

## Swimming in a different pool – Careering from Career to Career

Recently, I met one of my clients, whom, two years ago, I encouraged to ‘swim in a different pool’ (according to her testimonial). She is very happy in her new role. She says, as a **career coach** I gave her the courage to change. But first she needed to decide what she wanted to do.



- How did she do it?
- How would you do it?

For many people they get their first job by chance, by who they knew, by their qualifications or education subjects.

So career decisions are fixed when you start specialising at school. Some of us have the courage to change over the years. Or maybe every job move is based on doing the same thing, just getting more money or in a different place. This is how promotions shift people from doing to managing – many don't like it but put up with it.

Coming up with the **blue sky options** is a great first idea – start with:

- Addressing **lifestyle**:
  - *Where I want to be in five years?*
  - *Who do I want to be?*
  - *What do I want to be remembered for?*
- Addressing **careers**:
  - *What do I really want to spend most of my awake hours doing?*

(Note.....If you start with “where I am now” it will block your creativity).



Then get real. How do I you decide what to do?

- List what **characteristics** you have for any jobs, your likes and dislikes, and your strengths and weaknesses. You may find that your likes/dislikes contradict your strengths/weaknesses.
- One of the ways you can help understand your preferences is to take a **behavioural profiling** test such as [this](#).
- Doing this profile can help clarify your **personality traits**. If you undertake a **360 degree** behavioural profile you may be surprised that others think about you differently than you do

Looking at your personal characteristics as identified in the behavioural profiling above may make you realise that for some of the options you don't have the **personality traits**. Learning skills is one thing, changing who you are is another. Awareness will help you improve but potentially not enough. Some you may be able to learn, some you will never learn. So time to cross a few options off.



You may have to choose between being fulfilled or being rich. If you have family to support then rich may be the only option – but don't put that resentment on to your **family**.

If you turn to family and friends they could easily give advice in THEIR best interests, not yours, and THEIR opinion on who you are; and remember, their best intentions are based on their limited knowledge.

A **career coach** can draw out from you your blue sky options and help you come up with some practical solutions. Combining **profiling**, your current **skill set**, and your **strengths and weakness** can help you understand where you are now. When you understand yourself and your ambitious **practical goals** you can **identify the skills** you will need. Your coach can help you do that and build a plan on how to get the skills to be able to apply for, and get, the job you want.

---

*David Rigby has a wealth of experience coaching people in career transition and progression  
January 2018*