



*CAREER***FOUNDRY**

HOW TO CHANGE Your Career To Tech

Actionable Tips, Tools, And Advice For A Successful Transition

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Introduction From Raffaella Rein

There's never been a more exciting time to be in tech. With 20% projected growth over the next 10 years and median annual salaries more than \$60K, tech jobs can provide a secure future--but it isn't simply a question of quitting your job and applying for another. A career change to tech takes preparation, dedication, and motivation.

In this ebook, we'll give you insider tips on how to change to tech, so you know exactly what you should be doing and when. We'll also look at WHY it can be so hard to make the initial jump and what you can do to overcome your professional fears and insecurities. Here's what's inside:

Chapter One In this chapter, we'll look at the four psychological obstacles that are stopping you from changing careers, and give you the simple steps you need to overcome them.

Chapter Two This chapter gives you seven simple steps to get you started on your new journey into that new career--many you can start today.

Chapter Three Not sure which tech career is right for you? In this chapter, we layout the personalities of two in-demand professions: Web Developer and UX Designer.

Chapter Four Do you need to go back to school to start a job in tech? In this chapter, we'll examine what going back to school means and explore alternatives to traditional master's programs.

As someone who has changed her career from banking to operations to startup entrepreneur, I know the journey you're embarking on now is both exciting and a little bit scary. From my experience, I know that the things that challenge us the most are often the things we need to do to help us learn and grow. I hope this book helps push you towards taking the first step towards your professional goals.

Best,
Raffaella Rein
CEO and Cofounder, CareerFoundry




CHAPTER ONE:

What's stopping you from changing careers?

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A person with long hair is sitting at a desk, looking down at papers. There are several papers, a cup of coffee, and some sticky notes on the desk. The background is a dark, textured blue.

So you want to make a career change, but every time you try, you freeze. Something just won't let you do it. Whether it's a belief that you'll fail, or a fear of change, overcoming psychological obstacles can be the hardest part of taking the first step towards a new life. A common conclusion drawn is that by not taking a risk, we are unable to fail. To stay safe, we often end up feeling that it's better not to try at all.

By understanding the factors that are holding you back from what you want to do, you can address and ultimately overcome the issues that are keeping you from reaching your potential. To help guide you on this journey, this chapter identifies the four biggest psychological obstacles and provides actionable tips to train you to overcome them. Don't feel like you have to do all the actions at once. Instead, focus on actions related to one hurdle a week so you have time to absorb the technique without feeling overwhelmed.



The Four Big Blocks

Psychologists have identified four main hurdles, called the Four Big Blocks, that keep us from making successful changes in our lives. These are our limiting beliefs, assumptions, interpretations and “gremlins”. By learning how to recognize these blocks in your own thought processes, you’ll see that many of the things you think are stopping you from changing careers aren’t logical, legitimate or based on any real-life truth.

1. Limiting Beliefs

Throughout your life, you are unconsciously absorbing beliefs about the world from family, friends, teachers, the media, and more. Sometimes these beliefs create an internal braking system that keeps us from moving forward with plans. These are called limiting beliefs. They are usually based on phrases, cliches, or societal expectations that we think are true, but actually distort our view of ourselves and what we can achieve in our lives and careers.

For example, as a child, your parents may have told you that writers don't make money. You internalized this, and before you knew it, you were believing it. Or perhaps a commonly held view at your school was that women are better at working with children than men. When this view was reinforced by a number of teachers, you found yourself agreeing with it.

These limiting beliefs can seem very hard to overcome because they've been reinforced throughout your entire life. This makes it hard to question them. It's important, however, to recognize that these beliefs are holding you back from achieving your goals, and are not true for everyone. You've been indoctrinated!

How to control limiting beliefs

Whenever an obstacle pops in your head, it's important to individually assess whether or not that belief is relevant to you. Is it based on truth--or can you let it go? When a limiting belief starts to creep into your thinking, simply acknowledge the thought and remind yourself of your true purpose. This will help diffuse the belief and retrain your mind.

