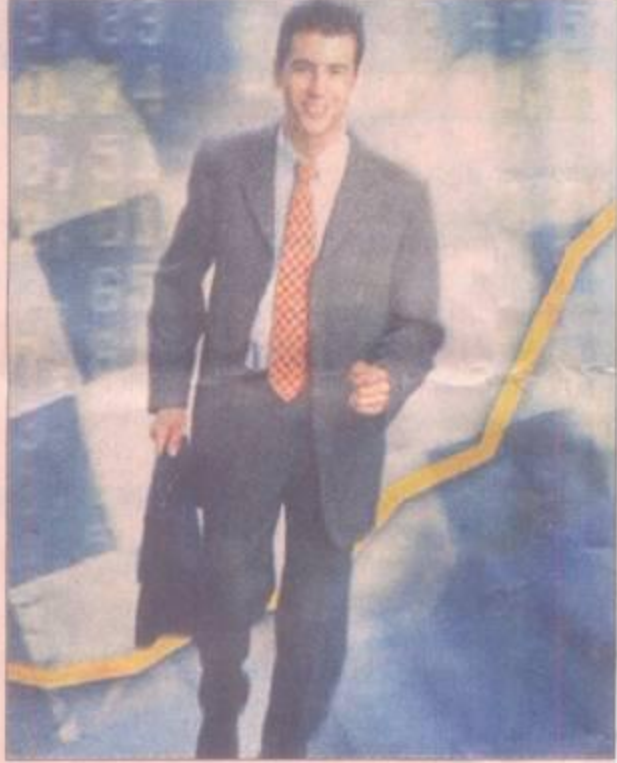


Handling a Career Transition



It's never easy to get out of the comfort zone of an existing career and dive into something completely new. The older you get and the higher you climb on the career ladder, the more unsettling it may get to make that switch. Nevertheless, a career transition, if handled the right way, can be just the right ticket to a fresh lease of professional life, says Sreeradha D Basu.

1 TAKE STOCK OF PRIORITIES
Do a self-analysis before taking the plunge, advises MD of head hunting firm Executive Access Ronesh Puri. "List out all your skills as well as the challenges you anticipate in the new career. Identify how your previous experience can complement your new role," he says.

2 DON'T BE SCARED TO TAKE A RISK
Your priorities keep changing, so you might need to do a course-correction. Don't be scared to experiment. "A lot of people are risk-averse. But nothing in life is zero-risk," says Puri. If you are at a stage in your life when you are not in a position to take that risk, postpone your decision. But don't let it constrict you, he adds.

3 HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN
What is your continuity plan? How will you handle things if your new career doesn't pan out well for you? Your confidence levels will be much higher if you have a back-up plan in place.

4 PLAN YOUR FINANCES WELL
In certain cases, a career transition may involve a reduction in income and a consequent hit on finances. That's why you need to think ahead about how to manage your family obligations, EMIs and other expenses. It could mean cutting down on your indulgences; dipping into your savings or some other avenue.

5 ENHANCE YOUR SKILLS
Develop new skills that are required for the career change. Take an online programme or read up as much as you can about your new career choice. "Acquire all the skills, knowledge and information possible about the new field before entering it. Do your groundwork well," says CEO of executive search firm Symbiosis Management Consultants Vinay Grover.