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Career Coaching

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# 7 Steps

To Kick Start Your Career

# Step 1 – SWOT Analysis

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What you are assessing e.g. your current career, personal situation

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(Please note that many of the criteria examples given can apply to more than one quadrant.)

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## Criteria examples

- What are the advantages of this proposition?
- What are my capabilities?
- What is my competitive advantage?
- What is my USP (unique selling point)?
- What resources, assets or people do I have available to me?
- What experience, knowledge or skills do I have?
- Is my location an advantage to me?
- What accreditation, qualifications or certificates do I have?
- What IT processes, systems, or applications am I competent in?
- Is my culture, attitude or behaviour a strength for me?
- What strengths do my values and the way I see life give me?

### Strengths

### Weaknesses

### Opportunities

### Threats

# Step 1 – SWOT Analysis (continued)

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## Criteria examples

- What are my competitors' vulnerabilities?
- What are the current industry or lifestyle trends that present opportunities?
- Are there any technology developments or innovations that I could exploit?
- Is there opportunity to exploit global influences, new markets (vertical, horizontal)?
- Can I pursue a niche target market?
- Could I use specific tactics: e.g. surprise, major contracts?
- Are there any business or product developments that could be a benefit to me?
- Is there an opportunity for me to obtain information intelligence or research?
- Is there an opportunity for partnerships, agencies, distribution networks?
- Is there any historical data that helps me predict the risks?

### Strengths

### Weaknesses

### Opportunities

### Threats

# Step 1 – SWOT Analysis (continued)

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## Criteria examples

- What are the disadvantages of this proposition?
- What gaps exist in my in capabilities?
- Do I have any lack of competitive strength?
- What is my perceived reputation, presence and reach?
- What are the financial implications of this proposition?
- What are my own known vulnerabilities?
- Are there any timescales, deadlines or other pressures?
- Is there a cash-flow, start-up or cash-drain?
- Will I be distracted with other activities/responsibilities?
- Is this propositions reliable/predictable

### Strengths

### Weaknesses

### Opportunities

### Threats

# Step 1 – SWOT Analysis (continued)

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## Criteria examples

- What are all the barriers that might get in my way?
- What are the predicted risks?
- What is the likely impact of expected risks?
- How likely are these risks?
- Are there any political or legislative effects?
- Are there any negative environmental effects?
- What are my competitor intentions?
- What is the current market demand?
- Do I have any insurmountable weaknesses?
- Will I lose the support of any key people around me?
- Can I secure sustainable financial backing?
- What is the economic impact to my personal life, in the UK or abroad?
- Is there any seasonality, weather effects?

### Strengths

### Weaknesses

### Opportunities

### Threats

# Step 2 – Time Travel Exercise

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You may well have heard the quote from Stephen R Covey 'We should start with the end in mind'. When you are planning changes to your career or indeed any aspect of your life you need to have a clear plan and an 'end goal'. How can you possibly hit a target you cannot see? This exercise will help you to establish if your life is heading in the direction you wanted it go, and more importantly create a picture of where you want your future to be. Your past

does not have the equal your future, so whatever challenges and set-backs you might have experienced in life, you always have the chance set yourself onto a new or different path. Good luck with this exercise. In my experience it usually leads to a couple of personal discoveries or ah ha moments.

Kindest regards  
Andrea

## Ten Years Ago?

Imagine you are introducing yourself for the first time.  
Write down how you would have described yourself 10 years ago.

## Today?

What skills/ attributes have you developed over the last 10 years?  
Write down how you would describe yourself now.

## Ten Years Ago?

What skills/ attributes and changes to your life will you have made in 10 years time.  
Remember, if you are going to dream, you may as well have the dream you want.  
Write down how you will describe 10 years from now

Personal discoveries or Ah ha moments from this exercise?

# Step 3 – Wheel Of Career

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## Note to reader

You can easily apply this exercise to any aspect of your life, not just your career. You will just need to alter your focus accordingly.

## Magnificent Moment

To start this exercise on a positive note, write down one of the best moments in your career over the last 12 months. Savor the moment and reflect back.

My Magnificent Career Moment last year was

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## Maybe it could be when you were:

- At your best
- In the flow
- In the zone
- In the right place at the right time
- Feeling great about yourself
- Feeling..... this is it!!

Choose from this list, 8 areas of your career or life that you would like to focus on for this session. See the diagram wheel on the following page and label each of the 8 segments with your 8 chosen areas.

