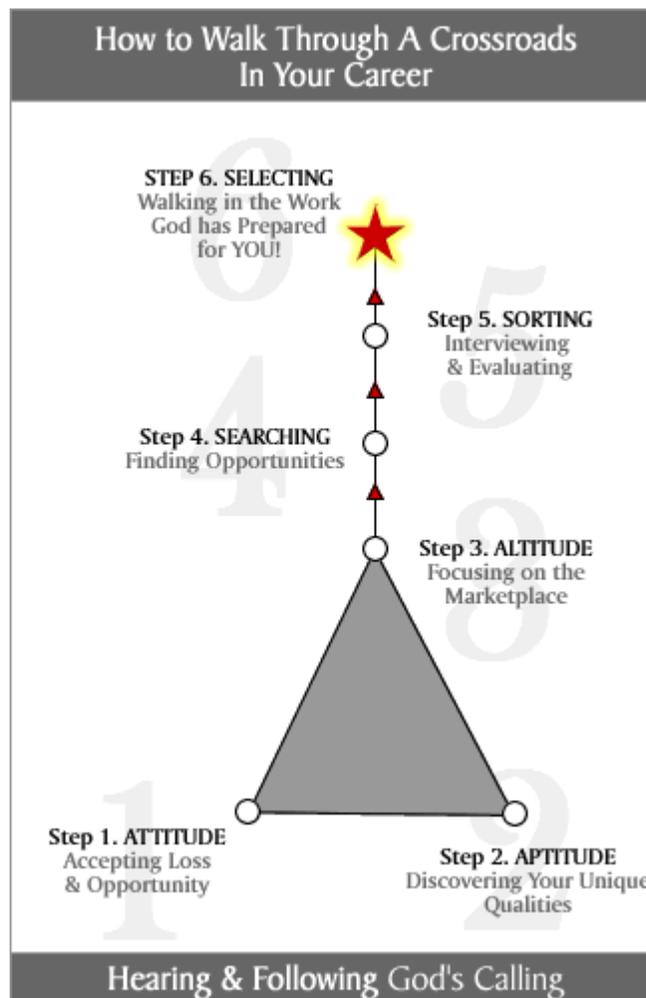


## Walking Through a Career Crossroads

You may be at a crossroads in your career because you are **unemployed or mis-employed**. Walking through a crossroads in your career can be hard work. The hardest part of a job or career change is generating the emotional energy to take another step.

In Crossroads, we use the model below to help you move through your career change process. This six-step process is the foundation of our Career Explorer's Course, as well as our network meetings. We strongly recommend you begin with Step 1 to learn more about each step.



# Step 1: Attitude

## Accepting Loss & Opportunity

### **ACCEPTING LOSS**

Your **feelings play a critical role** in your ability to walk through a crossroads in your career. That is why **ATTITUDE** is the first and most important step.

Whether you have lost your job or you are in a job that you wish you could lose, you need to **admit, understand and grieve the loss**. Be honest with yourself about your negative feelings and emotional pain. **First, admit each of your feelings** — shock, denial, irritation, anger, fear, panic, sadness, depression, stress. **Second, get your feelings out**. You might write about them in a personal journal or talk about them with a person you trust— spouse, friend, parent, sibling. You might even consider talking with a professional counselor.

**Third, forgive everyone involved** in your situation — including yourself. **List** everyone you feel is to blame. **Describe** each person's offense and how you feel about it. **Pray** for forgiveness for each person— whether you feel like it or not. Every time you feel bitterness or anger toward one of these people, pray again for forgiveness for him or her. Remember that **forgiveness is a process**. Over time, you will be able to let go of your anger and hurt. Then you will be free from a huge burden.

*“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”*  
Colossians 3:13

### **RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITY**

You have before you an **incredible opportunity** in both **breadth** and **depth**.

**Breadth** — There are more than **30,000 different occupations** in more than **1,100 different industries**. You can work for someone else or work for yourself. You can work full-time or part-time.

**Depth** — Today really is the first day of the rest of your life. You can make decisions today that will make your life better forever. Consider the following questions:

- How would I like to see my future?
- When I am old and looking back on my life, what would I like to see?
- Did God put me here for some reason?
- What is the purpose of my life?

**Dream impossible dreams**. Consider how God made you. **See a career for yourself** in which you are using your gifts and passions. Then begin to make plans and think about what it will take to accomplish them.

*“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.”*  
Jeremiah 29:11

# Step 2: Aptitude

## Discovering Your Unique Qualities

**There is nobody like you anywhere.** There never has been and never will be. God Himself crafted you uniquely and individually.

The more you know yourself, the better you will understand the kind of work you are uniquely gifted and prepared to do and where you can best do it.

