

How-To Know It's Time to Make a Career Change



If there's one thing that's constant in this day and age, it's change. And it's something that most people have a hard time with. The crazy thing is that it inevitably happens to all of us, yet we resist it. Our brains are hard-wired to tell us that there is safety found in predictability and routine. The unfortunate part is that if you refuse to change, you end up stagnating, get bored and your [productivity suffers](#). This is especially true in the workplace. The bottom line is, change can be good a thing if you're no longer happy in your current post.

It's Time for a Change if You're Bored to Tears or Overwhelmed

In order to be your most productive at work, you need to be challenged in the best ways possible. When you're bored, you aren't being challenged enough and conversely, if you find yourself overwhelmed, you either have too much on your plate or the job you're expected to do might not be something that fits your skillset. Pay close attention to symptoms of both stress and boredom. If they show themselves on a regular basis, it's probably time to look for something different.

If Your Mind Wonders, It's Time to Move On

Do you ever find yourself sitting at your desk staring off into space and thinking about what it would be like to be anywhere but where you are? This is an obvious sign that you're no longer happy with your current situation. If this goes on long enough, you might even start to complain to family, friends and even colleagues about what's missing. If this is the case, you'd best take decisive action, or someone else might make the choice for you.

No One Wants to Feel Underappreciated

When you started your current job, you were eager to share your thoughts and ideas with your colleagues and superiors. They even asked for your input on important decisions. But now you feel like everything you have to say falls on deaf ears. And what about that overtime you put in to meet a critical deadline? No one acknowledged your efforts or thanked you for all your hard work. It sucks when this happens. Whether you're simply not a good fit for the culture or you actually are being walked on, take it as a sign that there are greener pastures somewhere else.

If You're Constantly Being Told to Work on Your Weaknesses, Adios

Individual reviews are the norm in the workplace these days. We all dread them, but our hope is that they go well. That's not always the case unfortunately. If you're consistently being told that you need to strengthen this, that or other thing, it might not be worth beating yourself up or feeling inadequate just to make other people happy. Of course, constructive criticism can be useful, but if it's to the point where you feel like your efforts aren't good enough or you're just being berated, probably time to head for the door and find a better fit.

You're Unhappy

It's a simple fact that if you don't enjoy what you're doing, you probably don't do your best work. People that love their jobs derive happiness from the process of completing projects and accomplishing goals. Sure, they might be motivated by a promotion or a bonus, but they truly enjoy the journey of getting there. If you find the work you're currently doing to be laborious and dreadful, what the heck are you still doing there? It's time to consider some other options.

Have the Courage to Make a Change

Maybe you can identify with some of the symptoms above and know in your gut that it's time to do something else. That's only the first step though. Having the courage to act decisively and follow through is another story. Because of the way we are wired to think, most people are hesitant to take a drastic step because doing so involves uncertainty and going outside their comfort zone. That's ok, no one ever said change was easy. But you have to ask yourself the question, "can I really expect different results if I keep doing the same thing?"

As much as you might not like it, change is something you're going to have to deal with. Sometimes your hand is forced and you don't have a choice except to change. But what about being your own instigator for change? Scary? Sure. Dealing with unknown? Ditto. Just ask any successful person you know and they will tell you that at some point in their life, they took a risk that allowed them to become who they are today. In fact, they probably failed many times along the way. But in the end, failure isn't the opposite of success, it's part of it. So, if you notice any of the signs discussed above, take a leap and make a change. It doesn't even have to be a big step to start. Just be open to learning of other opportunities to see what your options might be. Things will start coming your way then and you can figure out the next step. Even if it doesn't work out right away, you'll set yourself on a trajectory to achieve the things you really want.

I am a [Regulatory and Quality Recruiter](#) that helps people make career changes in the Bay Area. If you are interested in making a change in the [Life Sciences industries](#), contact me, Jeff King at (541) 639-3501.