

Career Transitions Unlimited

What's a Career Coach, and Why would you need one?

"The difference between a job and a career is the difference between forty and sixty hours."—Robert Frost

Those in professional careers often go through periods of repose and turmoil, not realizing that in each state and throughout the continuum, actions must be taken to protect the future of a career. With the current turmoil in the job market, having one career is no longer an ideal, just as holding one life-long job stopped being an option nearly twenty years back. A career coach is much like a ship's captain, who can help those aboard navigate a smooth course to the destination and who can also guide the ship to avoid dangers that lurk in high seas. A career coach is different from a job coach, who helps through job transitions. In keeping with the ship metaphor, a job coach is more like someone guiding a ship in a pilot boat to a safe port. Each serves a role unique in each situation. Although a career coach can serve as a job coach but not the other way around.

You would need a career coach because:

- Nearly 70 percent of the professionals are engaged in their work that does not give them the joy they seek and spiritual nourishment for a stress-free work life.
- Nearly 80 percent of those working are looking for change with the hope that this would make them happier. A recent survey shows that nearly 65 percent of those who made a change started seeing the same patterns of situation that made them unhappy before the change within 12 months of the change.
- Most who are engaged in their work give a small fraction of their true capability to accomplish what they do. As a result their performance is mediocre and their inherent job satisfaction low. This causes stress.
- Those who are employed and are unhappy in what they do—nearly 80 percent of those working—are so buried in their work and their survival that they do not have the energy or the focus to do something about getting out and finding their dream job. Those who had coach landed much faster; some even landing in their dream jobs.
- If you are facing what is described below, a career coach can help you if you are:
 - Not happy in your job and do not know what to do next to generate action
 - Doing great but do not know how long it is going to last
 - Facing uncertainties surrounding your job's or company's future
 - Dogged by a perceived lack of some skill, knowledge (a college degree) or advantage to propel you forward in your dream path.
 - Not reaching out for opportunities that "stretch" your capabilities to achieve your potential

Engaging a career coach is a highly leveraged investment and it isn't expensive. Also during the course of a career, timing is everything. A career coach is well connected in what they do and hence have a perspective rich in practical and actionable knowledge. Bootstrapping career management is improvident.

If you are still wondering about your needing a career coach, please take the following test to ascertain the level of your need.

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Transitional Momentum Assessment Tool

#	Item	High 10-9-8	Medium 7-6-5-4	Low 3-2-1
1	I am challenged in my current job and derive a level of satisfaction and joy that is			
2	I have a good sense of where I am headed in my career and the confidence I have in this belief is			
3	I often have discussions with my superiors about my future and the level of confidence I have in these meetings is			
4	Recently, there have been many changes at my company. The degree of confidence I have about my future in this company is			
5	The level of confidence I have about the company's future is			
6	When I see how my company does things that it does, I feel that we could do much better. The degree to which I am able to influence change is			
7	The extent to which I am able to differentiate myself from my colleagues is			
8	I often get overcome by fear, apprehension, and doubt about my abilities in what I do at work. I often worry that someone will expose me as incompetent. The degree to which that bothers me is			
9	In my career, I often feel alone, despite my network. The extent to which I could continue in this manner is			
10	The degree to which I can hold myself accountable in moving ahead in advancing my career is			
	Total score			

If you scored 50 or below, it may be worth talking to a career coach and exploring how you can advance your career and derive greater joy in what you do! Those who score 30 or below are found to suffer from excessive job related stress that pervades their personal lives and creates a dysfunctional existence.