2. Assumptions

Sometimes when we experience something once, we feel it will automatically happen the same way every time. This is an assumption. Unlike a limiting belief which happens around you, assumptions are based on things that have happened directly to you in your personal and work life.

For example, maybe you feel you can't make a career change now because of a rocky path in the past. Or maybe you had a hard time retaining new skills and are scared to try going back to school. Neither of these assumptions take into account different life situations or the change and growth you've had since the initial experiences.

Assumptions are dangerous because they reinforce the belief that every future attempt will achieve the same result: failure. And instead of embracing the reality of the present, we let the past control our future. When making a major life change, this often results in a complete paralysis where we stop trying at all.

Assumptions can also create negative energy around anything you do. That means that even if you attempt to make a change in your life, it's already less likely to be successful because your thinking sabotages you before you even start. You won't put the same amount of energy into that attempt, because you already assume you'll fail before you've even started. It becomes a vicious cycle where your past failures determine your future ones.

How to overcome assumptions

It's important to remove the emotion from the assumption and look at it in a more logical light. When an assumption arises in your mind, challenge it with: *"Just because this has happened in the past, why should it happen in my future?"* It might feel awkward at first, but just stay comfortable with what you're feeling. Remember your future will only repeat the mistakes of your past if you choose to let it! Take a positive action instead of believing the assumption to be true.

3. Interpretations

Throughout our working and personal lives, we are constantly interpreting what is happening around us. This means we formulate what we believe to be rational explanations for why certain things have happened. This story we tell ourselves is our interpretation.

For example, you might say, “I don’t think my boss likes me because she didn’t say hello to me in the morning.” Perhaps she was just having a bad morning--or maybe she hadn’t had her coffee yet. We don’t know whether our story of the interaction with her is true or not, but it can cause our interactions with her to be different than if we thought everything was ok.

The problem with focusing too hard on our own interpretation of an experience is that it can mean we ignore the possibility that other explanations could exist. An interpretation is just our own viewpoint and is influenced heavily by our own previous experiences and knowledge. And because interpretations are created from own

personal experiences of other events, they have a particular emotional hold on us, making it even harder for us to recognise other explanations or points of view just as valid as our own. This can be particularly dangerous when our interpretation of the past affects how we approach taking risks or making decisions in the future.

How to challenge interpretations

We can directly challenge our interpretations of events by simply asking ourselves what the exact opposite of our interpretation would be. This new perspective can make you see the experience in a way you hadn’t thought of. Sometimes just looking at your interpretation in this new light can free you from it.

You can also think about what another person would think of the situation. Imagine how a specific friend or family member might view the event, interaction, or experience. Or talk to a trusted friend about your worries. Ask them for their interpretation. By exploring other stories or perspectives, we reduce the power the original interpretation has over us.

4. Gremlins

Your gremlin, or inner judge, is the voice that tells you you're not worth it. You'll recognise him because he'll try to make you believe you shouldn't make that change in your career or apply to that new job. And because he has direct access to your hopes and fears, he can target exactly what it takes to get you to roll over and give up. He can make you your own worst enemy.

One of the reasons why the Gremlin is so hard to overcome is that he's actually a part of you. At one point in human evolution, the Gremlin's job was to make sure we didn't do anything that might cause us to fall off a cliff or get eaten by bears. But now that we don't have the same life-or-death situations, he treats everything as a potential risk. He wants you to play it safe instead of trying new things or starting something that could be uncomfortable.

How to reduce the gremlin's power

By fully identifying your Gremlin, you separate yourself from it and make

it weak. Give your gremlin a name or simply see it in your mind. You sap its strength by seeing him in objective terms. When he starts telling you that you're unable to achieve something, say to yourself, "Oh that's my gremlin-not me." Or you can address it directly by saying, "Thanks, Fred, but I'm going to change my career."

From there you can analyze the truth in the statement you're hearing in an objective fashion. By using this exercise in your everyday life, you'll soon learn to reduce your gremlin's power over you, enabling you to achieve the success in your life and the career you deserve.

