

Career IQ



Are You A Career Strategist?

Profound global economic and business changes continue to alter the world of work. Not only is the market demand for certain skills and career fields changing, but so are our roles and ways we will be managing our careers. The days of linear career planning have given way to career strategizing with emphasis on a multi-directional and probabilistic approach to career management. Career strategists focus on self-knowledge, trend spotting, forecasting, and optional goals. While many will continue to react to workplace changes, strategists will proactively, leverage their strengths and shift directions on demand.

Going forward everyone will need to become a career strategist. Here are several suggestions to help you begin.

1) Develop a clear picture of your career values and lifestyle needs.

This is critical because career values and lifestyle needs are key points of reference

for establishing goals and objectives, making decisions, and taking actions. Without this knowledge your efforts will not be strategic. Commit to reviewing values and needs whenever you anticipate change or are experiencing it.

2) Benchmark your strengths.

Assess your specialized skills and knowledge against the best in your field. If your job ended today, how well could you compete in the market? What would you bring to your next role? Would your skills be current? What would you be worth? Ensure your skills meet professional and industry standards.

3) Develop transferable skills.

Don't rely solely on skills required for your current role. Transferable skills can help you cross departmental and organizational lines. These skills are portable and move with you as you shift between projects, take on new roles or change careers. Transferable skills help you adapt with the evolving workplace and add value to your professional portfolio.

4) Scan and track trends.

What do you know about your organization, your industry, and your profession? What are the major industry, economic, political, and social changes taking place that will affect you? What are the opportunities and threats ahead? How will your profession be different in two years? In five years? What counts for success here? How will that change in the future?

5) Prepare for the widest range of career options.

Up is one way to go but there are other options (inside the organization) to consider, too. Talk to your manager or other valued advisors. Learn about moving laterally within the same level of responsibility; enriching your current job with more chances to learn and grow; and realigning duties with other priorities and future possibilities. Try to imagine at least one move you could make in each of these directions.

6) Think roles not jobs.

Instead of focusing on specific jobs, identify areas where you want to contribute your talents. Focus on roles that engage you and tap into your strengths. Remember jobs become obsolete while roles evolve with future needs.

7) Design a personal brand.

If given 30 seconds to define yourself, how would you describe your strengths, qualifications and experience? What would you say or write? Keep a portfolio of your skills, accomplishments and qualifications. Be ready to produce a customized marketing package.

DEVELOPING RESILIENCE

The Five Levels of Resiliency
by Al Siebert, Ph.D.

Resilience is essential in today's world. In today's workplace everyone feels pressured to get more work done, of higher quality, with fewer people, in less time, with less budget. In our personal lives things are changing so rapidly everyone must learn how to be change proficient, cope with unexpected setbacks, and overcome unwanted adversities.

Resilience is a process of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences. Resilient people overcome adversity, bounce back from setbacks, and can thrive under extreme, on-going pressure without acting in dysfunctional or harmful ways. The most resilient people recover from traumatic experiences stronger, better and wiser.

Everyone is born with the potential to develop these abilities. The five levels of resiliency are:

1. Maintaining your Emotional Stability, Health and Well-Being
2. Focus Outward: Good Problem Solving Skills
3. Focus Inward: Strong Inner "Selves"
4. Well-Developed Resiliency Skills
5. The Talent for Serendipity

The **first level** is essential to sustaining your health and your energy.

The **second level** focuses outward on the challenges that must be handled, it is based on research findings that problem-focused coping leads to resiliency better than emotion-focused coping.

The **third level** focuses inward on roots of resiliency--strong self-esteem, self-confidence, and a positive self-concept.

The **fourth level** covers the attributes and skills found in highly resilient people.

The **fifth level** describes what is possible at the highest level of resiliency. It is the talent for serendipity--the ability to convert misfortune into good fortune.

When faced with adversity it is useful to remember that:

- Your mind and habits will create either barriers or bridges to a better future.
- Resiliency can't be taught, but it can be learned. It comes from working to develop your unique combination of inborn abilities.
- The struggle to bounce back and recover from setbacks can lead to developing strengths and abilities that you didn't know were possible.

Learn more in Siebert's award-winning book, *The Resiliency Advantage: Master Change, Thrive Under Pressure and Bounce Back From Setbacks*

Visit the Resiliency Centre at <http://www.resiliencycenter.com/>

In closing, remember there are three types of people in this world:
People who make things happen
People who watch things happen
People who wonder what happened

Become a career strategist and make things happen!

Quotes

The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.

- George Bernard Shaw

Destiny is not a matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: it is not to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

- Willam Jennings Bryan

Stay on Edge

Continue your education to get the leading-edge skills you need. Intellectual stimulation is a powerful antidote to boredom and plateauing.

- Barbara Moses

Professional Development

Offered by McMaster's Centre for Continuing Education

- Computer Training Workshops
- MVP Managing with Vision & Proficiency
- Accelerated Business Courses
- Microsoft E-Learning

Visit their website at:
www.mcmaster.ca/conted/programs/profdev/
for full course listings and dates.

Helpful Resources

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us, by Daniel Pink

The 10 Laws of Career Reinvention - Essential Survival Skills for Any Economy, by Paula Mitchell

Balance Your Life & Work: How to Get the Best From Your Job & Still Have a Life, by A & C Black Publishers

How to Find A Job on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, My Space & Other Social Networks, by Brad & Debra Schepp

Luck Is No Accident: Making the Most of Happenstance in Your Life & Career, by John D. Krumboltz, Ph.D. & Al S. Levein, Ed.D.