

4 Steps to Career Success

The new career transition workbook

Michaela Partridge



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Michaela Partridge

4 Steps to Career Success

The new career transition workbook



4 Steps to Career Success: The new career transition workbook

1st edition

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Preface

A 5 minute internet search or a visit to a reputable bookshop will provide an overwhelming number of self-development and career change books and resources. The great majority of them are excellent in themselves but there is now little that is new.

I decided to write this book when I realised that, when helping clients, they needed to go to a range of different sources to cover what I regard as the fundamental success factors in job search or change.

I have set out to bring together these fundamentals in a four step process that puts **you** rather than the process at the heart of the matter.

- What really matters to **you**.
- What **you** ideally want to do.
- What works best for **you** in finding that ideal.
- How to look after **yourself** during a challenging journey.

In difficult economic times we too often have to settle for job opportunities that are not ideal. I cannot promise to always avoid that but I passionately believe we should start the search with the aim to do much better than “be able to pay the mortgage“. Only by setting our sights higher can we hope to achieve success.

This book is written primarily to help those seeking employment job change although if you are contemplating setting up your own business and becoming self-employed the fundamentals are the same although some of the detail may need to be adapted.

By concentrating on what **you** need and providing a practical workbook approach I hope I have made a contribution to your success.

Best wishes,

Michaela Partridge

About the Author

The author, Michaela Partridge, has spent more than 20 years in the Human Resources profession many of them in the corporate world responsible for all areas of recruitment and selection, redundancy programmes and career transition. Since setting up her own business Michaela facilitated the creation of a London based recruitment agency; has worked on numerous recruitment campaigns assessing potential candidates to join private and public sector organisations and has worked with a wide range of candidates seeking career change either through choice or redundancy.

Michaela is also an experienced, qualified career coach and mentor assisting individuals to gain clarity, motivation and confidence in all areas of their job search. She is the co-founder of Work's A Dream which was set-up to assist individuals either at the start of their career or seasoned professionals with their career change challenges. Her passion is to share her knowledge so that everyone can learn, grow and develop to be the best they can be.



About Work's A Dream

Work's A Dream has two parts to its business. It undertakes HR consultancy projects in both the public and private sectors within the UK and internationally. And, secondly, it carries out career transition services in companies and for private clients.

Please visit the Work's A Dream website to download a free guide on how to get ahead of the competition in your job search and regular blogs that will aide you in your journey to reaching your career goals.

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1 Introduction

Welcome to 4 Steps to Career Success – the new career transition workbook that is designed to help you explore, identify and pursue a career that reflects who you really are and what is important to you.

Perhaps, so far, you have, like many people, left your career to chance – you may have said or heard others say “I just fell into my job”. And for some people that works well and is just fine. However, I’m guessing that you picked up this book because you are seeking something more or different in your career.

Your applied energy and dedication will put you in a position to realise your true potential and be happy in your work. This workbook will take you on a 4 Step self-discovery journey and with your new found knowledge and with increased self-awareness you will have a more successful career change.

So, go explore and discover the right career for you and enjoy the journey...

1.1 Your journey comprises 4 Steps:

Step 1. Delving	You will uncover what matters most to you; re-discover your passions and interests; understand how to work with your personality; how to play to your strengths and recognise your achievements.
Step 2. Imagining	With your new found knowledge you will be able to create your ideal working day, set-out your “wish list” for your preferred organisations and working environments and generate a pool of career ideas.
Step 3. Realising	Here you will bring everything together and project plan your new search for a better working life.
Step 4. Caring	At this point we take care of the emotional side of career change and provide practical tools that will give you the confidence, motivation and resilience you need along the way.

2 Step 1 Delving

“Our lives improve only when we take chances...and the first and most difficult risk we can take is to be honest with ourselves.” Walter Anderson

This first Step is about exploring where you are today and what motivates you to take action. If you wake up in the morning and aren't giving 100% of your energy and motivation to your career you probably haven't found fulfilment yet or your reason “why”.

All of us need a compelling reason for why we do the things we do – it's what moves us and drives our actions. So what's your motivation behind your actions? What's your purpose? Why do you do what you do? Is your reason “why” aligned with your actions or are you on auto-pilot and have lost sight of what really matters to you? You will address these provoking questions in this first Step.

When you know your reason “why” you can make informed career choices that are authentic – after all, if you are going to make a change you want to make the right change.

If you don't have your reason “why” chances are you will be one of the 73% of people that are unhappy in their current job*. Interestingly, in a survey 42% of respondents over the age of 30 wish they had followed their childhood ambitions – maybe you are one of them? If so, you are in the right place and this first Step will get you thinking in a way that you may not have thought before now.

It's worth remembering that your work is going to fill about 1880 hours each year or put another way, 32% of your total waking hours before your retirement. So, make sure you are doing something you want to do – don't waste your valuable time as you can never get it back. This Step will help you to work out what you want to do.

The key is to do what matters most to you – so, let's get started!

*** Data from “A Journey of Online Job Searches” report conducted by Monster.co.uk**

2.1 What are personal values?

*“My interest is in the future as I'm going to spend the rest of my life there.”
Charles Kettering*

Personal values are probably best understood by thinking about the things that are really important to you or alternatively think about the things that motivate you, fulfil you and give you the energy and drive to get you up in the morning.

A good test of knowing if something is really that important to you is to observe when the chips are down and things are not going well do you have the sheer determination, courage and persistence to continue your journey to achieve what you know you want – be that in your life generally or in your work environment? If you do and you don't give up easily then it's probably fair to assume that it is important enough to consider it one of your personal values.

We all have personal values but you might be wondering what a personal value looks like. If that's the case, on the following pages are some examples of personal values, although be mindful that these may not be yours and that's absolutely fine.

2.2 Why think about your personal values?

Everyone has personal values but they are not things that we necessarily think about every day. Values often sit in our unconscious mind as we go about our daily business. However, bringing them to the surface and being crystal clear about what makes you tick is essential when planning your career and life outside of work.

You see, for you to be happy and fulfilled in your work, you must be 'feeding' yourself with the things that are most important to you just like a successful athlete on a programmed diet. We should honour our most important values, which we can only do when we are sure that we know what they are and what they mean to us.

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Experience shows that not all of our personal values will or can be met in our working life, in fact it's probably true to say that, for many of us, at any given time not all of our personal values will be met at all and that's OK.

The aim is to know what your personal values are and to know where they fit in your life be that at home, at work, at play – there will, of course, be a cross-over with some values. What is important is that you know what your values are and you have enough of them in your life to ensure that you remain motivated with higher chances of success and ultimately feel fulfilled.

2.3 Defining your personal values

Identifying and making sense of your personal values is by definition a personal thing. Whilst values may appear to be similar – “freedom” “autonomy” “independence” for example – they will mean different things to different people. So, to be effective, once you know what your values are you need to take time out to explore what they really mean to you – that way you will know if they are in your life already or if you need to work harder to achieve them.

The other thing to bear in mind when defining your personal values is that you have to be honest with yourself – forget about what you think your values “should” be because it's what your friends, family or society expect. Focus on your own feelings, listen to your heart and you will discover what you really want – this will form your values system.

You may already know what your personal values are and, if so, that's great although some times it's good to take time out to review what's going on because over time our values alter as our priorities change through life.

Now is a good time to get yourself a new notebook to accompany this workbook and make time to work through the first of many suggested workouts and resources that will help you on your career journey.

