

CHAPTER 8: PUTTING THE STRATEGIES TO WORK

APPLYING THE CREATIVE ELEMENT USING DISCIPLINE:

This section introduces discussion and activities designed to get you to practice another creative element.

Discipline requires you to act consistently whether or not you feel motivated.¹⁶¹

The great artists often led messy personal lives. But when it came to their art and the creative process, they were highly disciplined.

START WITH A SIDE PROJECT

The aim of these projects is to discover if that idea you really love, can work in reality. If you think of this as a low-risk strategy, you can explore without the fear of failure. You'll also discover if this thing you love, continues to be loved, or becomes more routine once you have to do it over and over again. But you'll also discover if there are elements of the project that you want to explore further and could be revised. If you think of these ventures as side or pet projects, either within or external to your professional activities, you may find they take on a life of their own as you meet new people, move into different sectors and start to capitalize on new possibilities.

How do you spend your Saturday mornings?

A few hints to help you get started:¹⁶²

- Choose a project that excites you. Try something that has been germinating at the back of your mind and give it a go.
- Give the project a timeframe. Try something that you can start and finish in a month so you will stick with it and won't get overwhelmed by the uncertainty ahead.
- Produce something tangible through the project. Aim for an outcome so you can really explore what you are able to gain from the project and get others to give you feedback on it.
- Schedule time for it. Don't assume that you'll just fit it in with everything else on your plate. Make time and schedule it into your calendar with a clear beginning and end date. Also don't wait for the stars to align and everything to be perfect before you start.
- Start the project and really stay curious about what is happening. What parts do you love, are you challenged by, do you need more advice on, and which make you really feel excited and alive?

BEING EXPERIMENTAL: THE 'WHAT IF' SCENARIO

Another way of starting to take action on career transition is to think of this period as an experimental time, a time to explore possibilities and see where it leads you.

By framing this as experimenting it means you don't have to make a decision immediately, you can weigh up options, play with the ideas and decide if they are appealing.

As a means to safely start your career exploration, this will allow you time to decide on when you could abandon the existing job in order to follow the new one.

But what if you are in a current job that does not offer the flexibility to undertake a side project? Side projects could consist of networking in new forums, looking at internal roles in your current organisation that will give you new skills, or applying for temporary projects.

If you can reduce your time in your current role or have time outside of this role, it is common to set up a small scale consultancy. Think about a market need, match this to your skills set and put yourself out there. Basically you need an ABN, a website and the confidence.

The process may not be orderly or sequenced, it will be dynamic and provide unexpected opportunities but most importantly it will get you started.

This experimental approach will also

“Inspiration exists, but it must find us working.”
Picasso

“Inspiration is for amateurs”.
Chuck Close, contemporary artist¹⁶⁰

demonstrate your readiness to make the change. If you really want the change, then devoting space or carving chunks of time to create projects, go back to study, or meet new communities who will support your move, will be something you will welcome.

Explore dipping in by entering a playful and more experimental period where you will commit to ACT, DO then REFLECT.

Go back to the 'possible selves' activities and identify those roles or working environments that give purpose and meaning. Think of it as job dating so that you are in a better position to make more concrete decisions.

This period of acting can take a few forms depending on your personal circumstances and the stage in your transition. Roman Krznaric, author of *How to Find Fulfilling Work*, describes three forms.

Take a radical sabbatical & immerse yourself in an alternative world¹⁶³

Grant yourself a dedicated period for action-based projects.

- This could involve shadowing people in their work, or volunteering in an appealing organisation.
- By working part time you can ensure your concerns about finances are dealt with.
- Use your next annual recreation leave or take that accumulated long service leave or leave without pay.

Temporary Assignment¹⁶⁴

These small, low risk steps can lead to big results. With each step you become more confident, easing you along the career transition journey. You will not die wondering as you explore the new world.

- You don't need to quit on Monday morning and go where no one has dared to go. This

strategy allows you to manage your risk factor by branching out for short periods around your existing career.

- Again try shadowing, an internship, volunteering and/or a training course that can give you a taste of this alternative career. Even rethink how you can spend your Saturdays.

