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IS IT TIME FOR A JOB CHANGE?

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Hello there, my friends. Welcome back. This week, we're talking about something that comes up so much almost with every single person. I talked to every one of my clients and the thing that we talked about is they're wondering if they should change jobs. Is it time for a job change? What I'm talking about here is not unique to our current COVID circumstances, it's more generic where people are in their careers right now.

Is it time to do something different? Is it time to move on? That's always a question that comes up. So I thought today, I would really address that directly, largely because it is something that comes up all the time. But also for the next few weeks, I'm going to be really talking about everything that I can think of talking about as it relates to job search.

Earlier this month, I talked with Sarah Wing Lima about building a resume that gets noticed. Last week, I talked more about building confidence. The podcast was called *Creating a Track Record of Achievement*. This is not just for building a resume or going for an interview. But it's really more about building self-confidence. It's about understanding what you're good at and being able to articulate it clearly because it's top of mind and because you're aware of what you've achieved.

So often, we get so caught up in the doing and the doing. We don't stop to notice all the great stuff that we're doing, how special it is, how unique it is, how not everyone has the same skills that we do or can do things the same way that we can. So it's really great to create this track record of achievement week on week to be able to not only notice the amazing things that you're doing, but really, it helps build confidence because you're focused on what's working in your life; all the things you're doing well, versus what we normally do, which is focused on the things that aren't working or things that are missing.

I think both of those podcasts would really help set the groundwork, even if you're not looking for a job right now to help you get prepared. Start to think about building your resume. Take it slowly. Don't wait till the night before and pull it all together. Start pulling the piece together, start building your confidence, and start building that track record of achievement.

Today, what I really want to talk about is helping yourself get clear on whether now is a good time for a job change. When I say now, I don't mean, necessarily in the middle of COVID. What I mean is where you are in your

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career right now – the situation that you're in right now. Is a job change the answer? Or are there some other things that you might want to consider? This is the conversation I have with clients all the time.

This podcast episode is really dedicated to helping you explore why you might be looking for a job change. And is it the right reason or the wrong reason for you? We're going to explore what's driving this desire for you, and ultimately how to make a decision that's right for you.

One of the first things I always think of when someone says, *I'm thinking about a job change*, is something that I actually learned from my marketing background, is it's always easier to keep a customer than it is to find a new one. It's the same with people on your team. It's always easier to retain employees than it is to find great new employees.

For me in my business, it's easier to keep clients than it is to find new clients. It's the same thing when it comes to jobs. It's easier to really leverage and maximize the job you have than it is to start finding a new one. In all of these cases, just because something is easier, doesn't mean it's the right thing to do for you. I will always want to remind you of that. But for those of you who are just thinking, *this is just going to be easier somewhere else.* It's not always easier.

The process itself isn't easier, the onboarding isn't easier, all the things that you need to learn in the new culture and the new people, all the emotions you're going to be feeling, none of that is easy. Maybe it's easier in the long run, who knows? But if you're someone who's thinking, *it's got to be easier somewhere else*, I want you to stop for a second, listen to this podcast, and then decide if you still think it's going to be easier somewhere else.

Let's start with the current thinking. The thing I hear the most is, I*'m not happy in my job. I think I need to find another one.* So the question I always ask is, *Why are you not happy in your job?* And there's like, five or six answers that I get that are pretty consistent. The first thing is, they're bored. *I'm bored in my job, I keep doing the same thing. It's not exciting, it's not dynamic*. They may feel that they're stagnating in their job. So it's not so much that they're bored but they're just not learning anything new. It may be that they don't know what they want to learn, but they just think, *I'm not learning anything new.*

Another common to hear quite often that's similar to that is, *I'm not learning what I want to learn. I'm not learning what I need to learn to get to the next level.* I want to talk about that one. I'm going to come back and challenge that one specifically. Other reasons that people give are: *I have a bad boss; I don't get along with my boss; or I don't know what I want to do in my career. I'm not sure this is it*. That's another one I hear.

