

Creating Smooth Transitions In Life and at Work

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Transitions in our personal and professional lives are inevitable, challenging, and stressful. Whether we are choosing to make a change - or if change is being thrust upon us - we can either resist or embrace the experience. When maximized and leveraged appropriately, transitions are strategic opportunities to exploit our best developed skills, knowledge and abilities and then, take advantage of our next life chapter.

Everyone we know and meet is in some stage of transition at any given time. Some transitions are more significant than others. Life-changing events such as relocating, starting a new job or business, starting a relationship, or changing careers can be some of the most exciting and fun times in our lives. However, there is often a normal and natural degree of anxiety or nervous energy that accompanies these types of major change.

Transitions are a process. Although the job we do or our geographic location may change overnight, there are emotions and energy that we must move through and manage during transitions. For these reasons, times of transition should be handled thoughtfully and strategically.

People experiencing transitions often report feeling frenzied, fearful, uncertain, and lacking in control, clarity, and confidence. Transitional periods can feel like being on an emotional roller coaster. This is understandable. Change often comes with a myriad of emotions. Feeling stressed out and emotionally overwhelmed by change makes us more susceptible to taking things personally. Minor things can set us off. A well-intended comment or question from a loved one or colleague during a sensitive transitional period can trigger underlying insecurities, self-doubt, and trepidation that can manifest as emotionally reactive and defensive behavior. Major transitions are difficult enough without adding needless emotional regret, embarrassment, and wasted time and energy.

[Here are three healthy habits to cultivate and make your unique life and work transitions more manageable, enjoyable, and as comfortable as possible.](#)

Step 1: Listen to Your Feelings

The first step is listening to your feelings. Being honest with yourself about what you are feeling is healthy and authentic. Your emotions give you valuable information about what you really want. Is the nervousness you feel about taking that new job simply natural apprehension about work responsibilities you are uncertain you can master? Or, are you experiencing a deeper anxiety indicating you may be taking this job for reasons that

are out of alignment with your core values? Listening to your feelings is a valuable habit to cultivate. With greater clarity around what you are feeling, you can more accurately express yourself to others.

Step 2: Express Yourself

The second step is expressing yourself with honesty. Being fully self-expressed helps you release stress and helps the people around you understand what you are going through. Shutting people out and internalizing feelings creates resentment and fuels conflict. Let's look at a business management example. Telling your business partner that you feel anxious about the direction the company is headed is healthy for a sound relationship. Are you naturally apprehensive because you have never taken such a business risk? Or, are you feeling anxious because you are unsure you and your business partner are aligned in your values? The habit of expressing yourself in a controlled, clear, and confident manner helps you to stay balanced emotionally, maintain integrity, and deepen the quality of important partnerships.

Step 3: Give Yourself a Break

The third step is giving yourself a break. Transitions are tough. Stop being so hard on yourself. You are entitled to feel what you are feeling and this includes feeling conflicted. You can be happy, yet apprehensive and anxious at the same time. It is important to determine how much of your inner conflict is self-imposed, fear-based, misdirected, and unnecessary. Stepping out into the unknown can be overwhelming and frightening. Facing change and transitions is difficult but it doesn't have to be riddled with sleepless nights and self-doubt. Redirect your energy to work for, not against you.

These three habits sound straightforward. However, developing effective, sustainable habits takes time, dedication, and practice. At Strategic People Solutions, we love helping professionals comfortably move through their life transitions and build a fulfilling future. Whether you are switching jobs, starting a new business, or carving out a new life venture from your bucket list, we have strategies that can make the changes smooth transitions.

About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business success expert. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. She is frequently featured in the media and contributes blog posts for www.AllBusiness.com, www.MarketInsiders.com, and www.WomenOnBusiness.com. Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.