

# **Get Real and Be Happy Anyway!**

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If your background is retail, but you've heard that pharmaceutical sales offer high compensation and lots of perks, this probably isn't the best time to be attempting to switch careers. Sure, you have some sales and customer service skills, but you are competing against a lot of displaced workers out there with the qualifications the pharmaceutical companies demand. Right now, there are plenty of displaced workers in every industry and profession. The hard cold fact is that you need an income.

Your best strategy, and remember this is only temporary, is to stick with what you know and be flexible. If you get a solid offer, but the pay is less, keep the end result in mind...what starts off as something that is "not quite what you wanted" may be just the opportunity you need to open new doors in the end.

Sign up with temporary employment agencies. Employers DO need people, but the economy is scaring them away from hiring. When they can't hire, they contract temporary workers. There are temporary agencies in every major city, and while they might frown upon it, sign up with ALL of them. This gives you opportunities not only to make some money, but to get a feel for the types of industries and jobs that are out there while keeping your skills fresh. And often times, if you do a good job, you'll end up getting a permanent job offer!

Market yourself as an independent contractor. Do you have good office skills? Contact local companies in your area and ask if they could use some temporary help, or if they have a special project you can assist them with. Are you a "jack of all trades" who can fix anything? Advertise your services in your local paper. Is there a large convention or event coming to your town? Find out who is staffing the event and sign up to help! You never know...any small opportunity can eventually turn into more work or an exciting job offer!

Now that you have a way to generate income, what about your passions, your dreams, your joy? Volunteer! Not only does this give you a chance to keep your job skills (and your resume) current, and even develop new skills, but you get to do something you enjoy, build networks, and again...may even find that your volunteer efforts turn into something more.

Take a class at your local adult education center or community college. Use this time to brush up on skills that may be lacking. You'll feel good about yourself...and, you'll have something new to add to your qualifications!

Join a group. You may miss the "social" element of going to work each day, but there are plenty of groups in every community. Find one that matches your interests and get involved. You can expand your networks while feeding your spirit.

Turn this challenging time in your life into a positive opportunity to grow...and have a little fun doing it!

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