

Careers in the 21st Century

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With work being central in our life, new ways of work are emerging. The 9-5 workday is only one option. From the late 20th century and early 21st century, there is a growing trend to multiple careers, and a range of employment patterns to balance work and personal commitments.

Concurrent multiple careers

Workers with concurrent multiple careers work at two careers simultaneously, with one career being dominant, or to pursue a creative need. Often, such careers are also regarded as a “hyphenated” [professional identity](#).

Example one, a “teacher-artist” might refer to an individual who works for nine months of the year as a teacher, and during the holidays as an artist. Or, combines both roles in different capacities during the year.

Example two, increasingly, as adults care for grand-children and older generation parents, the worker undertakes their career and simultaneously cares for the needs of grandchildren or elders.

Workers can adopt concurrent multiple careers for a number of reasons including:

- financial for additional income
- multiple qualifications in different fields encourage different occupations
- personal such as interest or lack of fulfilment in one career

Sequential multiple careers

Over a lifetime, individuals can expect to change their careers 5-7 times. A worker in one career may switch to a related career or an entirely new career.

For example, a teacher who has spent many years in the profession may change their career to being a fitness instructor. Multiple careers reflect the life stage of the individual and the state of the economy. As life-expectancy increases, an individual may seek a career that is less time consuming and demanding, or perhaps, the desire to express another side of him/herself. This will give rise to careers that have individual hobbies at their core, such as winemaking, or baking. With a slow economy, many individuals seek to hold a job for security reasons, so that there is less movement between jobs. As individuals pursue lifelong learning, it may enhance their career opportunities for a career change.

Employment patterns

Employment patterns have altered by several changes. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009, state that the labour market has witnessed trading hour liberalisation, anti-discrimination legislation, labour market deregulation, and enterprise bargaining. Flexible working arrangements such as part-time work, job sharing, or telecommuting can be an option for:

- parents and carers balancing job demands with family responsibilities
- mature-age workers approaching retirement
- employees with study commitments
- people returning to work after an illness or long absence

Employment patterns are broadened to fit with the challenges of globalisation, consumer trends, study, an aging workforce, people returning to the workforce after an absence or illness, and lifestyle requirements.

Home-based work

Employees work from home and come into the office for staff meetings or progress meetings with supervisors.

Phased retirement

Instead of retiring from work completely, older employees may consider a phased retirement or flexible work arrangements with their employer.

Voluntary work

When a person volunteers to undertake work, they do not receive payment.

Self-employment/Consultant

Self-employment may suit individuals who start or buy a business.

With the range of work options, select the type of work that meets your financial and personal commitments. By working in a capacity that suits you, you will feel career satisfaction and bring renewed energy to the workplace.



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Flexible full-time working hours

An individual works the usual number of hours; however, the start and finish times vary to assist the employee. Some employers such as government provide flexible working hours which can be accrued.

Part-time employment

Part-time employees have predictable hours of work each week with the same entitlements as full-time workers on a pro-rata basis.

Job sharing

Two part-time employees share the responsibility of a full-time job. A job can be shared where employees share the same workload or divided with job responsibilities for each employee.

Telecommuting

Telecommuting means the employee is working away from the office to work at home. It can be on set days or arranged as the work demands.

Compressed working hours

Compressed working hours is a formal arrangement where you work normal, full-time hours (e.g. 36 hours, 15 minutes a week) over fewer than 5 days. This arrangement is often used to work a 9-day fortnight.

Purchased leave

Purchased leave allows the employee to take extra leave each year by pay averaging (e.g. a 48/52 arrangement). You work 44 weeks a year, take 4 weeks normal annual leave, and 4 weeks extra or purchased leave. This can suit staff at a school, or employees who are transitioning to retirement.

Casual work

A casual employee has no guaranteed hours of work and usually works irregular hours. It is useful to meet an employer's requirement for additional capacity during peak times.

Term-time work

Employees only work during school terms and have holiday leave during school holidays. This could be arranged as leave without pay during school holidays when annual leave is exhausted or as purchased leave.

Flexible working year

Employees work for less than 48 weeks of the year and have additional time off work to care for dependents.