While overcoming your obstacles may seem insurmountable, don't let it overwhelm you. Keep a growth mindset and acknowledge you are a changing person. You may not be perfect now, but you're continually striving to be a better person. Just take it one step at a time, and before you know it, you'll look back and be amazed by how far you've come.

CHAPTER TWO:

How To Make A Career Change in Six Simple Steps

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Now that we've identified the key obstacles stopping you from changing careers, let's look at how to successfully get you into a career that embraces your passions. Many of the following steps you can implement right now, today--so what are you waiting for?! Implement right now, today--so what are you waiting for?!

Step 1. Explore what you *actually* want to do

You've probably had many ideas about what you'd like to do next, but never had the chance to sit down and plan it out. Here are some questions to help guide you towards discovering what you really want to do. Let your mind wander and explore what the perfect work situation would be.

1. What are your current strengths and weaknesses?
.....
2. What do you like in your job and what do you hate?
.....
3. When have you felt the happiest at work?
.....
4. Do you want to work for someone else again, or do you want to work for yourself?
.....
5. What does your perfect work day look like?
.....
6. Other than a paycheck, what motivates you to do the work you do?
.....



Step 2. Determine how you get there

Now that you know a little more about what you want to do, how do you get there? Let's say you've decided to become a web developer. Do you need to go back to school or can you already code? Will you need a formalized education or do you prefer the self-taught route?

In Chapter Four, we layout and explore educational opportunities to pick up valuable tech skills.



Step 3. Find a mentor

Finding a mentor in your field can be an invaluable resource and support when you're thinking of changing careers. And if you're thinking of starting your own business, it's crucial. Why learn from your own mistakes, when you can learn from someone else's?

The best way to find a mentor is to ask your social networks if anyone knows anyone in your future field. If they do, ask for an introduction. You can also do searches on LinkedIn for people with the title you're seeking.

Ask them for coffee and pick their brains.

Start by asking a lot of questions about the details of their day-to-day job. Are these things you could do every day? What do they like about their job? What don't they like? Listen carefully to what they say--don't assume you know it all already! They may not have been working in digital when they started out, but many of the fundamentals of working and entrepreneurship remain the same.



Step 4. Increase your network

Most jobs are won through personal or professional connections. Get a jumpstart on finding a new job by building a support network while still holding down your day job. You may want to get out of there as quickly as possible, but believe me, handing in your resignation letter too soon could be your biggest mistake. Not only do you not want to be without an income, you also want to keep from burning bridges.

Again, the first place to start is on social media. Find people in your target industry and ask them for coffee. Look on **LinkedIn** for

professional groups in your industry. Look on **MeetUp** or professional groups with events you could attend. And while you may be tempted to press them for their contacts and keys to their networks, keep your cool. Exchange business cards or contact info, but make a personal connection with them before trying to work them over.

The key to successful career transition is realizing you don't have to do it alone.



Step 5. Build your personal brand

In the age of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, we're all a brand. As a job seeker or potential freelancer, you are selling your brand and your brand is YOU. While the phrase "personal brand" may sound like selfies and status updates, your personal brand is an extension of your business and part of your unique selling point.

In case you haven't done it already, the first step is to clean up your Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter profiles. Since these are the first places many jobs and businesses look to learn about you, be sure they're

in-line with the image you want to present. Does it represent an image your future employer will embrace? And that's not just the profile picture. Do you share content, links, and photos that show you're interested and active in your field?

On LinkedIn, make sure your photo is professional and your work experience is up to date. Be sure your portfolio is up. Also, don't forget about websites specific to the tech industry. If you're a web developer, make sure your **GitHub account** is active and filled with projects which show off your skills.

Job Outlook for Tech VS Other Industries

Source: 2016 Modis Salary Guide for Tech Professionals

18.0%

Growth in tech employment: estimated 685,000 new tech jobs by 2022

10.8%

Projected growth in all other industries

Step 6. Write a plan of action and set yourself some goals

Goal number one: set yourself some goals. Don't use 'lack of organizational skills' as an excuse to stay unhappy in your job for the rest of your life. Anyone can write a list, including you.

