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**Serendipity: The New Career Science**

**By Cathy Goodwin, Ph.D.**

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My neighbor "Ed" found his career, he says, when he literally fell from the choir loft into the church organ. He was fascinated by the specialist who showed up to fix the damage. Ed began by sweeping up the shop, then served an apprenticeship. Now he owns a firm that repairs church organs all over the Southeast US.

Three Dog Bakery was formed when a dog refused to eat. The vet suggested, "Why don't you cook for her?" The dog's owner had no idea where to begin. He modified a cookie recipe and the dog wolfed it down. That was the beginning of an empire.

Maybe you suspect that most people find careers this way, rather than through a linear step-by-step process.

If so, you'd be right. Researchers are beginning to find examples of serendipity in career paths of successful professionals.

Serendipity means that you were influenced by an external event that appears beyond your control. You sit next to someone on an airplane who says, "I have been trying to fill a position..." And it's precisely the position you have been seeking for the past six months.

Or you deliver a batch of fresh-baked brownies to a charity event. The caterer asks if you want to bake more treats on a regular basis, for money.

However, students of serendipity like to quote the saying attributed to Louis Pasteur: "Chance favors a prepared mind." We all hear messages but most of us ignore them. We get caught up in our own plans or we aren't flexible enough to respond.

Once you realize that career and life changes often follow a feeling of being hit by a two-by-four, you can become more receptive to life's happenstance. An interruption can be seen as a message rather than a nuisance. And sometimes an unexpected encounter can transport you, like a magic carpet, to a

place you never heard of, but which feels very much like coming home.

Cathy Goodwin, Ph.D., author of Making the Big Move, helps midlife professionals navigate career and business transitions. "How Smart People Can Derail Their Transitions" complimentary Special Report <http://www.cathygoodwin.com/subscribe.html> . Contact: <http://www.cathygoodwin.com/feedback.html> Phone: 505-534-4194

**LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB, A NEW CAREER OR BETTER PAY!**

**By Tony**

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