



6 Strategies to Find Your Green Career

Green Career Central
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With the focus on climate change and the declining state of the environment, more and more people are dreaming of having a green career. Some find their career by leveraging the skills they have. Others come upon a green job that happens to work for them. And still others struggle to figure out what they want to do and how to make it happen.

Finding a new green career is like finding a hidden treasure. The more clues you have about what you want, the more likely you are to discover the career that's a good fit for you personally and professionally. In this free report you'll learn the six strategies to help you identify your green career and nurture it as it grows.

- Start with a tour of green careers that are evolving in this multi-faceted, ever-changing industry.
- Then learn the career change strategies to avoid that will take you off track.
- And finally discover the strategies you can take to find the green career that meets your needs and fulfills your dreams.

Take a Green Career Tour

When Green Career Central™ started researching green job boards in March 2007, we noticed that there was no standard way green jobs were categorized. Each board included different jobs, functions, and industries. By consolidating the lists from all of these boards we began to see clear green career categories.

As you review each of these green career categories, pay attention to which categories spark your interest. Notice if any of the sample careers would be a good fit for you. Make a check mark or asterisk next to the elements of these descriptions that excite you. You'll refer back to these later in the report.

*** The green economy is expanding and changing constantly. If you know of a green career category that is not included in this list, please let me know by using the contact from on my website. we'll continue to update this list as time goes on. ***

Environmental Sciences Careers

Environmental sciences careers are those that involve working directly with various elements of the environment. Scientists and those who support them, work with elements of the natural world - the environment, wildlife, forests, and fish. The following are examples of different specialties within environmental sciences careers:

Environmental science
Conservation biology
Ecology
Ecological Restoration

Sustainable forest mgmt
Natural resources mgmt
Biotic resources
Physical/earth resources

Wildlife conservation
Fish and Wildlife

Environmental Management and Services

Environmental management and services careers are those that involve working directly with various elements of the environment: air, water, land, waste. In many cases the goal of these jobs is to undo the human impact over the preceding decades and centuries. The following are examples of different specialties within environmental management and services:

Air Quality Control,
Emissions Compliance,
Trading
Offsets
Water Treatment
Water Conservation
Wastewater Treatment
Water Management

Land Conservation
Remediation
Land Use
Land Trust Management
Land Restoration
Soil Analysis Conservation
Ecological Restoration

Waste Management, Waste
Collection
Waste Transportation Waste
Processing
Waste Diversion Recycling
Nuclear
Atmosphere/Air

Renewable Energy

The careers in this segment are focused on solving the energy puzzle. How do we shift our energy sources away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy sources in a profitable, cost effective, streamlined way? There's a research angle to this segment as well as a technical side of putting the pieces in place to produce or harness the energy. Here's a sampling of renewable energy career areas:

Solar Energy
Hydropower
Green Power
Hydrogen/Fuel Cell

Ocean Power
Geothermal
Bio Energy
Wind Power

Micro Renewables
Energy Management
Carbon Offsets

Policy and Direction

Part of what drives innovation or stops it in its tracks is the policy and direction that are in place at each level of government. If you are passionate about a cause and have a political, legal, or advocacy background, you can definitely make a difference by working to make sure policies support and encourage green actions.

Setting Policy
Attorney
Advocacy

Politician
Activist
Regulator

Campaign Organizer
Political Consultant
Compliance

Funding and Finance

Another driving force in green industry is the race for funds – both in the non-profit world and the start up world. Providing funding, securing venture capital, applying for grants, and investing all play an important role in deciding which innovations get funded.

Finance
Investing
Grant Writing

Grant Administration
Venture Capital
Market Analyst

Fund Manager

Green Systems/Infrastructure/IT

Getting innovations to a place where they can be reliably produced and efficiently distributed will be key. Technology and IT will play a large role in production, tracking compliance, and providing the computing power for large scale modeling and other research. In addition, manufacturing and distribution systems must be evaluated and overhauled to meet green guidelines.

Supply Chain
Data Centers
Hazardous Waste Mgmt

Software Design
Distribution

Recycling
Manufacturing

Marketing and Sales

The next step in the cycle is to create a demand for the new products by motivating and persuading people to choose the new products over the old ones. Those of you who have used these skills in other industries will be able to transfer them to this arena.