2.4 Workout 1: identify your personal values



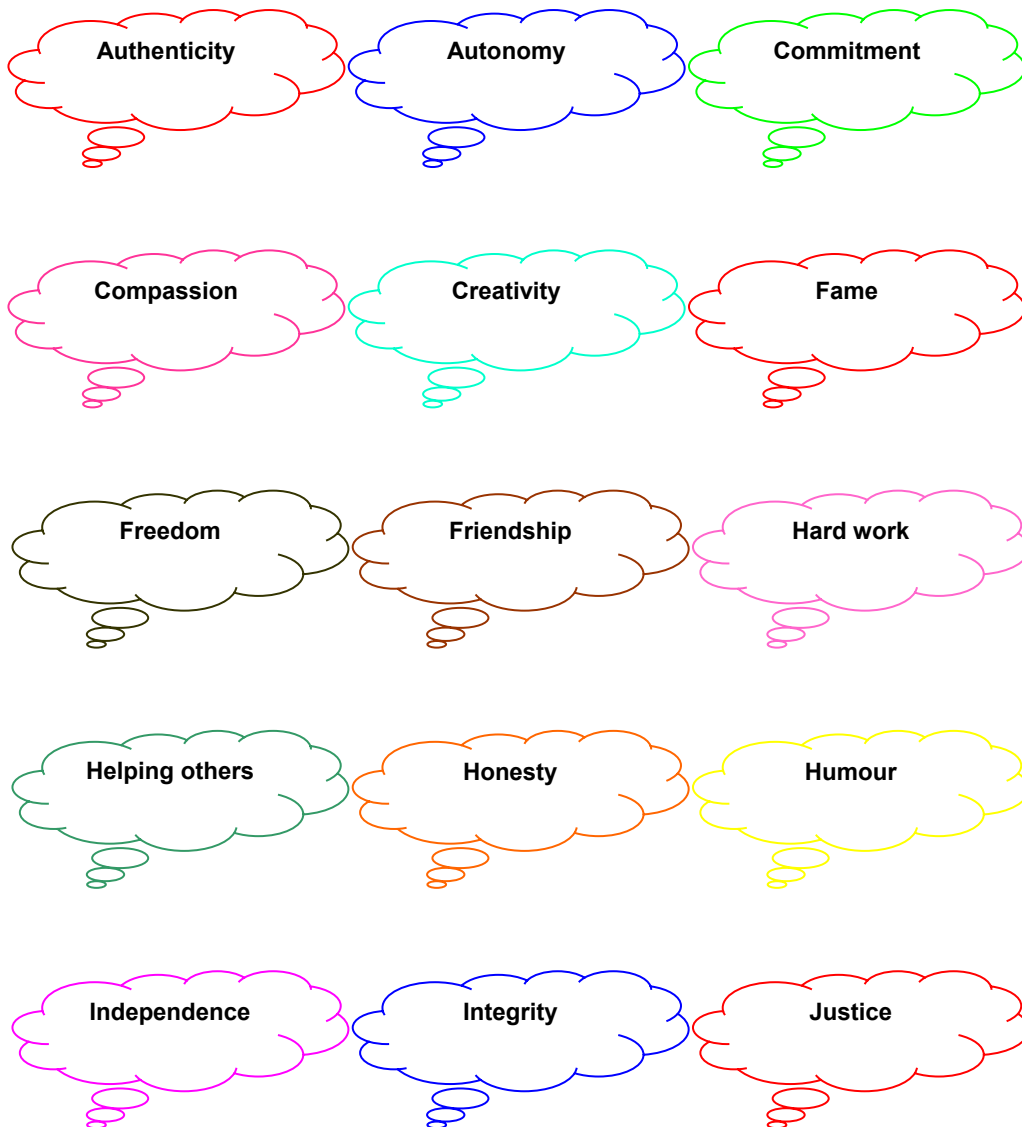
2.4.1 Part 1

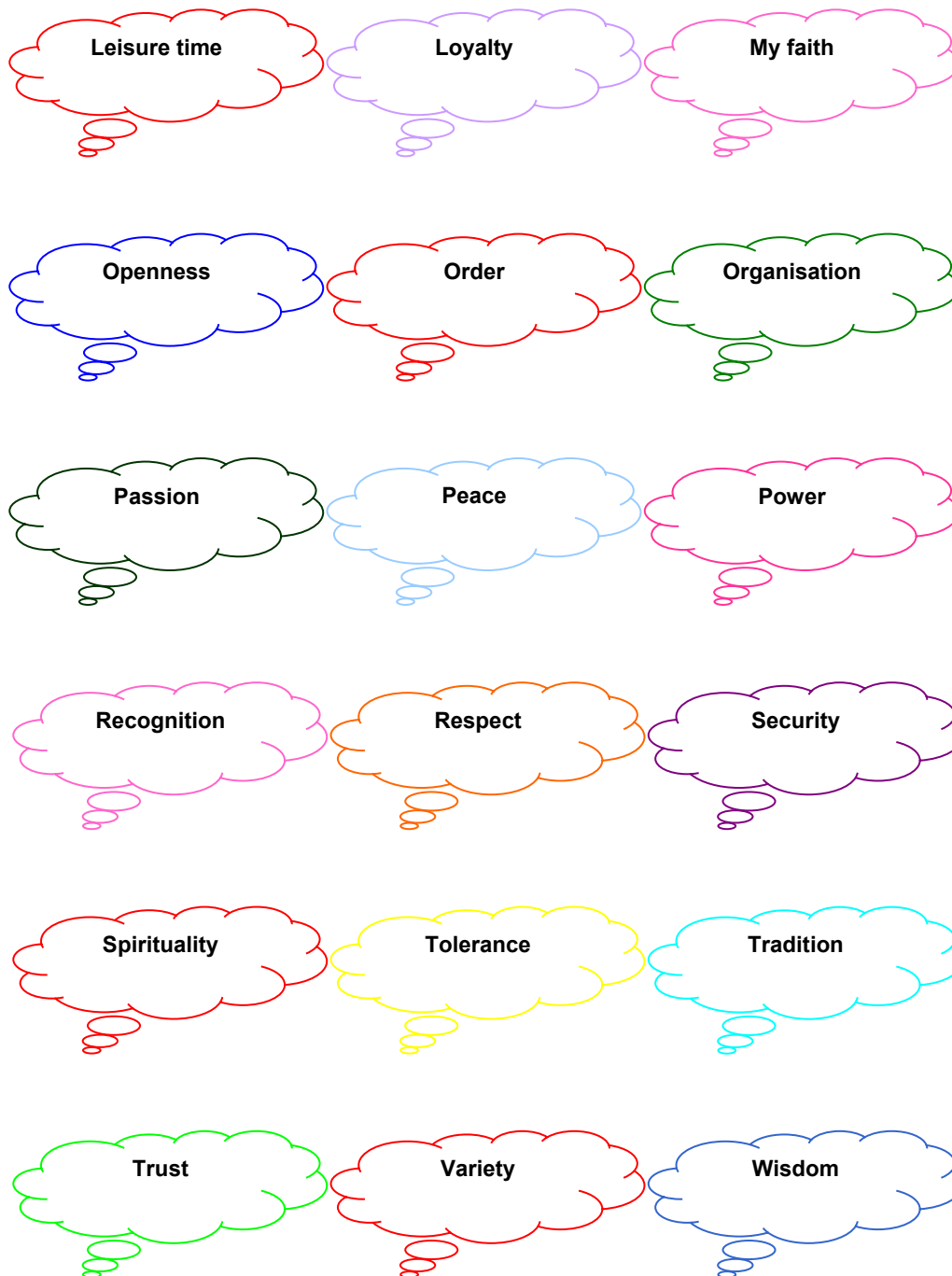
Make a list of your personal values and if you are looking for some inspiration to get you started take a look at the list of example values on the following pages. Whilst the examples are not intended to be an exhaustive list you can check to see if any of them stand out for you or spark other words that are more meaningful to you. Answering some or all of the following questions may enlighten you:

Questions



2.4.2 Examples of personal values





2.4.3 My personal values are:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
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15.

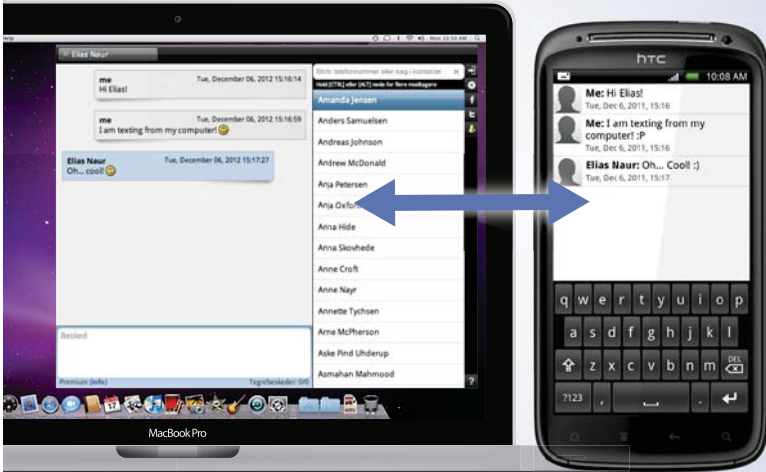
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When you have a list of about 12 to 15 personal values, see if any of them are similar or overlap and can be grouped together so that you shorten your list. For example, you could put the following personal values in one group: honesty/integrity, purpose/direction or innovation/creativity.

Aim to get your list down to 6 personal values and if you are finding this difficult to do you can order them in a list of priorities and select your top 6. This doesn't mean that your other values are not important it just means that we are going to focus on a manageable number so that you achieve maximum impact.

When you have your short-list you are ready to move on to part 2 of the workout.

2.4.4 Part 2: 5 questions

You now need to give meaning to the values you have identified because without it how will you know when you are living and breathing them? How will you know what changes you need to make at home, work or play if your values have no meaning attached to them?

Using the space below, answer the following 5 questions in as much detail as you can.

1. What does this personal value give me?

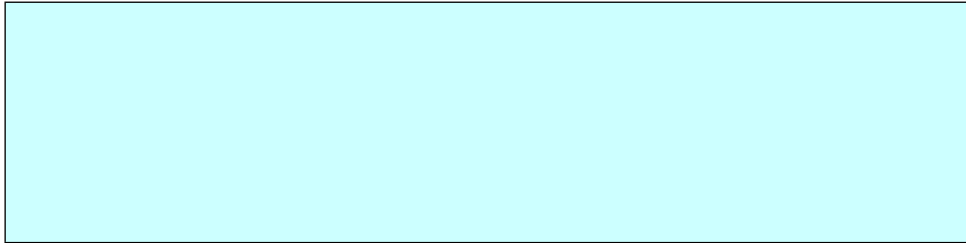


Tip: your initial answer will probably not give you your true meaning of the value so a useful approach is to ask yourself "and what does that give me" and so on and so on until you satisfy yourself that you have the true meaning of your value.

2. What would happen if I didn't have this personal value in my life?



Tip: if there is no detrimental affect of not having this value in your life or you don't think it will make any positive change to your life, chances are it's probably not that important to you so kick it off your top 6 list and move on..

3. What would happen if I had some or more of this personal value in my life?

Tip: if you would experience positive emotions such as feelings of happiness, motivation, contentment, peace and/or less stress then this is probably a high priority personal value that's worth developing further.

4. How will I know that I am living my personal value?

Tip: imagine what you will be doing, what you will be seeing, hearing and feeling. Think about how you will be behaving. If your responses aren't what you imagined then consider whether the value is a priority to you.

5. What affect will these personal values have on my career and job search?

Tip: You might find at this point that when you check your values against your current job or career you have a mismatch – which may account for why you are ready for a change.

When you are sure that you have explored the meaning of your personal values you can revise your list as you feel fit.

Your short-list must be captured, kept alive and visible. Visual reminders are powerful as they reinforce our values – consider listing your values and putting them on a wall, on post-its, in your diary, display them as a screen saver, display them on your mobile phone, in a postcard or take photos that depict your values.

Be creative and whatever you do don't lock them away in a desk drawer never to be seen again!

2.5 Honouring your personal values

We talked earlier about honouring your personal values and bringing them to life so that you can truly feel that you are living the life you want and deserve. When you know what you really want out of life you have a blueprint to guide and enable you to more confidently plan for the future, identify priorities, set goals, make decisions, handle setbacks and ultimately take actions that will lead you in the direction you want to go.

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Here are 5 top tips for honouring your personal values:

Tips:

1. Do something every day to keep your values alive – this is not a one-off activity, it's a way of life.
2. Trust your gut instinct – if you are doing something that doesn't feel right check back with your personal values, you could be doing something that isn't aligned with the things that are important and meaningful to you.
3. Question times when you are unfulfilled or unmotivated – is it because you are not being true to yourself and living your values or just a temporary blip?
4. Don't fall into the trap of thinking you "should" have a particular value – stick with the personal values that are meaningful and important to you regardless of what others say or think.
5. Review your values – they tend to change over time as new and different things present themselves.

2.6 Feed your passions and interests

"Without passion you don't have energy, without energy you have nothing."

Donald Trump

When our passions and interests are realised a more fulfilling, carefree environment is created and we experience high degrees of motivation. Feeding our passions and interests is good for our wellbeing and gives us the "why" in our life that gets us up and moving. If you are not experiencing these positive feelings right now it may be time to re-engage with your passions and interests. The following workout will help you with this:

2.7 Workout 2: capture your passions and interests

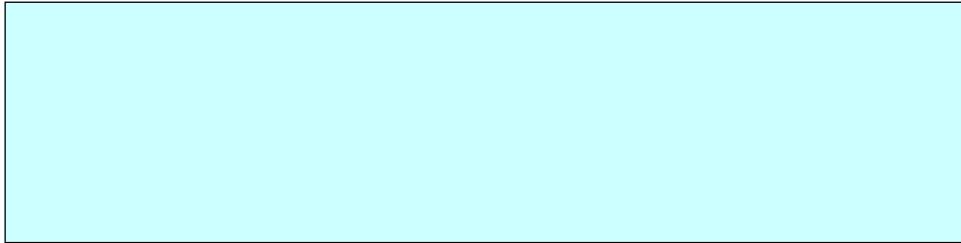


2.7.1 Part 1: Questions...

Below, jot down your answers to the following questions:

1. **What do I enjoy doing outside of work?**

2. What motivates me most at work and home?



3. What inspires me these days?



4. What did I love to do when I were a child, adolescent and young adult?

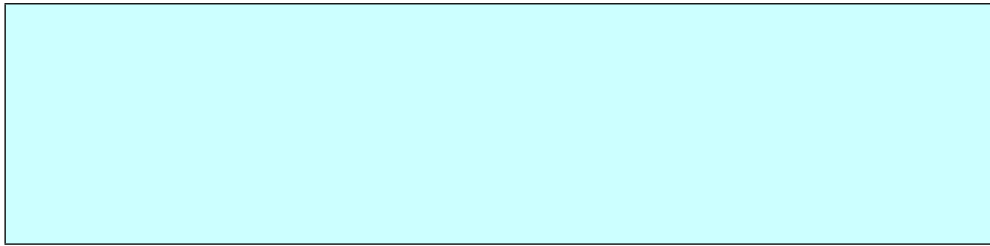


5. What hobbies do I have?



6. How do I use my leisure time?



7. What am I doing when I am feeling happiest?**8. What am I doing when I become so absorbed that I don't notice time?**

Tip: this workout may take a little time as you ponder your current interests and passions as well as recalling those from years gone by. Once you have made notes move on to Part 2 of the workout.

