



How to think creatively about your career

Why is creative thinking needed?

Brains like to think in straight lines and patterns.

- So we often end up thinking the way we always think and doing what we've always done.
- Therefore, good career decision making is a *creative* process. It is not only about choosing *between* options, but also thinking *anew* about our options.
- The Career Psychologist uses a wide range of creative techniques to get people thinking in different ways.
- This short handbook includes a handful a handful of exercises to get you started.



How to think creatively

Research shows that creativity is based on quantity, not quality.

- So we need *lots* of ideas in order to have *good* ideas.
- So just try the following 5 exercises without thinking too much – just allow your mind to wander – and record all your answers.
- Don't subject your new ideas to immediate scrutiny or analysis.
- Just notice what shows up.
- Evaluation comes later!



1. Write your autobiography

Find a quiet place to think and take 25 minutes to write your autobiography on a single page of A4.

- Think about your life now and in the future.
- Describe the transition from where you are now to where you want to be
- Tell the story of your future
- Bear in mind that the classic structure of a story is one of a personal struggle against adversity which results in change both in yourself and your environment.
- What struggles will you fight and win in your life?



2. Idea generator

Take 3 of your interests and 3 of your skills and think about how they could combine. I've provided an example of my own below.



Skills	e.g. Sport	e.g. Technology	e.g. Newspapers
e.g. Writing	Sports journalism e.g. Cricket correspondent at All Out Cricket	Develop an e-course on career change	Weekly newspaper column on career change
e.g. Creating new services	Career change advice for ex Armed Services / professional athletes / corporate Directors	Develop career change exercises online	Create a 'reverse job advert' section, where people post their own profiles which employers review.
e.g. Coaching	Sports psychologist	Career coaching online	Career coaching clinic - magazine column in Psychologies magazine

2. Idea generator

Take 3 of your interests and 3 of your skills and think about how they could combine. Use the template below.



3. What would you do...

...if you won
£10 million
and still had
to work?

...if you had
no fear or
knew you
could not
fail?

...if you had
10 years to
live?

...if you had
3 lives?

...if you could be
the person you
most admire...
Whose job
would you try
out?

4. De Bono's Thinking Hats Game

Try examining your choices from different perspective using De Bono's classic thinking hats game.

Hat Colour	White hat	Red hat	Black hat	Green hat	Yellow hat	Blue hat
Description	<i>Facts and information</i> <i>What would I do next if logic was the only driver of the decision?</i>	<i>Feelings & emotions</i> <i>What would I do next if emotions (your heart) were the only driver?</i>	<i>Critical judgment</i> <i>If I had to choose one career now to dedicate my life to, what would it be?</i>	<i>Alternatives and learning</i> <i>Which career would best encourage my own growth?</i>	<i>Positive judgment</i> <i>What would I do if I could do anything?</i>	<i>The big picture</i> <i>Which hat should I use more or less of to make a decision?</i> <i>Which hat is most exciting?</i>
Job option 1:						
Job option 2:						
Job option 3:						
Job option 4:						
Job option 5:						
Job option 6:						

5. Developing opportunities game

The game is designed to encourage you to develop new opportunities based on your current and future competencies.

- In **quadrant A**, begin by identifying your current (or past) clients and employers that you have already worked for. Identify any existing opportunities that you know you could do right now.
- In **quadrant B**, identify who else (people, groups, organisations, companies) is in need of the same skills and competencies that you currently have.
- Identify one **new** skill that you would wish to develop (think of the skills in your 1 page summary).
- In **quadrant C**, using this new competency, identify how you could better help your current clients / employers. What new opportunities could you develop with your existing (or past) clients and employers, based on the new skill?
- In **quadrant D**, who else could you use your new competencies help? As before, think of individuals, groups, organisations or companies who you could potentially work for.

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Existing clients

New clients

*Using new
competencies*

Quadrant C

Quadrant D

*Using your
existing
competencies*

Quadrant A

Quadrant B

Thanks for reading!

The Career Psychologist is an independent psychology consultancy based in London helping people to transform their careers.



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