



A free inside look at jobs and companies. Find [jobs](#) and see company [salaries](#), [reviews](#), and [interviews](#) posted anonymously by employees.

[Glassdoor blog](#)

Search Blog:

[Home](#) » [Career Advice](#) » How To Balance Two Jobs When They're Totally Different

How To Balance Two Jobs When They're Totally Different



Posted by [Vickie Elmer](#) • February 20th, 2012 • [3 Comments](#)

- | 34
- |
- | 4

The world is full of slashes – people who are earning most of their living in one field, but starting up in another. There’s the barista-artist and the lawyer – novelist and the energy consultant – photographer.

Yet those slash careers, which engage and encourage you and diversify your [sources of income](#) may confuse others or put them off. This may be true especially if one of your slash careers seems frivolous or a little funny (as mine does) or not in line with your main [career choice](#).

So even as you embrace your split focus, consider carefully how you characterize yourself before you head out for a sales meeting or professional mixer.

“It’s important to establish your credibility in the situation you’re in,” said [Marci Alboher](#), author of the book *One Person/Multiple Careers* and a slash herself (She works full-time for Civic Ventures encouraging older people toward “encore careers” and speaks and promotes her books too). A few years ago, she



wrote a column for the *New York Times* on small business, which established her credibility.

When you have multiple careers simultaneously, choose the one with “the most cachet or the most relevant to the setting you’re in,” Alboher said. “You really want to establish you’re a player in that space,” so at a marketing professional organization, introduce yourself as a marketing manager, not a princess party organizer.

“The one-size-fits-all approach never works for people who have custom blended careers,” she said. “Take the time to examine your own situation; see what works for you.”

Keep in mind your professional goals and guard the reputation and standing of your main income source, so it is not compromised by the start-up. Some slashes could hurt your main gig, if you’re not careful.

Here’s some other things to consider:

Professionalism

What will your clients or lawyer friends think when you show up to a law review alumni gathering with your puppets on your shoulder? Unless you’re in entertainment law you may want to leave your puppetry part-time business in the background. Strive to show your professionalism and make sure you fit into whatever industry group or environment you’re in.

Boss’s Reaction

Start by reading the employee handbook and pay careful attention to sections on outside activities, conflicts of interest and disclosure of personal pursuits. Then consider your boss’s personality and perspectives – and decide how or whether to tell your boss about your new micro-enterprise. Some people want to get permission first, said Alboher. Others decide to try to the “don’t ask permission, ask forgiveness” if concerns are raised.

Business Cards

Some slashers fit everything on one, especially when there is synergy between them: Think professional speaker and author or web designer and photographer. But others find it works better to have separate business cards and carry both of them. "Every slash combination and every profession has its own approach," she said. It's all right to pass out both cards in one setting, as long as there's a clear reason for it, or possible demand for your second income services, Alboher said.

Conflicts of Interest & Trust

Consider the potential for creating an ethical dilemma with your second or third slash career. Psychologists and social workers especially need to be careful, Alboher said. So do journalists who write about an area and also want to participate in it (as I do in the Ann Arbor area, where my small cart-based Italian ice company Mity Nice operates). If you're not sure on this, talk to a trusted advisor or mentor about this and err on the side of caution and care.

In my case, I aim for transparency about my slash career – journalist/writer and social entrepreneur. But sometimes mentioning both seems distracting or irrelevant to the conversation at hand. Still, I usually try to bring up my primary focus — career, consumer and business writing — rather quickly, except if the temperature tops 80 degrees, the sun is blazing and the customers are lining up for some Michigan-made Italian ice.

Alboher believes in the slash lifestyle and sees huge interest in it. But she warns people not to expect to tip toe into a slash career unnoticed. "It's a lot harder to do things under the radar than it used to be," Alboher said.



Vickie Elmer writes about consumer issues, careers and workplace subjects for the New York Times, Fortune magazine, the Washington Post and other top tier media outlets. Her articles are filled with actionable insights, compelling stories and inspiring people. The mother of three also co-owns Mity Nice LLC, a small social cart business based in Ann Arbor, Mich., which donates to more than a dozen charities each summer and fall. Her motto changes regularly, but her concentration on careers, kindness, creativity and high quality writing remains constant.

Tags:

[Multiple Jobs](#), [Slashes](#), [Vickie Elmer](#), [work/life balance](#)

Categories:

[Career Advice](#)

Related Posts

- [Laid Off? 5 Ways To "Slash" Your Way Back To Work](#)
- [5 Ways High-Achieving Professionals Balance Work and Life](#)
- [Veteran Careers: Top 5 Jobs For Ex-Military Personnel](#)

3 comments

0 Stars

Comments for this thread are now closed.

Discussion Community

Resell SEO • 8 months ago
In my opinion, it's good if you're going to do a check on the company policies about this, if you're already working for one. Think about it well before you actually start one. If you own BOTH businesses, that would be awesome, but how would you manage your time running both?

