



*Squiggly Careers*TM

Top 10 Episodes

AND PODSHEETS

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Top 10 Episodes

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1. Exploring and
applying for a new job

Listen to Squiggly Careers #170

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Exploring and applying for a new job



Many different and desirable versions of our future self are possible.
Learning, not performance is the outcome.



Herminia Ibarra

Reinventing Your Career in the Time of Coronavirus, Harvard Business Review

Exploring your possibilities should be a career constant

Don't save exploring your possibilities for when you are applying for a new job. Staying curious helps you to stay motivated in your career and prepares you for the unexpected.



3 ideas for exploring



Scanning

Go to LinkedIn and find at least 10 jobs you find fascinating. What are the common themes?



Admiration and inspiration

Whose career do you admire and how does their work inspire you?



Possibilities to probabilities

What are your...

- obvious possibilities?
- ambitious possibilities?
- pivoting possibilities?
- dream possibilities?

Now try to put them in priority order.

3 ideas for applying



Get help with your CV

Ask a critical friend to take a look at your CV alongside the job advert. Try helpful tools like [resume.io](https://www.resume.io)



Utilise your connections

Get in touch with contacts to learn more about the company culture and values, and to warm-up your application.



Make sure your impact is consistent

Don't forget that people look you up online. If your CV states that you are creative, make sure that this is echoed on LinkedIn and other social media.

Coach Yourself Questions



What is currently holding you back from exploring your possibilities?



What do you need to know and who can help you in exploring your possibilities further?

Recommended resources



[A Job to Love](#)
School of Life



[Ted Talk: How to make applying for jobs less painful](#)
Priyanka Jain



[Reinventing work: why you need to understand the 'self other overlap'](#)
Eat, Sleep, Work Repeat podcast

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2.

**How to cope with
overwhelm at work**

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How to cope with overwhelm at work

“ We feel overwhelmed when the complexity of modern life surpasses the complexity of mind. ”

Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey, Harvard Professors and authors of 'Immunity to Change'

What are the first steps to take?

≈ **Spot your triggers:** Can't say no to additional requests?
≈ Are you lacking support? Are your expectations too high?

≈ **Understand the impact:** e.g. you can't sleep, you go into 'robot mode', make mistakes, feel confused or forgetful

10 actions to take back control and overcome overwhelm at work

- 1 Know the difference between good enough and great**
Start your week by identifying tasks that need to be great. *Accept that not everything has to be perfect.*
- 2 Is it significant enough to sink the ship?**
Prioritise where your energy goes. ask yourself if any of this is going to sink the ship. *If it is, put your energy and time into that.*
- 3 Say 'no' or 'not now'**
if you find it hard to say no, practice the art of saying 'not now'. *Help others to understand what is time-critical and what is not.*
- 4 Get yourself a 'done' -list**
What progress are you making on your to-do list? *Get motivated by putting a post-it on the wall when you have completed something to show progress.*
- 5 Release the tap on your stress bucket**
if your 'stress bucket' is getting full, take the time to rest and reset. *This will feel challenging, but it's key for your resilience and just 5 minutes can help.*
- 6 Beware of doing it all yourself**
People like helping people and we get better when we receive the help we need. *'If something can be completed 80% as well by someone else, delegate!' Jon Maxwell*
- 7 Adopt Can/If thinking**
'I can do this / If I do that thinking' can help you prioritise and find creative solutions to your problems. *What solutions can you come up with?*
- 8 Get some perspective**
Get somebody else's perspective on how they would manage your overwhelm. *Or try reading about something bigger than you to regain your perspective.*
- 9 Read / watch / listen to something new**
Switching off momentarily is another way to take back control when feeling overwhelmed. *What inspiring things have you read / watched or listened to recently?*
- 10 Take action and declutter**
Rediscover the focus you need to do your best work. *Whether its a new notebook, a tidy desk, or meditation for a clear mind.*

Coach Yourself Questions

- ?** What makes you feel overwhelmed at work and what impact does it have on you?
- ?** What are your triggers for feeling overwhelmed and what action can you take once you spot these?

Recommended resources



[How to Deal with Constantly Feeling Overwhelmed](#)

A useful HBR article by executive coach Rebecca Zucker on the topic of overwhelm



[The stress-bucket explained](#)

A useful explanation about the stress bucket analogy to help manage overwhelm



[How to manage your monkeys](#)

Squiggly Careers Episode #258

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3.

How to build your self-belief

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How to build your self belief

“ People’s beliefs about their abilities have a profound effect on those abilities. ”

Albert Bandura

4 sources of self belief

- 1 Engaging in learning experiences**
Teaching ourselves new skills gives us confidence to go into the unknown.
- 2 Borrowing belief from others**
Feeling inspired by positive role models and internalising their confidence.
- 3 Getting positive feedback**
Increasing our self perception and in turn, our ability to succeed.
- 4 Connecting self care and self belief**
Feeling good about ourselves means that you're better able to cope in situations where self belief is required.