Conversational Research¹⁶⁵

- Talk to people from different walks of life that are engaged in the types of work you're considering. While obvious, this helps you work through all those questions about status, salary, working conditions and importantly gets you interacting with people who see the world differently to you.
- Shift out of the confines of your own worldview and your own peer group to those that have a different worldview to your own. This will bring you closer to the realities of this transition by hearing first hand the nuanced picture of this different life. It will also expand your network and this will expand your potential to get that new role.

THE BESPOKE CAREER

This is about exploring the idea of working for yourself or creating a career rather than looking for prepackaged jobs.

There's a growing trend to create startups that have these characteristics:

- Easy to start and easy to run, with no need for huge start up finance
- You can start this new job while you are still working in your old role
- It's flexible and simple, try things out and see what works
- You don't employ others or rent an office so the risk is reduced
- You can build and craft a career with a clear idea of your lifestyle design in mind
- You can make use of the low cost of start up technology.

Follow the same process as explored previously by taking action.

Look inward first

- Explore the self-reflective activities and seek to clarify your skills/strengths, values and passions, the environment you want to work in and the salary you want to make
- Consider what you want your day to look like and the lifestyle you want to design for yourself
- Examine your fears and honestly assess them. Are they real? How will you overcome them?

Look externally

- Who is out there that can be your cheerleader and support you?
- Get the networks going, join the groups that can help you and that you can contribute to.

Most of all - DO SOMETHING - EXPLORE - DISCOVER - ACT – then REFLECT and reassess where you are at with this accumulating evidence.

Don't get paralyzed by overthinking this process. Your bespoke career may not come together overnight.

Go to the Career Redesign website resource section to find references that could inspire you.

BUILDING A PORTFOLIO/SLASH CAREER

You may be the type of person who is excited about a number of topics and has the capacity to move between ideas, interests and roles with some ease. You don't like the idea of being restricted to one job, even if it's your favourite thing. If you have trouble answering the question "what do you want to do?" then finding ways to express your multiple talents and interests in a single career or role can be difficult.

A portfolio career means you are setting yourself up to undertake several activities. Not all are necessarily paid jobs, but together they add up to a fulfilling and rewarding career portfolio.

It could consist of part-time jobs like an interim, or temporary jobs, freelancing, contract positions, self-employment and non-executive positions.

It can also include unpaid pro bono, volunteer work, as well as spending time dedicated to personal and skills development.

It could mean doing something that is a second career and could turn into a personal business that while it may not pay as well, is something you have a natural ability at and enjoy like photography, writing or massage.

The term 'slash' refers to the multiple interests e.g. massage therapist/teacher/writer and can be defined by these 5 models:¹⁶⁶

- Money gig/Passion project. For example: Financial analyst/ Entrepreneur/activist
- Left brain/right brain. For example: Engineer/museum curator
- Mind/body. For example: Professor/massage therapist
- Writing/teaching/speaking/consulting. These four slashes go with anything
- Many hats, one job. Most small business owners fall into this category, but employees playing more than one role show up here as well.

The trend started when it was noted that older workers were staying in jobs longer on a part-time basis or taking on other kinds of work as part of their "worktirement".¹⁶⁷

It also shows a growing trend for older, experienced workers to share their experience as part of their 'encore career', particularly supporting non-profits in the areas of environment, education, poverty and health.

While it may occur during recessions, out of necessity, many are making the choice to create a fulfilling work/life blend. This popularity is evident in the midlife career age bracket, but it is increasingly seen also with younger age brackets, particularly mothers who want to supplement their income and intellect by working from home.

D.A.T.A Checklist for a Portfolio Career

Before you decide on this pathway consider some essential elements required for this approach to work and career.

Desires: Are you eager to reinvent 'work' and what it means for you?

- You are able to try on different careers, change directions and are comfortable with exploring roles.
- You are prepared to be on top of and be responsible for everything.
- You are prepared to invest time and money into building up your portfolio.

Abilities: Do you have a variety of skills and strengths that can be applied across roles?

- You are excited and realistic about the prospect of using different skills and abilities in different settings and can manage your time well.
- You can demonstrate that you have been paid for similar roles in the past and are confident you still have these skills and abilities.
- You can spot a trend and know how to tap into this.

