

CAREER

REINVENTION

BOOTCAMP

Module 2:
Touring Your
Career Options

Audio + Transcript

Pamela: Now we're going to move into Module 2. You now have a great picture, the qualities of who you need to be, and an ideal day vision. Maybe you even want to expand it into an ideal life. Now in Module 2, it's about exploring your career options and creating a short list that delivers the picture you want. You have it. Now you need to know what jobs can actually make it happen.

The trick here is to find a workable intersection of career possibilities and lifestyle. The idea is to get most of what you want in these arenas. This is about real-life reinvention and happiness. It is not about having 100% of everything. That's just not possible. It goes back to the concept of having just enough of what you want in all of those key areas so that life feels sweet and satisfying.

In this module, we're going to talk about some tactics for figuring out which jobs are most likely to deliver what you want and creating a short list for actually making that happen.

There are some very specific things that you do. One of the things that you're going to do is what I always say. Begin by making a list.

This sometimes panics people. They think, "Oh my god! How am I going to come up with a list?" You want to come up with a list of 10 jobs that can possibly deliver this ideal vision you have and the qualities of being. People say, "How can I come up with 10 ideas? I just want to come up with one idea."

I want you to come up with seven to 10 options. The reason for that is there's a big danger in doing less than this. I see this all the time. People come to us and have a great idea. This is what they want to do, and they're completely invested in that great idea. They say, "This is my thing. This is it."

This is a trap. If this particular idea doesn't work out, for whatever reason, you're going to be devastated. Then you'll have no other options.

Having only one prospective path is a very perilous position to take in your reinvention. It causes you to put all your eggs in one basket. That's not what you can do at this stage.

If you put all your eggs in one basket, there will be way too much pressure going on. Then you'll be scared because what if this one thing doesn't work? You'll think, "Oh my god! Now I have to go all the way back."

No. You want to come up with seven to 10 ideas at this point. This is also forcing you to think creatively.

This is the second reason you're going to come up with multiple jobs on this list. You're going to force yourself to start coming up with ideas. This is a very important skill in reinvention. It's the ability to brainstorm creative solutions.

As you go along in this process, you're going to be hitting challenges and barriers. You're going to need that skill to come up with ideas of different pathways through. This is the first stage of reinvention with multiple pathways through. It's this moment where you have to come up with seven to 10 pathways to create this vision.

You may not do all of them, but you're going to force yourself to think so that when you hit other challenges down the road, you won't think, "There's only one way to solve this. If I can't solve it this one way, then it's not getting solved." There are multiple pathways to your dream, and you're going to get really practiced at coming up with them.

Even though you're coming up with these seven to 10 prospects, don't worry. You're not going to be pursuing all of them. You're busy and have a life, and you don't have time to do all of that. Your goal in doing this exercise is to train your mind to seek out multiple options.

We're not going to go to the exercises that can help you do this. The first one is to begin by asking yourself, "Who else has the lifestyle that I want, and what are they doing?" You may know somebody who is living the kind of lifestyle that you want. Look at what they're doing. What do they do for a living?

Maybe they have a lot of flexibility in their day-to-day schedule or take 12 weeks of vacation a year. What do they do for a living? Are they an entrepreneur who has built up a company or an independent consultant?

People always say, "I can't have a job. I really want to travel, but if I have a job, I can't have it. I can't have the lifestyle I want because I need to work a job."

I knew an accountant who had an agreement with his firm to work six months nonstop during tax season. Then he spent the other six months of the year in Brazil.

It was a win-win situation for him and the company. The company didn't have to carry a full-time employee during the slow season, and he got the lifestyle he wanted. He basically got paid the equivalent of a year in six months, and then he got six months off.

This is about being creative. Many people wouldn't even think that that was possible, so they wouldn't even ask. Once you begin to be able to be creative about the options, you can begin to ask and put it out into the world to see if there's a way of working it.

That's one thing I want to also say about reinvention at this stage. For everything that you think is not possible, somebody has done it. You might as well decide, right up front, that it's going to be possible for you too if you figure out the way to get it done.

If you don't know anybody personally who is living the lifestyle you want, then look to the world. Don't just look to celebrities. That can feel unrealistic and not accessible. Read newspapers and magazines to find role models who appeal to you. Review the jobs that they're doing.

A lot of magazines these days write profiles. Read those profiles. See what people are doing. Pay attention to their lifestyles. It's very interesting. See these general interest stories and how people are putting together their lives to spark your creativity around this.

The second question that you want to ask yourself is one to mine your history and bring it back in. What did I want to do in high school? What would be a contemporary version of that based on my skill set?

For example, in high school this was something that I wanted. I wanted to be a psychologist, but I said I didn't want to go to school that long. When it came time to think about this reinvention I went back to that and became a coach who dealt with business reinvention when I was reinventing my career.

I had all this corporate experience about how to do it. Now this interest all the way back from high school came back, married with my current skill set, and opened up a whole new career path.

This is what you want to do. You want to look at what you wanted to do back in the past when you didn't feel that there were restrictions. That's the key. You want to take yourself out of whatever restrictions you've built up in your mind just because of the "reality" of your life.

We'll be getting back to those realities, but what we're doing is creating a new reality. We want to mine those areas where you didn't have those artificial boundaries to see what we can take back to current day to begin pushing your boundaries so that you can have more.

Think back to what you wanted to do in high school, or even go further back. Think back to what you wanted to do when you were a little kid. Don't laugh. If you said, "I want to be a fireman," why? What was cool about that? Don't just think, "I'm not going to be a fireman today." Maybe not, but what was cool about it?

