



Overcome the things
holding you back from
pursuing a fulfilling
career

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Overcome the things holding you back from pursuing a fulfilling career

Often we desperately believe that we want to change career and live out a different story, yet time passes by, nothing changes and we remain unhappy or unfulfilled in our work.

There are lots of things that keep us stuck in our current job or career, despite our best intentions of wanting to make a change.

These things are called blockers. They're designed to keep us **safe**, because safety comes from familiarity. Our brains and bodies like the comfort of familiarity, so blockers become reasons that stop us from moving forward. Sometimes we're not even aware of what these things are, yet they're there, hiding under the surface of our conscious, working as powerful drivers that influence our decisions and hold us back from living a better life.

It's time to take a different approach. Let's shine a light on the blockers holding you back from pursuing what you want and tackle them head on.

1. Begin with the end in mind.

Within Stephen Covey's international and best-selling book ***The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People***, he writes that one habit is to "begin with the end in mind". By that, he means that if we have a clear vision of where we want to get to in the long run, we can work backwards to create milestones and smaller stepping stones that we need to achieve along the way.

Let's put this habit into practice. Write down or draw where you want your career to be in two years' time.

Here are some prompts to help:

- What does that future you look like?
- Which skills are you happily using each day or working on developing?
- What activities fill your working time?
- Look back to the day you first completed this exercise and reflect on the achievements you are most proud of.
- How do you describe yourself to new people?

Are you ready to make a career change?

2. What blockers will hold you back?

You may already have some niggling voices in your head trying to dissuade you from achieving this two-year vision. Make a note of all the things that could stop you from pursuing this path.

Consider the following:

- What are your blockers? Some that often come up are lack of money and/or time, fear, low confidence, imposter syndrome. . .
 - What questions or doubts are those niggling voices posing?
 - How much are you influenced by what your friends, family and colleagues say or think?
 - What sacrifices might you need to make along the way?
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3. Filter and rank your blockers.

Review the list you've come up with. Identify any patterns between your blockers to help you categorise them into buckets that can be labelled, such as 'Confidence' or 'Skills development'.

Then, pay attention to the three blockers which are shouting the loudest and doing their best job at keeping you stuck in your current situation. Make a separate note of these.

4. Transform your blockers into actions.

Your blockers don't have to mark the finish line on your ambitions. Rather than seeing them as the end, treat them as guiding posts that represent what you need to address in order to get to your two-year vision – they're hurdles that you can resolve and overcome.

Taking each of your top three blockers in turn, make a note of three small, manageable actions you could take to ease their weight.

Here are some ideas to inspire you:

- Who could you have a useful conversation with?
 - What are the main gaps in your knowledge and what information do you need to gather?
 - Which books, podcasts, or TED talks could help?
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5. Move forwards and take control of your career.

Commit to following through on at least one action over the next week, to prove to yourself that these blockers don't have to control you. After that one week has passed, what other action could you put into place?

Regularly remind yourself that you are in control of your thoughts, beliefs and actions. Do this by talking to people you trust about the blockers that are holding you back, because the chances are they'll share similar beliefs. Write down positive and encouraging statements, or draw visionary pictures that illustrate who you want to become, then stick them around your home or workplace – serving as visual prompts.

Take control of your career: it's yours to shape.