

# The 6 Steps to Your Ideal Career or Business!



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# The 6 Steps to Your Ideal Career or Business!

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# The 6 Steps to Your Ideal Career or Business!



## Other Career Options:

- Be Your Own Boss: Turning Experience into Free-Lance or Contracted Opportunities
- Education & Training for a New Career

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## The 6 Steps to Your Ideal Career or Business!

Maintain a Positive  
Attitude



### ***Step 1:***

***Maintaining a Positive  
Attitude during a Job  
Change or Career  
Transition***

# Managing Dramatic Change in Your Life

## The Speed of Change

The speed of change is accelerating rapidly. To give you a sense of this, the following research has been compiled *by Karl Fisch, Scott McLeod, and Jeff Brenman in the videos entitled “Did You Know?” and “Shift Happens”* (distributed via YouTube.com; accessed November 2009). This research on future trends was originally provided to teachers in Colorado so that they could prepare students effectively for the careers of the future.

### ***Technology & Information:***

- The first text message was sent in 1992.  
Average number of text messages sent by American teens per month: 2,272.  
Brady James, from LA, CA sent 217,541 text messages in March 2009.
- 200 billion emails are sent per day; 90% spam.  
Total sent/received daily exceeds the population of the planet.
- By 2013, a supercomputer will be built that exceeds the computational capabilities of the human brain. By 2049, a \$1,000 computer will exceed the computational capability of the entire human species.
- 1 trillion web pages are now available. More information will be generated this year than in the previous 5,000 years combined.
- John McCain raised \$11 million for his Presidential campaign in February, 2008. President Obama held no fundraisers, but raised \$55 million via online social networks in the same month.

### ***Employment:***

- The Top 10 in-demand jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004.
- The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that today's graduates will have 10 to 14 jobs by the age of 38.
- 25% of workers have been with their current employer for less than 1 year.  
50% of workers have been with their current employer for less than 5 years.
- Technical information is doubling every 2 years.  
For students starting a 4-year technical degree, 50% of what they learn in the first year of study will be outdated by the third year of study.

## **Reactions to Dramatic Change, Job Loss, Job Change, or Career Transitions**

### ***Reactions to Dramatic Change:***

There are many types of dramatic change that each of us may face in our lives. One person's reaction to dramatic change may be different than that of another. For those of you who thrive on change, the facts presented in the YouTube.com video clip may be exciting and stimulating. For others, they represent a pace and magnitude of change that is uncomfortable, to say the least.

### ***Reactions to Job Loss, Job Change, or Career Transitions:***

In a tough economy, a major change for some may be the loss of a job. While a job loss can be viewed as a challenge that opens up new opportunities, many associate job loss with strong negative emotions. It is natural to have a variety of feelings. Most of us experience a roller coaster of emotion.

There are many "stress reduction" strategies which help to address the typical day-to-day stressors that we encounter during our busy lives. However, a job or career change can trigger a variety of unique reactions that make it very difficult to minimize stress and maintain a positive attitude during a transition.

### ***Strategies to Maintain a Positive Attitude:***

Maintaining a positive attitude during a job or career change is a critical factor in creating a smooth transition. Without a positive attitude, it is difficult to consider new and exciting opportunities, network with friends and associates, or present yourself or your previous experience effectively in your resume or an interview.

In Step 1, we review some of the factors that influence how individuals respond to dramatic change, in general, and to a job change or career transition, in particular. We provide a variety of strategies to assist job seekers in reducing stress so that they can maintain a positive attitude during the transition process.