Working backwards, outline your goals for the year. Then go back and write out the upcoming 6 months and then the next 6 weeks. From today onwards, you will write yourself daily goals, small things you want to achieve over the next three months to get you out of your job and into a better career by Christmas. Think about what you need to do, how you need to do it, and how long it will take.

If you're working full time while you do this, be sure to do one small thing a day. For example one daily goal could be to email that UX designer about meeting for a coffee to discuss

how he got into his career. Another daily goal might be, read five pages of **that book about UX Design**. Or perhaps, **sign up for a course on UX Design** to complete over the next three months.

Keep your long-term goals in sight at all times. Frame them and put them on your wall. This will remind you why you're doing what you're doing and what you're ultimately aiming for. Your goals should be specific, with a definite deadline and written down. Above all, make your deadlines realistic. Give yourself more time than you think you need.

It may sound a little insurmountable at first, but by chunking it into phases and taking little steps, you'll look back in a few months and be astounded by how far you've come. Won't that feel great?

CHAPTER THREE:

Which tech career is best for you?

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A man with short dark hair and a light beard, wearing a blue button-down shirt and dark jeans, is sitting on the edge of a wooden desk. He is smiling at the camera. To his left is a large computer monitor on a stand, with a desk lamp above it. A small potted plant in a yellow pot sits on the desk. The background is a bright, minimalist office space. The floor is covered with a colorful patterned rug.

Which tech career best suits you?

Two of the fastest growing careers in tech are Web Developer and UX Designer. Based on research with our students, alumni, and mentor, we've created a list of personality traits these jobs need. Does your personality match the profiles of these lucrative professions?

Web Developer

We've all heard stories of the solitary, socially-awkward young men who haunt web development. While this may fit one part of the profile, it doesn't represent all of them. Not all web developers are reclusive--and contrary to popular belief, there are many women who code.

Patience

Every programmer will tell you that patience is at the top of the list of requirements needed when learning how to program. As a web developer, you'll come up against numerous bugs and broken lines of code that will take practice, patience and research to fix. When you're starting out in programming, this can be very frustrating. And if you're the sort of person who can see frustration as a means to an end--i.e., your frustration fuels your drive to keep looking for an answer, then you might be web developer material.

Communication

Whether you're working alone as a freelancer or in a team at larger business, the ability to communicate

what you're doing to non-technical people is crucial to your success as a web developer. You have to get your point across as effectively as possible. In fact, programmers who can describe what they're doing using everyday language without jargon are 100 times more successful than those who speak in code.

Problem-solving Skills

Because you'll be taking ideas and turning them into living webpages and apps, you'll need to be able to use logic to help you create. You'll also have to take apart code to figure out what isn't working or where a bug is coming from. That's why a healthy passion for disassembling, building, problem-solving and overcoming challenges is key to a successful web development career.

MEDIAN PAY **\$63,490**

TOP PAY **\$112,680**

10-YEAR JOB GROWTH **24.6%**

Source: PayScale.com, US Bureau of Labor Statistics

UX Designer

UX design is a people-orientated profession that seeks to understand the needs, goals, and behavior of the user of a site, application, or product. By combining these findings with a company's business goals, they design solutions that meet the needs of both. A relatively new field, it's quickly finding its way into all industries.

Empathy

When navigating a website, a UX designer is always thinking about the quality of the experience for each individual user or customer and how to improve that experience. That's why empathizing, or understanding a person's feelings and motivations, is a key quality of any great UX designer. This involves taking time to research and understand the different needs of different personas and adapting the site to respond to those needs.

Curiosity

User research, a large part of the UX designer's role, involves finding out why people do the things they do. That's why having a deep curiosity about people and how they work

underlies the role of a UX designer. A curious person will enjoy making hypotheses, digging deep into analytics and data from user research groups, and implementing solutions to respond to these results. If you don't have a basic curiosity in humans and their behavior, this could be a very boring job for you!

Clarity of Expression

Being able to communicate complicated concepts to a team of designers and developers requires the UX expert to express themselves and what they want done clearly and accurately. Since you'll have to convey your processes to senior management who might have no idea of user experience, the more concisely you can articulate the findings of your research and how those apply to the web design, the better.