Or one where *I've just been here so long, there's so much old tape on me. I'm not being given the space that I need to move ahead. Even though I've improved and changed and done obvious things, there's just too much old tape.* What I want to say to you is all of those reasons are usually nine times out of 10 excuses. I want you to stop and think about that for a second. Because if this is one of the things that you're telling yourself, I want you to ask yourself, *Am I making an excuse?*

Why I'm saying that nine times out of 10 those things are excuses, is because all of those things, all of those statements are really symptoms of a much bigger challenge. There are really, I would say, two main reasons that people think they want a job change, or they use those excuses as a reason to look for a job change. The first

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one is, that they don't know where they're going. That is a big one. They don't know where they're going. They don't have a career plan. They're just drifting and floating with no direction, no goals, and no context.

Think about yourself in your job right now. If your boss didn't tell you, or your company didn't tell you what the objectives of the organization were and they just said, *Just figure out something to do today. Then go and do it.* You'd be like, *What? It's way too ambiguous. I can't do that. I'm not going to just do whatever. What are we trying to do here? What's the objective? What do you want to do? What are the company's goals, my department's goals, or the goals of the job that you've given me?*

Without understanding what you're working towards, it's really hard to do your job day in and day out, right down to like, what's the project that you're working on? What does success look like and what do you do every day? You need to know those things to be able to do a good job. But when it comes to our careers, we don't put those guideposts in place. All we know is that *I'm a buyer. I'm a salesperson. I work in IT. I'm a project manager. I'm a marketing executive. I'm a lawyer. I'm a doctor.* We know what we want to be and we found a job in that field. But that's it.

From there, we're like, *What's next?* Maybe I know I want to be CEO, run my own company, or be an entrepreneur, but I don't really know how I'm going to get there. That's usually like either I have people who don't really know where they want to go next in their careers, meaning how they want to grow in the field they've chosen, or they've got a goal, but they have no plan to get there. In fact, the only plan that most people have, if they have a plan at all, is the plan that they've built in the company that they work for.

You work for ABC Company, and you've got your ABC company growth plan. That's it. What I want to offer you is your ABC growth plan should be one piece of your overall career plan. What do you want? Why do you want it? When do you want it by? What are the obstacles that are in your way to getting there? How can you turn those obstacles into strategies? What things do you need to do?

First, these are the basic questions that you would ask yourself when you are building any kind of plan. These are the questions that you need to ask yourself when you're building your career plan, which you should absolutely have. The reason that people say, *I'm not learning what I want to learn,* is because they don't really have a scope of all the things that they need to learn to get to a specific goal. Because they don't really have a clear understanding of what that goal is. They just know, *I need to learn how to manage people. And I'm not getting that in this job.* But you might be getting a lot of other things in that job that are critical to a goal if you had a goal that you would set for yourself.

If you actually had a specific goal that you were trying to achieve, one of the things might be, *I have to learn how to manage people, I have to learn how to lead teams.* And the team could be people that report to you or it could be a task force or a project team. Maybe you need to learn how to lead with influence versus direct responsibility. Maybe you'd need to learn how to manage change. There are all these things that you could learn to do.

But people get so focused on the thing that they want to learn next, even though they don't have a career plan, They're like, *I'm not learning this thing. So I'm going to go find a place where I can learn to manage people.* Even though the job that they have right now might present the opportunity to teach them all these other things that

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they need to learn if they had a career plan, if they knew where they were going, they could really leverage the job they have.

You might be saying, *Nice, I can look at the job I have and find all these other skills that I can leverage and learn. But what about the one skill that I absolutely need to learn, which is managing people? What if I can't get that in this job?* I understand. Where else can you get that? I know that it's important to learn that on the job, but you could learn it by taking a role in an industry organization, leading a project, and having mentees.

