

A career pivot is a shift the direction of your career achieved by changing roles, skills, or companies. A pivots can be a series of small, strategic moves or a single significant career change.

Why it matters

Career pivots keep you learning. They encourage you to adapt to new skills, work environments, and challenges.

Pivoting gives you ownership of your career, unlocking new opportunities that help you focus on where your talents can take you.

Coach yourself question

What skills would I take with me regardless of where I worked or what I worked on?



5 ideas for action to plan your pivot



1. Plot your pivot possibilities

Adopt an open and curious mindset when plotting your possibilities.

First, ask yourself:

What do I want to be known for?

Then

What people, positions or companies need what I want to be known for?

Aim for 4-6 pivot options; some close to your current role, others further away, both inside and outside your organisation or industry.

2. Spot your 'pivot people'

'Pivot people' have a connection to your pivot possibility.

These could be people already in the roles you're interested in, working in the same field, or connected to someone who could help.

Reach out for curious conversations to learn more and to gather any valuable insights from their experience.

Building these relationships can help you to unlock future opportunities.

3. Create pivot projects

If you've not done the job you want to do before, your talents will need to do the talking for you.

Pivot projects are opportunities to showcase the talents you want to use in your next move.

Ask yourself:

What projects can I be part of that will demonstrate my talents?

By doing pivot projects, you'll build confidence, gain insights, and make valuable connections.

4. Apply & ask

Pivots require persistence! Apply for opportunities but accept that you might not be successful first time.

Ask for feedback to help to close any gaps you may have and stay open to smaller pivots that might get you closer to the dream possibility.

Look for and target organisations known for hiring pivot people. These organisations tend to value talents over titles, making them more open to squiggly career paths.

5. Take pride in your pivot

Sharing your *squiggly career story* can inspire others by showing what's possible and making challenging transitions feel more accessible.

If you've successfully pivoted, talk about your experiences; what worked, what didn't, and what you learned. This can also build your brand as a successful pivoter and lead to more opportunities in the future.

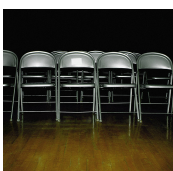
Encourage discussions about past pivots in your teams, as everyone has a story to tell.

Coach yourself question

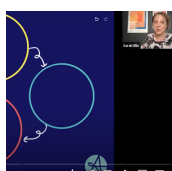
What pivot possibilities would I like to learn more about?



Recommended resources



It's Time to Reimagine Employee Retention
Read our HBR article



How to explore your progression possibilities
PodPlus episode to give you more practical ideas for action



Helen and Sarah share personal stories and what you can do to manage a career pivot on #45 of Squiggly Careers.