***What are the greatest concerns you are facing in your life right now?***

Concerns:	How do you feel about it?	What can you do about it?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

***Check with your local Workforce Development Center or Community Services Organizations for information on programs and services for eligible individuals to address concerns related to personal needs such as childcare, financial assistance, food, housing, utilities, transportation, counseling, employment services, GED, writing, reading, math proficiency, legal services, or services tailored to individuals with disabilities, veterans, or seniors.***

## Handling the Emotional Impact of Change

Put a ☒ next to each of the emotions or feelings that you are experiencing now or have experienced during times of dramatic change:

Shock	Relief	Euphoria
Negative	Tired	Exhausted
Low energy	Depressed	Sad
Angry	Foggy	Forgetful
Irrational	Irritable	Cranky
Crying	Happy	Aches and pains
Headache	Grief	Digestive upset
Sleep disturbances	Ambivalence	Appetite changes
Susceptible to infection	Pressured	Low self-esteem
Insecure	Worried	Scared
Stressed	Anxiety	Frustrated
Fatigued	Bored	Nervous
Moody	Difficulty concentrating	Defensive
Self-hate	Tense	

**Other feelings you want to add:**



# Factors Influencing Your Reaction to Life Changes

## **“Externally Imposed” versus “Self-Directed” Change**

“Externally imposed” change occurs when someone else decides it is time for you to make a change. “Self-directed” change occurs as a result of your own wishes, dreams, or desires. Most people are more comfortable with self-directed change since they are choosing the change and therefore, feel more in control.

### **“Externally Imposed” Change**

The universe, the organization, or someone else decides it is time for you to make a change.

### **“Self-Directed” Change**

Change evolves as a result of an assessment of your needs, dreams, and desires.

## **Definition of “Responsibility”**

**“The ability to choose your own response. What matters most is how we respond to what we experience in life.”**

Stephen Covey, Motivational Speaker & Author  
(*“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,”* Simon & Shuster, 1989)

## **Questions:**

**What were the most significant changes that you experienced in the past year?**

**Were those significant changes externally imposed or self-directed?**

**How did you react to those changes?**

## Past Experience with Change

Change management skills are strengthened through experience. Those individuals who have experienced numerous job changes will have stronger change management muscles than those who have stayed in the same job for many years. You are likely to have an easier time managing transitions if you have had similar experiences in the past.

**How much experience do you have with change:**

- **Number of homes you have lived in?**
- **Number of states you have lived in?**
- **Number of jobs you have held?**
- **Number of different job titles you have held?**
- **Number of different companies/organizations for whom you have worked?**
- **Number of different industries in which you have worked?**

**Have you made a job change or career transition in the past?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**

**If yes, what was the outcome of that change or transition?**

**If the outcome was successful, was there anything that you did, at that time, which assisted you in getting that successful outcome?**

## Style Preferences

Some of us thrive on change, while others avoid it at all cost! Two individuals, in a similar situation, can have very different reactions to change based upon their work and life style preferences. There are a variety of research-based assessment tools, used by millions of people, which support the idea that individuals react to and manage change differently depending upon their preferences.

Compare the concept in the left column with the concept in the right column.  
Put a ☒ next to the characteristic which best describes your preference, the one on the left or the one on the right.

Do you prefer this....	or....	This.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Considering possibilities for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing the present situation
<input type="checkbox"/> Focusing on ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focusing on tangible tasks and facts
<input type="checkbox"/> Being innovative or imaginative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Following standard procedures
<input type="checkbox"/> Changing the current situation because you are easily bored when things stay the same	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining consistency and stability
<input type="checkbox"/> Being spontaneous, flexible	<input type="checkbox"/>	Being steady, systematic, methodical
<input type="checkbox"/> Keeping situations open-ended to allow for last minute changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling more comfortable when situations, projects, and things are finished or complete
<input type="checkbox"/> Living or working with a less structured schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	Living or working with a structured schedule
<input type="checkbox"/> Adapting to new situations easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not deviating from the plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Having life be full of action and activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Having life be consistent, predictable
<input type="checkbox"/> Making quick decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patiently thinking through all of the options to make a well-thought out decision

If you checked more responses in the left column than the right column, you may be more comfortable with change, in general. However, if you checked more responses in the right rather than the left column, you may be less comfortable with change, particularly externally imposed change.

**“There is no sin punished more implacably by nature than the sin of resistance to change.”**  
Anne Morrow Lindberg,  
American Writer & Aviation Pioneer  
([http://thinkexist.com/quotes/anne\\_morrow\\_lindbergh](http://thinkexist.com/quotes/anne_morrow_lindbergh);  
accessed June 2010)

## Shifting Perspective from Long-term Employment to “Self-Employment”

One major shift in perspective is to stop expecting that an employer will provide long-term employment during your career. With the average job lasting between two and three years, we need to change how we view ourselves in relation to a job/career.

