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Tackling the Transition: The Confident Navigation of a Career Change

By Caterina Rando

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Until recently you may have been enjoying the illusion of a secure job, only to get involuntarily thrown overboard—drifting back to the shore of resume revision while brushing up on interview skills.

With things a bit rocky, the time is right to shine the searchlight on your career and make sure that you are on the right course for who you are today—not for who you have been in the past. See this time as one of possibility, an opportunity for personal and professional transformation. George Sand, the female French writer and novelist, said, "One changes from day to day . . . every few years one becomes a new being." In today's world, this is more true than ever.

Making a major life change does not happen in an afternoon. Even if you have just been handed a pink slip, do not jump into the first career boat that comes by. Take a little time to assess what you want to do and where you want to be.

Career shifts are a major life transition and should be treated as such. To ease this transition and gain clarity and confidence when deciding which direction to pursue, do the following:

Zap the Time Zappers

You have to make your career transition the top priority in your life. You may have to say "no" to volunteer activities, some family responsibilities and other things that take up the time you need to focus on you.

Get on Your Side

Stop beating yourself up for what happened yesterday. Instead, get into action and begin to figure out where you want to go. Start taking steps to get there.

Be Strategic

When choosing your next career move, ask what industry you want to work in, what kind of culture you want to work in, what benefits you are looking for and what kind of record a potential company has in promoting women. Interview any company that interviews you.

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Start with the Simple

There are things that are easy to do, such as reading a book on your ideal career, doing some research on the industry you are considering, having informal conversations with a few of your contacts. Start with these activities to get used to the idea of change; then begin the more challenging activities—redoing your resume, going on informational interviews, participating in job shadowing.

Journal

Ask yourself the important questions. What have you learned from your recent work experience? What do you really want? What would you do if you knew you could not fail? Would a move to a different place bring other opportunities? What is the best thing you can do for yourself?

Consult the Experts

Invest time with career counselors, business coaches and consultants. They will give you resources, advice and strategies. Also, read books, go to seminars, surf the Internet. Other perspectives are valuable because they are objective and will assist you in making a decision you can be confident about.

Talk to Headhunters

Headhunters are a great resource for more than just jobs. They know competitive salaries, hiring trends of the industries they serve, what new job titles are being created and which are becoming obsolete. The more headhunters you talk to, the more current information you will have to help you make an informed decision.

Conduct Informational Interviews

If you know what you want to do, talk to those who are already doing it. Ask them about the "blood and guts" of their career activities, not just the glamour and perks.

Get to Class

Take classes to assess your skills and interests; brush up on everything from Spanish to computer programming. There are many educational resources out there that can increase your chances of being successful.

Get Your Financial House in Order

Get clear on your short- and long-term financial goals, take stock of your living expenses, and eliminate your debt. If you are insecure about your finances, you may choose a new professional course too quickly or stay where you are too long because you need the money. Make your decision based on the merits of position or opportunity, not because your coffers are low.

Tell Your Loved Ones How They Can Support You

Let your partner, friends and children know what support looks like—taking care of dinner, allowing you time at the computer, picking you up from class. Support would not involve asking you if you should reconsider, suggesting you beg your boss for your job back or wondering out loud if you should forget this silly nonsense.

Be Realistic

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What else is going on in your life? Will other priorities take most of your energy—like a newborn baby, a rebellious teenager, a new marriage, an aging parent, or a health challenge? A career transition will be very demanding initially. It will require personal sacrifice.

Expect Success

What we believe is what we experience. If you expect it will be impossible for you to make a career move this late in your career, you will prove yourself right. If you believe your skill set is valuable anywhere, you will prove yourself right. Believe in yourself and your ability to be successful. It is unlikely you will take action if you think your efforts will be wasted. Expect success.

