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**You spend 1/3 of your life working.
You might as well enjoy it.**



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FIND YOUR PURPOSE AND MAKE A PLAN

10 Steps to Kick Your Career in Gear

If you're ready for a career change, but you're not sure what to do next, this guide is for you. You'll learn action steps to kick your career in gear, no matter if you are ...

- ... currently employed and looking for a new job
- ... ready to return to work after a career break
- ... a recent graduate struggling to find work
- ... near retirement and wondering about your next chapter

WELCOME

Hello there and thanks for reading this guide. I'm a Certified Professional Career Coach (CPC) and I wrote this paper for those who are ready for something new, but finding it hard to gain momentum.

I have helped hundreds of people on their career journeys - people who want to make a change but they're feeling "rudderless" or stuck.

So I wrote this guide to share some of the same techniques I use with my clients and help you **overcome inertia and move forward with purpose and a plan.**

But before you learn **10 steps to Kick Your Career in Gear**, let's figure out what's standing in your way of getting what you want.

I'm talking about **limiting beliefs**, and they can come in all shapes and sizes:

- 1) **A feeling of inertia** - Hard to commit, hard to get started, stuck in a rut
- 2) **Directionless** - Unsure what to do next, need a plan, need focus
- 3) **Being mentally ready for change** - Fear of failure, self-doubt, imposter syndrome
- 4) **Feeling overwhelmed** - Where do I start? What should I do next?

If these thoughts and feelings keep you up at night, I have good news ... you're about to learn 10 steps to help you gain clarity, confidence, momentum, and purpose in your career. Say "bye bye" to inertia, and "hello" to intention.

One quick note before we begin ... *I don't expect you to have all the answers to the questions below.* We're just getting started here, so there's no pressure. This is simply brainstorming and getting your mind to work in a different way. Read the questions, ponder them, revisit the document ... the answers will come to you in time.

10 Steps to Kick Your Career in Gear

1) Evaluate your past:

Write down every job you've ever had, paid or unpaid. *Yes, volunteer positions definitely count here.* Think of anything you've done that required work, regardless of compensation (and if you're a student or recent graduate, you can include projects you've done at school too).

- a) Describe the job/experience: List your tasks, duties, and responsibilities
 - i) What skills did you use? Think hard/soft skills
 - (1) Hard (technical) skills: Using the computer, writing a spreadsheet
 - (2) Soft (communication) skills: Team player, leadership, problem solving
- b) What was the **work environment** like: Did you work alone or with teams? Was it a competitive or relaxed atmosphere? Was it a slow, established company or nimble, new start up?
- c) What were your **favorite parts** of the job? Why?
- d) What were your **least-favorite parts** of the job? Why?

2) What do you offer and who you can help?

Now that your brain is thinking about your previous work experience and skills, ask yourself: *"What is it about my background/experience/education/skillset that makes me unique?"*

- a) What can you say about your background that no one else can say?
 - i) Places you've lived, languages you speak, your variety of experience, training you've received, a unique blend of skills
- b) You have a distinct set of talents/skills/abilities/gifts that could help other people - who can benefit from your unique set of skills?
 - i) What is the *impact* you want to make? What is the difference you want to create in this world? How do you want to use your skills to help people and make their lives better/easier?

- ii) For example, I'm an impossible optimist with an abundance of energy. I love supporting people and making them feel great. I'm a natural-born teacher/mentor/coach/cheerleader (and my personality tests agree ... more on that in a bit). I want to use my skills to help others improve their lives.

3) What does your future look like?

Think about your ideal life six months, one year, three years, five years from now ...

- a) Where are you living? Describe the location or environment:
 - i) An apartment in the city? A cabin in the woods? A houseboat? In several homes around the world?
 - ii) Who are you living with? Are you by yourself? With family? With animals?
- b) How much money are you making each year?
 - i) How much money do you have in savings?
 - ii) Do you have plans to retire? When?
- c) What is your lifestyle? How do you spend your days?
 - i) What does your typical day look like? What would a perfect day look like?
- d) What do you want to be known for?
 - i) What do you want your *professional* reputation to be?
 - ii) What do you want your *personal* reputation to be?
- e) What type of work are you doing?
 - i) What are the tasks and responsibilities?
 - ii) How many hours a week are you working?
 - iii) Are you working alone or on a team?
 - iv) How does the work make you feel?

4) Evaluate your needs:

You have thought about what you offer and your ideal future, now it's time to evaluate the things you need to make it happen:

- a) What do you require to live? Consider your top priorities. Here are some suggestions:
 - i) Money: Salary/checking/savings/retirement fund - why do you need this money? What are you going to do with it?
 - ii) Work/life balance: Time for yourself/family/friends
 - iii) Work situation: Hybrid/remote/in-person
 - iv) Sense of accomplishment - When do you feel satisfied or successful?
 - v) Ability to contribute - Financially, help others, help the family
- b) This is an important step because it helps explore your "why" - *why do you want to change jobs or come back to work?* What do you want to gain out of the process? **Remember your why when times get tough** - remind yourself why you're making this change.

