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# NEWSWORTHY

## From the Team

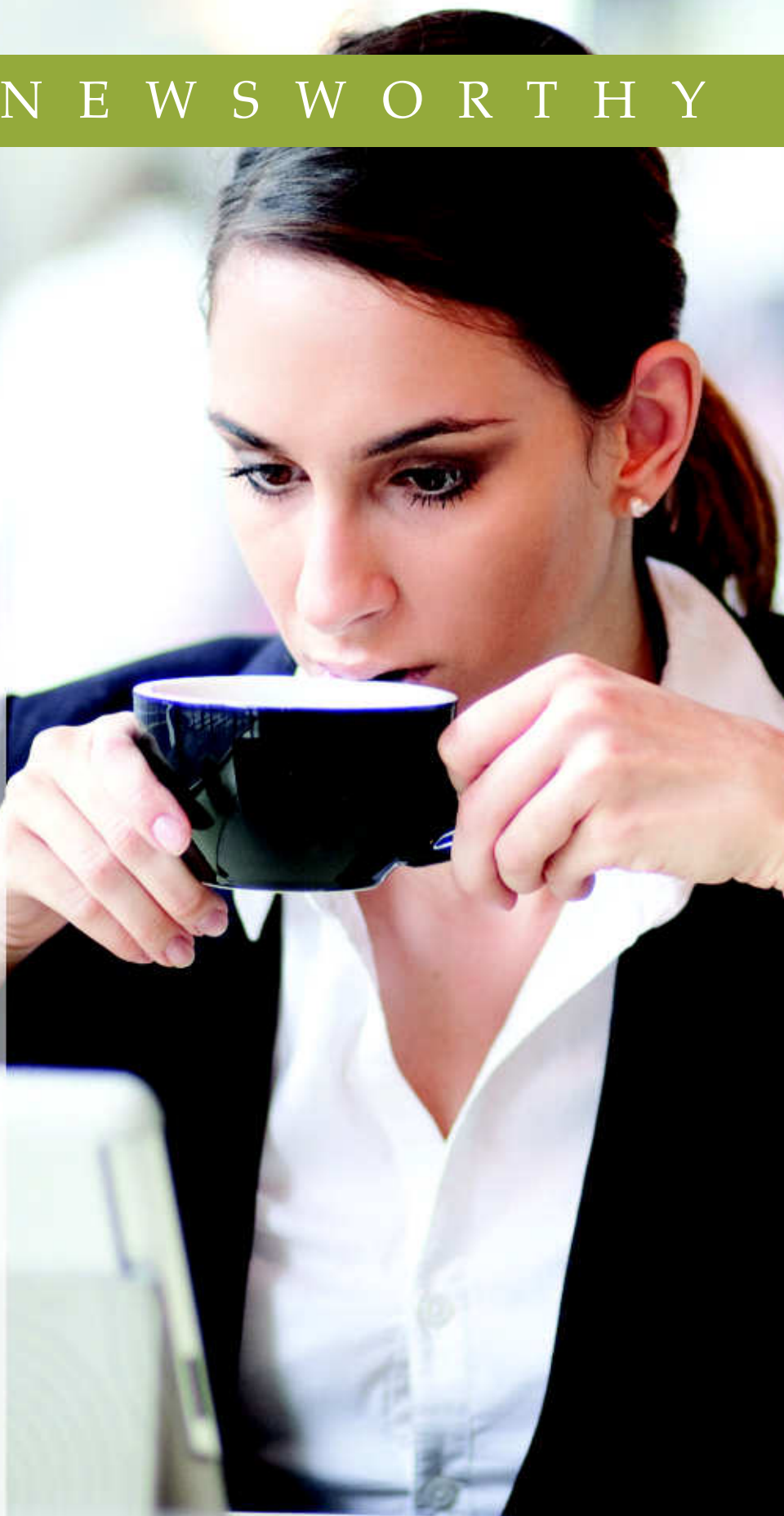
There has never been a more exciting time to pursue career options. The economy is picking up. The variety and scope of employment opportunities have never been more wide-ranging. And it's never been so open to anyone with the abilities and willingness to do the work. Today, when we tell children, "You can be anything you want when you grow up," we mean it.

But with choice comes challenge. And the field of possibilities is changing faster than ever. Who could have imagined the changes technology has enabled, for example. In our lifetimes, we know whole industries will become obsolete and work not yet conceived will emerge. So how do you decide? What if I start my career doing X with company Y? Where will it lead? The answer is, it's up to you.

The key to planning is to think about where you want your career to take you — and to begin to plot it out. Consider these questions, "When I retire, where do I want to be in my life and my career? What experiences do I want to have had in my lifetime? What can I say I've achieved, contributed to, or left behind through my work?"