Temperament: Do you enjoy variety and change?

- You want more control over the way you spend your time and can mix conventional and free thinking methods.
- You can embrace unpredictability and will enjoy a different mix of work and projects.
- You can communicate this approach effectively when seeking out paid work to enable you to maintain your lifestyle.
- You have weighed up the pros and cons and can manage the risks associated with this choice.

Assets: Do you have creative approaches that you are good at and want to explore?

- You will have the energy and time to create new networks as you move across different professions, sectors and types of people.
- You are able to deal with the income fluctuations.



- You are able to invest in your own training or overhead costs that may be incurred during the transition.
- You have looked at the various potential financial aspects of your portfolio and can make it work with a mix of freelance, self-employment and/or regular part-time work.

Review your D.A.T.A and determine if you're ready for a portfolio career.

Activity - Taking stock

Go back to your responses in the 'Inhibitors' section that includes discussion on fear, risk and challenges. This section asks you to consider your approach to embracing uncertainty and risk taking.

On a scale of 1-10 where are you at with each of the following:

Be specific. What issues are still to be investigated? Consider all the risks and write down what you need to do to manage, avoid or overcome these risks?

1. Will I have enough money?

0.....10 Ready to go

2. Do I have the necessary skills to perform the tasks required by my new direction?

0.....10 Ready to go

3. Am I worried about what others will think?

0.....10 Ready to go

4. Can I adopt a new identity with which I feel secure and which fits?

0.....10 Ready to go

5. Will my family, friends and significant others give me permission to make the changes I seek?

0_____10 Ready to go

6. Is there any other fears holding me back?

0_____10 Ready to go

7. What is my comfort level with allowing opportunities for change to unfold, even though I may not have all the information?

0_____10 Ready to go

8. What is my adaptive response to working through the questions and unknowns to move forward?

0_____10 Ready to go

9. What is my readiness to act without certainty of the outcome?

0_____10 Ready to go

10. What do I need to prioritise to enable me to move forward? List these.

Still not ready to jump?

Try this interim approach

Happiness Advantage or “Love the one you’re with”

Another myth that we often believe to be true: if you work hard, you will become successful and once you are successful, you’ll be happy. The only problem is that this formula is broken.

“The Happiness Advantage asks us to be realistic about the present while maximizing our potential for the future. It is about learning how to cultivate the mindset and behaviors that have been empirically proven to fuel greater success and fulfilment. It is a work ethic.”¹⁶⁸

The excellent reference by Shawn Achor builds an argument backed by ground-breaking research, that happiness and optimism actually fuel performance and achievement.

From the perspective of career transition is it applicable in a number of ways:

When you find yourself in a job or role that is not fulfilling, you need more than an escape plan. The ‘happiness advantage’ assists you to get valuable experience while still in these roles. Rather than grin and bear it, it’s about using these roles as a stepping stone to your next one. It builds on the work of Martin Seligman and helps us to consider our current roles in a new light.

It’s also a safety net. The financial risks of transitioning can be overwhelming and, for some, can result in inaction. It can also be a ready made network, a place to discuss and test ideas in an informal way.

The following seven principles help focus on values that can overcome obstacles, reverse bad habits and make the most of opportunities to reach our fullest potential, and are directly applicable to how we can transition across careers.

The Seven Principles

Shawn Achor has developed seven principles that are specific, actionable and proven patterns that predict success and achievement.¹⁶⁹

1. The Happiness Advantage

Because positive brains have a biological advantage over brains that are neutral or negative, this principle teaches us how to retrain our brains to capitalize on positivity and improve our productivity and performance.

2. The Fulcrum and the Lever

How we experience the world, and our ability to succeed within it, constantly changes based on our mindset. This principle teaches us how we can adjust our mindset (our fulcrum) in a way that gives us the power (the lever) to be more fulfilled and successful.

3. The Tetris Effect

When our brains get stuck in a pattern that focuses on stress, negativity and failure, we set ourselves up to fail. This principle teaches us how to retrain our brains to spot patterns of possibility, so we can see and seize opportunity wherever we look.

