

## A good start to a great career

Written by Julie Desmond  
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A friend nearing retirement shared a few stories with me recently about how his prosperous career got off the ground and it reminded me that every career starts somewhere, and can go anywhere, as long as you do what you love and work as hard as you can every day. Cliché? Of course. True? Definitely.

Jeff said he wanted to get into radio. He graduated with the right credentials from a good local school, along with everyone else in town who wanted to get into radio. He started looking for work in Minnesota, North Dakota, anywhere he could think of where someone might be willing to try him out. He went to a station he liked a lot and asked for a sales job. During that conversation, it became apparent that Jeff had zero sales experience but had a deep knowledge of the programs on that station. Hired. His education probably got him the interview; his passion got him the job.

But about that missing experience. Starting out can be frustrating and Jeff's manager saw him struggling. He called Jeff in after a while and told him he'd need some training. He said, "If I go out there (pointing outside) and shake that tree, do you know what will fall on my head? Not great salespeople." The manager was willing to work with Jeff, if Jeff was willing to put in the effort to learn and develop his skills.

Even with a mentor who believed in his potential, the sales job was not always smooth sailing for Jeff. Developing a thick skin can help anyone succeed when situations get off track. For example, during one of his meetings with the manager, Jeff said, "You're looking at me like I'm a bumbling idiot." The manager said, "I never called you bumbling..." Jeff laughed at the comment, but his skin got a little thicker that afternoon.

If your career is on the rocks, ask yourself where your passions lie. Are you working at a place you believe in? Are you working hard every day? Are you reaching to learn more all the time? Are you tough enough to stick it out, knowing everyone has bad days? If you answered yes, yes, yes and yes, then hang in there; success is right around the corner. If not, then figure out why not, and change your behavior or change your career. Success is up to you.

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