

Broadening Horizons

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is a little like dying. With any change (for better or for worse), you lose something. It's usually helpful and healthful to figure out what it is you've lost, then allow yourself to feel angry and sad about it. Only then can you feel resolved about moving ahead, around, over, under or through the change.

4. Experiment with other change styles, starting with those that are most comfortable.

If you are a job-hunting Reasoner, gather your data first. Pore over Standard and Poor's for a list of companies where you'd like to work. Discover which locations have the highest income levels and lowest cost of living. Check out the specialties in your chosen field that earn the highest salaries. Then move to the Relater style to find out whether you'd like working for the company, at the job, in the area. Call friends who've been there, interview people in the field, get opinions of someone who's worked for the same firm.

Then make a Risker decision. Go for it. Jump. Once you know what you want, become a Refocuser. Prepare a great resume, get that interview, and call back until the job is yours.

5. Think about change using the 4R system.

Relive a time when you faced a similar change and the outcome was highly successful. Try to find something from that situation that can help you with the upcoming change.

Reverse your thinking. When you get blocked and can't think of a good way to handle a change, pretend the problem is reversed. For example, if you've decided you can't accept a job that pays less than \$20,000 a year, reverse it and say you won't accept anything for more than \$20,000.

What could happen from such an absurd stance? Only everything. You might then become aware of part-time jobs for \$20,000 that allow you time to develop your own consulting firm. You might discover a small research project that leads to an exciting field you've never heard of. A \$19,000 job might be so satisfying, you decide to avoid the rat-race of high competition and live a simpler, gentler life. Conversely, you might land a low-paying job with a small company that suddenly explodes with success and takes you

with it.

Risk new, off-the-wall approaches to change. Or risk doing nothing. Look at the change and decide what you'd really like to do about it. Then dare to do it. Following your innermost desires usually produces happy endings.

Reinforce yourself for confronting change instead of meekly allowing it to roll over you. Recognize and congratulate yourself, and your confidence will build for the next change that comes along.



NEEDLESS
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6. Push for different solutions by taking a poll.

Talk to four people about your transition. Ask your favorite professor, someone in the career to which you aspire, a fellow grad, and someone off the wall, such as your 7-year-old sister or even the spirit of your deceased grandmother. The ideas you glean from these opinions will broaden your options and help you avoid inbred thinking.

7. Immerse yourself in your chosen field.

Go to the library or bookstore and read every magazine, book and biography that's related to your interests. Inquire about affiliated clubs and associations, then attend their meetings and seminars. At parties, find people who share your interest. Eat and sleep the field to fully understand its current state.

8. Avoid the urge to head in all directions at once, or to make change for the sake of change.

Needless change can lead to disaster. All in one week, one M.B.A. student signed up for further training at a local college, asked a headhunter to find him a job in another city, proposed marriage to someone he'd known for three months, signed a lease on a new apartment and decided to take a trip to Mexico with his fiancée before conducting a "real" job search. Obviously, some of these changes are at cross-purposes and chaos will result.

9. Add to your list of jobs something entirely new and crazy that you know little about.

This will offer you the chance to discover new interests and push yourself to the limit. What if you got a job marketing pharmaceuticals even though your field is finance? You might discover a scientific side to your thinking. On the other hand, if you make a mess of it, you'll at least discover one direction you don't want to take.

10. Get started.

Make a list of your job search activities for each day of the week, such as phone calls to make, people to see, resumes to send out, research to conduct. Then stick with it.

The key to making any or all of these 10 strategies work is staying flexible. If you're offered a job you don't love, or one that for which you're not entirely prepared, consider it seriously. This will add to your experience and could lead you into an emerging field. And you may fall in love with the job as you get to know it better.

This period of your life has more potential than any you've experienced thus far. You're moving from professional, parental and institutional control to your own. Eventually, you'll find structure and comfort again when you're settled into a career. It will be different, but even better. You'll have had the experience of the next six months behind you. You'll have paid your dues. Then, too, you'll be able to tell next year's grads how to broaden their horizons by developing new options and staying flexible.

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