

Career change: Do I go or do I stay?

Q I am considering changing my career, but is now a good time?

A If you look hard enough, you'll always be able find a reason to stay in a less-than-satisfactory job.

After all, what's to say the next one will be any better?

Certainly, it's important to time your exit, but what's more important is making the best use of your time in order to ensure success in any career move, be it large or small.

Especially if you are considering a major career change, your first move should be to see a qualified career counsellor or coach.

That person can help identify those aspects of your current job or profession that are not working for you.

If a career change is indicated, he or she will help you to establish long and short-term goals and help you with the practicalities, including navigating the most appropriate pathway into your new career.

Talking to a professional about fears of leaping into the unknown will help you to develop strategies to manage the associated risks.

Ultimately, though, the timing is in your hands.

You will be much better equipped to handle the process of transition when you feel more in control of your situation.

Ask yourself these important questions:

- Have I dealt with issues in the current workplace to the best of my ability?
- Have I thoroughly researched a range of possible career options?
- Am I aware of my transferable skills.
- Have I addressed any shortcomings?

Julie Farthing, Herald Sun, May 22, 2004