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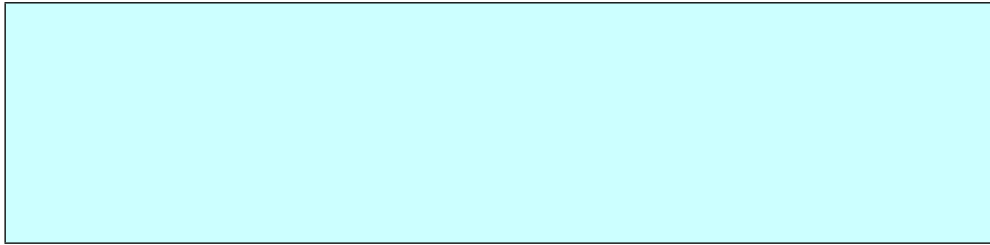
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2.7.2 Part 2: Bringing it together...

1. **From your notes create a list of your interests and passions.**



Tip: Your list may be repetitive, if so, look to see if there are themes running through that you can pull together to narrow your list.

2. **From your list identify and make a note of those interests and passions that are currently featured in part of your life. Then consider if you want more of any of these interests and passions. Ask yourself if what you currently have is enough to fulfil you.**

If you would like more, then you can use this information to guide your career direction.



3. **If there are interests and passions still on your list that are not currently part of your life then prioritise your list, selecting those which have the potential to get your pulse racing today. Use these passions and interests to steer your career direction.**



2.8 Work with your personality

“Always be yourself, express yourself, have faith in yourself. Do not go out and look for a successful personality and duplicate it.” Bruce Lee

Our personality is made up of a combination of characteristics or qualities that make us who we are. These characteristics control our emotions, thoughts, feelings, actions, attitude and behaviour and personality theorists refer to them as personality traits. It's these traits that make us interesting and unique and they remain mostly consistent throughout our lives.

Personality theorists through the years have debated how many personality traits exist with incredibly varying views. The number of traits, for the purpose of our work here, matters less. What matters more is what this means to you.

2.8.1 What your personality means for your career

Research has shown that different personality types tend to have distinct preferences in their choice of careers. Perhaps pretty obvious but it makes it important to learn more about your personality and come to a better understanding of your likes and dislikes, your strengths and weaknesses.

The greater your self-awareness the more likely it is that you will make better career and life choices and feel more content because you will be living your life authentically.

Self-assessment tools can be useful in helping you to develop your self-awareness and can play a great role in helping you to make important decisions about your next career move.

2.8.2 What is your personality type?

Understanding your personality type can be determined by engaging in a scientific approach using online self-assessments or having a psychologist analyse you. If you choose either of these options you will find that the personality assessment is quite straightforward – you simply answer a series of questions about your likes, dislikes and aspirations. At the end of the assessment you receive a report detailing your personality type.

You can visit www.personalitypage.com and for \$5 you can undertake an online self-assessment which considers different career choices depending upon your personality along with some suggestions for possible directions. The learning from this self-assessment will help you make the right career choices and if you have the opportunity to share this with a coach or mentor then you will gain even more insights.

Another way of determining your personality type is to just take a long and deep look at yourself. Asking questions is a great way of discovering who you are and what you are. The questions you asked yourself in the previous workouts along with the forthcoming workouts will assist you in discovering more about your personality.

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Useful resource!

Check out this online personality profiling assessment to gauge your personality type.

<http://www.personalitypage.com>

2.9 Play to your strengths

“My best friend is the one that brings out the best in me.” Henry Ford

Work is much more enjoyable when you’re doing something you enjoy and you’re good at, so take some time to think about your key strengths, skills, experiences, knowledge and interests.

Here are some questions to ponder and jot down your answers...

Tip: Your response to some of these questions may appear to be the same and that’s perfectly ok. Go with the flow, get your creative juices working and see where it takes you and if any themes appear.



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Complementary Potential





2.10 Workout 3: capture your strengths



2.10.1 Part 1

1. What are my strengths in and outside of work?

2. What do I really enjoy doing?

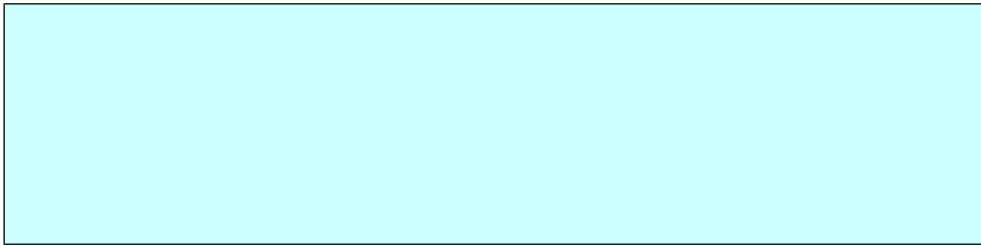
3. What are my favourite skills?

4. What do I do best? What am I good at?

5. What are 3-6 of my strongest skills or competencies?



6. What have been my greatest personal and work achievements?



7. What do other people say I'm good at?



8. What awards and certificates have I received?



9. What have I been recognised for inside and outside of work?



10. What type of activity or environment attracts me?

2.10.2 Part 2

1. Take a look at your answers and make a list of any skills, interests, attributes that keep cropping up and stand out.

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2. Now consider if your list of strengths can be clustered into themes and make a note below.

3. You may have strengths that you recognise in yourself or others recognise in you but this doesn't necessarily mean you want to use those strengths in your next career move. So, now is the time to review your answers and make a note of those strengths you would like to make use of in your next role.

Tip: this is about you so be honest and don't be influenced by other people who think you should do something because you are good at it.

Useful resource!



<http://www.strengthsfinder.com> is a really useful website that partners the book. "Now Discover Your Strengths". There is a self-assessment that helps to uncover your top 5 strengths. Information on careers which may suit each of your 5 strengths is provided along with ideas for action. The self-awareness you gain from the self-assessment can form the basis of a great career discussion with your coach or mentor.

2.11 Key points from Step 1: Delving

You have now reached the end of Step 1: Delving – and are ready to apply your new found knowledge in Step 2: Imagining. Here are the key points from Step 1:

1. Knowing your personal values and what's important to you is the first step to being fulfilled.
2. Your personal values are personal to you – they make you who you are so don't be influenced by family, friends or society. Be honest with yourself, honour your values and keep them under review.
3. Knowing and doing what is important to you focuses your attention, motivates you and ultimately gives you the results and achievements you want in your life.
4. Feeding your passions and interests is good for your wellbeing and helps to give you the “why” in your life.
5. Research has shown that different personality types tend to have distinct preferences in their choice of careers. Check out your personality type and use the information to steer your career direction.
6. Work is so much more enjoyable when you are doing something you want to do and you're good at it so play to your strengths.



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3 Step 2 Imagining

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did. So, throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails – Explore. Dream. Discover.” Mark Twain

Having come this far you will, hopefully, have lots of ideas and information in your head. Well, Step 2 is all about bringing your ideas together and imagining what your next career move looks like, what you will be doing, the things you will be feeling and hearing.

This Step is about being creative and willing to explore new things even if they appear unrealistic options right now. Now, I understand that this Step may be easier for some people than it is for others and that may be influenced by the way we think – some of us are more left-brained than right-brained.

A person who is more left-brained tends to be more of a critical thinker who uses logic and sense to gather information whereas a person who is more right-brained tends to think more in whole concepts and is attuned to images and visual thinking. Both are perfectly good just different.

Now, if you happen to be more left-brained there is still no reason at all why you won’t be successful at these workouts it may just take you a little longer and require a bit more effort but at least if you are struggling with some of the workouts you now know the possible reason for this. Just give it your best shot and enjoy doing something different!

Tip: with all of the workouts in Step 2 make sure you do a sanity check against your values.

Useful resource!



If you would like to know if you are more right or left brained then there are plenty of online resources although Psychtests is one I have used free of charge. <http://testyourself.psychtests.com/>.

3.1 Workout 4: letter to myself



This workout is based on you writing a letter to yourself that describes how you imagine your working life to be at a certain point in time – say 6 months, 1, 2 or 3 years from today.

Get comfortable and write non-stop for 20–30 minutes as if you are at that point in the future.

Write about:

- What you are hearing, seeing, feeling.
- What you are doing in your work.
- The people in your working life – the different relationships with your colleagues, peers, managers.
- The things in your working life which are important to you.
- Where you are working – describe aspects of your working environment and its location.
- How your working life has changed.
- Events at work which are important to you.
- Anything else you want to write about your working life.

Keep writing until you have nothing more to give.

This workout feeds your unconscious mind with information about the people and things that are important to you and that you want in your working life.

Writing a letter to yourself may expose things that you hadn't consciously thought about before today although they may have been sitting in the background. You will now find that consciously or unconsciously your mind will focus on what you want – and, as we know, we get what we focus on!

Remember – we are more motivated when we are doing things that we value and really want – the things that are important to us. When we are doing something that reflects our values we are focused and we gain momentum. We take positive action and that in turn motivates us to achieve our goals.

Focus → Motivation → Achievement → Fulfilment

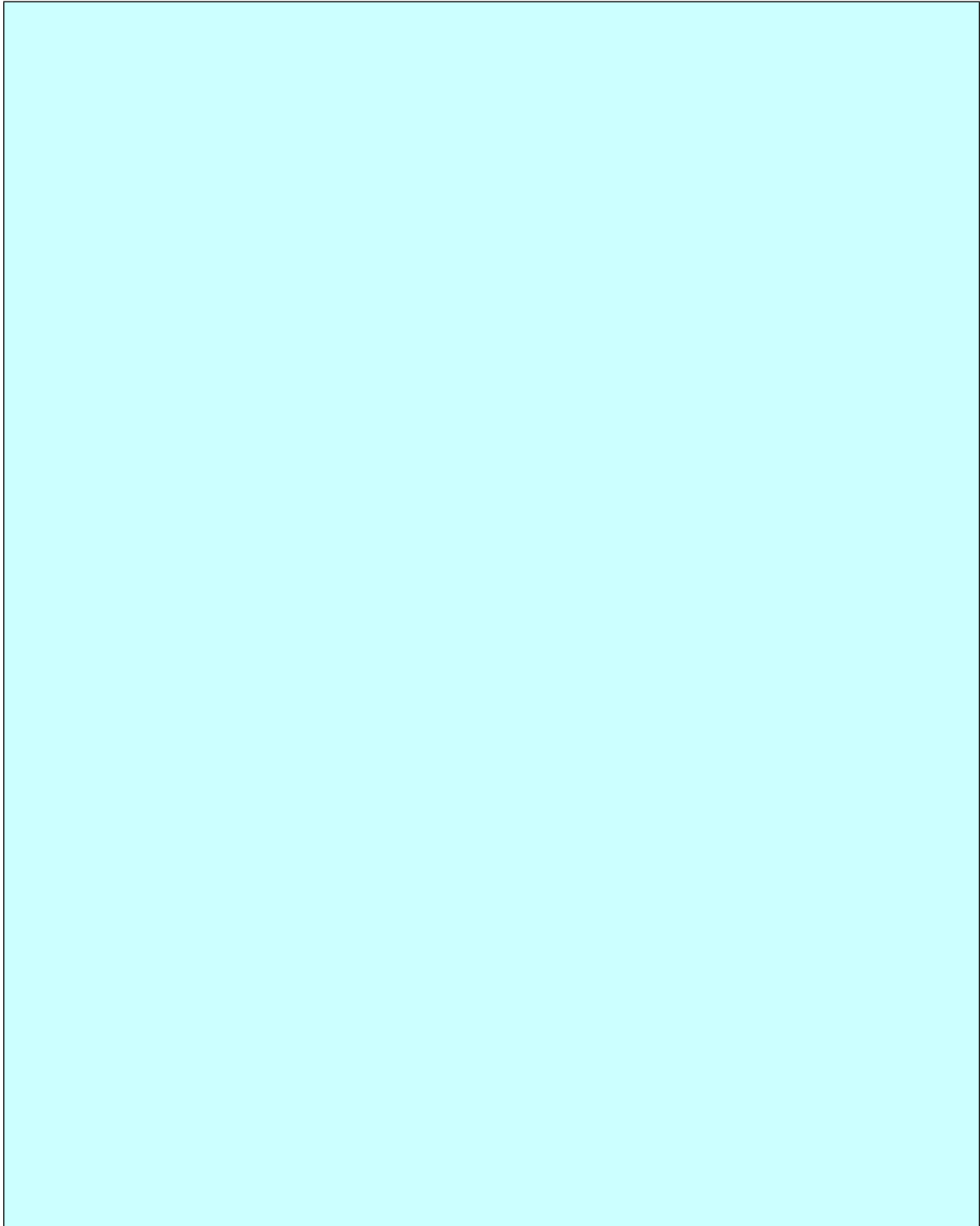
You can refer to your letter at anytime to check out your progress and why not take time out every 6 months to write yourself a letter?