4. Falling Up

In the midst of defeat, stress and crisis, our brains map different paths to help us cope. This principle is about finding the mental path that not only leads us up out of failure or suffering, but teaches us to be happier and more successful because of it.

5. The Zorro Circle

When challenges loom and we get overwhelmed, our rational brains can get hijacked by emotions. This principle teaches us how to regain control by focusing first on small, manageable goals, and then gradually expanding our circle to achieve bigger and bigger ones.

6. The 20 Second Rule

Sustaining lasting change often feels impossible because our willpower is limited. And when willpower fails, we fall back on our old habits and succumb to the path of least resistance. This principle shows how, by making small energy adjustments, we can re-route the path of least resistance and replace bad habits with good ones.

7. Social Investment

In the midst of challenges and stress, some people choose to bunker down and retreat within themselves. But the most successful people invest in their friends, peers and family members to propel themselves forward. This principle teaches us how to invest more in one of the greatest predictors of success and excellence – our social support network.

The Science of Happiness

So what is happiness? Shawn Achor says talk to a scientist and they'll refer to it as 'subjective well-being', essentially the experience of positive emotions combined with deeper feelings of meaning and purpose.

Martin Seligman, the pioneer of positive psychology, has broken it down into three measurable elements: Pleasure, Engagement and Meaning. His studies have confirmed that people who pursue only pleasure, experience only part of the benefits happiness can bring, while those that pursue all three routes lead the fullest lives.¹⁷⁰

So it makes sense if we apply this to happiness at work. As the data shows, happy workers have higher levels of productivity and overall perform better in leadership roles, taking less sick days and basically enjoying higher job security.

For those skeptics out there who are thinking 'correlation is not causation', just hold on for a few paragraphs.

Thanks to strides in positive psychology research, authors say conclusively that "study after study shows that happiness precedes important outcomes and indicators of thriving ... In short, based on the wealth of data they compiled, they found that happiness causes success and achievement, not the opposite".¹⁷¹

Further, Shawn Achor believes happiness can improve our physical health, which in turn assists us to work faster and longer and hopefully this translates to being more productive. Research shows that unhappy employees take more sick days, staying home on average 1.25 days more per month or an extra 15 sick days per year.¹⁷²

Recent research has also indicated that happiness gives us a

chemical edge. Positive emotions flood our brains with the feel good chemicals dopamine and serotonin. It also assists with our learning by organising new information and keeping the information accessible longer, enabling us to retrieve it later on.¹⁷³

This clearly translates into the workplace. Is this why Yahoo has an in-house masseur and Google engineers are encouraged to bring their dogs to work? Are these PR gimmicks or have these smart companies determined that cultivating this type of working environment helps give small bursts of worker happiness, resulting in creativity and innovation and, of course, a better bottom line?¹⁷⁴

Tips to capitalize on the happiness advantage

Shawn Achor has outlined a number of ways we can improve our mood and raise our happiness levels at work each day.¹⁷⁵

Lift your spirits by

- ✓ Meditating – Monks who spend years meditating actually grow their left prefrontal cortex, the part most responsible for feeling happy.
- ✓ Finding something to look forward to – just thinking about your favorite stuff and anticipating future rewards can increase your endorphin levels.
- ✓ Committing conscious acts of kindness – random and planned acts of altruism decrease stress and contribute to enhanced mental health.
- ✓ Infusing positivity into your surroundings - think about surrounding your office with things that you know if you glance at them will give you a positive emotional hit. Or get 20 minutes outside in good weather to boost a mood. Similarly decrease the negative cues, watch less TV and avoid the news if this causes you distress.
- ✓ Exercising - you did not hear it here first! Endorphins are released with any form of exercise, so just do it!
- ✓ Spending money – on other people not on stuff. Really think about your spending habits, do you spend money on experiences with other people or just more stuff?
- ✓ Using your strengths – this book has explored at length the value of reconnecting with your natural or acquired strengths. Now it's time to share them, giving you a burst of positivity.

Check out Shaun Achor on Ted talks at www.ted.com

ARE YOU CLOSER TO FINDING YOUR CAREER SWEET SPOT?

