



MAKE THAT CHANGE

CHANGING GEARS ON YOUR CAREER DEMANDS SOME GENUINE EVALUATION BEFORE TAKING THE PLUNGE AND MAKING THE BIG CHANGE.
BY JOHN BURFITT



At this time of year, as the best new year's resolutions have possibly become lost memories, it's still not too late to consider the changes you want to make in your life.

And for many people, making a career change is often at the top of that list. But one thing to be clear about is there is a big difference between changing jobs - wanting a new job within your current profession - and changing professions - wanting to leave your profession behind and start again in a completely new field.

Embarking without clear

direction on the new career you intend to pursue can be both confusing and ineffective.

"Being ready to learn, adapt and change are critical skills, now and into the future," Michelle Gibbings of Change Meridian says. Michelle is also the author of *Step Up: How to Build Your Influence at Work*.

"A CSIRO report found more than 40 per cent of jobs are at risk of automation over the next 10 years. The Australian Bureau of Statistics also revealed the average worker will have 10 different jobs before they turn 40."

This point about change is

also taken up by Carli Saw, the Director of Strawberry Seed Consulting.

"There are whole industries that exist today that didn't five years ago, and many jobs are no longer relevant due to technology," Carli says.

"Workers need to be able to build adaptable, transferable skills that will allow them to move between careers and industries."

PAYING ATTENTION TO THE SIGNS

According to Michelle Gibbings, career change is the time for self-reflection and to note your own



FROM JAMAICA TO **JAMAICA BLUE**

Mona Lamshed tells of her own career change journey – from the high seas of Jamaica to the high stakes of running her own Jamaica Blue café in Adelaide’s Myer Centre.

“For nine years, I worked as a steward on luxury private yachts in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. I was in charge of taking care of the rooms, the service and catering.

“Then I met my husband, became pregnant and we decided Adelaide was the perfect place to make a new life. We arrived in 2009, but I wanted a new direction that would challenge me. That was when I decided to run my own business.

“I thought of hospitality as my parents ran a restaurant when I was growing up, and I had spent years on the yachts, so it seemed a good fit. I opened my *Jamaica Blue* café in April 2014.

“The first six months was hard and tough work, and you need to know you will make mistakes all the way along, but you have to keep going. I had great support

from people who helped guide me and showed me how to stay on track.

“No amount of training can prepare you for actually being on the job, calling the shots and making mistakes as you do. But if you know you must keep learning as you go along, you end up surprising yourself. One day, you realise everything is going well and you do know what you are doing. That’s a very good feeling.”



performance standards. She says it begins with paying attention to five particular signs – a drop in performance, a disconnect in values, cynicism, burn out and a lack of learning.

“Taking a bare minimum approach will impact your performance, the outcomes you deliver and ultimately your reputation,” Michelle says. “If there’s no more room to expand your horizons, it may be time to step outside.”

TAKING STEPS

Once a change in direction has been determined, smart moves are needed to find a new path.

But Carli Saw advises only one step should be attempted at a time.

“First, allow yourself to dream, and make a list of what makes you happy and where you are right now. This gives you criteria to use when assessing your options.”

Next is exploration, so that anything and everything is up for consideration. “Don’t discount anything,” Carli says. “Make a list of the skills and knowledge you have and think about other areas you may be able to apply them.”

The third step is Assessment. “Assess the realities of the options you have explored. Look at if

you will need to study, where those jobs are located and what they pay. Find information and determine if it is really viable for you to make this change.”

CREATING A PLAN

Once all that is done, then create a plan that maps out what you need to do, and includes a timeline of when it will be done. “This plan should act as your business plan, guiding you through the key actions you need to take to move into your new career,” Michelle adds. “It should also include clear measurements so that you can monitor your progress.” 