

Is it the right time for a career change?

by Anne Henderson

As the economy grinds through this recession, keeping your head down for now and hanging on tight might seem like your only option. You may feel that you are lucky to have a job at all right now and with a mortgage and bills to pay you simply can't take the risk of changing career. But don't let the current level of uncertainty put you off thinking about a new career. If you are bored and unfulfilled by your work, now is the perfect time to take stock of what you really want out of your work.

Here is our 6 step guide to what you can do as you wait for the dust to settle.

Step 1. Rediscover what really makes you tick.

Career change takes time. Whilst you've got your head down and you're hanging on tight, use this time to rediscover what career is right for you.

Take time to consider what you like and dislike about your current role.

Make a list of your natural strengths, passions and interests.

Step 2. Boost your confidence.

As your company comes under pressure to improve performance and justify past decisions, you can find your job role changing imperceptibly until one day you wake up and realise that you are no longer doing the job you were originally hired to do. To make matters worse senior management are not feeling the love and tokens of appreciation and reward are thin on the ground. It's natural that your professional confidence begins to falter.

Take a moment to try this simple exercise.

What are your key skills? What are your natural strengths?

What have you achieved at work that you are really proud of?

Feeling more confident?

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Step 3. Explore your options.

Start exploring what is the right career for you.

What would you really love to do?

Do you want to be your own boss or work for someone else?

Research opportunities and identify future growth areas.

Try to build up a picture of your dream job.

Step 4. Get creative.

Having explored your options and identified your dream job you need to identify what steps are required to move into your dream job.

Do you have a skills gap? Consider volunteering or signing up for an evening class to bridge that gap.

Do you need to find out more information about your chosen dream job? Use your contacts. Network. Find someone that is already working in that field that is willing to share information.

Step 5. Take action.

Now that you have identified the steps you need to take to move into your dream job, write them down in an action plan and set a timeline.

When would you like to move into that new position? Check your timeline is realistic and monitor your progress.

Step 6. Stay fresh!

Be kind to yourself. The career change process can be an emotional roller-coaster. Make sure you set time aside to keep your mind fresh.

Escape from the office during your lunch hour.

Take a walk in the park.

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Get some exercise.

Surround yourself with positive people.

Drink a pint of Guinness or a raspberry flirtini – whatever floats your boat!

And stay positive. Remember you are doing your best to find the right career for you.

So, is this the right time for a career change? Absolutely. After following this six step plan you will feel more prepared, confident and ready to make the move when the dust settles. Who knows, you may feel ready to make the move before the dust settles!

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