I'm not saying don't eventually leave to be able to learn to manage people. What I'm saying is, if you really had a clear idea of everything that you needed to learn to be able to achieve your goal, are you really squeezing all the opportunities that you can out of where you are now, before you make the shift to a new job? Really take the time to assess that. But you can't assess it without clarity on where you're going in your career and a plan to get you there. It's the same with the bad boss situation.

A lot of people will say, *I'm not learning what I need to learn from this boss. This boss isn't the kind of leader that I like to work with,* or *this boss isn't teaching me the things that I want to learn.* But what are you learning from this boss? One of the most valuable things that you can learn from a bad boss is how to build a mutually beneficial relationship with a difficult boss. If you could do that with this boss, you could do it with any boss and any person. Take the opportunity to demonstrate your leadership ability by building a strong relationship with your difficult boss.

Because I'll tell you this, if your boss is difficult with you, they're probably difficult with a lot of people. But if you demonstrate your ability to build that relationship with your boss, and I have lots of podcasts that offer suggestions on how to do that; if you are seen as the person like, *I can't believe Mel figured that out. This person is so difficult to deal with but not for Mel. She's figured it out.* It reflects well on you. So don't run away from it, take it head on, and use it as an opportunity.

If you're stagnating in your job or you're bored in your job, take a look at your career plan and say, *Here are some things I need to learn. Where can I dial that up in my current job?* Some people think that your boss or your company is supposed to bring all your learning opportunities to you on a silver platter. But realistically, most of the time you need to go seek those things out. You need to say, *Look, I want to learn x y zed. I see there are opportunities here and in the organization to do that. I like to put my name forward. I'd like to step up and I'd like to move towards that.*

Often, that's going to be welcomed by your boss, by your company, by you stepping up and taking an opportunity and showing some initiative. So don't wait for people to come to you and say, Here are some exciting things for you to do. Know what you want, and go after it. You can find it in the company that you're in right now. Let go of that linear thinking where your only career plan is the one that you create in the organization, that everything that you need to learn to be better comes from your boss or your company.

In fact, if you're only looking to the company that you work in, or your direct boss to teach you everything you need to learn, you're never going to be able to learn the things that you need to learn. You need to be reaching out, having a mentor, making relationships with influencers, and joining industry organizations looking for

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opportunities to learn beyond what your boss can teach you. Your boss and your company have their own agenda as well, and they need to follow their own priorities.

If you're not focused on what you need to learn, you need to focus on what you need to learn. And then you have to go after and find it. Whether that's in the company you have now, or outside the company you have now, it means augmenting your learning and your influences by adding things. And some of those things don't have to take more time on your calendar. We're talking about mentoring meetings, which could happen during your workday, depending on who your mentor is, or influencer discussions, or integrating industry, and refuge representation.

Sometimes when you volunteer for organizations, you're in your industry. So the industry lead organizations, those are things your boss can sometimes also let you integrate into your day job. It really just depends on who you are, how you perform, and what industry you're in. Sometimes, it will take some of your personal time but not every day, and not all the time. So look for opportunities to augment your learning outside of just your boss and your company.

The same goes for skill sets that you want to learn. Don't be so linear. You can learn to manage people or be a leader. If you don't have direct reports, you can still make a huge impact on a team without leading it. You can still help grow people, you can still help mentor people on your team, you can still drive efficiencies, come up with innovative ideas or solutions, or coach people on your team. You can do all of that without being the person in charge.

It's the same thing when let's say, you just wanted to improve your presentation skills. This is the basic one that I always bring up because it is something that's very polarizing for people. You can improve your presentation skills without being the person at the podium every time. You can do it in one-on-one conversations, you can do it in team meetings, you can do it on video conference, you can do it in lots of places. But the key thing I want to underline here is it becomes so much easier for you to mine out the opportunities on the job that you have right now.

