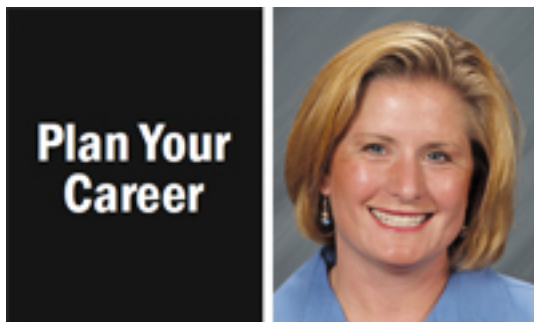


Winning career move: The pivot

Written by Julie Desmond
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By Julie Desmond
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Has anyone seen any good basketball lately? It's always on at my house. I was thinking this week about that one basic move every player uses to buy more time, defend the ball and access the basket: they plant one foot firmly in place, and then turn in another direction. It works on the court; can it work in your career?

As America heads back to work in 2011, many people are scratching their heads, wondering if going back to the type of job they left last year is such a brilliant idea. In some cases, an identical position simply is not there to return to.

People are saying, "I want to work with a company that fixes things, that gives back, that does good." After surviving the economic devastation of the past few years, after spending weeks or months at home with family, cutting back and making do, and watching the tragedies of war, natural disasters and all that's going on in the world, people want more than a job now. Values matter, sometimes more than money, because no company is too big to fail, but neither is any one person.

The easy way to make a career shift is to go to school, learn a new trade, and move along. However, this path is costly both in terms of time and money. Instead of taking an altruistic technical foul, try going for the career pivot instead.

First, plant your feet. Where are you standing at this moment? Create a list that answers the strengths and capabilities questions: What do I know? Where do I excel? When am I most satisfied with my work? What skills and qualities set me apart from the crowd?

Alongside the strengths list, create a list of companies and organizations whose values align with yours.

Now, for the pivot turn. How can your current skillset take you in a new direction? Online, go to Indeed.com. Enter in the search box a few words from your strengths list and the name of one of your selected companies. What comes up? The same position you've held in the past, but at a preferable organization? Or an entirely different role that perhaps you hadn't thought of before?

A welder who values creativity might pivot into partnership with artists who want to use welding

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in their sculptures. A cosmetologist might pivot to styling wigs for cancer patients. You do not have to go back to where you came from. A confident pivot turn can take you in a winning new direction.

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