### ***You are Self-employed:***

A question for you to consider before you begin your journey is: Do you consider yourself self-employed, an entrepreneur, or an owner of your own business? Consider it. All of us **are** self-employed whether we perceive it that way or not.

### ***Customers, Products & Services, Changing Needs, Exchange of Value:***

We each have a **product or a service** that we deliver to some **customer**. Your customer could be your boss, your co-workers, internal departments in your organization, or an external customer. So, as an employee/business owner, you are providing a product or service to a customer **in exchange for something that you consider valuable** (which is, for most people, salary and benefits). But, if your **customer's needs change**, the need for your services may change as well.

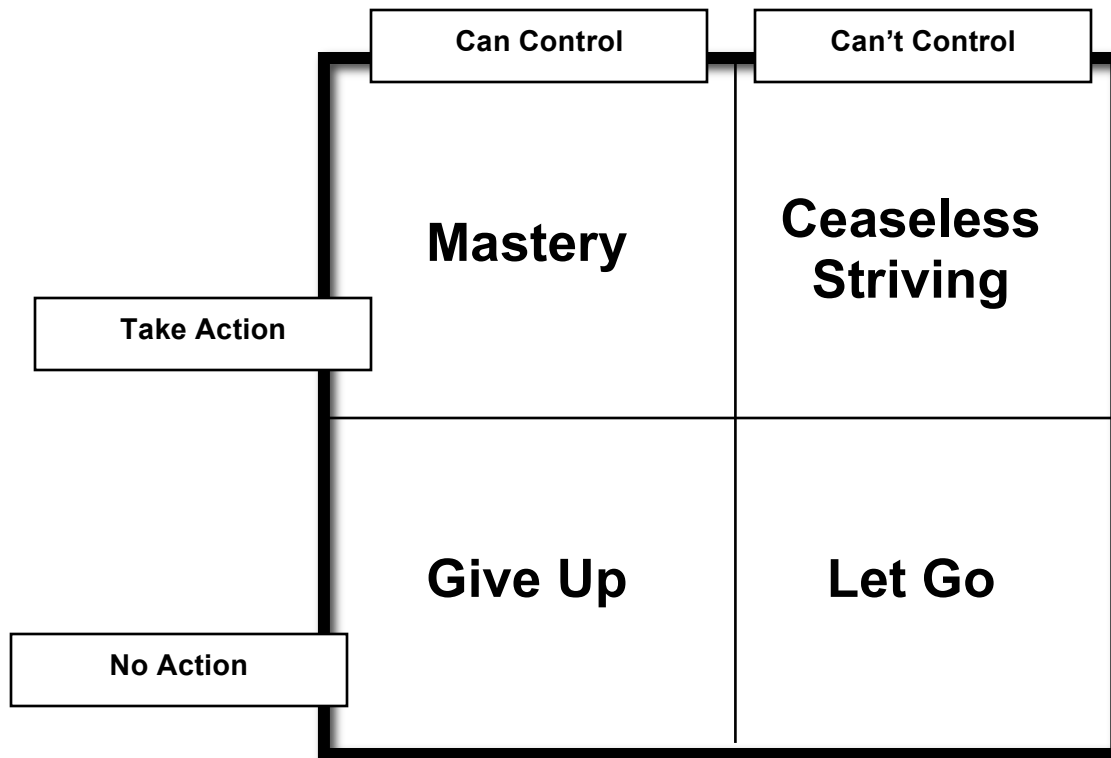
### ***Self-Directed and Proactive Owner of Your Future:***

The good news is that by proactively planning and managing your career, you can move from being dependent on a company for your future, to being a self-directed and proactive owner of your future!