4 Coach Yourself Questions

- 1** What is going to be your learning experience in the next 6 months?
- 2** How are you staying connected to the people that inspire you?
- 3** Who could you ask for 3 words to describe you at your best?
- 4** How could you restore and re-energise your emotional health?

Self care exercise

Write down 4 simple pleasures that make you smile. Assign them red, amber or green based on how well you are prioritising them right now. What would it take to make them all green or amber?

The biggest barriers to self belief

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| BAD MANAGER | ACTION: Over invest in your other sources of support. |
| PAST EXPERIENCES | ACTION: Reflect regularly on your small successes. |
| LACK OF FEEDBACK | ACTION: Start giving more positive feedback to create a cycle. |
| CONFIDENCE GREMLINS | ACTION: Reframe your limiting beliefs into limitless beliefs. |

Recommended resources

- The Confidence Code**
Katty Kay & Claire Shipman
- Ted Talk: 3 tips to boost your confidence**
Amy Adkins
- Build your support system**
Squiggly Careers Episode 83

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4.

How to ask better questions

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How to ask better questions



What stops us from asking good questions:

- Fearing that you should already know the answer
- Fearing that your question will be a hindrance or will come across as awkward

Reframe these fears into positive prompts:

- "Asking a question shows that I'm interested in learning"*
- "Asking questions leads to better outcomes"*

Why questioning is a skill worth investing in



It helps uncover new insights. People around you are a great source of learning. Asking questions is a way to relationship-build whilst learning.



It demonstrates vulnerability and curiosity. Asking questions is a practical way to increase the trust that people have in us.



It improves our emotional intelligence. It's a virtuous cycle that helps you develop empathy and build better connections.

What stops you asking questions?

4 Ideas for Action

1

Increase the quantity and quality of your questions

*What's your question tally in a conversation?
What are the quality of your open questions?*

2

Try out these different styles of questions below:



Mirroring questions - This is where you mirror a question asked to you. It helps to build rapport in a conversation.



Adjoining questions - These "What else/Who else?" types of questions help you think broadly and explore connections.



Elevating questions - These questions help you take a step back and re-group. "What is the problem we are trying to solve?"



Deep-diving questions - These questions help you to better understand any details. "Can you give me an example?"



Curious-style questions - This is where you ask questions to shift thinking. "How might we do things differently?"

3

Have the confidence to ask one question at a time.

When we ask all of our questions at once, we stop someone being able to fully think through their response. When we ask a single question and pause, we increase the attention given to each query, increasing the quality of the conversation.

4

Watch, listen and learn from others.

Reflect on what you might be able to watch (e.g. Prime Minister's Questions) or listen to (Emma Barnett interviewing on Women's Hour or Elizabeth Day on the How to Fail podcast), to create a great learning environment. What can you learn from other people's approaches and styles of asking questions?

Coach Yourself Questions

1

What types of questions do you hear the most at work?

2

Which questioning techniques do you want to try out?

Recommended resources



Quiet by Susan Cain

Provides tools for introverts to take full advantage of their strengths.



The art of asking the right questions Video from Big Think, uploaded on YouTube



How to Fail Podcast

Every week, a new guest is interviewed by host Elizabeth Day

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5. How to find
your work/life fit

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How to find your work/life fit

Achieving Balance vs. Finding Fit



Achieving the perfect balance implies reaching a level of perfection that doesn't exist. It creates pressure and leads to comparison "if they can do it all, then why can't I?"



'work/life fit' focuses on finding out what is most important for you right now and fitting together the pieces of your work and life in the best way for you.



How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your work/life fit?

“ There is a vital difference between managing time and managing work: work is infinite, time is finite. ”

Jim Collins, *Beyond Entrepreneurship 2.0*

3 Ideas for action to find your fit

1 Fix and flex your fit: Don't get too rigid or fixed on rules as it can create resistance and stress in a squiggly career.
Reflect on what you can fix and how you can be flexible with it.

2 Identify your mis-fit flags: Work out the signals which help you know when your work/life fit isn't working.
Share these mis-fit flags with someone you trust to notice it.

3 Name the work/life conflicts that are out of your control: Identify what is creating any challenge in achieving your desired work/life fit. Ask yourself these questions:

- ? *What would a good / better / best outcome look like for me?*
- ? *Who could I learn from that has experienced the same?*
- ? *What compromises would I be willing to make to move forward?*

More Coach Yourself Questions

- ? **What might your work/life fit look like for you this week?**
- ? **Who are the people around you that could support or sponsor your work/life fit this week?**

3 mindset principles



1. Accepting that your work/life fit might be a work in progress.



2. Knowing that finding your fit will mean making choices and trade-offs.



3. Understanding your work/life fit is personal to you and not falling into the comparison trap.

Tactics to improve your fit



Helen says: Look at times when you can multi-task to double the value of your time (e.g. commute + podcast).



