

A 3-Step Process for Figuring Out Your Next Big Career Move

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Whether you've just joined the workforce, graduated college, or have been in the workforce for several years and are getting bored, **it's always the right time to think about your career.** The question of "What do I do now?" or "Where do I go next?" can be answered with a little introspection and time.

Follow these three steps to put you on the road to a career that fulfills you.

Step 1: Talk to Yourself Like an Interviewer

Ask yourself some of the same questions that a potential employer might ask, such as:

- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why do you want to leave your current employer?

The first question forces you to genuinely consider what you want to be doing in 5 years. Do you want to be making enough money to travel the world or have more kids? Do you want to be in upper management? Do you want to be running your own company?

The second question gives you some insight into the difficulties and challenges of your current employment. If the reason you're seeking other employment is to run away from current work stressors, consider the root cause of these stressors. Is it the environment? Personality clashes?

If you're running away from current turmoil at your job, you may not find greener

grass without first considering your needs.

Step 2: Find Your Inspiration

Inspiration can come from many different areas of life, both internally and externally. Before jumping ship from your current job, find a purpose that's bigger than you.

- **What are your goals?**
- **What do you want to stand for or live for?**
- **What are your passions?**

The answers to all these questions lie within you and are waiting to be unlocked.

Try these techniques to find your inspiration:

1. **Reflect.** Spend some time in quiet solitude, meditating on your purpose in life, going for a long car ride and considering your future, or talking with friends and those who know you best.
2. **Look at others whom you admire.** Who do you look up to? Why? Read stories of successful individuals who are in the same career field as yours or in a different one in which you'd like to be.
3. **Talk with friends and family.** The conversation, however, needs to go beyond the simple question of what you should do with your life. Ask for advice on how others have figured out where they're moving in their career and figure out how you can use their advice to chart your own territory.

Step 3: Take Action

Before you quit your job, taking steps to drill down into what you really want is important.

Aside from conversation and introspection, there are many things you can do to help you figure out your next career move:

1. **Brainstorm.** Come up with a list of ideas about how you can advance your career or move up the ladder. Consider grad school, tech school, additional training, starting your own business, taking on a second job, or any other idea you can muster.
2. **Go on job interviews. Applying to jobs before you're ready to make the jump can serve a valuable purpose.** You'll learn about what values, characteristics, and criteria you're seeking. In addition, these interviews can help prepare you to convey your own experience and assets to others.
3. **Volunteer or do side work.** Find an organization that might allow you to get your feet wet by volunteering or taking on side work. You'll gain valuable experience and also be able to generate a list of your likes and dislikes for your next position.

Figuring out your next big career move doesn't have to be stressful. If you give yourself enough time to consider the possibilities, you'll be better served than by making quick, rush decisions.

These three steps are the keys to discovering your next career move. Spend time in introspection, find your inspiration, and take action to figure out what you really desire and want to do. You'll be on the path to a meaningful career before you know it!