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Tip: Do not get hung-up on being word perfect or the structure, presentation, spelling or grammar of your letter – simply allow your thoughts to flow and capture them as they present themselves. This letter is personal to you so just enjoy the experience.

My letter

Date (as if you were at that date in the future):



3.2 Workout 5: creating “idea pools”



Creating ‘idea pools’ is a space where you can capture any career possibilities that come up at any time. It’s “blue sky” thinking – so you are looking for possibilities, ideas, concepts, dreams, wishes etc – be creative not analytical or logical at this stage and enjoy the journey.

Ideas can come from magazines, newspapers, the internet, words and songs that inspire you, photographs, job boards, childhood ambitions, hobbies and interests. Be sure to include all ideas that you are reminded of from time gone by.

Be creative, get involved and be non-judgemental. However tame, however wild the ideas – do not judge them but just put them in the ‘ideas pool’ and when you are ready you can look for patterns and pull your ideas together into work themes. It will help you identify your new career direction and options.

In this workout you are going to pool your ideas in the form of a box or other container, a folder, binder, a scrap book, vision board, collage, post-its, on your iphone or anything else that works for you.

Tip: Collect the ideas as they occur and once a day pool them in whatever format you choose ready to review later.

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3.3 Workout 6: ideal organisations



As you start to build ideas for the type of job or career you want to move towards you should begin to think about the types of organisations you would like to approach or, indeed, if you have decided to start your own company the type of company you want to create – one that reflects your values.

1. **Make a note of the size, location and the culture of the ideal organisation you would like to work for or create:**

Size:

Location(s):

Culture:

2. **Make a note of any organisations where you would be happy working:**

Tip: if you get stuck, here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Which organisations are highly regarded in my particular profession?
2. Which organisations have cultures that are most compatible with my own values?
3. Which organisations are currently working on problems and issues that are of interest to me and compatible with my skills?
4. What organisations are likely to be interested in someone like me?
5. What organisations am I most interested in joining?

3.4 Workout 7: creating a vision board



This is a large board/piece of card/cork board on which you create a collage that represents the working life you want.

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You include a photo of yourself in the middle and use photos, pictures, cuttings, words, text and/or drawings to represent the working life you want including all the important areas e.g. aspects of the job, the location, environment, culture, people etc.

It is then hung where you will see it every day and provides inspiration and a reminder of why you are doing what you are doing now to build the future career you want.

Here is an example vision board:



Useful resource!



If you are looking for even more inspiration take a look at Richard Bolles work in his book “What Colour Is Your Parachute?” – here he talks about the idea that people are attracted to working with **Things** (physical), **Data/Information** (mental) or **People** (interpersonal). If you want to know which category you fit into you can purchase his most recent book on Amazon..

3.5 The story so far

Now is the time to bring your work and thoughts together in a short summary. It's important that you do this as it will help to clarify those ideas you want to pursue and those that you want to put on the backburner for now.

3.6 Workout 8: what have I learnt?



My personal values are...

The interests and passions that I'd like to reflect in my next career move are...

My personality type is...

The strengths, skills, experience and knowledge I have and want to use in my next career move are...

The types of jobs or careers I am interested in are...

The type of organisation I would like to work in is...

I would be happy to work for these organisations...

3.7 Workout 9: what are my options?



Reflecting on the previous workout (8), take time out to think about the options you have for your job/ career change. Remembering that not everything that's important to you has to be satisfied through paid work – satisfaction can come from your hobbies, leisure activities, voluntary and charitable work. Later we will focus on your “paid work” options.

Paid Work	Unpaid Work	Leisure/Hobbies

3.8 Key Points from Step 2: Imagining

You have now reached the end of Step 2: Imagining – and are ready to apply your new found knowledge in Step 3: Realising. Here are the key points from Step 2:

1. Allowing time to dream and the freedom to be creative and non-prescriptive is the essence of Step 2.
2. Imagining and describing your ideal working day is a great way to expose thoughts, ideas and options that you hadn't consciously thought about before.
3. “Blue sky” thinking is essential when creating ‘idea pools’.
4. Creating a vision board provides daily inspiration and reminder of why you are doing what you are doing to build a future career you want.
5. A person who is more left-brained tends to be more of a critical thinker who uses logic and sense to gather information.
6. A person who is more right-brained tends to think more in whole concepts and is attuned to images and visual thinking.
7. Thinking logically and analytically during Step 2 is not the best way so just let go and enjoy the journey.

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4 Step 3 Realising

“Don’t live down to expectations. Go out there and do something remarkable.”

Wendy Wasserstein

In his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey says: “To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you are going, so that you better understand where you are now and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.” This is what Step 3 is about.

Having worked out what your options are you must move in the right direction to set and realise your career goals. You will do this by creating a clear vision of where you want to be, setting a goal and developing a plan of action.

4.1 Prioritising

At this point you hopefully have lots of career ideas buzzing around in your head and now it is time to prioritise them and look at the reality of the situation.

From the previous workout (9), take each of your “paid work” options in turn and complete the following workouts. NB paid work can be employed or self-employed.

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4.2 Workout 10: my top 3 paid work options are...



Option 1.	
Option 2.	
Option 3.	

Tip: You may have lots of ideas but the reality is that once you start to take action you will not have the time to effectively pursue every idea that you have so I suggest you start with the top 3 ideas that interest you the most and get your heart racing today. There is no reason why you can't come back to your other ideas at a later stage.

4.3 Reality check

This is the time to work out which of your options are really possible for your next career move and which ones might need to go on the backburner for now.

Only by being honest with your appraisal will you truly understand the challenges you may face so don't hold back when undertaking the following workouts!

4.4 Workout 11: dissecting your options



Taking each of your three options in turn make a note in part 1 below of what each role or occupation entails – if at this moment you know little about any of your options you may need to undertake some research before completing the first part of this workout.

Parts 2 and 3 of this workout are about understanding your current situation in relation to each option and identifying where there are gaps between parts 1 and 2. Part 4 is about the actions you will need to take to bridge the gap.

Tip: you can undertake research at the British Library and membership is free of charge.

Option 1 is:**Part 1****This is what the role entails:**

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Part 2**This is where I am at the moment:**

(think about your experience, abilities, strengths, skills, training, qualifications, transferrable skills, work situation, home and personal life, financial situation, job market and other external factors, your resources and network).

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Part 3**This is the gap that needs to be bridged:**

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Part 4**These are the required actions to bridge the gap:**

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Option 2 is:**Part 1****This is what the role entails:**

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Part 2**This is where I am at the moment:**

(think about your experience, abilities, strengths, skills, training, qualifications, transferrable skills, work situation, home and personal life, financial situation, job market and other external factors, your resources and network).

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Part 3**This is the gap that needs to be bridged:**

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Part 4**These are the required actions to bridge the gap:**

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Option 3 is:**Part 1****This is what the role entails:**

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Part 2**This is where I am at the moment:**

(think about your experience, abilities, strengths, skills, training, qualifications, transferrable skills, work situation, home and personal life, financial situation, job market and other external factors, your resources and network).

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Part 3

This is the gap that needs to be bridged:

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Part 4

These are the required actions to bridge the gap:

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4.5 Review and reflect

This is your opportunity to review and reflect on the information you have identified in the last workout and ask yourself if all three options are still viable career moves in the short-term or given your gap analysis and the actions required to realise your career change do you need to re-prioritise?

All things considered which is your number one preferred option right now?

The next workout (12) will help bring to life your number one option.

4.6 Visualising your future

Visualisation is about forming a mental picture of something that is invisible. By creating images, sounds and feelings in your mind in relation to your future career you will bring to life something that, at this point, is imaginary.

Through visualising you can get a sense of how your life will be when you have achieved your career change. If it's a compelling vision, one that reflects your values, gets your heart racing and gives you the motivation to get started immediately, you will be on the right track.

4.7 Workout 12: create a compelling vision



4.7.1 Part 1

Choose a date in the future when you would like to have achieved your career transition and create a vision of what your life will be like then.

You can create your vision by drawing or painting a picture, recording a message, making a video of how you visualise your life at that time. Maybe you want to write another letter to yourself or simply sit back and imagine your working life doing the very thing that you want – that's to say your number one option.

Get comfortable and take yourself to that point in the future and respond to the following questions:

- What are you doing in your working life?
- Who are you working with?
- Where are you working?
- What results are you seeing?

- What are your achievements?
- What are you feeling?
- What are you experiencing?
- What's so great about your work?
- What would make work better?
- Which of your values are you living through your work?
- What are your family and friends thinking and saying?
- How much support are you getting?

Keep going until you have nothing more to give.

4.7.2 Part 2

You need to have a sanity check before moving forward. On reflection how would you answer the following questions?

- How did the visualisation work for you?
- Was the image you created so good that you want to make it your reality?
- Did it motivate you enough to keep going even when the chips are down?
- Could you really focus your attention on achieving this change?
- Would this new venture reflect your values?
- Would you be using your strengths, skills, experience etc?
- Does this type of work suit your personality?
- Would you be feeding your passions and interests?
- Would it sit well with your other commitments – family, friends etc.?
- Would it be life changing?
- How hungry are you for it?

Ultimately, you want to be sure that your vision is so compelling that it's worth your hard work and effort and that you have the support of loved ones to make it a reality.

If you haven't, at this stage, created a compelling vision then you need to go through this workout with your other options to satisfy yourself that you are making the right career choice.

My advice would be that you do not move on to the next workouts – where you will start planning your career transition – until you have a compelling vision otherwise you could be embarking on a plan of action that is based on a wrong decision.

4.8 Plan! Plan! Plan!

Now that you have a vision of where you want to go you will want a plan to get you there. It's not easy to get a job nowadays. Recruiters and hiring managers are frequently swamped with applications and often forego the traditional courteousness of replying or even acknowledging your application. This can be disheartening and even when your application is of interest the process is so much more rigorous. All of this adds to the need to plan your career move and leave little to chance. The following is a suggested guide to help you plan and organise your new career search.

4.8.1 Determining the opportunity:

Activity	Outcome
1 Determine your career goal/objective.	You can state your goal/objective in a phrase or sentence so the kind of work you are seeking is clearly understood by people inside and outside your profession.
2 Know what is happening in the professional environment you want to work.	You are able to summarise the current state of the profession and industry, including the key trends shaping the future and how these trends will directly affect your career goal/objective.
3 Create your CV and communications strategy.	You have a CV and communications strategy that will help you to achieve your goal/objective.
4 Define your target market.	You have established clear criteria for the group of organisations you plan to pursue (geographic boundaries, industries, size of companies and preferred organisational culture).
5 Gather market place information.	You have a continuing flow of current information about target organisations from people (preferable insiders) who are knowledgeable about those organisations, and you are conducting background research so that you can relate your assets to their needs.

