

CAREER CORNER



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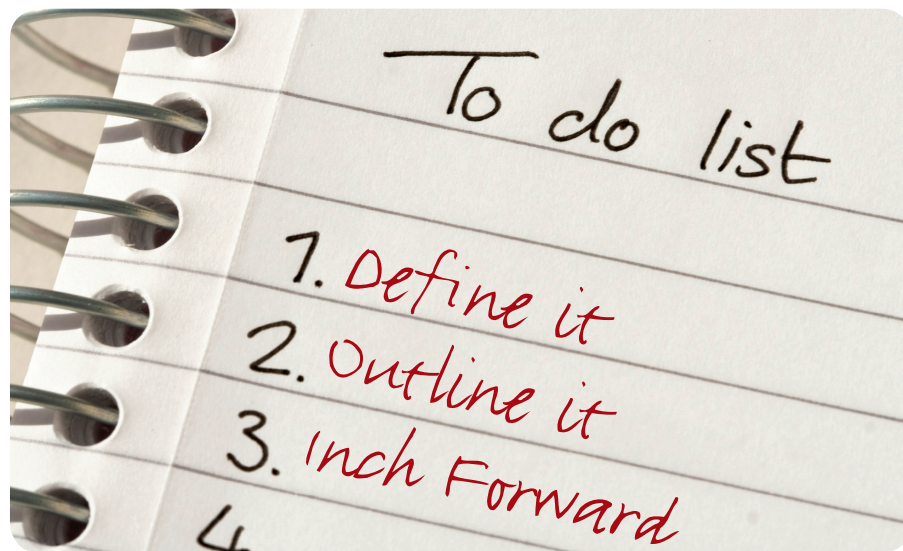
Underemployed? Here Are 3 Steps to Get You Unstuck

Effecting change takes energy, focus and persistence, and changing jobs is no different. Even thinking about changing jobs can be so overwhelming that you find yourself putting it off, settling for a job that you've long ago outgrown.

Many people delay starting a job search because they perceive their "switching barriers" to be too high. What's a switching barrier? It's any thought that stops you from chasing your dreams, such as:

- > **I don't have the necessary training or credentials.**
- > **There are no suitable jobs near where I live.**
- > **I am over- or under-qualified for the kind of job that I want.**
- > **I don't have time to interview.**
- > **There's no guarantee that I'll like the new job better.**

If you're reading this column, then I'm certain you have significant career goals and aspirations. I'd like to ask you to pause here and ask yourself a serious question: What have I done lately to chase my dreams? If you haven't done much to move your career forward, here are three simple steps to get you unstuck.



Define It

The first step toward achieving any dream is to clearly define it. Write it down, preferably someplace where you will see it. I keep a bright pink index card in my wallet with a short poem written on it that reminds me of my dreams. Every time I pay for something, I see the edge of that bright pink index card. I may not always read it, but I am reminded of it and that helps me keep my dreams top of mind.

Outline It

The second step is to make a list. It doesn't have to be fancy, orderly or even reasonable. You can whittle it down and make sense of it later. For now, just write down all of the possible ways you might get closer to your dream job. You might need to conduct informational interviews, research target companies or even go back to school. Write down everything that comes to mind, large or small.

Inch Forward

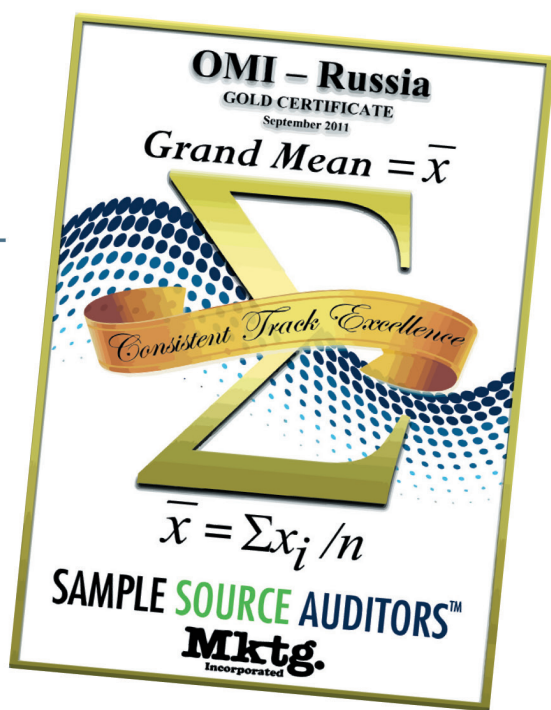
Forget quantum leaps. Pick the smallest, easiest item on the list and do it. That's right, leave the heavy lifting for later. Just take one small step forward and celebrate your progress. I'm no psychologist, but I know firsthand that every major change starts with just one step, followed by another, and then another. No matter how small the step, moving forward is the only way to get unstuck.

Consider the words of Eleanor Roosevelt: "It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan." Wishes are for birthday candles and pennies in a fountain; plans are what move people forward.

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