Sarah says: When a situation is out of your control, try to "let it go". This creates a mental shift that helps you see any alternatives / options.

Recommended resources



Invisible Work

John Howkins on how to find your fit in a new world of work



TED Talk: How to gain control of your free time

Laura Vanderkam on how to best manage your 168 hours a week.



How to manage boundaries

Squiggly Careers episode #121

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6.

**How to explore your
progression possibilities**

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Squiggly Careers PodSheet

How to explore your progression possibilities



Key principles of progression

- ≈ Progression doesn't just mean promotion
- ≈ Everyone can develop in different directions
- ≈ People progress at their own pace
- ≈ There is no 'blueprint' for a successful career

Why is progression important to you?

4-stage process to help you explore your progression possibilities

stage
1

Develop a mind map of your possibilities

Brainstorm all the ways you might be able to progress in your career. Take off the career constraints and think about what your progression possibilities might look like.



Could you embark on a career pivot? Could you look outside your organisation?

stage
2

Prioritise your possibilities

Don't progress for progression's sake. Instead, reflect on why progression is motivating for you. Connect your values to a vision for your future that feels meaningful.



Use your values as a reflection point. How can you grow and stretch in a new direction?

stage
3

Prototype your progression priorities

Explore the ideas generated from your mind map. Which do you get most excited or energised about and which feel more relevant and realistic for you right now?



Rank your top 3 progression possibilities.

stage
4

Signal the support you need

Remember that others can support and influence your progression possibilities. Showing your commitment to your career growth creates commitment from others.



Involve others you trust in your thinking. Who could you learn more about your priority possibilities?

How to respond when your progression doesn't go to plan



Acknowledge your emotions but focus on the actions that will help you to make positive progress.



Start small and specific. Think about what's in your control and start there.



Don't be afraid to reach out and spend time with people who will inspire you.

Coach Yourself Questions

1

Whose career progression are you inspired by?

2

What can you learn from their journey?

Recommended resources



[The Long win: The search for a better way to succeed](#)
Cath Bishop



[The Secret Leaders Podcast on YouTube](#) Hear founders' stories about the realities of being an entrepreneur today



[How knowing your values unlocks career happiness](#)
Squiggly Careers Episode 42

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7. How to explore
your potential

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How to explore your potential

“ Fulfillment doesn't come from clearing hurdles others set for you; it comes from clearing those you set for yourself. ”

Robert Steven Kaplan
(Reaching Your Potential, published on Harvard Business Review)




How are you stretching your strengths in different situations? (see diagram below)

3 ways to stretch your strengths and uncover your potential

- 1 Develop in different directions**
Actively work at growing what you are already good at by using your strengths in different situations and making them great.
- 2 Teach others your strengths**
Knowledge-sharing makes learning last and challenges you to effectively explain what you know.
- 3 Learn from the best**
How can you actively learn from those at the top of their game? Adopt a growth mindset.






How to develop your risk-readiness when exploring your potential

-  **Recognise the risk**
Does it feel exciting?
How will it benefit you?
-  **Be realistic**
Think about the impact of the risk.
What's the worst that could happen?
-  **Have a Risk Recovery Plan**
How can you get feedback on the action you plan to take?

Coach Yourself Questions

- 1** What is it you want to explore your potential in?
- 2** What would you add to your "curiosity" curriculum?

Recommended resources

-  **The Startup of You: Adapt to the Future, Invest in Yourself, and Transform Your Career**
Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha
-  **Ted Talk: Why you should define your fears instead of your goals**
Tim Ferriss on fear-setting
-  **40 minute Mentor**
Be inspired by guests on this podcast.

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8.

**How to negotiate
for what you need**

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How to negotiate for what you need





"If knowledge is power, then information is influence"


Chris Voss, *Never Split the Difference*

How emotions impact negotiation


 Negative emotions reduce our clarity. Fear, frustration and anger can reduce your influence.

 To reduce negative emotions:
Take a break. Stand up to get a drink or go to bathroom. Create a moment to breathe.


 Positive emotions lead to smarter negotiations. They broaden your mind and increase creative thinking.

 To increase positive emotions:
Think about the benefit of what you can learn not just what you want to 'win'.

Coach Yourself Questions


 How does the thought of negotiating make you feel?

4 negotiation tactics to try out

 **Call out the elephant in the room**
Show 'tactical empathy' by proactively discussing things that are difficult for the person you are negotiating with.