4.8.2 The implementation:

Activity	Outcome
6 Get your message out there.	You are having search related conversations with 20 plus people a week on a continual basis, gathering information about your target industries/organisations and identifying hiring managers.
7 Talk with hiring managers.	You are thoroughly prepared to answer difficult questions, you have prepared your own questions to ask, and you are having meaningful conversations with two new hiring managers a week.
8 Consider other methods of searching for your new career.	You are responding to appropriate ads or jobs posted on the Internet on a regular basis, and the recruiters or agencies you have contacted are sending you on interviews. Or you have determined that these methods are not appropriate for you, in which case you will need to concentrate on talking directly to hiring managers.
9 Interviews, offers and negotiating.	You have located, negotiated and accepted the position you want.

Useful resource!

You can get more information on all of the job search activities through my RED Route Home Study Course at <http://www.WorksADream.com>.

4.9 Action Planning

“Being busy does not always mean real work. The object of all work is production or accomplishment and to either of those ends there must be forethought, system, planning, intelligence and honest purpose, as well as perspiration. Seeming to do is not doing.” Thomas Edison

According to Dr. Stephen Covey, the first habit of highly effective people is to be proactive. In other words, rather than letting life happen to you, make it happen. Once you are sure that you have the right career goal take action no matter how small.

Taking action does wonders for your motivation and with all of the information you have available to you, now is the time to start writing your plan taking each of the job search activities detailed in turn.

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4.10 Workout 13: my action plan



Career Goal:		Date:
	These are the actions I will take towards my career goal:	The people and/or things I need to do this:
In the next 48 hours		
In the next month		
In the coming months		

These are the things that I will **stop** doing in order to keep my commitments and reach my career goal:

These are the things that I will **start** doing in order to fulfil my commitments and reach my career goal:

These are the **training & development needs** I have to fulfil my commitments and reach my career goal:

4.11 Key points from Step 3: Realising

You have now reached the end of Step 3: Realising and are ready to move on to the last Step: Caring. Here are the key points from Step 3:

1. By prioritising and working with your top 3 ideas the tasks will be manageable and you will be more focused.
2. Only by being thorough in your research, analytical in your approach and honest with yourself will you get a true picture of the work required to fulfil your career ambitions.
3. By creating a compelling vision you can gain a sense of how your life will be when you have achieved your career goals.
4. There is no effective substitute for planning your career change project and job search.
5. Job search activities are in two parts – firstly, you need to determine the opportunities available to you and secondly you need to take consistent action to implement your plan.
6. You need to get into the habit of being proactive. Rather than letting life happen to you, make it happen.

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5 Step 4 Caring

*“Health, happiness and success depend upon the fighting spirit of each person.
The big thing is not what happens to us in life – but what we do about what happens to us.”*
George Allen

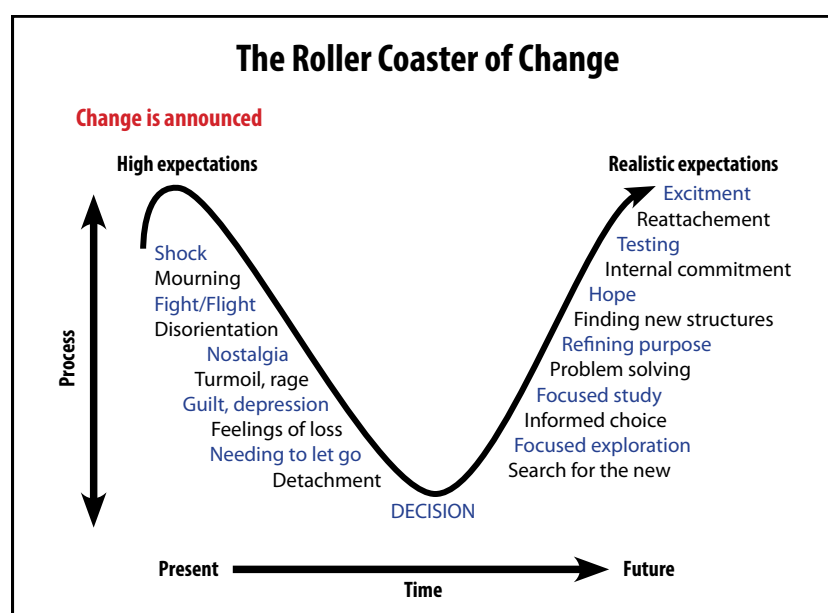
I know you have now created a compelling vision for your future career, set yourself a career goal and created a plan to deliver. You need, in this Step, to think about how best to cope with the emotional roller-coasters that you will probably encounter on your journey. During this time of transition everyone experiences a combination of reactions but this is particularly true if you have been forced into making a career change due to redundancy.

Reactions can come in the form of shock, denial, anger, sadness, guilt, anxiety, fear, relief, excitement and anticipation. How you cope with these reactions will depend upon how prepared and resilient you are for the challenges ahead. Your self-confidence, motivation and your ability to engage in self-care will also have a massive impact on your success in your career change project.

Some of these reactions that you may experience are more acute at the beginning of a career change although some or all of them may occur throughout your career transition.

I have described searching for a job as a roller-coaster ride; others have called it a bungee jump. Suffice it to say it is a time of incredible lows and highs, with, very probably, associated mood swings.

This roller-coaster of change is demonstrated below with a model that is based on the Kubler-Ross grief cycle model.



5.1 Facing the fear of change

“Not only are you afraid when facing the unknown, so is everyone else!”

Susan Jeffers

Opening the door to a new career is a big deal especially if you are fearful of the changes it will impose both during stages of your career change project and then again when you have achieved your desired result. Fear of change will rear its ugly head again until we are settled and no longer fear the unknown.

Fear of change is a complex subject but it is a perfectly normal reaction. What is important is to be able to sense the differences between a threat and a challenge. A challenge can make you feel good albeit a little nervous. A threat is something you want to get away from.

It's a fact that you can't magic away the fear of change. What you can do is to learn coping strategies so that you fear less and take control of the controllables and let go of the uncontrollables.

Useful resource!



Susan Jeffers book – *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway* – How to turn your fear and indecision into confidence and action – can be purchased online at Amazon.

5.2 Challenging limiting beliefs

“The most important opinion a person will ever hold is the one that they hold about themselves”. Anthony Robbins

Sometimes, of course, our fears are related to thoughts and ideas we have that we no longer question even if they don't serve us well. These are our limiting beliefs that have the power to create or destroy. Our thoughts, expectations and actions are a direct result of such beliefs and because they shape the direction of our lives they need to be kept in check.

Initially our beliefs came from other people like parents, teachers, peer groups, friends, family, the media and religion. In fact, from anyone who ever exerted or, still exerts, any influence over us. They are formed during childhood and adolescence and old beliefs established as far back as childhood are projected forward onto new and current situations.

Examples include such statements like “You won't become a... because you're not smart enough.” “Girls don't have careers they get married and have children.” “You are useless at...” “Forget that idea – there is no hope for you.” “Don't forget where you come from.” “Don't get ideas above your station.” “You're slow on the uptake.” “Managing money isn't your strong point.” “get a proper job.”

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By adulthood, self-image is a collection of all the lifetime attitudes and opinions we have received from others and it creates the belief of whom or what we are. Many of us are unaware that we hold beliefs about ourselves and such beliefs have a powerful influence on the quality of all aspects on our lives.

The good news is that these beliefs can be turned around. It is just a question of reprogramming the subconscious mind, which does not evaluate things and is, therefore, non-judgemental. This means that it is unable to distinguish between genuine and true attitudes and those that are false. They are all given the same credence because the subconscious mind takes in everything it is given.

In the context of career transition we need to turn around negative beliefs. We need to believe that what we want is possible, that we are capable and that we are worthy of it. Here is a workout that will help you.

5.3 Workout 14: turning around negative beliefs



If the above section on limiting beliefs struck a cord with you and if you, like many people, suffer from having limiting beliefs – especially in times of change, like now, then this exercise will turn around any negative beliefs that you have.

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1. Make two lists. In the first, list all the positive beliefs you have about yourself, all the things that you are good at. In the second, list all the negative beliefs you have about yourself, the things you are not good at. So, for example:
 - Positive beliefs about myself: e.g. I am a good leader, I am thoughtful, I am trustworthy, generous, I am successful at work, I am supportive and helpful. etc
 - Negative beliefs about myself: e.g. I don't believe that I can learn a different job, I cannot speak in public, I am disorganised, I cannot manage my time, I cannot pass a selection test, I am useless at interviews etc.
2. Look at the list of positive beliefs and spend a few moments on each one. Remember the positive things that happened to lead you to hold those beliefs. Write them down. E.g. people around me, my family and friends have always been trustworthy, supportive of me, generous with their time, advice, opportunities and money.
3. Look at your list of negative beliefs and think about what may have caused them. E.g. I can't speak in public because I once messed up a presentation at work, I am useless at interviews because my teacher told me I couldn't make myself understood in the classroom. I cannot pass written tests because it took three attempts to pass my driving test theory.
4. Take your top three negative beliefs, the ones that really hold you back. Reflecting on what you learnt from the positive experiences in two above, ask yourself:
 - Where did this negative belief come from?
 - Who gave me this belief?
 - How do I feel about the person that gave me this negative belief? Do I respect them? Are/were they always right? What is their history?
 - What is this negative belief costing me on a daily basis?
 - What will holding this negative belief mean for me in the long term?
 - How will my life be different if I let go of this negative belief?
5. Now, take one of your negative beliefs and write an opposite belief to the one you hold. For example, if your negative belief is:
 - *"I am too old to change careers to become a teacher", you could reframe your belief to be, "This is the perfect age to consider a change and I bring to my new teaching career my wealth of life experience to date."*
6. Actively look for evidence – both small and large – to support your new belief. You will find it. Keep a journal and record your success (you can write as many new beliefs as you want to).
 - E.g. My new belief is *"I have the self-confidence to attend a presentation skills course and will enjoy learning the technique with enthusiasm. I am as good and capable as all other participants in the class."*

7. Define your new self-belief, new comfort zone and self-talk and decide what action you are going to take.
 - E.g. My new comfort zone is: *“I believe that I can do it and I will do it. I will rise to the challenge of learning how to present confidently in front of an audience and understand that it’s ok to make mistakes along the way – it’s all part of the learning process.”*
 - E.g. My new self-talk is: *“I am confident at giving presentations. I have nothing to fear. Just do it!”*
 - E.g. The action I’m going to take is: *“I am actively going to research presentations skills training and register for the next course. I will commence classes by (date).”*

5.4 Improving confidence

“Confidence comes not from always being right but from not fearing to be wrong.”

Peter. T. McIntyre

We have all experienced the awful feeling we get when a lack of confidence gets in the way and prevents us from doing what we want. At its extreme it can mean that we just dread doing things that cannot be avoided – such as securing a new job following redundancy. However, it is worth taking the steps required to build self-confidence as this has a massive positive impact not only in career change situations but in life generally.

In the same way that fear of change affects us, a lack of confidence is often brought about by the anticipation of something we haven’t done before or something that we have done but maybe not as well as we could or should have done it. Whilst it’s unrealistic to believe that it will always be ok you can put things in perspective and minimise uncertainty, which helps to build to more confidence.

The reasons why we feel less confident matters less – what matters most is building and maintaining confidence.

5.4.1 10 strategies that confident people use:

Strategy 1 Create a positive attitude

Your attitude has an impact: how you perceive yourself, your thoughts and the way in which you communicate – that is to say, the words that you use – have an impact on your confidence levels, your self-esteem and how others perceive you.

