

Work Creatively Career Advisors Inc.

CAREER EQUITY LETTER©

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Your private partner for a career solution

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New Year's Career Tip: BREAK OUT OF A CAREER CATCH-22

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1. What this is

I'm Mary-Frances Fox, the founder of Work Creatively. My work is all about replacing the preventable struggles of a career with the ease and satisfaction of career equity©. I send The Career Equity© Letter only to people who know me through speeches and career advising – and their friends and contacts. It's a fast read, **spotlighting just one uncommon-sense career idea I feel is worthy of your attention.** A technique you can go right out and apply.

Long-time readers also received a Globe and mail feature on my take on career planning, in November. If you need a copy, please email my admin assistant, Barbie, at workcreatively@workcreatively.ca

2. Thank you for the referrals recently given to me by...

Jackie Curry, Mark Hammond, Steve Marsh, Nathalie Masse, Lorraine McCallum,
Lynda Morris, Linda Dawn Pettigrew, Cathy Schlender, Julie Simmons,
Katherine Sterry, Judith Tennenbaum, Andrea Tidy, Daniel Weinzweig, Steven Williams

– I love helping people you know.

3. One Step To Stop Career Pain for...

- Accomplished pros wondering what to do next in life
- Worried hunters who've lost or left a job and are burnt out from looking
- Confused changers who want a new, better career but aren't sure what
- Committed soloists who are tired of income peaks and valleys

Maybe you've had a friend repeatedly complain of career troubles like these. Or maybe you feel this way too. You're smart, you're self managing, but for some reason your career efforts aren't coming together for you. These situations are career and life bottlenecks, and they're painful to be caught in. Here's a simple means of actual help: Work Creatively's "**Career-Move Action Plan (CMAP) session**". In one private meeting, I'll personally pinpoint the reason things aren't working 100% in a person's career situation and write up clear steps that will stop that individual's difficulty and change their results. It's a specially priced preliminary session, providing real relief in less than 2 hours. Just have that person you know call me at 416.922.4476; we'll talk briefly about their situation and see if getting a CMAP is right for them.

4. This month's career tip: BREAK OUT OF A CAREER CATCH-22

Many people who are keen to make a career move continue to settle for less fulfillment and more job stress, because they feel constrained by paying their bills. How can you leave, yet still cover your expenses so you can do a career move to work that really suits you?

I could write about reaching top dollar faster by aligning the core talent you possess and the reasons you are relevant to a company. But that's for another day. To help kick off a new stage in your career, I simply want to remind you of the beauty of stoploss work as a tool to escape your old work and change your life. Stoploss work is interim underemployment so you can implement a plan. Schlepping briefly for greater career glory.

What you do as work is never your identity. But what you are doing now is probably not your full potential either. You can do so many things that bring value. TEMPORARILY compartmentalizing 'things you do for money' and the 'career-building' process lets you divide up your activities. Do career-making and stoploss simultaneously. If you wait, you never start. Since you're human, you deeply need to take care of BOTH your big picture and little picture needs. If you never go build the work you love, the pain could even sabotage your current ho-hum role in time.

Your new-and-better career can be rapidly built. You are the very person to build it. (I'll co-design and project-manage if you like). But give tomorrow and today a near-equal amount of attention. You see, bringing tomorrow's goals into reality totally relies on actions today. Today is all anyone ever has. Waiting doesn't achieve much, does it? Putting off your 'real career life' till you are financially stable sounds wise but is really, well, just putting it off!

The feeling of 'running on empty' is motivating to a few, but scary for most people. For Sam, it was worth dropping his rotten retail job to concentrate on campaigning for the sales agent roles he knew he could do well if he only got focused on his search. But for Tessa, getting a flyer design project from her drycleaner was essential to having the nerve to face campaigning for the steady corporate communications position she really wanted. I find most people are like her.

Many people who come to see me take up interim stoploss work to help them structure their time and manage their emotions while completing an audacious new career move. A job search today may take a year, and career changes can run you a couple years,

though these timeframes can be cut in half when coached. You can choose to buy yourself the breathing room to get your right career underway.

There are always more than enough money sources for you. The fastest route to getting hired is to show that you meet a need. Even for simple work, in the employer's eyes, it's rarely about giving you a job. You know how to do a lot of things - who has needs your know-how can help with?

Stoploss can be silent and offside, like working in retail at night, or related to your field, like projects for a past employer. Try to condense the time you spend stoplossing. – because your time is extremely valuable to you and your future.

Offer to do a low-level job in fewer hours for their entire salary budget. An \$88K arts marketer did a \$22K opera promoter job using 1¼ days out of his week. The opera was thrilled to gain expert results, and he remained free to line up his new executive position elsewhere in the industry.

Committing to having the satisfying work life you deserve, identifying your value to others and doing some math will help you think realistically about affording a career shift.

