

Take This Career And Shove It – In The Right Direction!

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By Ann Baehr

Sometimes we need a few ideas to help us along our path of career change. Unlike an extensive

career assessment, this article will provide you will some straightforward, down–to–earth suggestions to consider that just might change your life!

Are you listening to that little voice in your head telling you how much you dislike your job? If not, you may become angry with those around you, when in fact, you'll be angry at yourself for failing to taking the necessary steps to change your career — or job within the same industry. Career change is not always easy. For some, the simple task of deciding what to do is often the hardest part. For others who know what they want to do, they often feel it will take too long to achieve their career goals when there are bills to pay.

It is even more difficult when those around us do not understand our "crazy ideas" because they are too practical to make sacrifices for the sake of happiness. So what should you do to steer your career in the right direction without upsetting the family and draining your bank account? Here are a few suggestions to get you on the right career track to job fulfillment.

Work for yourself

Don't quit your day job just yet. Launching a business is a challenge in itself. Regardless of size, any worthwhile business takes a lot of planning, development, and maintenance to compete and stay in business. The key to successful business ownership begins with a passion to do something you enjoy, followed by a financial investment that depends on the business. Sometimes it is minimal, requiring a small space and general office equipment. For larger ventures, a business loan from a bank or the SBA might be necessary. Still, it takes time to turn a profit right away. So, if you can, start small while working full time and gradually build your business until you feel secure enough financially to leave that steady paycheck to take your business to the next level. You can always hire part–time employees, student interns, friends, and family members to help you in the beginning and in the long run.

Attend college or vocational training school

You don't always need to attend college full time. If you took a few classes each semester, you'd be amazed how happy you'd be just knowing you are working towards your goal. And, it doesn't always

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need to be a four–year college. Maybe there is a vocational school that offers the type of academic training you need to make a career change in a shorter period of time for a fraction of the cost. Other options include distance learning programs where you can study in the comfort of your own home at your own pace.

Change jobs internally

Sometimes happiness is only a department away! If you work for a proactive company that posts job openings internally, this might be the perfect opportunity for you to change careers while growing with the same company. Your career change can be very drastic if you have a supportive company that is willing to train you. Best of all, they might even pay for you to attend college to prepare you for that career change. If they don't post internally, keep your ears open to learn about new business developments within the company. Speak with your human resources representative to inquire about career growth opportunities and what you need to do to make a career change internally.

Create a position at your current company

Sometimes you know better than anyone in the company what is needed. If you can put a business plan together to present to management illustrating how this new idea would benefit the company financially and logistically, you might succeed at creating a new position—or even a new department! This is a great way to do what you do best in a new capacity because you will be the person who will determine what the job description will be. Pretty cool!

Transition to a new career by answering a classified ad

Again, don't quit your job just yet. You are always more marketable when you have a job. If you are ready to take drastic measures to find overnight career happiness, you should have your resume and cover letter professionally prepared to answer those classified ads in the newspaper or online. Even if you are just exploring the possibility of changing careers, this is a good exercise to see how marketable you are (how much money you can make), develop your interviewing skills, and to learn about what's out there beyond the walls of your office cubicle!

Go back to what you used to do—and love

Sounds crazy right? How many times have you heard someone say, "I used to work doing such and such. It didn't pay that well, but I loved it." It is not uncommon to leave what we love because it doesn't pay the bills. Money seems like everything these days. But, when we're unhappy, we know it's really not. We need to find a compromise—something we enjoy doing that will make us want to get up every morning so we can live that old adage that claims you'll never work a day in your life if you work at doing what you love.

Ann Baehr is a CPRW and President of Best Resumes of New York. Notable credentials include her former role as Second Vice President of NRWA and contribution to 25+ resume and cover letter sample books. To learn more visit

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Self–Knowledge: The Key To Finding The Right Career Direction

By Atul Mathur

Your career, like any journey, has a beginning, an end and a direction. For many people, the present direction of the career is probably not a result of entirely their own choices. If, for some reason, you are not happy with the direction of your career, there is a way out: Take charge of your career and change its direction.

1. Know yourself

Has it happened with you that after desperately looking for something (e.g., keys) all over the place, you eventually found it right in your pocket or drawer?

That's exactly the case with finding a new career direction. Usually, we try to search for a new career direction by looking all around, for example, at hot jobs, emerging fields, prestigious companies, friend's career, what's safe and so on. Ironically, we fail to look for the answer where it actually lies: inside us.

The secret of finding the right career direction is not to look outside but to look inside. Know yourself and you will automatically know the right direction for your career.

2. Dig deeper

Most people define themselves in terms of what they write in their resumes. That's just the tip of the iceberg. To really know yourself, dig deeper and uncover your:

- (a) Strengths
- (b) Personality
- (c) Values
- (d) Interests

(a) Strengths

Your strength is what you do well and enjoy doing it. We never fail to admire strengths in top athletes, painters, writers, leaders but fail to ask "What is my strength?"

Strengths have a solid connection with a person's career. According to Peter Drucker, a person can only perform from his strength. In other words, mediocrity is guaranteed if we fail to use our strengths. So know your strengths and get into a career that allows you to leverage your strengths to the maximum.

Discover your strengths by asking: What am I good at and also enjoy doing? What makes me feel energized? What comes naturally and easily to me?

(b) Personality

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Personality is the sum total of a person's behavioral, temperamental and emotional traits. For example, some people are by nature extrovert and enjoy meeting other people. But some people are born introvert and feel more comfortable when left alone.

Studies show a direct link between a person's personality and his career. Indeed, if you are an extrovert person, you would do well in roles such as sales, marketing, public relations. But an introvert person would be better off in roles that do not require public dealing.

To know your personality in detail and its implications on your career, appear at personality tests such as Myers Briggs Test Instrument (MBTI).

(c) Values

Values are what you consider important and valuable. Values differ from person to person and can range from things like money, prestige and power to more subtle things like respect, harmony and independence.

Your values hint towards the kind of work that will suit you. For example, if you value "achievement," you would do well in roles that regularly throw challenges at you. Someone else, however, may value "helping others" and, therefore, would do well in occupations that provide an opportunity to serve others.

To know your values, ask yourself what is important to you, make a list and prioritize the items. You can also use value inventories on the Internet to identify your values.

(d) Interests

Should the work be interesting? Yes, for an important reason: If your work arouses your interest, you are going to do well. History shows that great achievers always pursued what fascinated them. Akio Morita shunned the option of joining the family business of sake brewing to pursue what he was interested in: an electronics start-up. And he created Sony.

Doing the work that interests you can have a lasting impact on your career. To uncover your interests, find out what fascinates you and draws your attention.

Knowing your strengths, personality, values and interests is like having a compass with its needle pointing towards the right direction for your career.

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Atul Mathur is a career coach and author of the ebook "The Secret Of Finding The Right Career Direction."

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