The more self-assured you are you will notice people around you will treat you in a different way. The more energy you exude, people around you will notice that there is something different about you – something really good.

Choose to change the way you think: what you choose to believe and think will become your main focus and therefore your reality. So, if you are focusing on what you don't want to be like in a particular situation, for example, "I don't want to clam up at the interview" then this is blown out of proportion and leads to questions like "why am I so useless?" Instead focus on what you do want. So, think about what you do want to feel like, what you want to look like, what others will notice about you when you are confident.

Take credit for what you have learned: for example, when the results you get from your career change project do not work out as you wanted, consider it a learning experience and not a failure. Another way to think about this is there is no failure, just feedback. If we do not succeed in something, this does not mean that we have failed. We have not succeeded yet. We can vary our behaviour and find a different way of achieving our outcome.

Put simply, if what we do isn't getting us the results that we want we should do something different and take credit for the learning experience.

Consciously think: by choosing to consciously think positive thoughts you begin to have these same positive thoughts unconsciously.

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Strategy 2 Control your “chatterbox”

Everyone has a running internal commentary: it runs in our heads and it's known as 'self-talk' or our 'chatterbox'. If this is constantly telling you that you cannot do something or that it is too scary, you will believe it.

Your inner voice will say things that you would never tolerate from someone else (“you look awful in that suit”, “there's no way you could do that job in a million years”, “who are you kidding”). The key is to reject these thoughts just as you would if someone else expressed them.

Every time you catch your inner voice being negative, replace the thought with something positive. Your subconscious will believe these positive thoughts and as a bonus you will hear positive thoughts throughout the day.

Shut-up that voice in your head: when you hear a little voice inside your head saying “you cannot pass the interview, you're...”, stop the thought and replace it with a positive one e.g. “you will succeed at the interview, you have succeeded at other interviews”.

Don't let your inner voice get you down: automatically go on a hunt for how something will work, for example, a job interview – look for evidence of how you have previously been successful at an interview and replay the positive experience in your mind every time your inner voice interrupts.

Strategy 3 Use positive language

Many people have a tendency to paint a more negative picture than is necessary. How often have you said “*oh I've had an awful day*” when in fact you just suffered a small mishap? These over dramatisations have a similar effect to negative self-talk, you start to believe you live in a world full of awful things.

Be careful of your use of language you can shape your view of the world, of yourself and of how you react to those experiences.

Be aware of your language, the vocabulary you use affects how you feel about things. Consider for example the impact on your feelings of replacing:

“I can't” with “I won't”

“I should” with “I could”

“It's a problem” with “it's an opportunity”

“I need to” with “I want to”

Strategy 4 Energize relationships

Do not keep your career change project a secret – especially from your family and those close to you. The more secretive you are, the harder it will be for anyone to champion you. On the other hand, be mindful that it's often those that are closest to us that feel the need to protect us from fear of the unknown and in their enthusiasm to do that they sometimes become our worst enemies.

You should identify the energy vampires, moaners, crushers and critics – then distance yourself from them – even if it's only in relation to your career change project.

To maintain your confidence during your career change you must focus upon developing positive relationships with like minded people who will offer positivity, energy and support at the times you most want it.

Strategy 5 Expand your comfort zone

Increase your confidence by taking small steps outside your comfort zone and gradually move further away. Write things down, keep a success diary, note your achievements, keep up the momentum and commit to how many actions you are going to take in a day or a week.

Strategy 6 Act confident

As the catchphrase goes – “fake it till you make it”. The meaning behind this is to imitate self confidence so that “acting” confidently produces success and as it does so it generates real confidence.

You can “act” confidently – by using the power of body language, e.g. stand tall, look people in the eye, smile, offer a firm handshake. You can dress to look and feel your best.

Confident people take time out to imagine themselves being successful. Imagine if you were really confident in a particular situation what would you be doing? How would you be feeling? What would you be saying and hearing others say about you? Imagining and acting successful is a really effective way of building your confidence.

Strategy 7 Be yourself

Don't compare yourself to others as there is always someone who will be better at something than you. What you need to do is to remind yourself of the skills, experience, knowledge and things that you are good at. Focus on your abilities and strengths and draw confidence from them.

Strategy 8 Switch off

Confident people ignore the thought of the coming event – they prepare thoroughly for it and then when they cannot do any more but wait, they push the thought of the event to the back of their mind and keep busy so as to detract from what's coming until the last minute. This strategy focuses your attention on something else and stops confidence issues occurring – of course, if you are unprepared this back of the mind strategy will not work and will back-fire.

Strategy 9 Prepare thoroughly

Preparing thoroughly will go a long way to improving your confidence. This can include breaking your job search tasks down into small bite size chunks, role playing and talking things through with a confidante.

Strategy 10 Take action

The more you do, the more your mind will link doing something new with feeling good, which will increase your desire to do more new things and thus your confidence. Take action even if small or minor and discover the confidence this will give you.

The best way to develop more trust and confidence in your ability to handle whatever comes your way is to practise so that the action becomes so much more natural!

Taking action before you really need to will give you a huge buzz and confidence boost.

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5.4.2 Here are 12 good habits to help your confidence flourish:

1. Remind yourself of what you are good at.
2. Increase your energy.
3. Trust your instincts.
4. Accept responsibility for your decisions.
5. Stop complaining and take action.
6. Maintain (or attain) balance in your life.
7. Whatever you're doing, commit to it 100%.
8. Accept what you cannot change.
9. Take physical activity.
10. Keep a success diary.
11. Don't stop learning and growing.
12. Move outside your comfort zone.

5.5 Workout 15: Existing confidence and improvements

**Existing confidence**

Ask yourself in which areas of your career change project do you feel confident and list them here:
E.g. I feel confident speaking to recruitment agencies.

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....

Existing confidence: room for improvement

Ask yourself what you don't feel so confident doing or situations in which you don't feel so confident in your career change project. Write them here:

E.g. I feel less confident attending selection interviews.

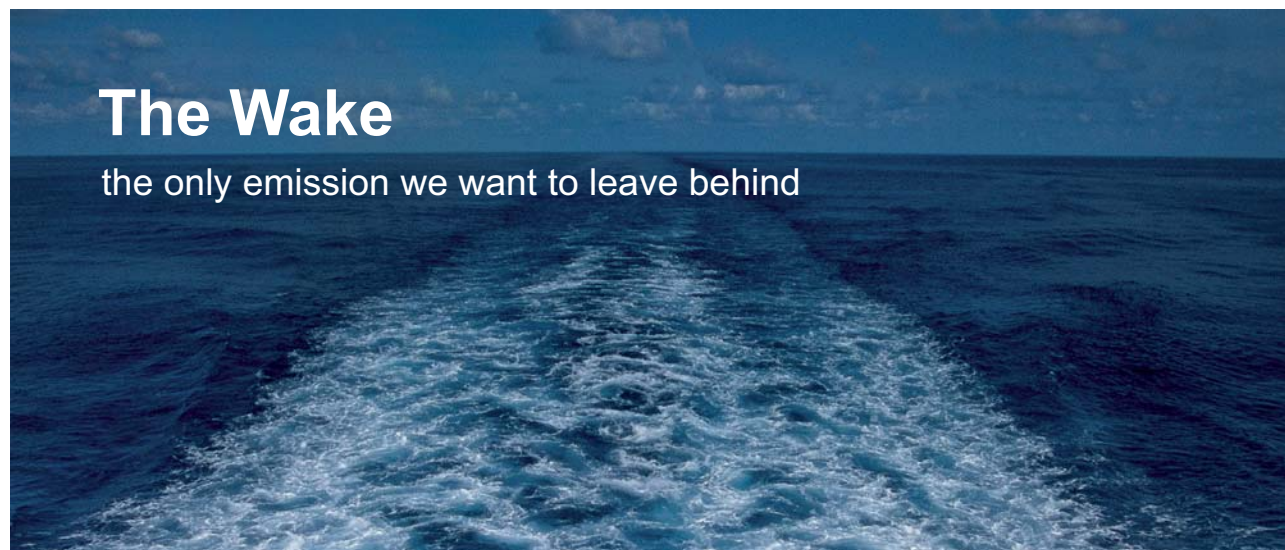
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....

Priorities for change

Of the above, which areas matter most to you? Which do you most want to change?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

For my career change project, I want to focus specifically on:



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Useful resource!

Boosting your confidence workbook available at <http://www.WorksADream.com>.

5.6 Beating the blues and staying motivated

“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.” W.W. Ziege

I am sure you are, like many of us, often exposed to new opportunities, ideas, concepts and outlooks. As a result it makes you feel more energised, excited, motivated and inspired to make change in your career and life generally – be they small or large, short or long-term. It doesn't matter the point is you are stimulated to make a change.

Then something happens and your motivation slips away – you haven't updated your CV for ages, you didn't respond to the job advert that interested you, you don't find the time to call the recruitment agencies, following up outstanding applications is no longer a priority, you don't retrain or update your skills etc. etc.

Does this sound familiar? It's something we all experience from time to time, it's natural. The important thing is to know how to recover your motivation and get back on track.

5.6.1 12 strategies to beat the blues and stay motivated:

Strategy 1 Make a commitment

Make a commitment to yourself and tell someone else as the very act of saying it out loud brings your goals to life and motivates you to take action.

Strategy 2 Make your career goals visible

A career action plan that is written and then left in a drawer or on your computer and never looked at is of no use to you. Put your plan where you will see it every day, preferably several times a day.

If you haven't already, go ahead and create a visual reminder of your career goals in the form of a vision board – as suggested in Step 2. Look at photos, pictures of what you want to achieve. Remind yourself of your career goal every day and the benefits it will bring.

Strategy 3 Keep your plan alive

Use your plan to tell the story of how much progress you have made and how much closer you are to your career goal. Update it as things change and progress. Keep it relevant and timely. Be flexible whilst keeping focus on your goal.

Strategy 4 Control the controllables

If you are doing everything you can to put a situation “right” and there’s nothing more you can do, then relax and control what you can control. There is absolutely no value in stressing, worrying or losing energy over it. This will only ever deplete your motivation. Focus your energy on something more productive.

Strategy 5 Manage the unexpected

Make sure you stay strong when life throws something unexpected at you. To stay motivated step back from the problem and view it from a positive perspective. Identify all of the positive elements i.e. what’s good about the situation. Look at the potential for the situation i.e. if some changes were made what might you be able to do? Consider the concerns and things that are troubling you about the situation.

Don’t look at the concerns first as that can close off potentially good ideas with all the reasons why it won’t work before you even get started and then, guess what, you lose your motivation.

Strategy 6 Learn from previous successes

Think back to a time when you achieved something you were proud of? How did you do it? What was the secret of your success? What kept driving you forward? What works for you? What keeps you motivated? For more insights refer back to the work you did in Step 1.

Strategy 7 Remind yourself why you are doing this

Desire is key to success; it gives us the motivation to keep working towards our career goals. Be clear about why you want what you want e.g. why do you want to change jobs? Is it because you want to improve your job satisfaction, to earn more money or to feel appreciated?

Once you are clear about why you are aiming for your career goal, remind yourself regularly of those reasons. Put notes in your diary, pictures on your wall or messages on the fridge door – anything to keep that desire top of mind.

Strategy 8 Use the support of others

Telling someone else what we are doing can be a very powerful motivator to keep us moving forward. Use your friends, family or consider working with a career coach. Choose someone who will be rooting for you and will want you to succeed.