Public Relations
Marketing Communications

Media
Web Design

Sales
Graphic Design

Green Building

Where we spend time – at home, at work, during our leisure activities – will determine how much energy we use on a day-to-day basis. The green building industry is flourishing with innovative products and design elements to conserve energy. As buildings are remodeled or rebuilt, finding ways to redirect and reuse demolition waste is an important part of the puzzle.

Architecture
Construction
Interiors

Meeting Venues
Building Supplies
Landscape Architecture

Urban Design
Salvage Demolition

Green Products

The products we purchase have a definite impact on the environment – the amount and kind of energy that are required to manufacture the product, the raw materials that are used and how they are obtained, how the final products are packaged and distributed. Innovations in any of these areas can have a positive greening effect.

Fashion
Cleaning Products

Consumer Electronics
Food

Automobiles
Packaging

Green Services

We also spend a great deal of money on services each year. Although we don't usually think of the environmental impact of these services, there are a number of services that are greening their offerings.

Travel
Entertainment

Events
Health

Real Estate
Printing/Publishing

Inspiring and Educating

Another career area entails encouraging, inspiring, and educating people to change their choices and actions. In some cases these are individuals or foundations with a cause. It could also be educating people on the technical side of using new products. For any of the scientific and technical innovations to take hold, those in this career category need to introduce the new concepts and inspire people to change their actions.

Teacher
Media

Writer
Musician

Artist
Videographer

Green Your Own Business

If you own your own business, think about how you might change your services or business practices to become greener. In the last month I've heard of green public relations firms, green wedding planners, green interior designers, green dry cleaners, green cleaning companies, green mortuary...and I haven't been searching for these. The sky is the limit here. Be creative and innovative as you explore your future green direction.

Work for a Sustainable Business

Another way to green your career would be to work for a company that is sustainable. These companies aren't just out for profits; all of their decisions are evaluated on how the decisions impact people (customers, employees, vendors, neighbors), the environment, and the profits. These companies may or may not be producing a purely green product or service, but what they are producing they are doing with an eye to the bigger picture--improving the quality of life, investing

profits in social/environmental causes, and operating responsibly. Examples of companies in this category include:

Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream
Seventh Generation
Tom's of Maine

Newman's Own
Eileen Fisher

Greyston Bakery
Clif Bar

Green Your Personal Work Habits

Even if you aren't able to make a career change immediately, you can become more conscious of your habits at work. How are you using paper and energy? How are you disposing of waste? How are you getting to work? Every little bit does add up.

Strategies to Avoid that Might Take You Off Track

If you've been thinking about pursuing a green career for a while, but you aren't making much progress, read through this list and check off any counterproductive strategies you have been relying on.

Passive Strategies

Each of these strategies has a passive component to it. In a sense, you want your new career to find you...without you having to take much initiative.

- You spend a lot of time dreaming about a green career.** But for all your wishing and dreaming, you don't take action to implement your ideas.
- You believe 'The Answer' will appear one day-- so you keep waiting.** The truth is, meaningful careers evolve as a result of exploring your interests and trying out new experiences.

By Default Strategies

You are doing a bit of leg work to determine your next green career move, but you don't have a plan of any sort. If a new opportunity arises, you leap on it ...without checking whether it makes sense for you.

- You fall into jobs.** When opportunities present themselves, you jump at the chance--without fully examining the realities of the new position.
- You choose a career because the people around you think it's a good move.** Whether the money and status are good or the job is consistent with your education, other people think the job is a good fit, so you take it.
- You get caught up in the 'I Could Do That' Syndrome.** You meet someone at a party who tells you about their green career. You try it on, check it out, and run into a snag or you meet someone else whose career seems even more interesting. You are so busy trying on everyone else's career; you don't know what really works for you.

Half-Baked Strategies

You have a green direction in mind, but you aren't asking yourself enough questions. With a little more planning and forethought you could transform your ideas into a workable green career. If you discover that the career is not a good fit, you've saved yourself from an unnecessary disaster. You may also find that making a slight adjustment can result in an even better solution.

- You attempt to identify a new career based on one interest or skill.** Perhaps all you know is that you want a green career. Unfortunately working with this one clue doesn't give you enough to go on.
- You jump headlong into the new green career you've chosen without testing the waters.** As a result you know nothing about the job and it's potential. In fact, you don't even know whether you'll enjoy it or not.
- You target a green career that looks great from a professional point of view.** The problem is taking the job forces you to live a life you don't want. In the final analysis, how good is that job?