Revisit the three circles of passion, purpose and rewards

Reflect on the questions raised in Chapter 1.
Have your responses changed?

CAREER SWEET SPOT



Diagram 9

REFLECTION: WHERE ARE YOU AT NOW?

Before we commence the 'ideas to action' planning process, review where you are at. How much closer are you to finding your career sweet spot?

Review the past

Use the tools contained throughout this book to enable you to review your past work history and come to terms with roles that have worked or not worked. Assess your desires, abilities, temperament and assets (D.A.T.A) as well as your achievements and current attitude to work.

Review your current job

Conduct a current D.A.T.A analysis based on your role and objectively look at the problems or opportunities presented. Think more broadly about what you've added to the organisation, what you have learned there and what you'd do if you had to leave tomorrow. What is your Plan B? Also consider

the techniques from the Happiness Advantage.

Review your unique value proposition

What is the unique and special value you are offering an organisation or could use to start your own initiative, project or business? Do you need to improve this offer and become cutting edge through exploring reading, training, interviewing and networking?

Review your Karma and give back

Are you willing to share with others, mentor and teach? How did you get to where you are, what are your achievements and how can you create more opportunities, in turn, giving back to others? Karma Rules!

Stop thinking, start doing

Planning ahead does not mean you have to have everything worked out. Just start by clarifying your goals and pulling together a personal set of objectives. If you can't write it down, visualise it and imagine what it could be. This could relate to the skills you want to cultivate, articulating the place you want to live physically, or the environment you want to be in. Take baby steps if you need to, but just start doing, and the 'how' you'll get there will start to be created.

Make a plan to change your life

Most of us know how to plan - we do it all the time at home and at work - the only difference is that this time the project is you.

Remember it's not a step by step plan for your whole life. It's about articulating and creating what you want and being able to respond when those opportunities come your way.

So now is the time to start - establish your goals, set objectives, then plan backwards to identify the steps needed to get from here to there.

Identify the resources required, who you will enlist to support you, and who or what can stand in your way. Set a timeline and start.

Not everyone has the ability to imagine the future, so if you struggle with planning, start with initial ideas on what you'd like to accomplish.

Say it out loud, talk to people and find ways to stick with this commitment you have made to yourself.

Check now if you have an Avoidance Plan in place

If the thought of undertaking planning is putting you off, be aware of this. If you have another unconscious plan underway, that is an avoidance plan, maybe you need to ask yourself a few more questions.

"Avoidance strategies usually come out of a reluctance to change, even if this means moving from an uncomfortable position. The status quo is very attractive, and the internal voices will tell you Don't rock the boat.... Better the devil you know.... The grass is always greener...."¹⁷⁶

By undertaking the reflections and activities in this book, particularly in overcoming inhibitors (Chapter 6), you can start to think through the cost of change and what you are willing to give up to have the career you said you wanted to actually happen.

You may also just need to find a way to keep your motivation and energy levels up. Is it a passive habit and inertia that is kicking in at this point? If you are starting to feel apathetic then setting goals and planning will help you refocus your attention.

The following section gives you a couple of approaches from the simple to the more detailed to get started on planning to drive you to action.

Activity – Create an Initial Action Plan

- Give each outer circle a name: strengths, passions, attitudes and opportunities
- In each circle write down 4 statements that express what you need to do next to deepen your understanding of that area of yourself. Make the statements as practical as possible.
- Highlight the ones that are the priority in each circle.
- Then list the four that are the priority across all the circles in the center.
- Consider this your initial action plan with your next steps defined.