**An “intrapreneur” is a person, working inside an organization (traditionally called “employee”) who provides an innovative product or service to a customer and, in exchange, gets something of value (usually salary & benefits).**

Howard Haller, coined the term “Intrapreneur” in the book, *Intrapreneurship Success*, 1981

## Strategy to Manage Dramatic Life Changes



Adapted from "*Managing Personal Change*",  
by Cynthia D. Scott, PhD., M.P.H. & Dennis T. Jaffe, Ph.D.,  
Crisp Publications

To stay in **Mastery**, you need to take action on what you can control. The only things in life that you can control are your **attitude and your actions**. So the question is: What is your attitude about the situation and what action can you personally take in this moment related to this situation? If the answer is that there isn't any action that you can take, then you have to let it go.

- How much experience do you have with making changes in your life?
- ♦ Do you enjoy change?
- ♦ In the past, what strategies have you used to stay in mastery and maintain a positive attitude during times of dramatic change?

## Managing Your Reactions to a Job Loss, Job Change, or Career Transition

### Reactions to a Job Loss, Job Change, or Career Transition

There are many types of dramatic changes that each of us may face in our lives. However, in a tough economy, a major change for some may be the loss of a job. While a job loss can be viewed as a challenge that opens up new opportunities, many associate job loss with strong negative emotions. It is natural to have a variety of feelings. Most of us experience a roller coaster of emotion. After losing or changing jobs, you may feel:

- ***Loss of professional identity:***

Individuals in our culture identify strongly with their job title and their career. When a job or career is lost or changed, your sense of identity or self-esteem may change as well, at least temporarily.

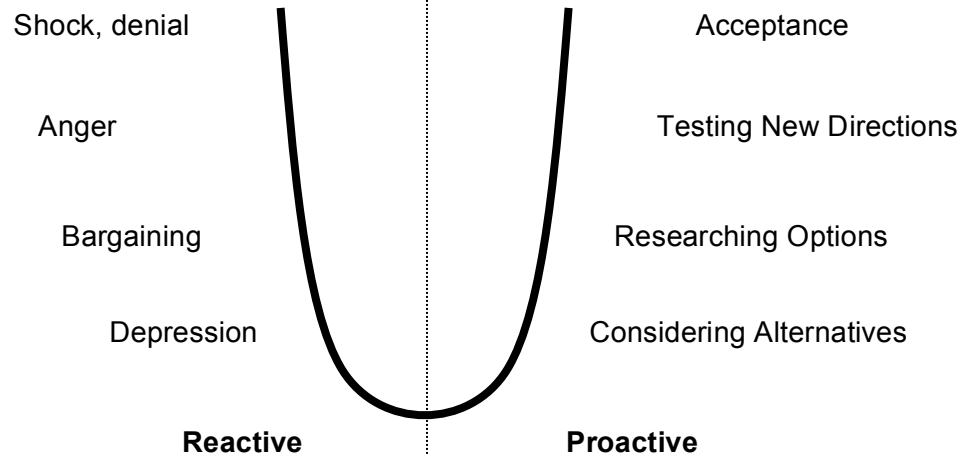
- ***Loss of a social network:***

When your social life has been strongly linked to a particular job, the feelings of loss may be even greater. Many ongoing work friendships are suddenly halted. Old friends and colleagues may not call because they feel awkward or don't know what to say. Often when work and social activities mix (company picnics or dinner parties), the job loss or job change can be hard for other family members as well.

- ***Increased personal, family, home, and financial stress:***

For many, a job loss or change can trigger concerns about stability in an individual's personal, family, home, and financial life.

## Loss of Professional Identity & Social Network



### Reactions to Receiving Catastrophic News Adapted from the work of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

#### The Loss Curve:

Psychologists have found that people often have an easier time dealing with loss if they know what feelings they might experience during the change process. The concept of different stages occurring in reaction to catastrophic news was first introduced by Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in her book, *"On Death and Dying"* (1970, Collier Books). Kübler-Ross's work originally applied to people receiving the news of a terminal illness. However, later research suggests that these stages may also describe the emotional process that some people experience after other types of catastrophic personal loss, such as the loss of a job or income. (Reference: "Beware the 5 Stages of 'Grief'" Editorial, TLC Group, <http://home.windstream.net/overbeck/grfbrf13.html>, accessed 6/2010). These stages, which may not occur in order, include:

