

THE MENTAL PHASES OF A CAREER CHANGE



Summary: Success looks different for everyone. While contemplating changing careers can be scary, if you make a plan and understand why you are making the change, it will be easier to see what you value in life.

When was the last time you had to make a big decision? Are you considering [changing jobs or careers](#)? The thought process behind thinking, planning, and actually making a change can be very intense and even debilitating for some. While this process directly applies with changing careers, it can be loosely applied to any big transition in life.

1st Phase: Fear of Uncertainty

Any big change is terrifying. You never know what is going to happen or what to expect. This fear stops many of us from taking the plunge into changing careers. Try to figure out [what is making the decision so difficult](#) by making a list of your fears. These fears may be not making enough money, not being successful, no one liking what you create/make, or having to do something you don't want to do. Next to each fear, write the fear as a question, such as "how will I make money if I quit my job" or "is what I create making me look like a fool". Highlight the main reason for the uncertainty. In the above examples it would be money and look.

2nd Phase: Overcome Uncertainty

Use your uncertainty questions as a way to gain confidence that things will work out by seeing opportunities in them. Make a list of possible answers to your questions. For the money question some possible answers might be to cut expenses, find an additional source of income with another job or temp position, offer up an amount of time where you work for free with your dream company with the option of being hired if things go well, and to attend industry events to network with people as potential employers or clients.

3rd Phase: Embrace Fear and Make it an Asset

Once you know what your fears are and have identified steps to overcome them, you are [ready to take action](#). View life as an experiment where not every decision is the right one. There will be times of trial and error where the risks don't work out but as long as you keep moving forward, things will turn out in the end. Success is what you define it as, not how others define it. The things you value in life may not be lots of vacations and designer clothes if it means you can work every day at a job you love. Don't hold yourself and your expectations to what others have.

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