Find the dead ends
Certainty trumps uncertainty. Finding out what's not possible can help you get clearer on what is.


 **Work your words**
Manage your tone, volume and pace to influence the other person's response.



Summarise their argument first
By presenting their perspective, you can take control of the conversation.

Coach Yourself Questions

 How could you increase your value to the person you are trying to influence?

 How could focusing a negotiation on learning, rather than losing, change your approach?

Recommended resources



[How positive emotions help](#)
HBR article on the link between positivity and creative thinking



[Masterclass with Chris Voss](#)
Free 1 hour discussion



[How to negotiate with impact](#)
Squiggly Careers episode 92

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9. How to manage
ego at work

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How to manage ego at work



“ It’s the sense of superiority and certainty that exceeds the bounds of confidence and talent. ”

Ryan Holiday

When have you experienced ego at work?

Understanding your ego

Which of the following statements feel familiar to you?

1. You get defensive when someone disagrees with you
2. More people feed your ego than give you feedback
3. You rarely change your mind
4. You need other people to give you praise
5. You view your career in comparison to others
6. You're more likely to think you're right than you're wrong

Your ego is most likely to show up when...

3 ideas for action to manage your ego

- 1 Listen:Talk Ratio**
Make sure you're spending more time listening to what other people are saying than sharing your own views.
- 2 Cultivate Critical Friends**
Seek out people who give you radically candid feedback and improve your self-awareness.
- 3 Learn to let go**
Identify the assumptions you make about what you need to do and by when. What really happens when you do something different?

3 ideas for action to manage someone else's ego

- 1 Crowd-sourcing perspectives**
Create 'challenge and build' meetings and introduce 'pre-mortems' to proactively include other people's thoughts and insights and prevent one person dominating the discussion.
- 2 We vs. I**
Spend time agreeing collective outcomes and celebrate shared successes. Encourage a 'rush and point' mentality.
- 3 Manage your mindset**
Don't internalise someone else's ego. Reinforce your boundaries by giving them space and gravitating towards people who operate with humility.

Recommended resources



Ego is the Enemy

Bestselling book by Ryan Holiday



Abby Wambach & Brene Brown

Explaining the principle of 'rush and point'



How to be a brilliant listener

Squiggly Careers podcast #134

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10.

**How to
reshape your role**

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Squiggly Careers PodSheet

How to reshape your role



Invest in 3 different relationships:

-  **Reactive Relationships.** These often develop following short-term networking opportunities which are often in the moment. They can create career momentum.
-  **Reciprocal relationships.** These mutually beneficial relationships are likely to last over the long term and are built on common interests and understanding of each others aims and aspirations.
-  **Random relationships.** Spending time with new people in new places can spark new ideas and create unexpected opportunities.

How could you better cultivate relationships in your career?




Get involved with your Alumni network (university / past employers)

Volunteer for internal projects / communities of interest

Self-organise an event outside of work around an area of passion

Other

Barriers to reshaping your role or career

-  Not having the right mindset.
How can you adopt a growth mindset to reimagine your role?
-  Lack of self-motivation and not seizing opportunities.
How can you be more intentionally curious in your career?
-  Not being open to the process of learning.
What are you learning for the first time this year?

“

Reinvention is almost never a one time, fix-it-and-you're-done job. Instead, it's a way of life and a habit we can build.

”

Dorie Clark

Ideas for Action



Visualise your career without constraints. What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail? Create a vision board of images, quotes and pictures that reflect your dream career.



Devote 20% of your time to experimental projects. Find the win/win for your company of spending time on new projects that increase your impact and accelerate your learning.

Coach Yourself Questions

1 Who do you know who has reimaged their career?

2 What can you learn from their approach?

Recommended resources



[Reinventing You: Define Your Brand, Imagine Your Future](#)
Dorie Clark



[How to future-proof your career](#) Dorie Clark's Tedx Talk about the benefits of a portfolio career in an uncertain world.

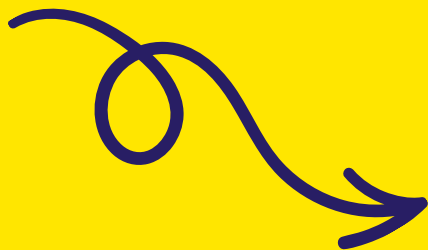


[A re-skilling revolution?](#)
Squiggly Career Ask the Expert Podcast episode 183

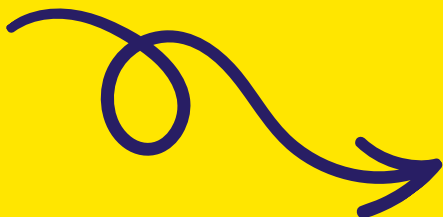
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