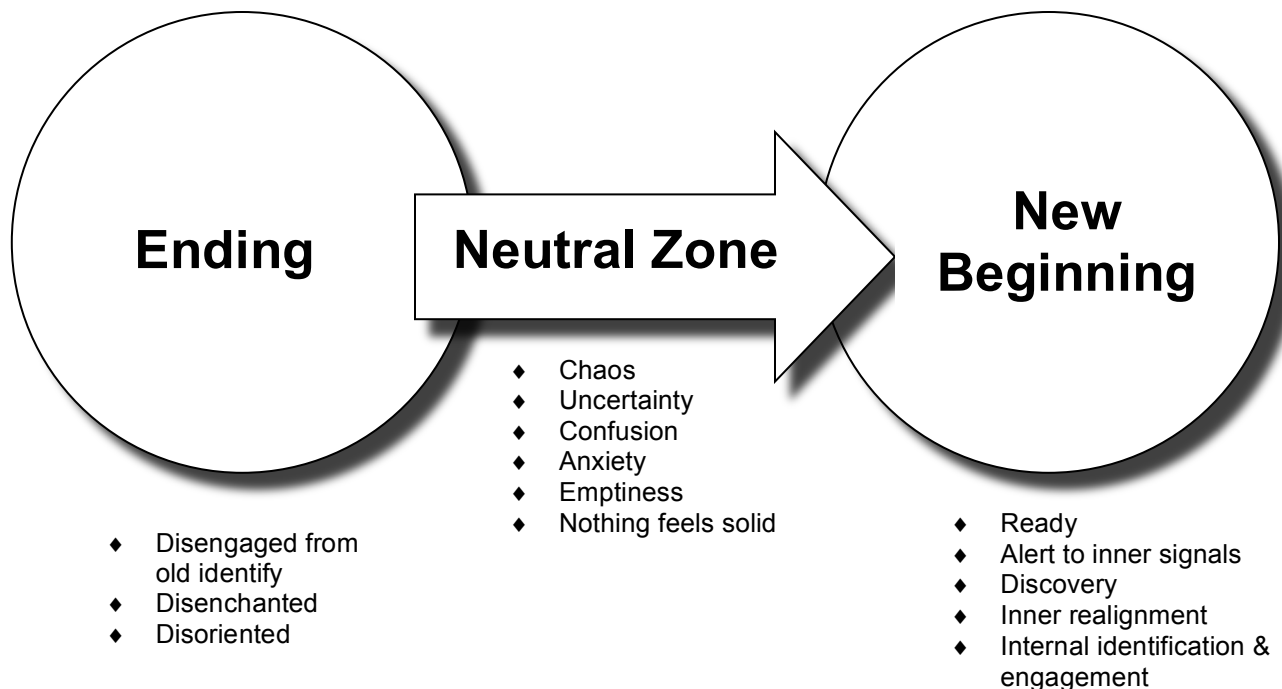
#### Reactive Phase:

- **Shock, denial:** You cannot believe that the loss is true. The denial allows you to pretend that nothing serious has happened. This stage is sometimes followed by or combined with relief that the burden is lifted and opportunity may await.
- **Anger:** You blame those you think may be responsible, including yourself.
- **Bargaining:** You try to figure out some way to make a deal so things can go back to the way they were.
- **Depression:** You may feel depressed about what happened or what might happen (i.e., your fears about finances, future job prospects, security, or status).

#### Proactive Steps to Acceptance:

- You come to terms with the loss and get the energy and desire to move beyond it and consider new alternatives, research options, and test new directions.

## Loss of Professional Identity & Social Network



### The Ending, Neutral Zone, New Beginning

Which stage of the Transition Process you are in now?