They will listen to you, assist you to find solutions, talk options through with you, encourage, motivate and if you are having an “off” day they will remind you why you are doing this. And of course, they will always be willing to celebrate your successes with you!

Strategy 9 Take action

Take action now- do something, anything, however small, e.g. look up a prospective company’s telephone number, make a follow-up call to a recruitment agent, organise your job search file. If you do nothing, nothing will change. Make small changes, do something small every day and you will move forward. Don’t let your motivation fall through the floor, don’t put off things until tomorrow.

Strategy 10 Do more

The more you do the more you will get done. Take advantage of momentum. Once you get going momentum will kick in and it will get easier. The momentum will help carry you along.

Strategy 11 Celebrate your successes

Keep a success diary. Be kind to yourself: don’t berate yourself when you don’t make as much progress as you want. Reward yourself frequently, it maintains your energy levels and makes you feel good.



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Strategy 12 Finish what you start

Get into the habit of completing tasks 100%. There is nothing like achieving something to keep us motivated.

5.7 Workout 16: access your motivation

When thinking about what motivates us to take action it is, for some people, because they want to move away from a problem or a situation that they want to avoid or rid of – this can be described as “moving away” or “negative motivation”.

For other people their motivation may be to move toward their goal. Their attention and focus is all about how they can reach out and achieve what it is they want. This is described as ‘moving toward’ or “positive motivation”.

As an example, a “moving away” person may say something along the lines of *“in my next job I want to steer clear of any problems that exclude me from being paid for the sales I make.”* Whereas a “moving toward” person may say *“in my next job I want to take control so that I achieve and get rewarded for the sales I make.”*

Whilst we may be predominantly a “moving away” or “moving toward” person in reality most of us have personality traits that are a mix of both.

Even when we know what motivates us to take action it doesn’t always work! It’s at these times when we become inactive we need to be reminded of why we set our goals in the first place and what the benefits of achieving them are.

In the following workout there are 4 questions that will help you to assess your levels of motivation and decide on your way forward.

Write your answers to the following questions, in relation to your career goal:

What will happen when you achieve your goal 'X'?	What won't happen when you achieve your goal 'X'?
What will happen if you don't achieve your goal 'X'?	What won't happen if you don't achieve your goal 'X'?

Useful questions to ponder:

- What do you conclude from this workout?
- Do the benefits of achieving your goal outweigh the prospect of not achieving it?
- What more do you need in order that you reach your career goal?
- What do you need to do to feel passionate again and get your motivation back on track?
- All things considered, do you need to review your career goal?

Useful resource!



When you want to recreate a feeling of motivation you can use a 'motivation anchor'. For this I would recommend Paul Mckenna's book Instant Confidence.

If you want a workbook check out my "Boost Your Motivation" Ebook at <http://bit.ly/13ODudd>.

5.8 Make the best of your 168 hours

“You may delay, but time will not.” Benjamin Franklin

The fact is we all have 168 hours in our week – no more and no less – but some of us achieve a great deal and others very little.

If you want to achieve more in your week then take a look at the following, choose the ideas that appeal to you and get started today. This will increase your control of the project and make better use of your time. Make your time count as you won't get it back!

5.8.1 4 strategies to control and maximise your 168 hours:

Strategy 1 Be organised

Disorganisation sometimes comes from not knowing what works best for you. You can experiment with how you like to work:

To Do Lists

This may include having a daily planner, working through a “to do” list or allocating your mornings to career tasks and afternoons to home activities.



Best time of day

Work out the best time of day for you to be creative, deal with numbers, make phone calls, write letters, handling correspondence, problems etc and schedule your activities around those times.

Allocate one place for incoming papers

Papers create a lot of clutter and we can waste a lot of time looking for something. Your CV, letters, job search correspondence, career activity log, action plan and any paper that comes into the office or house goes in that one place.

Create morning and evening routines

Create routines for the start and end of your day, for you and your family. In fact, create routines and processes for everything!

Strategy 2 Be realistic

Sometimes we are not realistic with our time planning. We over-commit ourselves expecting that we will achieve so much more than is realistic. This leads to disappointment and failure.

Scheduling work

When scheduling your work, leave time for the unplanned, so that you can remain flexible.

Push and reward yourself

Push yourself but also give yourself a treat – you deserve it!

Strategy 3 Accept help from others

Remember that, just like you, people often like being asked to help and contribute.

Make a list

Draw up a list of people you respect and think can help you. Start by explaining to them your challenges and asking if they might be able to help. You will be surprised how flattered people often are by the approach.

Delegate

“Delegation” can also cover using other resources such as libraries, the Job Centre and other public services, books, the internet etc.

Strategy 4 Say “No” when you need or want to!

A common problem for people “who have no time”, is that they cannot say “no”.

Often they don’t actually say “yes” but rather “well maybe” or “I’ll see”. What then happens is that the person seeking help acts more assertively and you find yourself doing what you didn’t really want to.

It is not always easy but you can learn to be stronger and say a simple “no” when that is what you really mean.

Permission

Give yourself permission to say “no”

- It is OK to say no (you have every right to say no)
- It is OK to put yourself first
- Saying “no” can give you more energy and confidence
- Saying “no” can make people value you more.



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Practice

Practice on little things to be ready for the big things.

- Aim to say “no” to two trivial things every day.
- Don’t forget to congratulate yourself when you say “no”!

Question yourself

When the going gets tough ask yourself:

- “What is it costing me in terms of my happiness and health when I cannot say no?”
- “How different could my life be if I said “no” to the things I don’t want to do?”
- “What is the worst thing that could happen if I say “no”?”

Useful resource!

If you want a workbook check out my “De-clutter and Make Time For You” Ebook at <http://bit.ly/13ODudd>.

5.9 Tricks that keep you in control

On the following pages are some useful models that I have used over many years to help me to manage my time. Take a look and see which ones you like and experiment with them.


5.10 Gold Time

In her book ‘Your Best Year Yet!’, Jinny Ditzler introduces the concept of Gold Time where she talks about how we need to learn to manage ourselves by identifying the activities in each of our roles that will make the greatest difference to us and others. Roles, for example, can be your job or your transitional role, husband, wife, parent, friend etc.

Gold Time is spent on Important, Not Urgent activities. It’s called Gold Time because the time you spend on this type of activity pays off at least tenfold over the time you invest in other types of activity.

Also, by focusing on activities that are Important and Not Urgent you’re led to a life of less stress and less fire-fighting. Fewer things reach crisis point.

5.10.1 Gold Time example:

Urgent/Important	Not Urgent/Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crises – <i>needing a plumber</i> • Pressing problems – <i>fixing an over-due appointment.</i> • Deadline driven activities – <i>getting the CV sent to recruitment agency</i> 	<div data-bbox="911 344 1289 495" style="text-align: center;">  <p>Gold Time</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention – <i>getting basic CV written in preparation for forthcoming jobs</i> • Relationship building – <i>Fix a time to visit an old acquaintance that could assist my job search</i> • Planning – <i>plan my transition goals before being made redundant</i> • Recognising new opportunities – <i>take time out to attend industry specific exhibitions</i> • Priorities & projects – <i>proactively working on your next career move</i>
Urgent/Not Important	Not Urgent/ Not Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions – <i>from neighbours</i> • Some emails, phone calls, Twitter or Facebook • Pressing matters – <i>handling correspondence</i> • Popular activities – <i>shopping for things you like but don't need</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivia – <i>worrying about which colour socks to wear</i> • Some emails & phone calls • Time wasters – <i>gossiping with the neighbours</i> • Pleasant activities – <i>buying a new lawn mower in the winter</i>

Useful resource!



If you like this approach then you can purchase Jinny Ditzler's book *Your Best Year Yet* online at Amazon.

5.11 Workout 17: your Gold Time



Create your own Gold Time activities – focusing your attention on the Not Urgent/Important segment.

<p>Urgent/Important</p>	<p>Not Urgent/Important</p> 
<p>Urgent/Not Important</p>	<p>Not Urgent/ Not Important</p>

5.12 Eat that frog!

Brian Tracy explains in his book “Eat that frog” that there is an old saying that if the first thing you do in the morning is to eat a live frog, you’ll have the satisfaction of knowing that it’s probably be the worst thing you do all day!

Eat that frog takes this saying as a metaphor for tackling the most challenging task first thing in the day. This is the one that you probably avoid doing but by taking action it will most likely be the one that will give you the greatest impact on your life.

He goes on to say that there simply isn’t enough time to do everything on our “To Do” list and there never will be. Successful people don’t try to do everything. They focus on the most important tasks and make sure they get done.

Useful resource!

Learn Brian Tracy's time management system in his book "Eat that frog", which can be purchased online at Amazon.

5.13 Most important things

Use the action plan you devised in workout 13 to identify the 3 'most important things' to do each day. If you find it difficult to prioritise then ask yourself this question for each of the actions on your plan "what tangible difference will this action make to the achievement of my goal?" Then choose the 3 actions that will make the biggest difference and work on those first.

The trick is not to start with a long list of things as you probably won't get them done by the end of the day. Make a simple list of the key things to do and focus on these and don't start anything else until you have completed these tasks.

5.14 Does this make the boat go faster?

Does what you are doing take you closer to your goal? If your goal is to win a boat race, will your action make your boat go faster? If the answer is "yes" then keep going but if the answer is "no" then stop what you are doing, think and plan again and only take actions that will make your boat go faster and move you in the direction of your goal.

5.15 Stop procrastinating

"Procrastination is one of the most common and deadliest of diseases and its toll on success and happiness is heavy." Wayne Gretzky

Do you have an item on your "to do" list that has been there for ages and somehow you just never seem to get round to doing it? Is it annoying you that it has been on your action list for so long? Have you been avoiding doing something that you really want or more to the point need to get done? If so, perhaps you are suffering from procrastination.

5.16 Workout 18: 5 steps to beat procrastination

Step 1 Do you really want to do it?

Take a look at the item you have been avoiding and ask yourself if you really want to do it? If you don't and there will be no negative consequences from not doing it, why not cross it off your list?

If it is something that you think you need to do or should do, do you really need to? Is there another way you can achieve the same objective? For example, you may have “ring 6 recruitment agencies” on your daily “to do” list. If you want to get a job and are repeatedly not ringing 6 recruitment agencies a day, consider alternatives: writing to companies directly, joining more job boards, network with other industry professionals. Find what works for you and will help you achieve the same objective.

If it something that you “have” to do, ask yourself if you really have to or if actually you want to. I had been putting off doing the paperwork to renew my home mortgage (because I’ve never been too keen on form filling) and kept telling myself that it was something that I “had” to do. When I realised that I didn’t “have” to, but rather I “wanted” to, because I wanted to be able to carry on living in the house, that subtle shift made it easier for me to get on and do it.

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Step 2 What are the benefits of getting this done?

Consider all the reasons for doing this and all the benefits of achieving it. Such is life that sometimes we have to do things that we would prefer not to, in which case the main benefit of doing something maybe so that we can cross it off our “to do” list and not have to think about it every time we look at the list. Also you may want to consider what happens if you don’t get this done.

Step 3 What is getting in the way of you not doing this?

Is anything stopping you from getting this done? Do you need something, some information, help from someone else or something else in order to get this done? Work out what you need in order to move forward and get it sorted.

Step 4 How will you feel?

How will you feel once you have achieved this? You may be relieved to finally have got it sorted, satisfied with yourself or pleased with a job well done. Imagine how you will feel and hold onto that feeling.

Step 5 Break the task down into the individual steps

Break the task down into the individual steps and take the first smallest step now. For example if you have been putting off updating your CV, then dig out the latest copy or set up a new document on your computer. If you need to make a phone call, then look up the number. Take the first step and you will be on your way.

