

# Management Checklist

## Choosing a Second Career

This is an excerpt from a [Chartered Management Institute](#) checklist providing practical advice and guidance enabling managers to check out how to do a range of tasks quickly and efficiently using concise, tried and tested information.

### Introduction

This checklist offers a framework within which the objectives and choices open to you in choosing a second career can be identified. It is addressed to those who see themselves presented with an opportunity to choose a second career and to those who, for a variety of reasons, feel that pursuit or continuation of an earlier career is either impossible or undesirable.

### Definition

A career is understood as the job or profession that someone does for a period of their life, not necessarily with the same employer. Planning for a second career implies embarking on a course of action which will lead to the pursuit of a different job, profession or occupation for a significant number of years.

### Action checklist

#### 1. Decide whether you are faced with a problem or an opportunity

Be clear about the circumstances in which you are considering a second career. Decide whether you have a problem (for example, redundancy), or an opportunity (for example, an earlier than normal retirement together with a pension which will provide you with a basic standard of living whatever the outcome of embarking on a second career). Recognise that while a problem needs a solution, the perception of that solution as a second career may be wishful thinking. Recognise also that an opportunity needs a decision and that a decision requires assessment of information and facts.

#### 2. Decide whether you need a second career or another employer

Ask yourself whether you are being realistic in attempting a drastic change or whether your interests have changed, your balance of skills has shifted, or you feel you need a new stimulus. Talk to colleagues and friends. Satisfy yourself that you really do want a career change rather than just a new job.

#### 3. Decide on your objectives, motives and priorities

Don't just rush into a decision. It is important that you take time to decide whether your aim is to enhance your income or make use of your skills and experience for the benefit of others, for example. You may also want or need to develop a completely new career and skills which you have not used before.

#### 4. Consider the financial issues involved – be realistic

How much capital do you have available for investment in a new career – think about this and weigh it up with how much you need to live on. Consider how much you are prepared to spend, invest or lose and think about the implications for your family's welfare, your children's education or other aspects of life which are personal and specific to your situation.

#### 5. Think about training

Discover what training you will need for this second career. Find out how it can be obtained, who are the providers, how long it will take, how it may be funded and where it will take place. If it is in a location away from your present home, consider the implications for family life, education and a partner's job or career. Remember too that some skills can be self-developed, without 'training'.

## **6. Consider status**

Reflect on your previous status and the power and influence you may have held, and ask yourself how willingly you would forgo these. Also, ask yourself if you would be prepared to start again at the bottom of the hierarchy.

## **7. Establish what you are good at**

Consider what you think you are good at and reflect on your career so far. Consider vocational guidance, or a Careers Advisory Service or Counsellor; find out if your local library, Learning and Skills Council or Business Link can help, or ask close friends what they think you are good at.

## **8. Consider voluntary work**

Voluntary work can provide great satisfaction. REACH is one example of an organisation which needs volunteers to help with social problems and to help disadvantaged people within a range of charitable activities. VSO seeks those able to offer help in developing countries, by passing on their skills or providing organisational support, or through direct action in leading projects. Your local Council for Voluntary Organisations may be able to put you in touch with an organisation looking for particular skills.

## **9. Talk to other people**

Talk to others who have taken the path that you are now considering, both people who decided against seeking a second career, to discover why they reached that decision; and also people who tried but did not succeed - what were the obstacles which they could not overcome?

The full [Management Checklist](#) is part of a series offered by the Chartered Management Institute, that focuses on issues relating to people management and personal effectiveness. The full checklists are freely available to all [members of the Institute](#). Further information can be obtained by calling (0)1536 207 373 to request a sample of what the Institute has to offer.