If it was about the sense of adrenaline from rushing in or the ability to help people, those are things that you could add into your life today even if you're not going out and literally fighting fires. This is about expanding to come up with these job ideas and start to marry them with what's going on today and say, "If I were to rework this, what would I be doing today?"

You will need to brainstorm. If those seven to 10 don't roll off of your mind by thinking about ideas that you've come up with, what you see in the world, who's living the life that you want, and what they're doing or thinking back to high school, you're going to need to brainstorm.

If you're stuck, here's what you need to do to brainstorm. I laid this out very specifically in my book. We're just going to go through this step by step. This is what you do and how you come up with ideas.

Question 1: You ask yourself, "When am I in flow?" There is a lot of research done on this. Flow is an optimal state of mind that happens when you're totally absorbed in an activity, when time seems to stand still and you just feel that deep sense of satisfaction.

It's back to that "just enough" category we talked about in Module 1. Those moments of flow are moments of happiness. Time is standing still. What do you do normally that is so effortless and joyful that you can happily do it for hours? That's where you're making a list. "I could do this. I could do that." These are the things that you're going to be tapping into to come up with ideas.

Strangely enough, when I was in entertainment I could talk to people for hours about their career and how to rework their resumes. This was crazy stuff given what I was doing then, but I just found it endlessly interesting. To this day I still do. This is what I do.

When you're in flow, it will feel like 15 minutes, and two hours will have passed. Whatever that is, put that as part of the list. That's going to help you come up with ideas for this seven to 10 jobs list.

Question 2: What feels easy? This is the talent that you have that feels as natural as breathing. People probably always call you for something. What is it? What problem do they always come to you to solve? When and where are you the go-to person? Where are you the resource for your family and friends? What do your friends always tell you that you're good at?

Many times we think, "Doesn't everybody know how to do this?" The answer to that is no. This is the thing that everybody is coming to you for. If you're the go-to person for videos because everybody says, "You're so great with a camera," then pay attention. Weave that into this whole jobs list.

Question 3: What seems obvious? This goes back to what I was mentioning a little bit before. This is something that seems so abundantly clear that you wonder why others don't see it or do it.

These are the things that people should be doing. Why don't people know how to do this? It's something that is a natural talent for you with a big arrow saying, "Look in this direction." That's another way to brainstorm ideas.

Another one is what are your inexhaustible interests? These are the things that spark an unending sense of curiosity so that you never get enough of it. That's really critical.

My problem when I was Wall Street is that I didn't have any interest in Wall Street. It wasn't deep. When I left Wall Street I thought, "What do I want to do?" I realized that I really loved magazines. I was a pop culture junkie.

I figured if I did the same thing but did it in an industry where I actually was passionate about the topic and had an inexhaustible interest in culture, magazines and stuff then maybe it was okay. Sure enough, that's what turned out to be. You want to look for your inexhaustible interests, those things that you're always interested in.

Question 5: You want to ask, "What do I gravitate to in my current career?" Sometimes we're so desperate to make a change that we forget how much of it does work for us.

If you leave what is working behind, you're going to set yourself up for more happiness because you'll be missing what you left behind. You think, "I left all this other stuff." This is so you don't have to leave it.

Look at what's working for you. Pull out those components and think about jobs that would satisfy those so that you get to take what you like with you.

Question 6: What do you think should exist in the world but doesn't, perhaps to buy, eat, do or read? This is a great question for people who want to be entrepreneurs and say, "I'm just tired of this rat race. I want to do something different." If that's you, think about what you think should exist in the world but doesn't.

That was me. I was tired of the corporate politics. Even though I got offered a huge job I turned it down enough because I thought, "Enough of this." I felt that somebody should be out there teaching reinvention skills.

I thought the world was moving in a different way around work and that somebody needed to be teaching this. I didn't see anybody teaching it, and I thought, "Why not?" What you're going to be looking for is what you think should exist in the world but doesn't. Come up with those ideas.

One last thing that I want to say about this particular process of coming up with ideas for your job list is that you may be thinking, "Can I ask people what they think?" The answer to that question is you can ask them for ideas about what they would think that you might be good at, but don't ask them to think what you should do.

Now you're asking for opinions. That's going to come out of their framework. Whatever limitations they might have, now you're subject to those. You don't want to be in a box at this moment. When you ask somebody what you should do they're going to put you in a box.

You really want to ask people what talents they see you having. You want to ask for an objective viewpoint but not for an opinion. This is a very artful way. It's not, "What do you think I should be doing?" but "What do you think my natural talents are? Who else has those kinds of natural talents?"

If you're a lawyer and they say, "You really should be an event planner because you're so good at that," put that on your list. If you're a lawyer and they're saying, "You really should just move to this law firm," don't put it on your list because it's not different.

If you're going to ask this question, go to your most blue sky, out-of-the-box-thinker friends. Don't go to the ones who are really conservative and saying, "Why are you even thinking about leaving? You have such a great job." Don't ask those people.

Ask the ones who have struck out on their own and done something different in their lives. Those are the ones who felt that they didn't have to hold to a boundary. Those people can help you be creative, which is what you need at this particular stage in your reinvention.

Search out all these ways. Come up with a list of seven to 10 ideas that can deliver that. Then you're going to begin matching that against your ideal day and those BE qualities. You'll winnow down that list to see which ones are most likely to deliver the ideal day and those BE qualities, the ones that you get to express when you want to feel the most happy and fulfilled.

This is how you begin to work with these and come up with a workable short list of careers that can deliver this picture. That is the basis from which you'll begin to move forward through the rest of the bootcamp and reinvention process.