5.17 Mindset matters

“It’s not who you are that holds you back, it’s who you think you’re not.”

author unknown

Everyone wants to stand out from the crowd but what does it take to get the job you want? Having a positive mindset is very important although what we are talking about is having a mindset that goes beyond being happy and saying positive things. It’s about a mindset that employers think is important. So, what is that?

A study conducted by James Reed – chairman of the giant recruitment agency REED found that in a survey of thousands of top employers, 97% picked mindset over skill set when asked who they would hire when faced with the final 2 candidates.

Now typically candidates would think that to get their dream job they need to have the right skills set. Most people wouldn’t even consider what mindset you need to get a job. So, this survey was a revelation. Not only did the survey’s findings show that mindset trumps skill set it went on to show that...

Your mindset can triple your chances of getting, keeping and flourishing in the best jobs and even more, employers rate individuals with a strong mindset to be 7 × the value of other employees.

So what is mindset all about? Mindset is defined as: “A habitual way of thinking” If your skill set is about what you can do – then your mindset is about what you see, think and believe. – mindset qualities are things like being driven, innovative and balanced.

Your mindset becomes second nature – it isn’t something you think about consciously.

It’s a way of life – you live and breathe it.

James Reed’s research deemed that the top 6 mindset qualities most important to employers are:

1. Honesty
2. Trustworthy
3. Commitment
4. Adaptability
5. Accountability
6. Flexibility

These results were regardless of occupation or level. So, why are these important to know? Well, the key is to build these mindset qualities into every element of your job search.

There is an online assessment that accompanies the book: Put Your Mindset To Work. The assessment – called 3G Mindset is a complete way to gauge your mindset. It takes about 15 minutes to complete and you are provided with a personal report detailing your mindset strengths and areas for development. Once you have this input you can use it in your job search project.

Knowing and improving your mindset can give you a substantial advantage in getting, keeping and advancing within any job. The work Reed has undertaken provides lots of pointers for you to master your mindset.

Useful resource!



You can purchase the book Put Your Mindset To Work, which gives you a password to the online assessment, online at Amazon.

5.18 Overcome set-backs

“Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.” Henry Ford

When you are in job search it's inevitable that you will have ups and downs. You can't control every eventuality in your quest for a new working life although you can control how you respond to these life challenges.

Finding a positive side to handle your knocks will stand you in good stead and don't forget, job search is a numbers game so try not to take rejection personally – just keep going and something good will happen. The next workout provides powerful questions to examine what has gone wrong and what can be done to improve the situation next time.

5.19 Workout 19: get to the root of the matter



Part 1: Understanding what happened

1. What seems to be the trouble?

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2. What caused the set-back?
3. What were the main obstacles?
4. What, if any, feedback have you received?

Part 2: Doing things differently

1. What lessons have you learnt?
2. What could you now do?
3. Where do you go from here?
4. What are your next steps?

Tip: When answering these questions check back to ensure your personal values have not been affronted or ignored as this may be the cause of your set-back.

5.20 10 tips to keep you on track:

1. Keep in mind that setbacks are temporary – greater things lay ahead.
2. Remind yourself of your career goal and your reasons to achieve it.
3. Take a break.
4. Step back and put some distance between yourself and the situation.
5. Examine your career goal and plans to establish if they are specific and realistic.
6. Consult an expert.
7. Re-evaluate your strategy.
8. Push through the dip.
9. Be aware of and turn around negative self-talk.
10. Be aware of your language.

5.21 Move forward

The important thing about being able to handle setbacks is your ability to keep moving forward regardless of what else is going on. Here are some tips that have proven to work for other people in similar circumstances:

5.21.1 5 tips to keep you moving forward

1. **Take action.** Take action now, do something, it can be anything, however small e.g. look up a telephone number, make a call, fix a meeting. If you do nothing, nothing will change.
2. **The more you do, the more you will get done.** Take advantage of momentum, once you get going momentum will kick in and it will get easier, the momentum will help carry you along.
3. **Learn from previous successes.** Think back to a time when you secured your last job – how did you do it? What was the secret of your success? What kept driving you forward? What works for you?
4. **Use the support of others.** Telling someone else what we are doing can be a very powerful motivator to keep us moving forward. Choose someone who will be rooting for you and will want you to succeed. They will listen to you, assist you to find solutions, talk options through with you, encourage, motivate and if you are having an “off” day they will remind you why you are doing this.
5. **Celebrate your success.** So many of us berate ourselves over what we haven’t done and neglect to congratulate ourselves on how much we have achieved so far. Recognise and celebrate your progress.

5.22 Self-care really matters

“Put your future in good hands – your own.”

author unknown

We have already talked about the inevitable roller-coaster of emotions that career transition creates at some level and how you react to the ups and downs will have a massive impact on how successful you are in reaching your career goal.

Although you cannot control every stressful situation or emotion that you feel on your career transition journey there are certain things you can do that will help to relax you and put you in the right frame of mind to handle whatever comes your way.

Coping with your emotions will come more easily to you if you take the trouble to take care of yourself. Self-care may seem rather indulgent although it's probably the single most important thing you can do for yourself during your job search. Looking after yourself will help you to feel good and give you that bit of confidence to help get you to where you want to be. Ignore self-care at your peril.



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5.23 4 self-care strategies to keep stress levels in check

Strategy 1 Emotional self-care

Enjoy supportive relationships with family, friends, yourself and others. Surround yourself with positive people and those that care for you. Nurture your relationships and learn to fulfil your personal needs – which may mean saying “no” to requests that don’t meet your requirements right now.

Strategy 2 Mental self-care

Focus your attention on your goals. Stretch and stimulate your mind through your activities. Set yourself time limits for your search activities, ensuring that you take regular breaks. Create a good balance in your life and always include things that are enjoyable, relaxing, inspirational and motivational to you.

Strategy 3 Physical self-care

Take regular activity and enjoy a healthy diet. Don’t over indulge in your food or alcohol consumption. Eat slow releasing carbohydrates to keep your sugar intake balanced. Keep hydrated and headaches at bay with a regular intake of water. Avoid excessive caffeine and drink herbal teas daily.

Strategy 4 Purposeful self-care

Recognise what’s important to you and live your life with a sense of meaning and purpose. Spend time doing the things you most enjoy with the people you like to be around. Take time out to experience the outdoors or do something that you have wanted to do for a long time but could never find the time.

5.24 Workout 20: self-care plan



Draw-up your own self-care plan, following the 4 strategies:

Self-care	Actions	When
Emotional self-care		
Mental self-care		
Physical self-care		
Purposeful self-care		
Other self-care		

5.25 Key points from Step 4: Caring

You have now reached the end of Step 4: Caring and the end of the workbook. Here are the key points from Step 4:

1. During periods of transition everyone encounters ups and downs and this is known as the roller-coaster of change.
2. Fear doesn't go away but we can learn strategies so that we fear less.
3. Limiting beliefs can be changed and turned around to something positive.
4. The reasons why we feel less confident than we want to matters less than knowing how to build and maintain confidence.
5. Strategies that confident people use are having a positive attitude, retraining their "chatter box", being aware of their language, building energizing relationships, stepping outside their comfort zone, faking confidence, not comparing themselves to others, preparing thoroughly and taking action.

6. Stay motivated by bringing your goals to life, make goals visible and keep your action plan alive. Don't stress about things you cannot control and step back from a problem and view it from a positive perspective. When the chips are down remind yourself why you set the goal(s), accept help from others and above all keep taking action towards the ultimate prize.
7. Make your time count as you won't get it back! Be organised and realistic with how much you can achieve in a day. Accept help from others and learn to say "no" when you don't want to. Use a time management system to help you stay in control.
8. Procrastination affects success and happiness but by taking the 5 steps outlined you can nip it in the bud.
9. Mindset matters to employers more than skill set. Having the right mindset can triple your chances of getting, keeping and flourishing in the best jobs.
10. Finding a positive side to handle setbacks will stand you in good stead and don't forget, setbacks are temporary and greater things lay ahead.
11. Keep moving forward towards your goal by taking action, however small and don't forget to celebrate your successes!
12. Ignore the 4 self-care strategies at your peril: emotional, mental, physical and purposeful self-care.

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6 A Final Word

In this workbook I have designed, for you, there are lots of strategies, tips and workouts you can use to facilitate your career transition.

I believe very strongly that your chances of success both in and outside of your work environment will be multiplied if you take steps to identify, prioritise and live your personal values; stretch your mind to envisage your successful future and plan your career transition to maximise your chances of success.

If you take nothing else from this workbook please do not ignore your health and wellbeing. Look after yourself to ensure you can handle the inevitable roller-coaster of career transition. It may not be easy but it's worth it.

Having reached the end of the workbook you have taken the first steps on your journey and ,with your continued commitment, I am sure you will reach your goals. The important thing is to keep your action plan alive, up to date and where you will see it on a regular basis.

Keep coming back to this workbook, experiment with all the resources available to you and find what works best for you at this challenging time.

If you want one-to-one coaching with me then please make contact. Enjoy experimenting and celebrate your successes.

Michaela Partridge

7 Resources

7.1 Books

7.1.1 Career transition

Strengths Finder:

Now, Discover Your Strengths Tom Rath

What Colour Is Your Parachute? Richard Bolles

Do What You Are Paul Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger

The Work We Were Born To Do Nick Williams

7.1.2 Confidence and motivation

Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway Susan Jeffers

Put Your Mindset To Work James Reed and Paul G. Stoltz

Instant Confidence Paul McKenna

The Confidence Plan Sarah Litvinoff

How To Work A Room Susan RoAne

How To Have A Beautiful Mind Edward de Bono

Who Stole My Mojo? Gary Bertwistle

The Quick And Easy Way To
Effective Speaking Dale Carnegie

7.1.3 Personal development

Your Best Year Yet Jenny Ditzler

Eat That Frog! Brian Tracy

7 Habits Of Highly Effective People Stephen R. Covey

Download free eBooks at bookboon.com

How To Win Friends And Influence People	Dale Carnegie
How To Stop Worrying And Start Living	Dale Carnegie
The Mindgym Wake Your Mind Up	The Mindgym
The Mindgym Give Me Time	The Mindgym
Think And Grow Rich	Napoleon Hill
Keys To Success	Napoleon Hill
Six Thinking Hats	Edward de Bono
Who Moved My Cheese?	Dr. Spencer Johnson

7.2 Online

7.2.1 Ebooks

Work's A Dream The RED Route Home Study Course For people in job search	www.WorksADream.com
Work's A Dream Boost Your Confidence Workbook Work's A Dream	http://bit.ly/13ODudd
De-clutter And Make Time For You Workbook Work's A Dream	http://bit.ly/13ODudd
Boost Your Motivation Workbook	http://bit.ly/13ODudd

7.2.2 Online assessments

Personality assessment

Myers Briggs Type Indicator www.personalitypage.com

The website that partners the book

Strengths Finder www.strengthsfinder.com

3G Panorama free test to partner

the book Put Your Mindset To Work <http://bit.ly/1ayqobv>

Test if you are right or left brained

Psych Tests www.testyourself.psychtests.com

7.2.3 Career websites

CV Library – Job board

and careers advice <http://bit.ly/16N9Cms>

General recruitment

www.social-hire.com

General recruitment

www.workthing.com

General recruitment

www.monster.com

General recruitment

www.totaljobs.com

Broadcast, film and media industries

www.grapevinejobs.com

Banking, accounting, insurance

and financial services www.cityjobs.com

Human Resources

www.hr-jobs.peoplemanagement.co.uk

7.3 Career coaching

Michaela Partridge

www.WorksADream.com

7.4 Research

The British Library – London

www.bl.uk