



Changing Career: things to ask yourself

Sometimes there are a few key questions that you might want to ask yourself – and honestly answer! – that can help you move forward:

Initial thoughts

- Do I feel my current career situation is unresolvable, or just a temporary difficulty?
- How much certainty is there in the various possible future scenarios?
- What is the risk of the worst-case scenario happening? What would be the consequences? Are they acceptable? Should I have contingencies in place?
- What degree of influence do I have over each of the factors that may affect the possible scenarios happening?
- What else might I need to do to increase my degree of influence? Greater depth of analysis? Planning? Influential friends, family or associates?

Practicalities and other people

- Are there any pressures from others that might jeopardise working outside of my current career? Partner? Dependents? Parents? Social group?
- What is the smallest total income that I actually need (rather than want)?
- What lifestyle is actually necessary for me and my dependents?
- What expectations of lifestyle do others in my life have?
- Does a position exist that allows all of my constraints to be resolved?
- If not, what are my priorities?
- If I were to rank all of my constraints and aspirations, would I be able to get to the bottom of the list? If not, am I happy with how far down the list I can get?

Social

- Am I ready to accept a life in which I may no longer have my current social standing?
- What else might I lose?
- Which of these can I replace?
- Which of these should I allow to go?

Thinking broad

- Am I going to be able to challenge my own assumptions about my life? How about others' assumptions?
- Am I being too hasty? Should I devote rather more time to considering my options and possibilities?
- Is a 'job' or a 'career' the only option for me? Portfolio career? Gig economy? Volunteering? Retirement? Semi-retirement? Self-employment?



Opportunity?

- Is this actually an opportunity to reassess what I really want out of life?
- Will I look back on this moment with regret?

Skills review

- Has my career delivered what I had originally hoped for?
- Was there anything surprising about my current job?
- Did I get fulfilment from unexpected parts of my job?
- Do I get a buzz from working under pressure?
- Have I enjoyed interacting with people?
- Was it the technical and analytical aspects that I will miss most?
- What transferrable skills may I have unknowingly acquired during my career?
- Were there additional things that I did beyond doing my job that I found stimulating or rewarding?
- What do I like doing in my spare time?
- What do I avoid doing in my spare time?
- What can I learn about myself from those experiences?

Honesty and challenge

- Have I answered with honesty all of the above questions?
- If I suspect not, then do I know why?
- Do I have someone who can provide the challenge and support that I need to help me address these issues?
- If not, do I know how to find someone who can?

Career coach

Having a career coach can provide a useful external perspective that offers a combination of challenge and support, and is always non-judgemental and working in your best interests.