MEDIAN PAY **\$95,600**

TOP PAY **\$150,000**

10-YEAR JOB GROWTH **22.1%**

Source: PayScale.com, US Bureau of Labor Statistics

CHAPTER FOUR:

Do I Have To Go Back To School For a Tech Career?

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Whether it means learning a programming language to help you code or discovering how to wireframe a website, changing your career means filling your brain with new skills and vocabulary. Traditionally, that has meant going back to school to get another degree or a master's--but that may not fit everyone's budget, timeline, or work schedule. In this chapter, we'll explore whether or not going back to school is the right option for you.

What are the requirements?

Before you dive into an expensive master's program and waste time and money on an education that might not land you a job, it's important to verify that you're getting the skills and experience required by the new position or new career. Check out job postings for your desired position and learn what the expected education and experience will be. Also, talk to your mentor or a friend in the industry to learn exactly what skills really are necessary. Do you need to spend a semester in a class on theoretical programming languages? And if you do, will you have time to develop the experience to start a job when you graduate?

What's your budget?

Going back to school can get pricey. For example, a masters programs in Web Development can cost tens of thousands of dollars--and that's just the classes. Other expenses to bear in mind include books, rent, food, and transportation, all of which push the total even higher. And depending on the program, it could be a few years before your "investment" finally pays off.

Becoming a full-time student also means you may have to go part-time or quit your current job. Have you saved enough money to cover your cost of living while you're in school? Have you looked into scholarships or grants? Or do you plan on taking out a loan?

Money shouldn't stop you from reaching your dreams. You may have to scrimp and save before you graduate--but that's part of being a student, right? Just make sure the program you are enrolling in will arm you with what you need to get you a job after you graduate.

What about your family?

Going back to school doesn't just affect you. If your new career choice is going to affect your loved ones, or those you live with, make sure you fully prepare them for what your new education and career could mean for them. It should, ultimately, lead to a happier you, with more money and a better life/work balance. But in the meantime there could be long nights of study, a smaller disposable income, and a lot less free time while you work on getting there. It's important that you discuss your decision with your partner; they'll be in a much better position to support you on your journey if you brief them in advance.

Do you have to go to school?

Going back to school is a big investment of both time and money. Over the last couple of years, however, many options have arisen that still offer high-quality training without the price tag or time commitment associated with traditional education. If you're looking to make a quicker career jump, these options might be a better fit for you.

In case you hadn't noticed, the Internet is chock full of free tutorials and videos. YouTube is a veritable library of detailed walkthroughs. There are also many blogs that offer top notch, step-by-step instructions on coding or design. Do you have the diligence and focus to leverage these sites in lieu of a formal education?

If you've tried these and found that you need something more formal and structured than the self-taught route, you might consider an online or in-person bootcamp. In-person

bootcamps like General Assembly can often require that you be in a particular city or in class every day -- but you'll get your skills in XX months. Online programs like Bloc can allow you to learn anywhere at any time. And with CareerFoundry you get the flexibility of an online course that also includes a 1:1 mentoring. You can also try free lessons at Codecademey.

Don't let the variety and range of options intimidate you. The beauty

of all this choice is that you can pick and choose what you need. Ultimately, you don't want to get so caught up in planning that you psych yourself out of actually making the leap. The most important thing you need to do when making a life change is to just start being the change you want to become. That means taking the first step and building the momentum by doing things that get you closer to where you want to be.

Find Out
What's Next >>

Next Steps

At CareerFoundry, we believe that everyone deserves a fulfilling career. That's why our courses are specifically designed to arm you with the skills, tools, and portfolio to get a well-paid job in the tech industry in three to six months.

About CareerFoundry courses:

- Online so you can take them anywhere, anytime
- Flexible to integrate into your work schedule
- 1-1 Mentoring by experienced industry professionals
- 3-month or 6-month courses to fit your speed
- Results-oriented to arm you with a job-ready portfolio

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