## Career List:

1. Job satisfaction
2. Job fulfillment
3. Dream role
4. Career development
5. Salary
6. Colleagues
7. Environment
8. Working hours
9. Travel commitments
10. Work/life balance
11. Promotion prospects
12. Clear career path

## Life List:

1. Relationship with Partner
2. Relationship with friends or family
3. Relationship with children
4. Social time
5. Hobbies and interests
6. Health and fitness
7. Finances
8. Holidays
9. Your property/accommodation
10. Personal development
11. Spiritual Life
12. Attitude

# Step 3 – Wheel Of Career (continued)

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**Finances**

**Spiritual**

**Personal Development**

**Career**

# Step 3 – Wheel Of Career (continued)

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## For each segment please conduct the following.

1. Decide on a score for each of the segments between 1 and 10. One is low and 10 being high.
2. You do not have to be 'scientifically' accurate in your scoring. Your first thoughts will probably be the most accurate.
3. A score of 10 would indicate things could not be better, that you were at the very top of your game.
4. A score of 1 would show there is nothing going well in this area whatsoever.
5. Whatever the score, shade each segment accordingly.
6. You will now have a strong and simple visual of the segments that need attention and the segments which are going well.

## My Chosen Area

You now need to focus on one segment and conduct a self directed coaching session. If you chose to work with a coach, each segment will be explored in much finer detail.

My chosen area is .....

Current Score: .....

My strengths in this area:

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

4. ....

5. ....

What does excellence look like? What does a 10 look like?

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# Step 3 – Wheel Of Career (continued)

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## Your Goal

- What score do you want to achieve?
- What would give you a real sense of achievement?
- What would give you real satisfaction and personal gain?
- Specifically, what do you want to achieve?
- Is your goal SMART (specific, measurable, realistic with a timescale)

## What's going on now?

- What is your current score?
- What got you there?
- What is the reality of what is going on?
- What is really happening and how do you know?
- What are the symptoms?
- What happens regularly?
- What is the current standard?
- What's going wrong?
- What going right?

## Possibilities

Without discrimination:

- Assuming whatever you did was successful, what are all the possible actions are available to you?
- What are all the things you could consider?
- What is the consequence of not taking any action?
- What would happen if you considered a particular course of action?

## What will you do?

- What action are you prepared to commit to NOW?
- Write down at least 3 things you will commit to starting tomorrow
- How are you going to keep yourself on track?
- What reminders are you going to give yourself?

# Step 4 – Identifying your Time Wasters

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## Exercise:

- Using the statements below, tick the time wasters you feel reflect your working style.
- Select the top 3 time wasters you would like to eliminate from your working life.
- Decide on the counteracting action you will take
- Create a plan with clear timescales

## TIME WASTER

## IS THIS ME?

### Self Discipline

Never make To Do Lists

Never set myself goals/deadlines

Wander around and interrupt others for a chat

Low level of concentration, easily distracted

Try to do more than one thing at once

Get involved in everything

Make social calls regularly

### Cannot Say No

Find it difficult to delegate (or have no-one to delegate to)

Involved in everything

Too much paper

Poor administration

Forget things

Badly organised

Too much routine work

No system for reading

Slow at writing letters and reports

Lengthy unstructured telephone calls

No system for controlling telephone conversations

# Step 4 – Identifying your Time Wasters

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## TIME WASTER

## IS THIS ME?

### Ineffective Meetings

No agenda or timescales set

No clear objective agreed at the start

Wrong people

Stray off the subject

Can't get my point of view across

People don't listen

No conclusion or review of actions

Badly chaired meeting

Negative attitude

Systems and Procedures

Untidy desk

Messages not passed on/received

Don't file regularly

Not clear on the purpose of other departments

Not clear about my managers daily/weekly/monthly priorities

Always looking for things

Cannot decide which task to complete first

### Communication

I only think about the best way to communicate after the event

We are unaware of each other's communication style

Other departments don't seem interested

I never get a response

We all have different priorities

I haven't got time to take time to discuss issues at length

I assume others understand my intentions

# Step 5 – Planning

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## Monthly, Weekly and Daily Planning

Sometimes our more challenging goals can leave us feeling completely overwhelmed as they are just too big for us. If you are serious about working towards your bigger goals, breaking down activity into manageable chunks is key.

Once you have a clear picture of your End Goal, along with the associated Journey Goals, more detailed planning into your diary system can take place.

