

Ask the Career Coach: What Would Be a 'Safe' Career for the Future?

What is "safe" can mean a whole lot of different things.

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

What would be a "safe" career for the future?

S.T.
Short Hills

It depends on how you define your term "safe." Does safe mean a lifelong career? Does it mean flexibility to manage your life style as you wish? "Safe" career options may only last for a select time period. Most individuals will change careers approximately five to seven times during their working life span.

In this current market, you need to understand your skills and strengths and how to market yourself to meet a business need. Industries that are growing due to the political administration, economy and demographics are in health care, geriatric care, green and government positions, just to name some.

If you are a professional looking to transfer into a different industry, it is helpful to understand how your core skills and past performance of deliverables are transferable. Say you have worked in chemical companies for the last several years, how are you able to draw correlations between business results in this industry with business results in your new targeted industry? How can you engage in the industry language and understand the regulatory and compliance issues impacting it? Have you considered volunteering with an organization or a cause related to the industry you want to break into.

As you develop your career, there are certain core skills that you will need regardless of what industry you work in. Look to identify the critical skills that are most valuable for your targeted industry—where do they have a need and how can you deliver value to close this gap? Core skills typically include current technical knowledge, communication skills and ability to development business opportunities.

As stimulus incentives are given, health care continues to evolve. And as the population ages, there will be a greater need for health care and geriatric professionals. As the government continues to encourage and support green incentives, new opportunities will be created. As this new industry grows, it may provide some "safe" career options.

Being aware of the industry buzz by following the news, discussions on LinkedIn, blogs, professional organizations and networking groups will help you determine if this industry provides "safe" career choices.

The key to career success is to follow your passions or live your talents with an understanding of business needs and future trends. Keeping yourself current in your functional expertise and knowing when to retool is important. Managing your own career development plan will keep you "safe".

"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com.

Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.