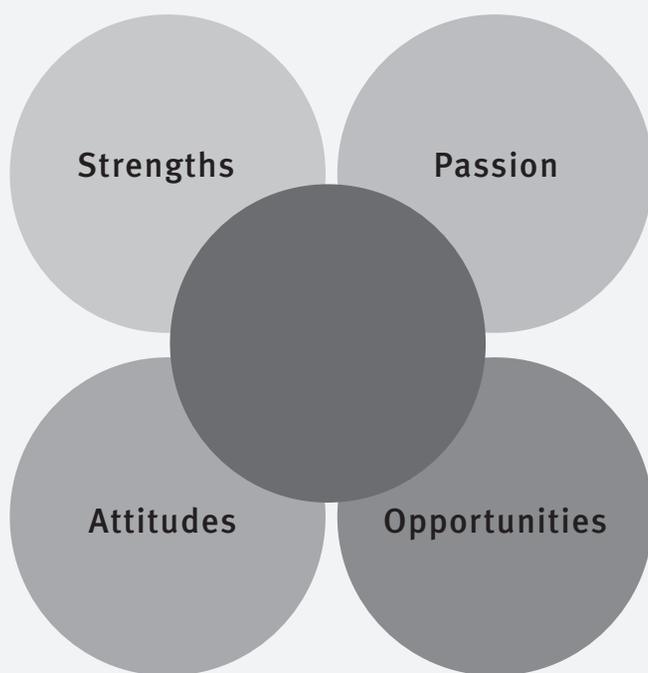


Diagram 9

Activity – Career Redesign Annual Plan¹⁷⁷

The initial plan assisted in giving you a big picture, so now work on a plan that you could accomplish over a year. There could be a theme for the year to help guide your choices. Make it inspiring.

You could also undertake this activity as a visual exercise and create a visual map of your career redesign plan. Consider collages, a pin board, a whiteboard or index cards.

Start with Big Goals

Something that would typically take 6-12 months to achieve. For example: saving for 3 months leave to explore a new role.

Projects

These are smaller tasks that could take a few months to complete – focus on those projects that will help you achieve your big goals.

Maybe it's getting your website up or writing 10 articles for the blog on a topic you are researching.

It could be something that you'll need to get more advice or training on, join a group to assist you further and importantly allocate time for.

Remember the side project question 'How do you spend your Saturday mornings?'. This exercise can help answer that question.

People to meet, spend more time with, and learn from

These are people you may know or not know yet. Join that meet up/ association or forum and get networking!

New skills to learn

Consider those skills that could be improved by completing a course, becoming an apprentice, volunteering, observing and engaging.

Problems to resolve

What are the key challenges that need to be resolved to help unblock this plan? Don't get stuck at the first or last hurdle.

Things to let go of

What needs to be let go of or completed to allow you to move forward?

Activity – One Page Action Plan

Convert your thinking into a one page plan

Do as many drafts as you need to get this to a simple one page. The idea is to prompt you with questions that you have already answered along the way through your journey in this book.

Aim of career plan:
List the outcomes you want to achieve

What are the key actions you will take?	What are the stages to complete the key action?	Indicators: How will you know you are on track?	Timeline: How long will this take and when will I start this?
What are the risks/challenges and obstacles I will face?	What is the proposed solution to these risks?		
Evaluate each outcome		What does success in each outcome look like?	What are you doing differently?

Deadline- I will launch my new career into the world no later than:

Check in point using the creative element of discipline as your guide

By exploring your approach to discipline what are you noticing?

Consider:

- Did you enjoy the activities section only to be distracted when it comes to developing a plan?
- Were you disappointed at any stage when you did not have a ready-made answer during any of the activities or reflection provided in the book? What will you do about this?
- Have you stayed engaged for as long as needed to move from exploration to discovery?
- What changes, however small have you instigated to get through your thinking or transition phases? What can you integrate into your approach to redesign?

FINAL TIME FOR REFLECTION

Now that you are convinced that starting is worth the effort, even if they are small steps, how will you know when to make that final career move? What signals or signs will tell you the time is right?

Clearly you will be the best judge of this, when the advantages outweigh the risks, when you know you are financially secure or something more intangible, like it just feels right.

Making sense of your exploration and discovery period is about interpreting the information, the changes and making meaning of this time.

There might be a trigger, like a pivotal moment or event, that catalyses your decision. You may just get to the point where you are paying attention to things that justify what you want to do, like looking for symbols or signs.

“During career transition, our sense of identity is fluid and shifting, and so are the frames we apply to our experience. People, places and things that might have gone unnoticed before become significant if they serve the cause of our reinvention.”¹⁷⁸

There will be a point when you step back from your career dilemma, reflect and have a moment of insight, where a new option becomes apparent helping to gel that new direction.