**Discover your unique qualities** in five categories.

1. **Background** — education and experience
2. **Abilities** — skills, talents, knowledge
3. **Interests** — things you enjoy doing
4. **Personality** — natural traits and tendencies
5. **Values** — standards, purpose, passions

Try this four-part process.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

**Make a list** of your accomplishments, experiences, and attributes. Look for patterns.

### **REFERENCE ASSESSMENTS**

**Ask 4 to 6 people who know you** to make their own lists about you in each of the five categories listed above. You might create a simple form for them to fill out and return to you confidentially.

### **PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Take the **Career Direct™** assessment available through a church with a Crossroads Career® Ministry or directly through Crown Financial Ministries. This **professionally validated computerized assessment** will give you valuable insight into your personality, skills, interests and values. You will receive a **comprehensive report** with graphs, charts, evaluations and career suggestions that reflect your unique design.

### **SUMMARIZE**

Spread out all of the results from your assessments. **Look for common themes** in each of the five categories. **Write down several qualities** in each category to compile a well-rounded portrait of yourself.

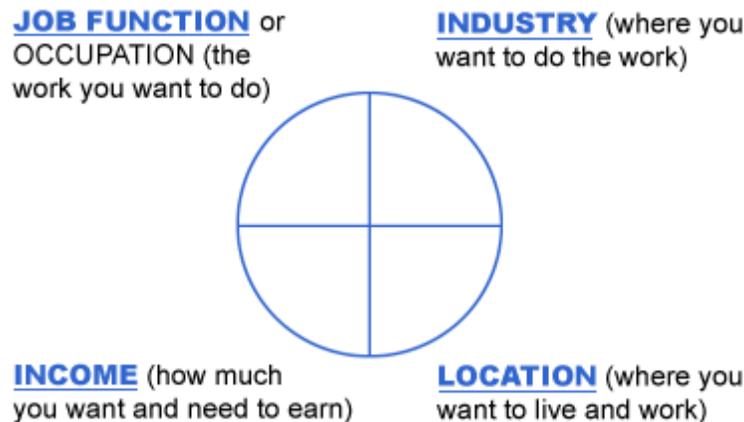
*“For it was You who formed my inward parts;  
You knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”  
Psalm 139:13*

# Step 3: Altitude

## Focusing On the Marketplace

**ALTITUDE** is the **direction, focus and motivation** that you need to begin thinking about the **specific kind of career, job or business opportunity** that you want.

First, decide what kind of work you want to do and where you want to do it. This will become your **target**. Second, prepare a **personal marketing plan** for reaching your target. Think of your target as a sighting scope with four cross-hairs.



**Research each area of the target** to help you make decisions about your own personal career target. You can also do **informational interviews** with people who work in an occupation or industry you are targeting. Ask them questions about their jobs, industries and personal career paths.

Other sources of information are **trade associations, trade magazines and newspapers**. You can find resources for these on the Internet.

### ***YOUR PERSONAL MARKETING PLAN***

**Develop a marketing plan** for each one of your career targets. (Limit yourself to two.)

1. Write an **accomplishment-based resume** tailored for each career target.
2. Prepare letters:
  - For **requesting information and contacts**,
  - As a **cover letter for sending your resume**,
  - For **sending follow-ups and thank you notes** after interviews.
3. Develop a **networking script** — your "30-second resume" — to use for concisely telling people what you are looking for. Use your four-part target as a guide.
4. Make a **list of target organizations and contacts** for your search for a new job or career opportunity.
5. Gather information you will need for completing **job applications** and **contacting references**.
6. Set up a way to **organize and keep track** of all your contacts.

### ***REMEMBER...***

*"The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."*  
Proverbs 16:9

# Step 4: Searching Finding Opportunities

There are many ways to find opportunities, but **85% of all new jobs are found through NETWORKING**. Looked at another way, your **odds of being selected for an opportunity are 42 times greater** if you are personally referred through networking. That gives you a 4200% better chance!

How do you find personal referrals? By **starting with people you know**.

1. **Make a list** of everyone you know — family, friends, people you've worked with, neighbors, people you went to school with, people you go to church with, people you play with, people you do business with, and so on.
2. **Contact each of these people** and **use your 30-second resume** to let them know what you are looking for. **Ask them if they know other people** you can talk with who might be able to help you. Do not ask them if they know of a job. If they do, they will tell you. What you want them to do is to give you more contacts.
3. **Continue networking with each new contact** until some of them begin to tell you about opportunities. One of them may even offer you a job. That's how networking works. It works for virtually any kind of job or business opportunity because **people know people who know about opportunities**.
4. Always **thank people** for their help. Send a thank you note or email in addition to a verbal thank you.
5. **Stay in touch** with people as your search progresses. Let every person who helped you know when you finally land the job or business opportunity you want.
6. **Be ready to help** your networking contacts if they ever ask you to.

## **OTHER WAYS OF FINDING OPPORTUNITIES**

**The Internet** — A **great tool for research** as well as finding job postings and posting your resume. Only about **5% of jobs** are found via the Internet.