When you have a clear goal of where you want to go with your career; when you want to get there; why you want to get there, and the steps that you want to take to get there, what are the obstacles in your way? What are the skill gaps? What are the mental gaps? What are the behavioral gaps? What are all the gaps that you have and all the obstacles that you have to get from where you are now to a very clear goal of where you want to be in your career? Start addressing each of those obstacles and each of those gaps.

What do you need to learn? What behaviors do you need to shift? What relationships do you have to develop on and on and on? And then you'll be able to look at all the things that I talked about. Whether your job is boring, or you're stagnating or you have a bad boss or there's too much old tape on you or you're not learning what you want to learn; all those things go away when you know where you're going. Because you can actually look at your plan and say, *How can I activate this in my current situation?*

Yes, there may come a time when you've looked at your job, and you've said, *I've leveraged everything I feel like I can leverage. So it's time for me to leave.* That makes sense, too. I'm not in any way suggesting that you should stay at your job forever. I'm just saying, that sometimes we make excuses because we can't figure out what our opportunities really are with this job. So take the time to figure that out first, and see if there are things that you

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can leverage where you are right now because it is easier to do that in your current job nine out of 10 times than it is to go find another job and start all over somewhere else.

That's really the first big problem that most people have – not having a clear career plan that drives all those excuses. The second big problem that drives all those excuses is your thinking. It's your thinking. It's how you think about your job. We think that because our boss doesn't treat us well, that they're a bad boss, and that's a fact. But it's not a fact. Your boss is just a boss. You think they're bad, your job is just your job, and you think that you can't learn anything.

That's what you've decided, and you believe it so strongly that you think it's true, but it's not true. It's just the way you're thinking about it. You think that your job doesn't make you happy. But here's the secret: Jobs don't make you happy. Jobs don't have that power. A job is a job. It can't determine if you're happy. The only thing that determines your happiness is how you think about your job. And you are in 100% control of how you think about your job.

If you think your job has lots of opportunities for growth, then it will because you'll be looking for that opportunity. And you'll be asking for it and doing all the things that you need to do to leverage it. But if you think your job is boring and a dead end, that you have a crappy boss, and you don't like the people that you work with; these are things that you are thinking, and you're thinking them so hard that they're creating this experience for you at work, but it's just your thoughts. You are creating this, and you can turn it on or turn it off, depending on how you think about it. Job doesn't have any power. It's just a circumstance. It's just a thing.

Let's take an example. If you have this thought, you have a job. And the way you think about the job is that you're thinking, *I'm not learning anything new.* That creates this emotion of disinterest. *I'm not learning anything new*, and you become disinterested in the job. When you're disinterested, how do you act? You do the bare minimum. You don't try anything new. Maybe you hide from people, maybe you avoid new work, maybe you wait for five o'clock to run out of the building. What are the things that you do when you're disinterested? You don't put your hand up for new work.

The thought that *I'm not learning anything new* is actually driving the behaviors that create a result for you that you actually aren't learning anything new, because you're not taking that opportunity versus if you had a job and you're like, *I want to learn something new* or get really specific about what you want to learn. *I want to learn how to influence change*, *manage people, or be a conversational presenter*, or whatever it is. *I want to learn X*. That may create an emotion in you like you become energized, you become excited, you become passionate, or you become motivated.

From that place, you might start looking for opportunities and looking for innovation, looking for change, looking for opportunities to actually activate what you want to do, and getting creative with what you're doing. Some people say *I used to think that way. But I tried to do something. I asked for the opportunity and I got shut down. So yeah, I already tried that.* But how many times did you try? Once, twice, 10 times? Don't take your first no. Keep trying keep looking, and keep pushing if you want something.

The squeaky wheel gets the oil, my friend. That's just the way the world works. So figure out a way to get it. Don't get me wrong, I get that it's not always an easy thing to do. I've done that. I've asked for things or I've been shut down three or four times. I think I don't feel like being shut down again so I'm not going to try. But that's never

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getting me where I want to go. That's never gotten to where I want to go. What gets me where I want to go is picking myself up, going after it again, and not giving up until I get what I want in some way. Because it's totally possible.

