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all about you  
YOUR CAREER

"I TURNED A HOBBY INTO A GLOBAL BRAND"

Renée Griffiths, 35, perfumer

I first came across bespoke perfume houses while travelling through Europe in my early 20s. I was so inspired that when I arrived home, I bought a book on perfume making and began developing fragrances. It was a perfect creative outlet compared to my dry job in real estate. I didn't see it as more than a hobby until my wedding in 2002, when I designed a scent for the female guests. The response was so overwhelming that, after a year of planning and saving, I quit my job and trained as a perfumer, before spending a year blending perfumes in my kitchen and designing packaging. My risk paid off, and today my range of candles and fragrances is stocked everywhere from Melbourne to Moscow. Going to work is no longer a chore! Visit [www.renee.com.au](http://www.renee.com.au).



"I FELL IN LOVE AND FOUND MY CALLING"

Leona Watson, 43, culinary entrepreneur

I was known for throwing fabulous dinner parties, but never thought it was something I could do full-time. I was a marketing manager, convinced I would be that forever, until I went on a sailing trip around France. To my surprise, I fell for a sailor onboard. After much soul-searching, I quit my job and followed him to the Whitsundays, where he was working on a charter yacht. Coincidentally, there was a role for an onboard chef, and I signed up. It was the best decision I've ever made, and it reawakened my passion for cooking. When my contract ended, I completed a cordon bleu course, and launched Cheeky Food Group, which offers interactive cooking events. It's about to expand overseas – and all because of a summer holiday! Visit [www.cheekyfoodgroup.com](http://www.cheekyfoodgroup.com).

COULD YOU BE A MID-LIFE GENIUS?

Not everyone picks the perfect profession first time. These women show why it's never too late to tap into your true talent

"GETTING SICK GAVE ME A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE"

Shannah Kennedy, 38, life coach

I was a successful sports sponsorship manager working seven days a week – and loving it – until, at 29, I fell ill with chronic fatigue syndrome. Stuck in bed for six months, I reflected on my 60-hour a week job, and realised that the part I loved and was talented at wasn't sponsorship-related; it was giving support to athletes, who were constantly asking me for advice on everything from relationships to finance. Then, I read about life coaching and something clicked. I began studying coaching part-time and, after two years, opened my consultancy, which, six years later, has 40 clients. Today, I earn twice as much and I'm more fulfilled. Visit [www.shannahkennedy.com](http://www.shannahkennedy.com).



ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SKILL SET?

Max Coaching's Jane Lowder reveals three steps to finding your inner virtuoso ...

**QUESTION** Not sure where your true passion lies? Ask yourself, if you were a multimillionaire and never needed to work again, what would you do?

**PLAN** Now, list what you want from your new job, from hours to environment. Identify the skills you'll need, then how to fill them – a course or work experience?

**TRY** Test out your potential profession by volunteering through organisations like [www.goodcompany.com.au](http://www.goodcompany.com.au). That way, you add to your skills before committing.