If you're part of the fastest growing population of professionals, the Millennial generation, you're likely to have 15 to 20 jobs in your lifetime. Planned carefully, this work can create the legacy you desire. We've provided some information and resources we believe will help you navigate your career path. When you think it is time for you to make a shift — upward or in a whole new direction — please call. We'd love to help.

*The Welsh & Associates Team*



Your new job is just a click away:  
<http://welshandassociates.net/jobseekers.html>



## 4 Steps to Plotting Your Career Path

If you're considering a career shift, you'll get where you're going faster with a plan. That means knowing what milestones you may need to hit and what will be required to meet them. Following are four simple steps to helping you succeed in the work you desire.

**1. Start with what fuels your passion.** What makes your heart sing, your pulse race? If you don't know, find out. Think about the things you're drawn to in your spare time. Often we gravitate toward activities that fulfill us through our hobbies or volunteer efforts. Ask family and friends, your spouse or partner. What talents and passions do they see in you?

**2. Determine the distance from here to there.** Are you suited for the work? There are hundreds of online assessments — many of them free — to help you determine if your temperament or interests are suited for the type of job or industry you desire. They also offer suggestions for how to fill gaps with training or education if you're determined, but not fully equipped to make the leap just yet. (Check out the national resources we've included under our Online Resources Story, next page.)

**3. Don't go it alone.** Once you've identified a field or a particular job that interests you, talk to people you know who do that work. Find mentors who are willing to help guide you. What is it really like day in and day out? What were their career milestones? What education is required? Aside from giving you inside information, these folks may be able to help open doors.

**4. Broaden your network.** The adage about "it's who you know" still holds, but in today's connected world, it's easier than ever to expand your network. This is especially important if you're making a shift in industries or the type of work you're seeking. Consider industry associations or groups. Explore the many online communities, for example, where you can often hang out and learn.

## Career Patterns

A December 2015 essay, "Career Paths to Patterns" in *Talent Management* magazine by Beverly Kay and Lindy Williams, said the era of prescriptive career pathways is over. Today's employees will have career journeys as individualized and unique as they are.

Patterns are different from a path or plan. Patterns occur over time based on the individual's career choices. They can be random and unstructured or carefully planned. But patterns will naturally emerge. Careful planning and savvy decision making enable the employee to create a personalized pattern that speaks to his or her talents and passions.

To design a fulfilling career pattern, Kay and Lindy suggest that employees ask themselves three important questions: What experiences do I want to have during my career? What will I learn or gain from each? And, how will I move between these experiences?

[See the full article](#)

*Does the walker choose the path, or the path the walker?* — Garth Nix, Sabriel







# Online Resources for Career Planning

Summit County, Ohio put together a career pathway toolkit for its residents. The toolkit contains resources for education and career planning that provided insight into local growth industries. (They borrowed the idea from Seattle-King County in Washington.) Interestingly, many of Summit's growth industries are important industries here, too: healthcare, biosciences, finance and information technology, for example.

If you're considering a career in these areas, you may want to check out the Summit guide. It offers crucial insight into the qualities and skills required and the education and training you'll need for success in several types of jobs in these fields.

The salary information, of course, is unique to Ohio. But you can compare the cost of living at Sperlings Best Places or [payscale.com](http://payscale.com). Southwest Michigan Partners commissioned a salary survey for the Kalamazoo Region in 2013 that offers some information specific to southwest Michigan.

A few of the links Summit County includes in their toolkit are national resources that may be particularly helpful. We've included them here, for quick access.

- Wage data from the labor of statistics offers information on national, state and regional wages for 800 occupations in 400 industries. If you're looking at our region, note that the Kalamazoo Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes portions of Van Buren County.
- Career One-Stop is an online resource sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. It houses a national database of tools and resources for job seekers and it provides localized information.
- The Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) is sponsored by the US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA). It offers career exploration tools, job analysis questionnaires, employer guides, and technical reports on hundreds of occupations.

## Michigan is Once Again a Top Tech Employer

If you had any doubt that the recession is over, just look at the growth in employment for tech jobs — up 3% nationally. And Michigan is once again a national leader, according to a recent report in MLive. It ranks 12th in the nation in tech employment and is among the top five states for engineering services and R&D testing labs.

According to MLive, "If you're looking to choose a career based on likelihood of finding a job, these fields are the most likely to see increased demand from 2014-2024."

Job	Increase in Demand
Web Developers	26.6%
Biomedical Engineers	23.1%
Computer Systems Analysts	20.9%
Software Developers Applications	18.8%
Information Security Analysts	17.9%
Computer and Information Systems Manager	15.4%

### Michigan's Top Tech Jobs Today

- #1 Mechanical Engineers
- #2 Industrial Engineers
- #3 Computer User Support Specialists
- #4 Software Developers, Applications
- #5 Computer Systems Analysts

— Source: MLive Apr. 3, Sunday Report: *Five things to know about Michigan's tech job growth*, by Paula Gardner