



Cogent Career

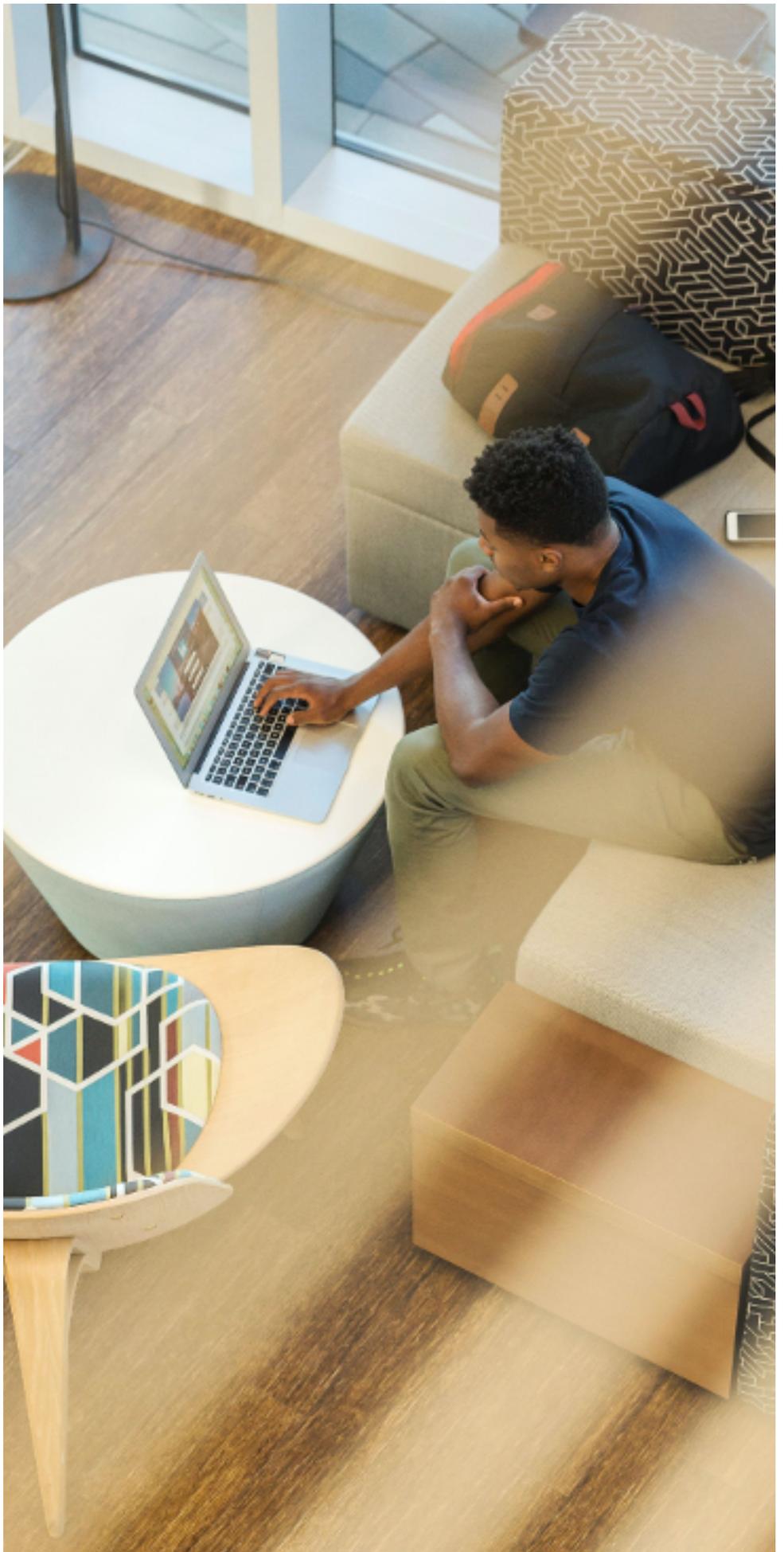


**10 Proverbs for
Your Career Journey**

About Us

Ever see a need that you were uniquely able to meet? A need that seemed tailor fit to your skills and abilities? We founded Cogent Career to offer clear, simple career advice to make the living you dream of. First, we offer two unique perspectives. We have subject matter experts with a history of mentoring new and existing staff. Second, we have career changers to coach those looking to flip careers, go to graduate school, or start a business. We have professional experience in healthcare, education, nonprofits, and construction. We want to take our lessons learned and pass them on to you. Called "Proverbs for Your Career Journey", these basic rules provide a simple philosophy on developing your life and livelihood. We hope they benefit you as much as they have us.