It all comes from your thinking. So first thing, have a career plan. Then take a look at your job through the filter of your career plan and say, how can I think about my job differently to be able to activate my career plan where I am now? Have I really exhausted all my opportunities? Do that work before you decide to leave your job. Some people think that's a lot of work. That sounds like so much work. It's not a lot of work. It's not. I do this in two, or three months with my clients who put all this together and put their plan together, start activating it, start dealing with their mindset shifts.

I'm talking two or three months of them, maybe going after it a couple of hours a week, including the time they spend with me coaching. So it's not a lot of work, you just need to want to do it. Because I'll tell you this, if you think it's going to be better somewhere else, it won't necessarily be that. Not without a career plan, and not without the right thinking. You can make any job work if you have a strong career plan and you can manage your mindset.

It's not going to be perfect. No job is perfect. But why not try a little bit to see if you can make what you're doing now work for you? Once you've really exhausted all the possibilities, then you're ready to go. You get more proactive with your job search. It's not about, *Maybe I should leave where I am right now*; it's more like, *I've done everything I can do here. I'm looking at my plan, I need to fill the x y zed gap now. So I'm going to be looking for a job that gives me x y zed.*

It's a much more proactive and powered way to approach a job search process than running away or avoiding what's going on in your career right now. So my biggest advice to you is if you are operating on a motion and making a decision to leave a job on a motion, then you need to take a step back. Be more pragmatic about it. Remember, no one's making you feel anything. It's a thought that you're having that's creating your boredom, anger, sadness, or depression, or however you feel about your job.

It's not because of your boss, it's not because of your job, it's not because of the things you do every day. It's because of the way you think about all those things that it's creating the experience for you. So get pragmatic about it.

If you need to talk about it, you can schedule a free session with me. You can go to my site, and I'll put a link in the show notes, thecareerreset.com/41. You can just book a session and we can talk about it.

The thing I always say at the end of the day is when you're making a decision like this to leave a job and you've gone through the career plan, you looked at your thinking and you got pragmatic about it, and you decided, this is the reason why you want to leave this job, but you're worried it's not going to work out, what I want to say to you is nothing is for sure. When you go forward and make a decision, as long as you feel good about the reason that you've made the decision, you can make anything work.

But if you don't feel good about the reason that you're making the decision, that's when you should stop and reflect a little bit. There are some really good reasons to make a job change. It could be the values of the organization are misaligned with your own. Maybe it is a really toxic environment that is so against who you are,

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it just takes too much energy for you to show up every day in terms of showing up at your best. Maybe there's another reason altogether, like maybe the commute is too long. Maybe it's infringing on some of the other priorities you have in your life.

Those are all good reasons to start to look at a job change beyond doing all this work. But if you can integrate all of that into this work, it becomes so much more powerful. It's so much more powerful to have a career plan with focus, just like you would have any other plan that gives you direction and context. Building a career plan is going to help you get clear on how you can leverage every single job you have, whether it's the one you have now or the one that you're going after. So really ask yourself this question, take the time to build a plan. If you don't know how to get help, get a mentor, get a coach, book a session with me, and we can talk about it.

If you're asking yourself, *is it time for a job change?* Number one, build a career plan and get clear about what your objectives are. Number two, assess your current job situation first. It's always going to be easier nine times out of 10 to make the current job you have work for you. So assess your current job against that career plan. How can you leverage your current job to get you closer to your goals? Number three, reflect on your thinking. How is your thinking about certain situations in your job inhibiting your ability to move forward? And number four, remember, no matter what decision you make, it's the right decision for you if you're making it for reasons that you feel comfortable with and if you're making it for reasons that you can believe in.

That is all I have for you today, my friends. Thank you so much for joining me. I'll talk to you next week. Bye for now.

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