= Gerald Martin =
1 ^ | v · Share >

Interview questions • 7 months ago
Great post, thanks to share itI m waiting for the next ideal article of yours.
0 ^ | v · Share >

Cmpalomo Edu Gov • 8 months ago
Vickie, you have mentioned multiple careers. I do agree about the relevancy of what type of job. And your aiming at the right audience which many may not be aware of work policies and procedures. It is something everyone who already has a career might want to think about like what you said before making that meeting. I also agree that is it important to get permission first and if anyone wants to meet someone that can do well networking together, this is where it is appropriate to let them know who you are and describe a little bit of how both organizations might benefit working together. I see this time and time again, and trying to start up one project and yet another one is coming, yes this might just be a bit overwhelming. I also think that because of the cost of living on services and products only drives people looking for extra income just to make ends meet no matter if it isn't related to what we do. Indeed I have met a few of them. Thanks for sharing your opinion on this subject. Well worth said.
0 ^ | v · Share >

ALSO ON GLASSDOOR BLOG

10 Ways To Not Get Hired 7 comments

Vera Swain — I don't know if I should trust an article whose title is "10 Ways To Not Get Hired" that goes on to ...

Top 6 Reasons Your Job Search Isn't Working 5 comments

ABC — Try and follow up an application with a phone call... especially a big company. I dare you! They don...

How To Get A Pay Raise In A Bad Economy 5 comments

myra — I have been with the same employer for 6 years and only making \$2 more an hour than when I started....

5 Signs You're Ready To Start Your Own Business 4 comments

N R LAKSHMI — Dear Df every time in my career i had the passion to succeed but the employer has not encourage this ...

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU

What's this?

No You Didn't: 6 Things You Shouldn't Say To A Married Woman Madame Noire

Things may have been all good before marriage, but your girl's opinion about certain topics may have changed. Therefore, certain things aren't cool to ...

Around the World with Kate Middleton and Prince William Zimbio

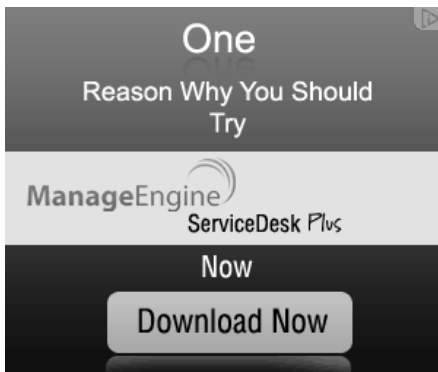
Whether they're cooking in Quebec or playing polo in Santa Barbara, one thing's for certain: The royal couple loves to see the world

Scion IQ News AOL

Like Glassdoor? Tell Your Friends

195k
Like
50k

- Follow us:



Most Popular

- [Top 25 Companies For Work-Life Balance \(2012\)](#)
- [10 Things You Should Never Do When Starting A New Job](#)
- [Top 5 Reasons You Never Hear Back After Applying For A Job](#)
- [Top 25 Highest Rated CEOs 2012](#)
- [Most Common Interview Questions](#)
- [Top 25 Oddball Interview Questions Of 2011](#)
- [Top 50 Best Places To Work – 2012 Employees' Choice Award Winners Revealed](#)

Guest Contributors



•

[Why A Company's Reputation Matters, Even In A Bad Economy](#) by [Donna Fuscaldo](#) October 3rd, 2012



•

[4 Free Tools To Build An Effective Online Portfolio](#) by [Heather Huhman](#) October 2nd, 2012



•

[6 Tips To Make Your References Work For You](#) by [Vickie Elmer](#) October 1st, 2012



•

[Top 6 Reasons Your Job Search Isn't Working](#) by [onTargetjobs](#) September 28th, 2012



•

[10 Ways To Not Screw Up Your Video Interview](#) by [John Sumser](#) September 27th, 2012

Categories

- [Career Advice](#)
- [Glassdoor Updates](#)
- [HR/Recruiter Advice](#)
- [In the News](#)
- [Interviews](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Salaries](#)
- [Watercooler](#)

The Archives

Select Month

[About Us](#) | [Employers](#) | [Publishers](#) | [Blog](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Help](#)

Glassdoor is your free inside look at jobs and companies. Salary details, company reviews, and interview questions — all posted anonymously by employees and job seekers.

Browse:

[Salaries by Job](#) | [Salaries by Company](#) | [Salaries by City](#)

[Reviews by Company](#) | [Interview Questions by Job](#)

[Interviews by Company](#)

[Jobs by Title](#) | [Jobs by Company](#) | [Jobs by City](#)

Copyright © 2008–1900, Glassdoor. All Rights Reserved. Your use of this service is subject to our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).
Glassdoor® is a registered trademark of Glassdoor, Inc.