“Facts and intuitions, reasons and emotions come together, and we feel ready to seize the moment.”¹⁷⁹

This can be facilitated by a time out period, to step back and enable some reflection on your career future.

But a word of caution. “What we do in the period immediately following a time out determines whether we will be able to use that experience to effect real change or whether instead old routines will reassert themselves, leaving basic problems unresolved until urgency builds the next time around.”¹⁸⁰

We know that career transition can be a challenge for some, where the focus on fear and risk takes control. We also know that to act through

small steps will provide confidence towards that change we desire.

We may be lucky enough to have a defining moment where it all becomes clear and it propels us into that new career. But for most of us we'll not have that epiphany or dramatic moment.

We can reflect back on the ‘4 Dimensions of Life Change’ model and understand that our learnings and discoveries will become integrated into our redesign process. We can also seek to practice and improve our creative elements in an effort to assist us to put our career redesign strategy into action.

The key is to act, this is not based on hypothetical ideas, the action is based on your own self-reflection process, exploring what has challenged or inhibited you to move forward, creating strategies to overcome these, forming new networks and collaboration within a new rich community to support your passion for change. **Yes step back and reflect periodically but don't lose the window of opportunity that has presented itself now.**

MAKE THE MOST OF THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITY CHANGE PRESENTS

Redesign and self renewal is a process that allows us to get back in touch with our forgotten selves, explore long standing or new interests. So some final reminders and pointers to help you on your way to an amazing new redesigned career.¹⁸¹

Act your way into a new way of thinking and being

The whole message of this book is to ensure that you act by changing what you do. By exploring you will go down various paths that will give you feedback to what feels right. It's important to have a reflective period if you need to clarify what role and career you need to pursue, but the point is that you can't just sit and mediate on ideas, you must act by stepping into the space in a safe manner.

There is not one perfect job out there

So stop trying to find it. Explore the many roles you could be right for and, along the way, you'll find many possible identities that you'll want to test and learn more about. By failing to act, you are falling into the trap of hiding from yourself.

Allow yourself a transition period

Create a transition plan that recognises you'll go through a period of letting go, moving in and out of the neutral zone, until you launch into the new beginning. The transition period is bound to be messy and will have periods of difficulty and uncertainty but the alternative is to stay put in the wrong job or jump too soon.

Value small wins

The strategy of small wins acknowledges the incremental gains that will lead to profound and big changes. It may mean resisting the temptation to start by making a big dramatic change. This might seem appealing at the time but unless you are sure it meets all the criteria of a sweet spot moment, then you'll be back to redesign mode. You know that you are learning at a deeper level when you start to question which parts of your life besides your career also need redesign.

Create time for experimentation

Think about the projects that you can do that will help you get a feel for different work styles and roles. Extra curricular activities, side projects or temporary assignments can allow you to start without making a huge investment or binding commitment and still give you invaluable insights.

Break out of your circle of friends

Find people who you admire, respect, have the role you want, could mentor or teach you and can help

move you through transition. But don't expect to find them in the same circle that you associate with now. So get ready to create new tribes and networks and enjoy the benefits of time with others.

Don't wait for an epiphany

Because you'll be waiting a long time for this answer to be revealed. Career transitions can take time so don't waste it waiting for a catalyst for change. Take advantage of whatever life is sending your way and be open to the messages and opportunities.

Show Up

Think of the opportunities you have missed by taking yourself out of them. All our predictions of success and failure are simply our thoughts that have turned into beliefs, but we'll never have a true picture of all the factors. There is no way to guess how many career opportunities we miss out on by not giving it a go or showing up. So that also means being present and giving our career change our best shot.

Be Truthful

Being truthful in words and thoughts is the most powerful action you can take in career transition. Seemingly overwhelming problems have been transformed when we tell the truth about what we want in our careers and the trade-offs that may be required.

I wish you every success in your career transition. With each step of trying on new roles and identities and exploring projects and new tribes, you'll get closer to the career sweet spot you've dreamed of.

I welcome your feedback on this book and how it assisted your journey. These can be provided via the website www.careerredesign.com.au