5) Take some assessments:

Whew! That was a lot to ponder! Give your brain a break from brainstorming and take some self-assessments to find the answers you seek. I love these evaluations from [CareerOneStop](#), an incredibly helpful website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor:

- a) [Work Values Matcher](#) - Sort your work values then see a list of careers that highlight these values
- b) [Skills Matcher](#) - Rate your work skills and find occupations that use similar skills (I love this exercise to help identify your soft and hard skills from Steps 1 and 2)
- c) [Interest Assessment](#) - Designed to help you define your work interests and discover careers they relate to
- d) [mySkills myFuture](#) - Add your previous work experience and this handy tool will suggest complementary career ideas - click on the "Occupation Title" to learn more about each career
- e) And if you're looking for a personal assessment, I really like [16Personalities.com](#) - This is an accessible version of the Myers-Briggs test that gives you loads of helpful insight about your personal and professional capabilities

6) Research occupations:

If you clicked around on one of the evaluations above, you likely already discovered [CareerOneStop's Occupation Profiles](#). In case you didn't see it, I wanted to be sure you knew about this fantastic resource which tells you all about potential occupations - job description, employment outlook, skills/education required, wages, etc...

- a) I also like the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) sponsored by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is the place to go for the most updated information about occupational data. Find information about wages, employment outlook, fastest-growing industries, highest-paying jobs, and field of degree.

7) Search for job openings:

You don't have to apply to jobs at this time, just search around and find job openings that speak to you. Most people like [LinkedIn Jobs](#) and [Indeed.com](#). I also like the [Job Finder at CareerOneStop](#), which aggregates the top four job sites and your state's job bank. Type in the career suggestions you got from the assessments at CareerOneStop and see what interests you.

8) Research salary and take-home pay:

You did all that hard work in Steps 1-4 to evaluate your needs. In Steps 5-7, you discovered potential careers and job opportunities that interest you. Now it's time to research the average pay for these types of jobs and see if it works with your budget.

Use the resources in Step #6 to find salary information, also try [salary.com](https://www.salary.com), and [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com).

- a) Gather the average salary information and plug it into a [take-home pay calculator](#) - how does that work with your ideal [50/30/20 budget](#)?

9) Reach out to your network:

Look at your contact list, consider your social media connections, study the clubs or organizations you belong to - do you know anyone who is doing the type of job that interests you, works at a company that sounds appealing, or is involved in an industry you'd like to explore?

- a) If you don't know anyone directly, ask your network if they know someone who can help - be specific about what you want
- b) Or go on LinkedIn and search for job titles that interest you, and find people already doing those jobs
- c) Ask them for an informational interview - 20 minutes where they can tell you more about the job and answer any questions you might have about that type of career

10) Keep your momentum going:

Once you start researching jobs that interest you, things get exciting - you will get an endorphin rush from imagining future possibilities. Keep this momentum going!

Continue researching jobs, making connections, and conducting informational interviews

- a) Also **remember your why** ... Go back to your answers in Step 2-4. Why is it important to you to make this career change? What will be the consequences if you don't make this change now?
- b) Consider your life six months from now ... what does it look like when you follow the 10 action steps in this guide? How does it feel?
- c) Now consider how your life will look in six months if you DON'T make the change - how will you feel then? Are you ok with that?

If you're excited about the steps above, but a little overwhelmed or worried you can't do it on your own, you might be a great candidate for coaching. I offer 1:1 coaching and group courses, and [I help people in every stage of their career journey](#) - job searching, personal branding, resume writing, LinkedIn, networking, job interviews and salary negotiations.

People spend 1/3 of their life working - about 90,000 hours. And when you do work you hate, it's brutal on your mental and physical health. You likely know this. But when you're doing work you love, and you're paid well, then your income is affected, where and how you live, your mental/physical health, lifestyle, relationships with others, and just overall happiness and contentment.

That's why I love what I do, because I help people improve their professional situation, which improves their personal lives too.

Simply put, **coaching helps you get where you want to be faster and easier** than if you tried to do it on your own.

Let's talk - [schedule a free 30-minute Kick Your Career in Gear session](#) and tell me about your #1 career goals and the problems standing in your way.

Think you're ready for coaching? [Take this quiz to find out.](#)

If you're not interested in coaching, contact me anyway, I'd love to hear what you think of the guide, and let me know if there are other topics you'd like to learn more about.

To your success!

- Emily

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Career Coach • Impossible Optimist

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📅 [Click here](#) to book an appointment

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YOUR CAREER COACH

Emily Worden is a **Certified Professional Career Coach (CPCC)** helping people with career changes - whether they are working and looking for a new job or career breakers ready to go back to work

Emily is a **teacher, author,** and **MBA graduate** who has a passion for business methodology and personal branding that informs her coaching philosophy; she encourages everyone to **“think like an entrepreneur”** about their career.

Emily has helped hundreds of clients, students, and entrepreneurs achieve their goals, whether it's starting a successful business or landing the perfect job. She never tires of hearing **“I got the job!”** and **“You are life-changing!”** and encourages everyone to write down their **big, beautiful dreams** then **go make it happen.** Read more about Emily and her mission to help people succeed at www.emilyworden.com.