### Here is my 10 Step Approach:

1. Decide which projects will be the focus for the month.
2. Establish what time has already been allocated for regular commitments and adhoc projects within a particular month e.g. Tuesday and Thursday evenings for evening classes.
3. Establish what residual time is remaining for additional projects. Include the time you are prepared to use from early morning starts, lunch times, evening and weekends. Calculate the total amount of time in terms of hours available per week.
4. Decide what ratio of time will be allocated to the projects you want to focus on that month.
5. For each project establish an overall monthly task goal with weekly milestones.
6. Create a skeleton schedule for each week in the month on paper. Each week should run from Monday to Sunday, blocking out time already allocated, and highlighting when time is available.
7. For each project, plan daily activity each for each hour available within each week, setting a 'hourly goal/objective' i.e. by the end of this hour I will have achieved X. Using post-it-notes can be helpful as you can easily move activities around
8. Review all activity planned for the week and check actions are contributing to your journey and end goals.
9. Adapt your plan for the week ahead.
10. Adapt your plan on a daily basis.

# Step 6 – Is Change Possible?

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## Limiting Beliefs

### Establishing if change is possible

This exercise is designed to establish if the time is right for you to challenge limiting beliefs that have been holding you back.

1. Write down any beliefs surrounding your goal that might be holding you back.
2. Do you think it could be possible for you to shift your thinking around these beliefs?
3. Are you prepared to take action to move yourself forward?
4. Are you prepared to be accountable for finding the answers, which are right for you?
5. Is there any other support, apart from coaching, that you might need?
6. Do you feel that coaching support is appropriate for how you feel about this belief?
7. Who is supporting you to change this belief?
8. Who is helping you on this journey?

# Step 7 – Common Mistakes

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## Understanding common mistakes when changing career

### Common Mistake Number 1 - Giving up

Changing your career can be hard going. Your family and close friends may have serious reservations, and you might be asking your family to adjust their lifestyle if your income will drop for a while. My father once said to me that anything worth having is never easy, and in my life experience I think he is right. Keep focused, keep taking action and change will come.

### Common Mistake Number 2 - Being afraid to make change

Change can be hugely beneficial but can take us outside of our comfort zone, which can be scary. Making sure you have done your research will help allay worries and concerns your loved ones might have, and help you stay focused.

### Common Mistake Number 3 - Make a career change without a plan

Having a detailed plan is an essential part of a successful career change. It will keep you on track. Your plans should include actions to carry out comprehensive research, investment in new skills, and clarity around any costs involved.

### Common Mistake Number 4 - Failing to invest in your skills and knowledge

The more specialised your skills and knowledge the more employment and salary you can expect to secure. People who command high salaries do so because they possess some kind of subject matter expertise. In other words they have the skills, knowledge and/or experience to add real value to an organization. Investing in your skills and knowledge will be the key to becoming a niche expert.

### Common Mistake Number 5 - Expecting to change your career quickly

A career change usually takes at least six months, so you will need to be patient. Be tenacious; it will be worth the wait.

# Step 7 – Common Mistakes (continued)

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## **Common Mistake Number 6 - Changing a career because you don't like your job**

We can often confuse hating our career when it's our job that we don't like. There can be many factors that contribute to lack of job satisfaction, so take the time to find out why.

It may be the relationship with your line manager, the lack of work/life balance or simply the culture of the organization. Once you are clear about the root cause, you can explore potential solutions.

## **Common Mistake Number 7 - Taking the first career option that comes your way**

If you are serious about finding the career of your dreams, jumping (without thought) into another career will be draining of your emotional and energy resources and is unlikely to be taking you in the direction you really want to go.

If you travel west will you ever see a run rise? Knowing our direction is as important as taking action.

## **Common Mistake Number 8 - My mates are doing well in the field**

Just because someone you know is successful in their career does not mean that you will be. Changing career is all about finding a new role that is the right fit for YOU.

## **Common Mistake Number 9 - Choose a new career without raising your self awareness**

Without self awareness we limit our ability to make good life decisions.

The more aware we are of what 'floats our boat', the more accurately we can assess if a particular fiend would be the right fit for us.

## **Common Mistake Number 10 - Focusing our attention on what we don't want.**

We are often very good at articulating what we don't want but find it more difficult to establish what we 'do' want.

Focusing on the negatives can keep us in a trap and stops us moving forward.

Having a clear picture of the career is the first step. It is then far easier to identify what we need to do to get there. Once you start the ball rolling you have started your new career adventure.

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