BRAINSTORM 1: Could I Use Stoploss Work To Cover Me During An Important Career Manoeuvre?

- Value of my time – my usual pay per hour or per day
- Total monthly living expenses (a comfortable level)
- % of my expenses I could self-fund by investing savings into my career move, having my spouse support me, selling an asset, or renting out part of my home
- % of my costs I actually need to defray with stoploss work
- \$ I expect to make from stoploss
- Until when might I need this interim income?
- How will I maintain my career skills, visibility in my field and progress on my goals while doing stoploss – either apply these in my stoploss work or set aside specific time for managing my career shift campaign.

BRAINSTORM 2: 50 Things I Know How To Do...(Spend 10 minutes making a list. Go!)

- Benefits my approach always provides
- Interests/Hobbies – Movies, Gardening, Elderly
- Special Know-How
 - places lived, languages known, client types served, major life events survived
 - what I know informally from books, seminars.

BRAINSTORM 3: Okay: where am I needed?

- SEASONAL NEEDS – Kids Out Of School, Tourist Season, Night Classes Start, Easter
- SPECIAL EVENTS – CNE, Pope's Visit, Film Festival
- FREELANCE TO OLD EMPLOYERS

- ASK FRIENDS & CONTACTS
- PROVIDE A SERVICE/MAKE SOMETHING If You Have Friends And Family Who Want It, Or A Group Of People You Can Easily Get To

I'm not suggesting everyone should run out and quit. But hey, it's resolution time. What if on New Year's Day you said, that's it, I want out of what I'm doing now. (I've done that before and it was always a good thing I did).

Top Overnight Work-Getting Methods

1. Keep in frequent touch with your best contacts in your field so you can go over there and help them with anything, fast!
2. Get direct introductions to owners, from friends or others who meet a lot of people.
3. Call and introduce yourself to 50 managers via a voicemail commercial for what you does for them. Leave your number but say you'll be responsible for following up till you reach them. It may take several tries to get them but keeping the ball in your court helps them.
4. Make a 1 page info sheet that excludes experience beyond the scope of what you are looking for today.
5. Go to the place and ask to see a manager. Yes, this works. At the sort of place you can really help a lot, it may be worth waiting up to an hour.
6. Get the general manager's/owner's name and phone number so you can call and discuss what you want to do for them.
7. To apply to corporations/chains, whether they are advertising or not, send a letter that focuses them on what your work does for them rather than an applicant-style resume and cover letter. When it's your idea, you don't have time to behave like an applicant!

A job you no longer like and bills to pay is only a catch 22 if you have no career improvement underway. Committing to getting the quality of career you want, not worrying about 'how it looks', crunching some numbers, and taking up stoploss work could change your life. But by waiting forever to start you're probably throwing time and money away. Yes, working nights at the warehouse or painting people's dog portraits could be a fabulous tactic in actually moving your career ahead.

5. Testimonials

I have a rich new perspective on my career. I can articulate what I want and where I should end up. New tools to use, I can safely utilize them properly.

SW

You have been working with me for two years now. When I came to you, I wasn't getting enough work in my field and I was sunk in debt. You helped me examine and describe my abilities with accuracy and panache, and apply that information to a consistent and effective marketing approach. As a result, I've had an excellent year, and have made significant strides in paying down my debt. I would recommend Work Creatively to anyone whose career needs a change or improvement.

TK

I've learned through your help that a career is something you DO, not something you HAVE. It's not something that happens to you, like being hit by a bus. You have to happen to it. I used to think of work, a job, and a career as a possession. I coasted along when I 'had' it, and looked frantically for a replacement when I 'lost' it. I felt certain that as long as I 'had' a job, I was in the game. I thought very little about the job I was actually doing. After all, if a company promises me no loyalty, why should I further its goals? Now I've learned that coasting along, I was only doing myself a disservice. That a career is a verb, not a noun, and that I'd rather drive the bus than slip under it.

MM

6. News You Can Use

Who We Are Now: Lynne O'Connor, CMF, an accomplished Toronto career management professional, has joined me as senior career advisor. Each person now gets the help of 2 coaches – myself (MFF) as well as experts whom I've additionally trained in my original Work Creatively methods. I welcome Lynne to our Work Creatively community.

Service Innovations: As you know, we coach each person privately. Since the summer we've also gathered our clients every 2-4 weeks for a bonus goalsetting and networking meeting that gets raves. And Work Creatively Alumni – senior people who've completed a career improvement move --- have asked for and now have a career club so they can stay on top of their game and keep moving.

Speaking Engagements: I recently spoke by invitation at the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, and at the November meeting of Wired Women. In April, I'm a presenter at the Association of Career Professionals International, in Chicago. If your association meeting needs enlightening, practical content, call to talk about a speaking engagement on a career topic by Mary-Frances Fox.

***Till next time,
Mary-Fran Fox***

Your partner for a career solution

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