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Looking for a career change, voluntarily or otherwise? Or, maybe you're retired and a little extra income would mean a step up from ramen noodles again tonight. Good news! If you live with Irish wolfhounds, you might be surprised to know that you've developed a special skills set that makes you a prime candidates for many exciting careers.

And you just thought you were wasting time standing out in the rain all those nights at 2 a.m. waiting for Belvedere to go tinkle. Think bigger. It's not padding your resume to say that you retain your keen powers of observation at hours when most others are soundly sleeping. You could have a new career as a night

watchman! You're certainly watchful at 2 a.m. leashed to a 165-pound dog, right? You see how this works. Let's take a closer look at what your wolfhound has taught you and the exotic new vocations that may be awaiting you:

### **Alligator Dentist**

How many times has your wolfhound scarfed down a hand towel, pillow, box of tacks or god-knows-what and you had to act fast to avoid a rush to the doggie ER? With no hesitation whatsoever, you stuck your hand in his or her mouth, possibly up the elbow, to fish out whatever disgusting thing they just tossed back and fully plan on keeping. There may be wrestling. Gagging. Wailing and gnashing of teeth. Yet you got it and usually pulled back a full set of fingers.

Did you know that alligators need good dental hygiene just like anyone else? Willing to relocate to the Gulf Coast or Everglades? Because alligator farms and attractions always need someone to scrub those gator teeth and maybe extract odds and ends jammed way back there in the molars. Quick reflexes are an obvious must, but job turnover is high, so if you think this may be a job for you, keep your eye on the news and keep your bags packed.

### **Snake Venom Milker**

Alligators aren't your thing? They're not for everybody. But neither are wolfhounds. You can use many of the same skills above milking vipers for venom. Professionally, I mean, not just on a dare.

Ever consider where antivenoms come from? You can't milk a

snake the same way you milk a cow. You've got to get your hands in there and hold an asp, mamba, krait, rattlesnake or cobra. Knowing which end to hold is a plus. Keen focus and reflexes faster than a snake are recommended. The average annual salary for a viper milker is \$30,000, which may sound surprisingly low, but your co-workers at the serpentarium always give you plenty of elbow-room and rarely look over your shoulder giving advice. Knowledge of reptile biology and tourniquets are also recommended.

### **Crime Scene Cleanup**

Maybe a career a little lower on the stress index, you say? You can earn between \$35,000 and \$85,000 a year as a crime scene cleanup specialist. Sound a little...grisly? C'mon, you have an Irish wolfhound. How many times have you cleaned up after a giant dog with diarrhea and drained anal sacs? How many times have they upchucked road kill or what might have been a dead squirrel? Maybe you were squeamish once but we're way past that now. You know how to use cleansers and air fresheners like a pro, so why not be one? And maybe they'll let you bring that hazmat suit home when you have to clean the outside poop bucket.

### **Iceberg Mover**

By now, you're a pro at coaxing gigantic, stubborn dogs from point A to point B. Like brisk weather and the sea? Why not a new career as an iceberg mover? You'll have a powerful tugboat to help this time. Sounds like a snap, right?

The International Iceberg Patrol was formed after the Titanic was sent to the bottom of the Atlantic by a big chunk of sea ice.

The Coast Guard didn't want any more nasty surprises so it pays a fleet of tugs to track potentially troublesome icebergs and steer them well away from shipping lanes. Private contractors also keep icebergs away from oil platforms off Greenland.

It's tricky business, but so is getting a wolfhound off your seat on the couch. The tug loops a line around the ice, attaches a massive tow line and roars off, taking about ten hours to get up to one nautical mile per hour. Or about the time it takes your wolfhound to sniff from one bush to another on a walk.

There are dangers. Icebergs can roll over and damage the tug. But icebergs don't do thunder paws. You're already used to dodging sudden, random swipes. You know when to keep your distance. You instinctively stay light on your toes. Billable skills.

## **Christmas Light Untangler**

See? The list of jobs you're uniquely qualified for goes on and on. But, if possibly dangerous occupations leave you cold — air traffic controllers, maximum security prison guards, bounty hunters — the Welsh supermarket giant, Tesco, is hiring Christmas light untanglers to take away some of the frustration of the season for its customers.

*How* are you trained for this? Think of that knot of leashes and harnesses you expertly unsnarl every day while a giant hound prances and dances from foot to foot, helping with the occasional jab of a snout. So, how much trouble do you think a few little wires and some little blinking bulbs would be now?