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BEGIN.

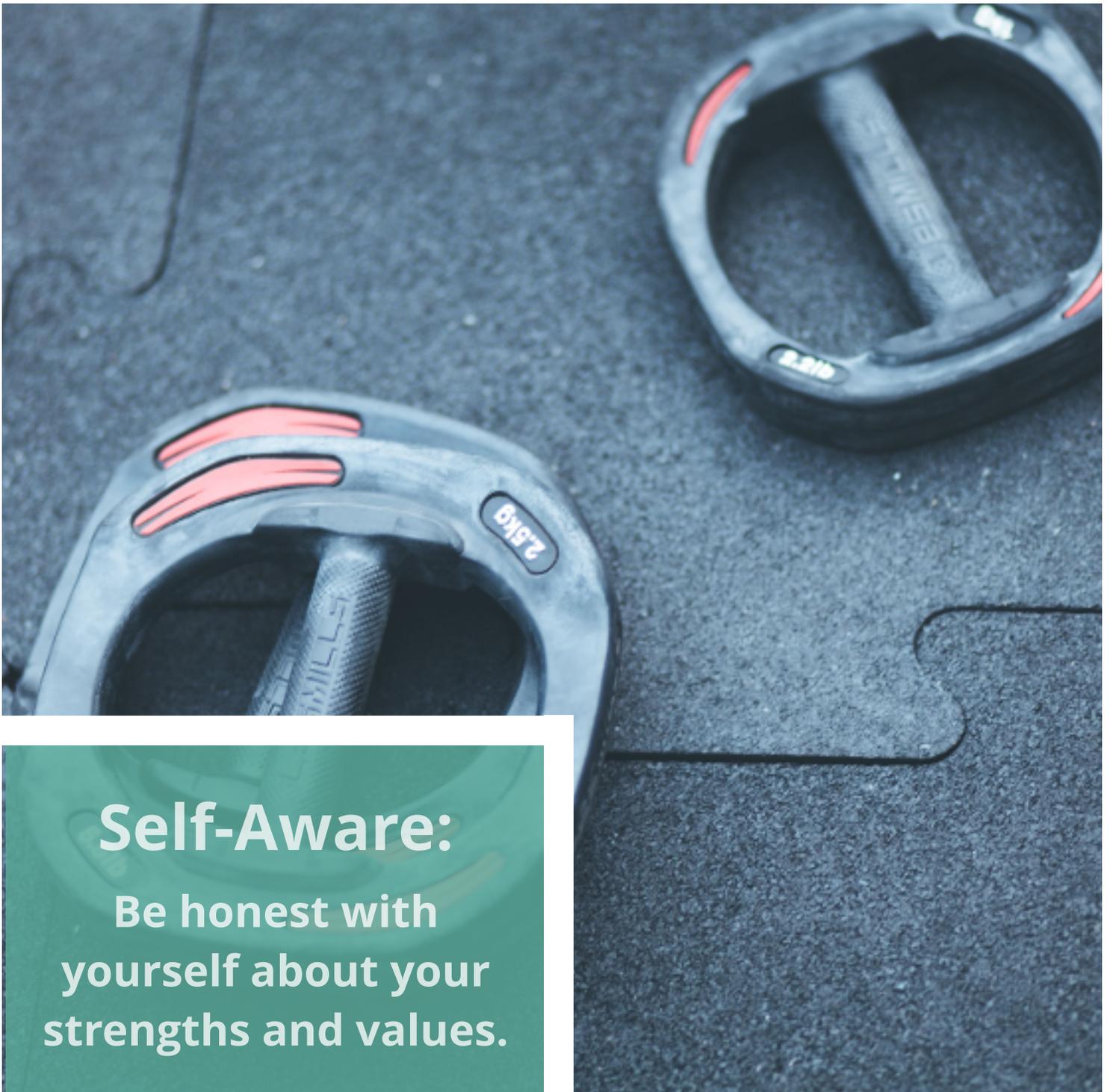
**Control:
Your career doesn't
define you. You
define your career.**

Identity. We find it in all sorts of things, but our career is the most common place that we get our identity. "I am a teacher." "I am a salesperson." We even sometimes find our identity in the company we work for. Those things will likely change over your life. If you place your identity in what you do, or who you do it for, you will find your wheels spinning because your career gave you traction and purpose in your life. Instead, use your career to express who you are and your values. Let your passion become your career. Your joy and performance at work will go up.



