

Stuck in Your Career? Transitioning Made Easier for Mid-Career Professionals

By Marilyn Tullius, Delta Strategies for Marketing, October 27, 2021

The Great Resignation is real: McKinsey & Company has published data from the U.S. combined with four other countries indicating 40% of employees are likely to leave their current job in the next 3 to 6 months. Reasons given? Gain freedom to work remotely; meet family obligations; recalibrate and explore new opportunities; and build networks for career shifts. Gone are the days of sending out resumes to see what sticks, also known as the ready-fire-aim approach. Despite the harsh screening of digital scanning software that rejects 75 to 80% of applications submitted online, I continue to meet people who have no clue what happens after they click off their online applications.



Prioritize Job Categories

Job changers in 2022 need to focus their resumes on a priority job category to increase their use of the right key words and give their resumes a chance to survive digital scanning. Employers only see resumes that closely match their criteria, as represented in key words associated with job requirements, education, and experience.

Job candidates who participate in my workshops say they need help in knowing where to start as they consider rejoining the workforce or transitioning their career. A good beginning might come down to getting new perspectives on alternative future careers. Here's a straightforward approach to help with crossroads career evaluations. Complete 6 lists:

1. What you enjoy doing most (Career satisfaction)
2. Your top 6 transferable skills (Functional expertise)
3. Industries closest to your current one (Known jargon)
4. Growth industries and emerging jobs—lots of research (Future)
5. Your values, preferred work environments, and criteria including career growth and compensation (Passion and practicality)
6. Training requirements and networks in prospective jobs (Readiness and access)

Review these lists to identify your preferred job category. I highly recommend testing your assumptions:

- Collect and analyze job postings
- Talk to people who work in a job you have prioritized
- Conduct informational interviews
- Shadow a few people as they work if you can



Understand Transition Routes

As I help solve career transition puzzles with clients, I use techniques I relied on as a marketing strategist tasked with evaluating business opportunities for innovative products. When considering a career transition, the following model of transition routes and suggestions will help you prepare for your next career steps:

Easiest

Old Function to Old Industry

Refresh your resume to reflect key words used in current job postings. Your knowledge of function and industry will give you an advantage over many other candidates.

More Difficult

Old Function to New Industry

Learn new terminologies. Conduct research on industry trends, competitors, trade shows, and media.

Even More Difficult

New Function to Old Industry

Learn new software and adjust to requirements for effectiveness in the new function. Training and a new certification may be needed.

Super-Difficult (proceed after extended preparation)

New Function to New Industry

Ensure your potential employer has an onboarding training program. Prepare to initiate your job search after volunteering your services in the new function and industry, taking classes, and attending networking meetings.

Doing your best to prepare can lead to a successful transition onto a different career track. Good luck!

Marilyn (Tullius)

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