Beth Orton, the singer–songwriter, said, "In life, there are no regrets—only lessons we have not learned yet." Making a career shift has many lessons to offer you. If things do not work out immediately, know you can always add a mid–course correction later. Incorporate some of these ideas to support yourself in creating a professional life that you find challenging, invigorating and richly rewarding. You have the power to create it—and you deserve it.

Caterina Rando, MA, MCC, helps people achieve success with ease. She is author the award winning, national best–seller "Learn to Power Think." To find out more about Caterina's coaching, keynotes, workshops, and other personal and professional development tools, contact her at 415–668–4535 (email: cpr@caterinar.com), or visit her website at <http://www.caterinar.com>.

The 6 Stages of Modern Career Development

By Michelle L. Casto, M.Ed.

Career experts say that people will change careers (not jobs) 5–7 times in a lifetime. This being true, career management is an important life skill to develop and cultivate. There are six stages of modern career development: Assessment, Investigation, Preparation, Commitment, Retention, and Transition. Learning the characteristics of each stage will empower you to navigate through each stage easily and with more confidence.

In the Assessment Stage, you are getting ready for your life's work. This stage is characterized by unawareness, in that you are not sure what your values, strengths, and weaknesses are. You start to feel like you want to know more about yourself and make a conscious effort to get in touch with who you really are.

Key characteristics: Taking assessment instruments Working with a career counselor or career coach

In the Investigation Stage, you are researching what work exists in the world. This stage is characterized by feelings of confusion, in that you are not sure what career options exist for you. You may feel overwhelmed with all of the different jobs and opportunities that exist as you begin the process of researching the modern world of work. But if you approach this stage with a positive frame of mind, you will find that you will learn about many possibilities you may have never considered.

Tackling the Transition: The Confident Navigation of a Career Change

Key characteristics: Researching the world of work Conducting informational interviews with people in your chosen field

In the Preparation Stage, you are still getting ready to do your life's work. This stage is characterized by feelings of excitement, as you think of how wonderful it will be to perform meaningful work. However, there is still much work to be done, and in order to be successful, you have to be prepared.

Key characteristics: Gaining knowledge and experience Setting goals and adopting a success-oriented mind-set

In the Commitment Stage, you will feel confident, in that you have figured out what you are meant to do. Sometimes people have known all along what they were meant to do, but were not able to commit to the process of making it happen, for whatever reason. At this stage, more than ever, you must focus your energy and keep your eye on the target.

Key characteristics: Conducting a job search Negotiating and accepting a job offer

In the Retention Stage, you will feel comfortable in your career field, as you will now have figured out how things work in your industry. You will want to remain committed to your career by continually updating your skill set and staying current with industry standards.

Key characteristics: Providing first-class customer service skills Building a professional network

The Transition Stage is characterized by feelings of discomfort, in that you are unsure of what you will be doing next (and/or if you will be happy). In this stage, you will learn to make conscious changes in your career direction.

Key characteristics: Making career changes Developing resiliency

No matter what career stage you find yourself in now, you can be sure that you will enter and re-enter through these six stages many times throughout your lifetime.

***This article is adapted from the book, *Get Smart! About Modern Career Development: A Personal Guide to Creating Your Life's Work* by Michelle L. Casto, M.Ed.

Michelle L. Casto is a whole life coach, speaker, and author of *Get Smart! About Modern Romantic Relationships*, *Get Smart! About Modern Career Development*, and *Get Smart! About Modern Stress Management*. Her coaching practice is Brightlight Coaching, she helps people come up with bright ideas for their life and empowers them to freely shine their bright light to the world. Contact her for a free 30 minute coaching session:

and

The 6 Stages of Modern Career Development

When Your Career Becomes Very Stressful

The Myths of Career Change

Top Career Advice ... More Choices and A Better Way of Life

Career Builder: Using Job Boards For More Than Jobs

Gate Crash into the Interior Design Industry.

How to become a Chef!

The Ultimate Guide To Acing ANY Job Interview

Home Vegetable Garden

Money Making Flashy Designs in a Box



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