Giving Up Too Soon Strategies

You may already have a viable green career idea, but you are your own worst enemy. You are limiting your success by basing your decisions and actions on beliefs that aren't valid.

- You talk yourself out of green job/career ideas faster than you can research them.** As a result you discount possible careers based on the unsubstantiated assumptions you have made inside your own mind.
- You are afraid to commit to a green career direction for fear you won't be able to enjoy any of your other interests ever again.** Have you ever looked for ways to combine your interests to meet several needs at once?
- You give up on your green career idea as soon as you hit a bump in the road.** Rather than look for creative alternatives, you tell yourself to give up your dream and just accept the job you have. As time progresses, however, you get so frustrated with your situation you realize you have to do something! You start the roller coaster ride one more time—until you hit the next bump.
- You don't reach out for help--you are bound and determined to figure this out on your own.** Unfortunately, if you have been wrestling with the riddle of your green career for some time, you may not be able to step beyond the scenario that runs through your mind like a continuous loop. Your best strategy is to reach out to other resources and support options to see yourself, your interests, and your future direction from an entirely new perspective.

Steps to Find Your Green Career

Making a successful career change takes strategy. It doesn't have to be hard, but you do want to familiarize yourself with the steps so that you can work efficiently and effectively as you embark on your adventure.

Strategy 1: Identify Your Green Niche

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary the word "niche" comes from the French and Latin words for nest. It's pronounced 'nich *also* 'nEsh *or* 'nish and is defined as:

a: a place, employment, status, or activity for which a person or thing is best fitted <finally found her niche>

b: a habitat supplying the factors necessary for the existence of an organism or species

c: the ecological role of an organism in a community especially in regard to food consumption

d: a specialized market

If you are searching for a green career, your first step is to identify your green niche. Where do your talents, passions, and personal style come together in a career that fits your personal and professional needs?

Remember a niche is specific and focused. It's not enough to know that you want a green career. As you probably noticed in the Green Career Tour above, there is a wide range of green possibilities when it comes to green careers. If you don't know what you want, your network will not be able to refer you to appropriate contacts or open job leads. You can't rely on other people to define your green niche, you must discover it from within yourself.

Your best strategy is to list all of your green and non-green interests. (As a starting point, return to the topics you marked during the Green Career Tour.) See what patterns and themes surface. Then play with the ideas to see which one floats to the top.

(If you'd like help finding your green niche, become a member of Green Career Central to gain access to articles and worksheets that guide you through this process. You can learn more about Green Career Central by going to www.greencareercentral.com/freetrial.html)

Strategy 2: Picture Your Ideal Work Setting

In addition to determining what you want to do, it's important to spend time envisioning the work setting that works for you. What kind of work setting makes you feel most satisfied and fulfilled? Is it working outside? Do you prefer to work in

an office? Do you want the opportunity to move around during your work day?
What equipment/technology do you want to use in your work?

What kind of commute do you want? Do you want to work from home at least part of the time? How much travel do you want to do as part of your work?

What does your work day/week look like? In your ideal picture, do you work a regular work week or a part time schedule? Are you working on a contract or in a full time position? How much vacation do you have?

Although you may not be able to design every element of your green career, having a clear vision of your ideal work setting will help you in several ways. You'll be able to assess how a potential job fits your needs. You'll be in a better position to negotiate more of what you want. You'll be able to steer clear of an environment that would be detrimental to your well being.

Strategy 3: Explore Your Possibilities

After you've determined the niche that suits you, your next goal is to learn as much as you can about that green career and the related industry. Your newfound clarity will help you stay focused during your research. To build a complete picture of your potential career, make sure you tap several sources of information:

- Do online research
- Conduct informational interviews
- Test the waters
 - Volunteer
 - Intern
 - Work on a committee
 - Get a part-time job
 - Help a friend

As you conduct your research, can you confirm that the position and field are a good fit for you? If you have any questions, ask your network to help you fill in the gaps or contact the relevant professional association.

To prepare for your future job search, pay attention to key players in the field, the kind of training or experience you need to enter the field, and the kinds of skills that are most important in the field.

Strategy 4: Choose Your Path

Your next step is to create a plan to take you from where you are now to where you want to be. The details of your next step depend on your situation and your goals. You'll need to determine whether your next step is to:

- Explore how to green your own work habits
- Be of service—give back to your community

- Get some more experience in the field
- Go to school to get a degree, a certification, or updated knowledge
- Launch your job search
- Find a job in a sustainable company
- Start your green business or green your existing business

Strategy 5: Build Your Network

Although you may be tempted to jump into action to land your green career, we encourage you to take some time to build your network.