**Classified Ads** — Take time to **scan them every Sunday** or **find them on-line** on Friday or Saturday. Only about **5% of jobs** are found through classified ads.

**Recruiters** — There are two types of recruiters, **contingency** and **retained**. Both **work for and are paid by employers**. The best method of finding a good recruiter is by referral from someone you know. Do not sign any contracts with recruiters or agree to pay any fees. Approximately **10-15% of jobs** are found through recruiters.

**Career and Job Fairs** — Find these advertised in your local newspaper. Job fairs can be a good way to **see representatives from many companies in one place** and make initial contacts. Before you attend, **get prepared by researching the companies** who will be represented and deciding which ones you want to see.

**Job Support and Networking Groups** — These groups can be effective ways of learning information about companies and getting **leads and contacts**. Attend as many of them as you can. Continue to attend the ones that offer the most help.

**Your State Department of Labor** — Many states have career centers in key towns throughout the state. These centers may offer **career transition seminars, career counseling, jobs databases, career fairs** and more. Look in your local Yellow Pages or on the Internet for locations.

# Step 5: Sorting Interviewing & Evaluating

Think of interviewing as a **two-way street**. The hiring company will be evaluating you, but you should also be evaluating the hiring company and the specific work opportunity to see if it is a good fit for you.

**Be prepared for an interview** — physically, mentally and spiritually.

**Physically**, be sure that you are **rested** and **look your professional best**. Be sure to arrive in plenty of time to park, take a restroom break, give yourself one last checkup in the mirror and arrive at the place for the interview about 10 minutes before your appointment.

**Mentally**, review your **list of accomplishments** and reflect on **common interview questions**. Learn as much as you can about the company and the person(s) who will be conducting the interview.

**Spiritually**, ask God to go with you, to help you listen and speak well and to help you determine if this is the right opportunity for you.

**During the interview**, listen as carefully as you speak. Listen for what the employer's needs are and explain how you can meet those needs (if you can). Listen for what kind of work situation this might be. Try to determine how it fits your unique qualities and your values.

Be very cordial, and be yourself.

**At the close of the interview**, ask what the next steps will be. Thank the interviewer for taking time to talk with you.

Be sure to **send a thank you letter** to each person who interviewed you. Express your interest in the position if you are indeed interested.

**Make notes** about the hiring company, the opportunity, the interviewer and what you think about this opportunity. **Write down any questions** you may have and think about how you can find answers.

# Step 6: Selecting Walking in the Work God Has Prepared for You

Select a career opportunity based on a **win-win approach**. Be sure the career opportunity you choose fits your unique qualities and your values. Also understand that the employer has needs that must be met.

Be sure you **understand the full opportunity**. Some things to be sure you understand are:

- The **job, reporting relationships, work hours, work place**
- The **employer's expectations**
- The **culture** of the company
- The **personalities** of the key people you will interact with
- The **total compensation** including pay, benefits, leave time, other kinds of compensation such as bonuses, car allowance, stock options, etc.

Know what **compensation you need and what you want**. This provides a range within which you can negotiate. Know what you are willing to give up and what you are not.

Before you say "yes," **consider what God wants you to do**. Ask God, and listen to Him.

When you start your new opportunity, consider that **God cares about how you work**. Begin your new work with the right attitude, giving it your very best, and you will be sure to find fulfillment.

*“Whatever you do, do your work heartily,  
as for the Lord rather than for men,  
knowing that from the Lord  
you will receive the reward of the inheritance.  
It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”  
Colossians 3:22-24*

# GOD IS CALLING YOU IN THE MIDST OF YOUR CAREER CROSSROADS

Most people believe that there is a God who created everything and that, maybe, He has some purpose for their lives. They are right!

The God who created the universe wants to have a personal relationship with you because He loves you. This God wants a relationship with you so much that He paid the price Himself for your sin, the only thing that separates you from Him, so that you could know Him and be with Him forever.

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son,  
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

John 3:16

*“The only way to know God is to know Jesus Christ, God's Son.  
For in Him [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell  
and through Him God was pleased to reconcile all things to Himself,  
whether things on earth or things in heaven,  
by making peace through the blood of His cross.”*

Colossians 1:19-20

You can know Jesus simply by confessing to Him that you are a sinner, asking Him to forgive you, accepting His gift of paying the price for your sins Himself by dying on a cross, and giving Him your life. You can pray to Jesus and receive Him into your life.

***Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness.***

***I believe that You died for my sins,  
and I want to turn away from my sins.***

***I now give You my heart and life.***

***I want to follow You as my Lord and Savior. Amen.***

You can come to know God better and understand God's will for your life. Here are some things that can help you.

- Read and study the Bible.
- Pray.
- Listen to God.
- Worship God.
- Spend time with other Christian believers.

*“I have come that they might have life,  
and have it abundantly.”*

John 10:10