



# SUCCESS STORY

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## Cisco Creates New Opportunities for Career-Changing Adults

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 67% of American workers don't like their jobs and 41% of them are not employed in the fields which they studied in school. Many adults think about changing careers at some point in their life, but few people actually do anything about it. "Stress is a natural and healthy part of life, but when it becomes overwhelming it can have severe consequences, not only on your feelings of satisfaction at work, but on your entire life as well," (The Center for Balanced Living, <http://www.balancedliving.com/>). Scott Redilla, married and father of two children, reached the top of his field as Master Auto Mechanic at age 35. Although he was comfortable and felt 'safe' in his occupation, Scott was becoming more and more unhappy with his job and his unhappiness carried over into his home life as well. "Mostly I was bored," he said. "I felt mentally dull and the job began holding little challenge for me. I couldn't see myself doing the same thing for the next 20 years of my life," Scott continued.



Scott Redilla on the job.

As Master Auto Mechanic, Scott was responsible for the more technical systems on vehicles. His job was to diagnose and repair problems with today's computer-controlled cars and trucks as well as troubleshoot the electrical system, transmission and engine work.

Although Scott enjoyed the challenge of tracking down and resolving complex mechanical problems, he felt a lack of respect from customers and his employer. "The perception of the stereotypical 'grease monkey' is very hard to overcome," he says.

Scott tried changing careers several times, but kept going back to the automotive industry, because it was a safe place to be. "Nothing else seemed to fit me until I got into the computer field," Scott says.

Scott's friend got him interested in computers and networking and told him of the Cisco Networking Academy Program offered at Montgomery County Community College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Scott was ready for a new challenge, so he did his homework. He talked more about the computer field with his friend, considered the job longevity for IT-related positions, researched the educational requirements, then registered for the Networking Academy program.

Scott enjoyed the Academy program right away. "The instructors were very knowledgeable. Now I feel that I really know networking. The hands-on labs were also great real world experience," he commented.





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In the summer of 2000, Scott received his Cisco Certified Network Associate certification and is now a Network Engineer for Elemica, a start-up company in Pennsylvania. He also had the opportunity to work side-by-side with Cisco engineers to learn about the setup and configuration of the Republican National Convention network in Philadelphia in August 2000.

The impact of the career-change decision has been overwhelmingly positive for Scott and his family. "I feel extremely confident and am much happier now. My family is happier because I don't sit around feeling sorry for myself and I'm more mentally alert," he says. "I am making more money and have an excellent chance of dramatically increasing my income in the future," he continued.

One of the most difficult decisions an adult faces in making a career change is taking a major pay cut. Going from the top of a field into an entry-level position can be a scary proposition. Scott was not an exception. He also took a pay cut at first, but now, just one year later is making 35% more money than he did in his best year as a Master Auto Mechanic. The best part is that he has a long way to go before reaching the top of the networking field. Scott says, "I don't think that money should even be an issue, because if you are passionate about what you do, the money just seems to come." What lesson has Scott learned from his career-changing experience? "You need to do something that really makes you happy," Scott says. "If you don't have a passion for what you are doing then you should do everything in your power to change it."