**Accountability:
Lead measures
predict and create
your success.**

None of us like accountability. But, without it, we will never accomplish what we think we can. Here's a new term for you: "forward thinking accountability". It means holding yourself accountable today so that you get the benefit in a month or a year. It's a way to describe lead goals. Lead goals, if accomplished, practically ensure your success. Why? Because you track out what it will take to get where you want to go. Lead goals state that if you do XYZ today, tomorrow, next week, etc., your year will be a success. For example, if you decide to go back to school, your lead goal is not to get a degree with a 3.5 GPA. Your lead goal is to study and practice two hours per day after class. By accomplishing your lead goal to study daily, your end goal of getting a degree with a high GPA will be accomplished. In other words, put in the work today to get the payoff tomorrow.



Self-Aware:
Be honest with
yourself about your
strengths and values.

Do you know what drives you? Do you know what motivates you and your career? There's a reason you bounce between careers or struggle to perform well in certain environments. This may not be a bad thing. It's just how you are wired. If you haven't already, take some free career and personality assessments, and get feedback from those that know you well. Don't try to be someone you are not. It's okay to not be "senior management material". It may be that your greatest potential lies outside your present company. Maybe you start your own company. Maybe your greatest impact is being a dad, mom, husband, wife, neighbor. Fully embrace the authentic you, and it will propel your career forward.



Community:
Meaningful
relationships will take
you farther than skills.

Right now, you might need to acquire or grow new skills to get your next job. Or, you may be highly educated with 15 years of experience in your field. The truth is that letters after your name and years of experience won't do more for you than the relationships you develop in your life. Without your community, your career may never get off the ground. Or, when tough times come, your career may grind to a halt. Take the time to genuinely network in your office, church, professional associations, and neighborhoods. It's a longer process like farming. The process can be long and hard. But, the harvest is great and will sustain you through thick and thin.



Supply & Demand

Be open to paths that others don't take.

The quickest way to long-term success is to meet a need that others can't or won't meet. Let's be honest though. We all aim for the easiest job within our skill set and interests that we think will get us the life that we want. This may work for some, but the opportunities are the greatest where the supply of workers and skill is small. This could be a "dirty job". It could be a trade like woodworking or plumbing. Or, it could be expertise in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) field. Regardless of the field or industry, the road less traveled often pays more.



Humility:
**Don't be too proud to
ask for something.**

You don't get what you don't ask for. This could be a job, a raise, a relationship, or a sale. Anything really. The reality is that shyness is usually a cover for pride. To ask for something means that you are not self-sufficient. That's okay. No one is. We have some great news for you. Every one of us gets asked for things every day. Need something? Don't be afraid to ask someone for their time and be honest about why you want to talk. If they say yes, they are expecting you to ask them for something when you meet. To not ask them would be a surprise to them and a waste of time and energy for you both. So, ask away!