Remember who you know can make all the difference in your quest, whether you are searching for a job or starting a business.

Begin by making a list of all the people you know—from all areas of your life. Don't make assumptions about who your friends know. You never know until you ask!

The key to getting productive leads from your network is your ability to articulate your goals clearly and simply. Those who hear your pitch must remember your needs and remember you when they run across someone who is a good match for you.

When you begin your exploration, you'll ask for leads to people you can interview about their work, their company, or their education. When you are clear about your direction, you'll return to your network to ask for leads to job openings. If you are building your business, you'll need your network to help you connect with vendors and potential clients.

As you connect with people in your network, keep track of their contact information and your conversation so that you can remember the specifics as your network expands.

Strategy 6: Take Action!

After identifying your green niche, researching your options, putting your plan in place, and building your network, you are now ready to take action! Again, your actions will depend on the action plan you created in Strategy 4.

- Green your own work habits
- Find a way to be of service
- Take an internship, part-time job, or volunteer position
- Apply to the school of your choice
- Actively search for your green job
- Search for a sustainable company that matches your interests
- Implement your green business plan

Remember that making a career change is more of a journey than an event. Don't get discouraged if you can't move directly into your ideal green career immediately.

Your best strategy is to make sure each move you make takes you closer to your green career goal. With this gradual approach, you'll be able to course correct as you test the waters of each position. Over time as you learn more and as the entire industry matures, your ultimate goal may evolve into something that doesn't even exist today.

Advance Your Green Career

As soon as you've landed in your new role, you may think you are finished with your career change. And, in a sense, you are finished with this one. Celebrate your success fully!

At the same time, it's important to realize that your success in your current career and your next career depend on you staying engaged:

- Stay informed about the current trends in your immediate industry and the green economy in general. The green industry is ever-changing, you must be aware of cutting edge advances that may impact your niche.
- Continue to nurture your network. Although you may not need your network to help you find a job any time soon, your network can help you find key resources, meet people who can help you in your current position, and point you in the direction of events and meetings that would strengthen your network even more.
- Learn and learn some more. The rate of change within these industries means that if you take your eye off the big picture and just focus on your job, the technology and innovative solutions are likely to pass you by.

There is Hope!

Although a green job probably isn't going to just drop into your lap, there are numerous opportunities appearing in a wide variety of fields.

If you are committed to having a green career, stay true to your vision by working through each step described here. Although you can't always predict when the opportunity will occur, you can proactively position yourself for the green career of your dreams.

GreenCareerCentral.com can help you:

**Find your green niche
Get focused
Search for opportunities
Be creative**

You can do this!

This free report, "Six Strategies to Find Your Green Career," has been prepared by Green Career Central™. This membership website community is for people who want to transform their passion for the environment into a prosperous green career.

For only \$49 for a three-month membership or \$19 a month you receive full access to how-to articles, expert interviews, job search resources, industry profiles and more!

Go to www.GreenCareerCentral.com/freetrial.html to sign up for your free 14-Day Trial Membership

About Green Career Central

Carol McClelland, PhD, founder and managing editor of Green Career Central™, has helped thousands of people discover their dream career



through her book, *Your Dream Career For Dummies*, and her work with individuals, groups, and students.

Carol has spoken about plugging into the green economy at Solar Living Institute's Green Career Conference, ProMatch in Sunnyvale, Kepler's Award Winning Go Green Series, Grace Cathedral's GraceWorks and a Step it Up Event in Mountain View. Carol is also a featured blogger on URTH.tv and Green Options Media (www.greenoptions.com).

Together with her team of researchers and writers, Carol has woven together her sixteen years of career change experience with up-to-date information about the green economy. The result is Green Career Central, a broad collection of how-to articles, resources, support, teleclasses, workshops, and expert interviews to help you find the green career of your dreams.

Career/Business Experts on Green Career Central:

Green Career Consultant:	Marie Kerpan
Niche and Transition Coach:	Karin Marcus
Research Expert:	Lauren E. Delp
Resumé Expert:	Jewel Bracy DeMaio
Interview and Video Resumé Experts:	Robin Ogden and Chris Fogarty
One Page Business Plan Coach:	Susan L. Reid
Personal Branding, Marketing/Branding:	Samantha Hartley