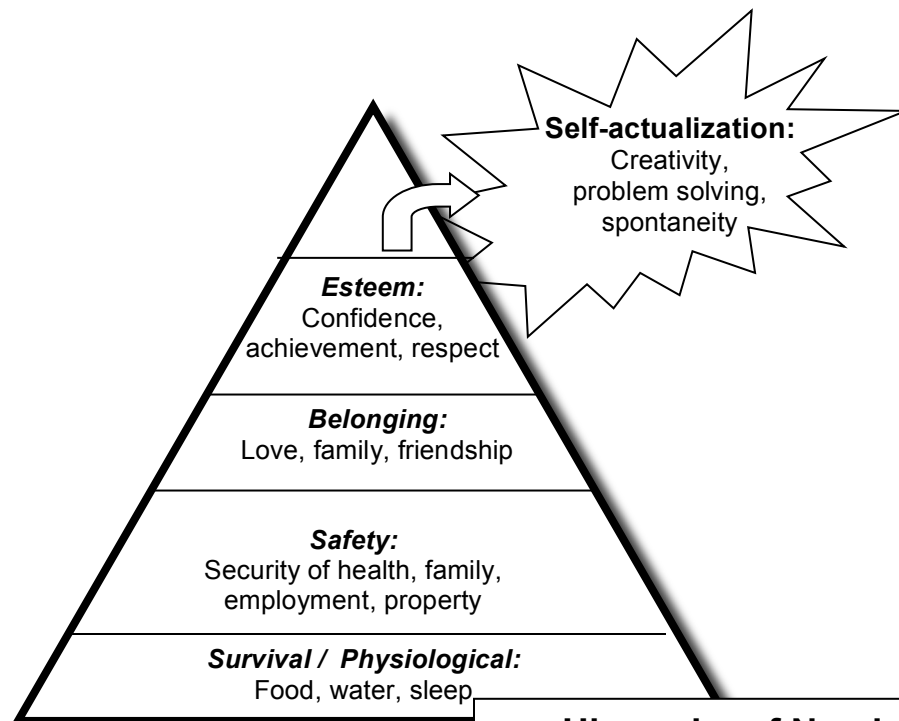
#### Transition Stages, by William Bridges

(*"Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes"*, Da Capo Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2004).

If you are experiencing wide mood swings following a job loss, job change, or career transition, you are not alone. Often, people go through a variety of emotional reactions to change. William Bridges is a leading author and authority on managing personal transitions in life. Bridges suggests that following the loss of a job, you may pass through three overlapping phases: the Ending, the Neutral Zone, and the New Beginning. During the Ending, you disengage from your old identity, the identify you held about yourself in your last job. In the Neutral Zone, you are between two ways of doing and being, having lost the old sense of self and not yet having found a new sense of self. The New Beginning stage occurs when you create a fresh, new identity based on your new circumstances.



## Increased Personal, Family, Home, and Financial Stress



**Hierarchy of Needs,**  
by Abraham Maslow, Psychologist  
(*"Motivation and Personality,"* 1954)

Individuals who are happy with their work often feel a sense of safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. The loss of a satisfying job could trigger a shift in focus from the need for self-actualization to the need for safety and survival. This shift can occur as soon as the job loss occurs or the shift may occur when severance packages, savings, or unemployment appear to dwindle. The fear of survival can inhibit the ability to be intuitive and open to new opportunities. It is critical during a job change or career transition to do whatever you can to minimize the fear of survival and maximize the ability to stay intuitive, open, and creative.

### **Strategies to minimize the fear of survival and maintain a positive attitude (circle all that apply):**

- Sign up for unemployment compensation, if eligible.
- Access community services, if eligible.
- Maintain your company health insurance or obtain another plan, if available.
- Eliminate unnecessary expenses.
- Consider short-term cash flow options.
- Participate in a Job Club or join a support group.
- Contact a professional counselor, if it would help ease the stress.

## Strategies to Manage a Job Loss, Job Change, or Career Transition

Circle the strategies below that you could use to manage this change effectively:

- **Acknowledge the Pain:**

- Pretending that everything is alright can only work for so long. Eventually, the reactions to the loss will catch up with you, physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- Recognize that physical symptoms of loss can include sleep disturbances, digestive upsets, head and body aches, lowered concentration, reduced energy level, and an increased vulnerability to infections due to suppression of the immune system.
- Let yourself be angry, but channel your anger appropriately through exercise, support group participation, or professional therapy.

- **Accept the Situation:**

- Surrender to it. Stop struggling to escape it. Be kind to yourself.

