

## Connect. Create. Thrive. recognising the moment for meaningful change

Career change and workforce re entry are increasingly common pathways in Australia's dynamic labour market. Whether driven by shifting values, evolving life stages, sector disruption or long standing ambition, understanding when you are genuinely ready to make a move is a powerful foundation for action.

National Careers Week 2026 invites you to **Connect, Create** and **Thrive** by recognising the signals that point to readiness for change. The signs below are not about pressure or dissatisfaction alone. They reflect growth, reflection and emerging opportunity.

### 1. Your values and work no longer align

When what matters to you personally no longer fits with what you do day to day, it is often a strong signal that change is needed. Values are central to career wellbeing. If you feel consistently disengaged or disconnected from work that once energised you, it may be time to pause and reflect.

This is an opportunity to connect with what matters most to you now, whether that is meaningful contribution, balance, creativity, autonomy, community impact or growth.

### 2. You feel drawn to other fields or types of work

Curiosity is an early indicator of career transition. If you find yourself regularly exploring new industries, reading about different roles or imagining how your skills could apply elsewhere, your career thinking is already shifting.

This curiosity invites you to **create** new pathways. Career change does not mean discarding your experience. It means recognising how your skills and interests can be re applied in new contexts.



### 3. Stagnation outweighs satisfaction

Feeling stretched and challenged at work supports learning and motivation. When stagnation becomes the dominant experience, with limited opportunities to grow or develop new skills, it may be a sign that your career needs a new direction.

Thriving at work often depends on access to learning, progression and meaningful challenge. If these are no longer available in your current role or field, exploring alternatives can support long term wellbeing.

### 4. You often imagine different possibilities

When your thoughts frequently return to questions like what else could I do or what would it be like to work in a different field, this reflection is worth paying attention to. These imaginings are not distractions. They are signals of readiness to explore.

At this stage, it can be helpful to **connect** with people working in areas that interest you. Conversations, mentoring and networking can turn abstract ideas into informed options.

## 5. Your life circumstances have changed

Life changes often reshape career priorities. Parenting, caring responsibilities, health changes, relocation or further study can all influence what you need from work.

Rather than viewing these changes as interruptions, they can be a catalyst to **create** a career that better fits your life. Career development is not static. It evolves alongside personal circumstances.

## 6. You are motivated to learn and grow again

A key sign of readiness for career change is a renewed interest in learning. If the idea of gaining new skills, updating qualifications or exploring unfamiliar areas feels energising rather than overwhelming, you are well positioned to move forward.

Learning can take many forms in Australia including short courses, microcredentials, workshops, volunteer roles or project based experience. Continuous learning supports adaptability and confidence.

## 7. You can see a direction even if the details are not clear

You do not need a fully formed plan to begin a career change. When you can describe a general direction or next step, even loosely, it indicates readiness for action.

Small steps help you **thrive**. Trial new learning, seek advice, explore roles in high demand sectors or test ideas through part time or transitional work. Progress often comes through action rather than certainty.

## Connecting readiness to opportunity

Australia's current labour market presents strong opportunities in areas experiencing workforce shortages, including:

- Registered Nurses
- Early Childhood Teachers and Educators
- Electricians
- Carpenters and Joiners
- Aged and Disability Care Workers
- Software Developers and ICT Professionals

For those ready to change careers or return to work, these sectors offer pathways where skills are needed, contribution is valued and long term prospects are strong.

## A National Careers Week 2026 message

### Connect. Create. Thrive.

Career change is not about starting over. It is about recognising when growth is calling and responding with intention.

If these signs resonate with you, National Careers Week 2026 is an opportunity to connect with what matters to you, create a pathway that reflects your strengths and values, and thrive in work that supports your wellbeing and contribution.

Career evolution is possible at any stage of life. When internal readiness meets external opportunity, meaningful change becomes achievable.