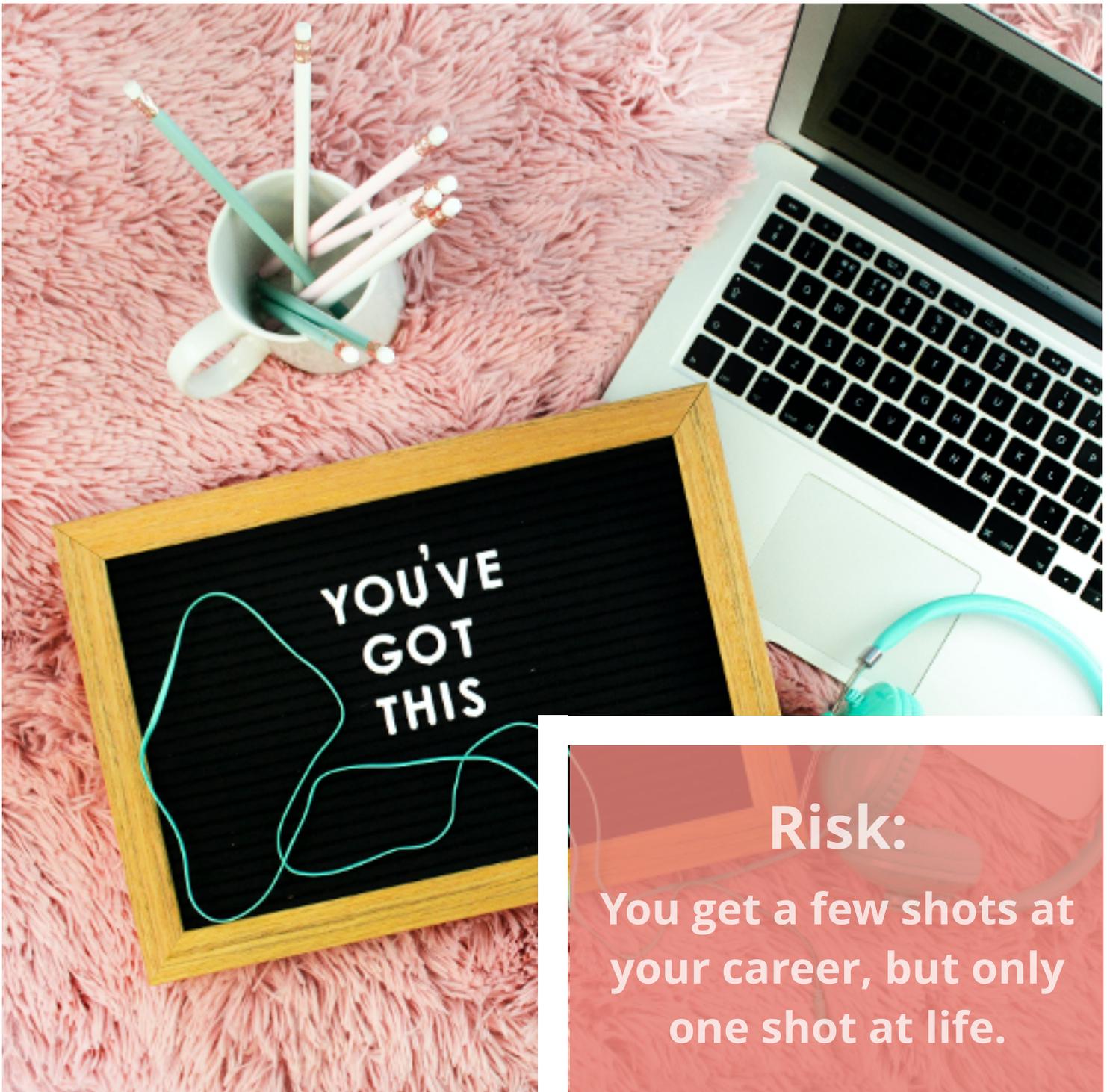


Everyday we make value judgments about people, purchases, etc. We ask ourselves, "Is it worth it?" That's another way to say return on investment (ROI). You must evaluate career decisions carefully. Thinking about school? How much more will you really make with that certification? How much will it cost you and your other priorities? Thinking about a job offer? Is it really worth it? Does the opportunity have long-term benefits? Are they worth it to you? Evaluate your current employer this way as well. Be assured that they do this with you. You should always evaluate the ROI with any organization you give the bulk of your life to. The same applies to education and relationships.



Confidence:
Be mindful, not
intimidated, by
other's strengths.

You should want to surround yourself with talented people. Smart, quick, hardworking. Better than you at some things. Guess what? That's okay. No one is better than you at everything. We all have unique strengths. Not only that, they might just have a different perspective. Sometimes your work may need a fresh set of eyes. So, be mindful and appreciative of other's abilities. They can probably help improve your work, just as you can improve theirs. A dull blade does nothing but require more effort and make a bigger mess. Surround yourself with sharp people. It will pay off.



Risk:
You get a few shots at
your career, but only
one shot at life.

Your life, your livelihood. Keep them in that order. Make sure your faith, family, and values shape your vision for life. Mistakes in these areas come with a great cost and are tough to fix. Your career, though, is a different story. There is room for error. Almost every success story involves an element of risk. Your risk may be leaving your current role for a start up opportunity. It may be switching to a lower paying job for higher potential pay down the road. It may be saying 'no' to a great opportunity because you are needed most at home. Thankfully, greater risk comes with greater potential reward. That may be financial, physical, or relational. At the end of the day, you have to know it's worth it to you.



Preparation:
Train for change, and
it won't be so bad
when it comes.

Training is a mental, physical, and emotional activity. Your training should match what you expect to be able to do. And, your expectations should be reasonable. You don't train for a marathon by running a mile every day. You also can't run a marathon five times a week. The same thing goes for change. Mentally prepare for change in your career. Read and stay up with economic, industry, and company trends. Be diligent to jot down your accomplishments at work every three to four months. Your resume will thank you. Stay grounded emotionally with your employer and coworkers. Those relationships can change in a flash. Stay ahead of the curve and face fewer surprises. When they do come, you will be in better shape to handle them.



What's Your Next Stop?



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