- **Reflect and Evaluate:**

- Find a regular time and place to be alone, to meditate, to listen to your intuition.
- Begin a log of Neutral Zone experiences:
  - What am I thinking about?
  - How am I feeling about the situation?
  - What puzzling or unusual things are happening?
  - What decisions do I wish I could have made?
- Write your autobiography. Getting in touch with the past helps to clarify the future.
- Take this opportunity to discover what you really want.
- Think of what would be unlived in your life if it ended today.
- Take a few days to go on a personal retreat to reflect on the present transition and take note of your hunches, coincidences, crazy ideas, dreams, ideas, etc.

- **Get Support:**

- Find someone with whom you can talk, who understands that he or she does not have to provide advice, but simply can listen.
- Participate in Job Clubs or support groups to talk with other people who are having similar experiences.
- See a professional counselor if you need help resolving your feelings.

- **Stay Active Doing Things You Enjoy:**

- Exercise, sports, recreation, etc.
- Creative activities.
- Volunteer opportunities.

### Journal Writing:

Research by psychologist James Pennebaker demonstrated that laid off individuals had a greater success rate for finding successful employment if they spent 20 minutes per day, five days in a row, writing down their feelings about being laid off. (*Writing to Heal: A Guided Journal for Recovering from Trauma and Emotional Upheaval*, New Harbinger Pub., 2004)

- Which phase of the loss curve or transition stages are you in now?
- What strategies could be helpful to you in managing this job or career transition and maintaining a positive attitude?

## The 4 P's to Creating Smooth Transitions

### First P:

#### What is your *Perspective* and attitude about this career transition?

Your perspective and attitude about this transition will be influenced by a variety of variables including:

- Whether this was a self-directed or externally imposed situation.
- Your previous experience with change and job transitions.
- Your style preferences and comfort level with change.
- Whether you expect long-term employment or see yourself as self-employed.
- The impact of this job loss, job change, or career transition on your professional identity and social network.
- The increase in personal, family, home, or financial stress that has resulted.

This workshop, **Step 1: Maintaining a Positive Attitude during a Job Change or Career Transition**, provides strategies to assist you in maintaining a positive attitude during this life change. Feeling victimized, angry, frustrated, desperate, or other less than positive emotions, while valid reactions to the situation, can negatively influence your ability to identify good opportunities, present yourself effectively in writing and in interviews, and get another job as quickly as possible. Too much stress can cloud your judgment and affect your decision-making ability. Take steps to reduce your stress so that you can maintain a positive attitude as you pass through the transition process.

### Second P:

#### What is your *Plan* for responding to this job change or career transition?

Knowing that you are conducting a realistic and effective job search that will lead to a meaningful new position can help lower your stress level. The planning process provides you with clarity about what is important to you, a sense of direction, and guideposts to assist in making good choices along the way.

**"The only limit to what you can achieve is the extent of your ability to define with precision that which you desire."**

Anthony Robbins, Motivational Speaker & Author  
("Giant Steps," Simon & Shuster, 1994)

### **Third and Fourth Ps: How will you *Practice* implementing your Career Transition Plan with *Persistence*?**

Once you've completed the planning process, you have to practice implementing your action steps with patience and persistence. Obstacles will always reveal themselves when you are heading toward a desired goal. Those who succeed are often not the most skilled or talented, but simply the ones who remain persistent and stay with it the longest!

- ***Take action to stay persistent while implementing your plan:***
  - Make finding a job, a temporary job.
  - Practice shameless self-promotion in your writing (creating a great resume!) and in person (by strengthening your interviewing skills).
  - Participate in Job Clubs and support groups.
  - Hold brainstorming and networking sessions.

**"Whatever you consistently think about and  
focus upon, you move toward."**

Anthony Robbins, Motivational Speaker & Author  
(*"Giant Steps,"* Simon & Shuster, 1994)

### **Action Plan:**

**What actions will you take to maintain a positive attitude and stay persistent in  
implementing your Career Transition Plan?**

**"No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or  
sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to  
the human spirit."**

Helen Keller, American Author & Lecturer  
(*"The Quotable Woman,"* Running Press, 1991)

## NOTES: