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## Frances Bolles Haynes: Radical Career Change

### 1 DEFINITION




- Radical Career Change means changing title/function and industry.
- There is no one correct way to make a radical career change –different strategies work for different people.
- It takes time and a lot of work (on your part) to make it happen.

### 2 WWW.POROT.COM

- Our web site to help with your career change.
- Sign in and get username/password.
- Do any exercises you wish.
- Everything is free.

### 3 THE PIE METHOD

#### 3.1 Six Questions

	Questions	Answers
?	<i>How did you get this job?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discover 1001 ways to get into this job</li> <li>▪ Gain self confidence</li> <li>▪ Scout the diversity of avenues which can be used to reach your dream job</li> </ul>
+	<i>What do you like best in your job?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Check if you really like this job</li> <li>▪ Verify that the job really attracts you</li> </ul>
[-]	<i>What do you like least in your job?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Check if you can stand the difficulties of the job</li> <li>▪ Identify the difficulties and evaluate if you are ready to accept them</li> </ul>
	<i>What are the key tasks/issues/priorities/challenges one has to carry out in this job?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prepare E (Employment) phase</li> <li>▪ Select “sales pitch”</li> <li>▪ Fine tune target</li> <li>▪ Discover and confirm the key tasks / missions / priorities of the job</li> </ul>
	<i>What skills/talents/traits/qualifications/degrees does one need to have to carry out these tasks?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inventory skills possessed</li> <li>▪ Value relevant past experiences</li> <li>▪ Discover relative skill</li> <li>▪ Measure the gap (if any) between your profile (skills) and the profile needed for the job</li> </ul>
	<i>Could you give me 3 names of people doing this job who like it?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start networking and enlarge your network</li> <li>▪ Secure informational interviews</li> <li>▪ Avoid cold calls and rejection</li> <li>▪ Get names of people you can approach on a warm call basis</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Recommendations

Rules for PIE!

- Prepare, Prepare, Prepare. Never “wing it.” Prepare as you would for anything truly important. Remember that you are going to collect information so do not plan to talk about “yourself” more than 1 minute. Every minute you spend talking about yourself is one less minute you will have to find out what you need to know from the person you contacted.
- Keep to the allotted time. If you asked for 10 minutes, wrap up at 9 minutes. If you asked for 20 minutes, wrap up at 19. Make sure you honor what you asked for – this will give you redibility and will help all those who come after you.
- If they say you can stay longer, do not stay more than 5 to 6 minutes more. If you have a lot more to talk about, make another appointment for another time.
- Research, Research, Research. - Not only the company, but even more importantly, the person. Find out all there is to know about the person you are going to talk to. Look for areas of common interest – it’s good way to create a natural bond.
- Follow-up, Follow-up, Follow-up. Be professional and thankful for the time this person spent with you. Follow up with a values-based thank you email, within 24 hours. We recommend you send a hand-written note too (also within the first 24 hours). May seem like overkill, but it will really make an impression to show you are grateful and professional.
- NEVER EVER let your informational interview turn into a “job interview”. You went seeking information and you must remain true to your stated purpose. If they turn the conversation to a “job interview”, thank them for their interest, restate that you are in the “information gathering phase” of your job hunt, and tell them you would be happy to contact them again to talk about a job (leave a reasonable time frame – don’t say you come in the next day!) or ask them to call you in a week or two.
- NEVER EVER accept a job if offered! The same applies as above. KEEP YOUR CREDIBILITY!
- Do not think it’s okay only to do the parts of this process you are comfortable with – adhere strictly to the format outlined for success.

## 4 BEING SELF EMPLOYED / CREATING MY COMPANY

**Question:** *To what degree can our school support the idea of self employment? I would in particular be interested in understanding the level of expertise from the related area, establishing a network in the target industry, etc.*

- Identify three to five reasons why you want to be independent/start your own business and put them in writing.
- Meet three to five people who have launched their own company (more than two years ago and less than five years ago) and ask them the 6 PIE questions {? + - ( ) \*\*\* >>>>}
- Draw two columns on a sheet of paper and identify the worst that could occur in two years if Alternative A (you start your own business) or Alternative B (you become an employee) - find two catastrophes for each alternative.
- Approach Career Services and ask them if they have a strategy to support you financially, logistically, strategically (advice).
- Investigate the level of expertise for your targeted area (Internet, telephone, visit) and insist that you are a student from our school. Stress the fact that you are gathering information for a research exercise.

## 5 BEST TIME TO CHANGE

**Question:** *When is it a good time to change company? Is it a good idea to continue evolving in the same industry?*

- Explore and investigate all alternatives that exist within your current employer (the fact of knowing their people, their culture is a tremendous plus) – there is less risk when you make a change this way.
- Flirt with the market by doing the PIE, browsing ads (newspaper or on job boards) and by answering ads for fun (choose ads outside of your geographical territory so that there is no threat of a leak that may hamper your current situation).
- Recognize that change can only be successful if your attraction to a new job exceeds retention to your current job (trust your gut feeling.)
- Make your choice by comparing it to things you could find elsewhere (PIE). Evaluate the gap and the frustration and decide.

## 6 CAPITALIZING ON ACQUIRED EXPERIENCE

**Question:** *There are many things and experiences (know how) which I would like to continue to use. Is there any good advice how to keep that?*

- Make an inventory (list) of things that you currently do or carry out (10 to 20 items).
- Design a double entry matrix (four boxes):
  - label one side “Enthusiasm” and split into:
    - +++ ;
    - and OK.
  - label the other side “Expertise” and split into:
    - +++ ;
    - and OK.
- Allocate each one of your 10-20 tasks in one of the four boxes.
- Focus on 2 boxes with
  - “Enthusiasm +++” and “Expertise +++”;
  - and “Enthusiasm +++” and “Expertise OK”.

		Enthusiasm	
		+++	OK
Expertise	+++		
	OK		

- Do the PIE for fulfilling/dream jobs which you contemplate. Check if those selected tasks are or could be incorporated in these jobs.
- Look for jobs that are either the same type of title/function you presently have but in a different industry; or jobs that are a different type of title/function but in the same industry. This way you can retain some of the things you know and are comfortable with/value.

## **7 CAPITALIZING ON MY EMBA/MBA/ADDED VALUE OF MY EMBA/MBA**

**Question:** *What is the real value companies attribute to an EMBA/MBA degree for professionals with roughly 10 years of experience considering a career change?*

- Realize that the outcomes of an EMBA/MBA are: developing self management skills/personality traits (50%), naming transferrable skills/talents (35%), acquiring knowledge/content skills (15%) (which amounts to 100%), to which you add your alumni network which equals an additional 100%!
- Expect that some people (within the small and medium-size companies) may not know the meaning/value of the EMBA/MBA. Be ready to deliver a 20-second pitch to explain it and describe its benefits.
- Identify two to three tasks/missions/responsibilities/initiatives that you could offer a company now that you have your EMBA/MBA and that you could not offer without your EMBA/MBA. Put a price tag on each one of these tasks in terms of contribution in terms of:
  1. an increase of gains,
  2. decrease of costs,
  3. avoidance of errors,
  4. strategic (ideas – hard to quantify).

**Question:** *What is the real value companies attribute to an EMBA/MBA degree for professionals with roughly 10 years of experience considering a career change?*

- Validate with two to three alumni the assumptions that you have made on point #3.
- Make sure that you approach the right companies since the same contribution [that you can attribute to an EMBA/MBA] may have no value for some companies and a very high-value to others [i.e. depending upon the level of competition, the technology they use, the type of vision they have of the markets...]

## **8 IDENTIFYING A FULFILLING/DREAM/IDEAL JOB**

**Question:** *The main driver for being interested in a career change would be an increased level of job and personal satisfaction. How could we ensure that we keep track on that and do not fall back in old habits and thus end up in an even worse situation?*

- Define five job targets. These job targets need to include the title/function/activity [backed up by skills] in the field/industry/domain [that could be found listed in the Yellow Pages of a telephone book]. Three of these targets could be a job of high interest to you, one could be a freelance consultant in a specialty that you love, and the last one the Plan B job [something that you would do if you cannot get any of the other 4 job targets you have identified].
- Make sure that, during your interviews, you ask relevant and targeted questions. You will be able to prepare these questions only if you have talked with (visited) 3 to 5 people doing the job for which you want to apply. If you ask good/professional/customized questions your interviewer will be more likely to answer you with detailed information which will help you know if you will be in the right job to keep your interest and job satisfaction high.
- Triangulate during the interview [i.e. ask the same sort of question in 3 different ways so that you can verify if you're being told the truth].

- When you start a new job, set the stage by developing good habits and make a plan on how to keep your job vital and interesting. Change the way you have done things in the past that have proven to keep you in a rut.

**Question:** *How and where to find the ideal company we are looking for (in terms of culture, habits, opportunities).*

- Proceed to our site at [www.porot.com](http://www.porot.com) and do the module called "Self-Assessment". It will take you 30 to 40 minutes. It will enable you to identify your preferred talents, the fields of interest that you like most, the people with whom you want to work and your ideal working conditions.
- Compile a list of characteristics you want (what kind of environment you thrive in) based on your self-assessment work (no more than ten items).
- Define 5 job targets [4 of interest to you and that attract you greatly and one plan B).
- Identify, for each one of those targets, 5 to 15 companies and gather information [Internet, alumni, contact, peers, social network, suppliers, customers...] to narrow down the companies that can really offer you what you want. After you do your research, you will find that some companies can be eliminated immediately; others will make your list of those you would like to interview with.

## 9 JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

**Question:** *What's the best approach to get exposed to companies looking to hire experienced recent EMBA/MBA grads?*

- Realize that out of 100 people who are hired: 15% are recruited on the open market (answering ads placed by employers; using internet job boards, etc.), 60% get their job by approaching companies in the hidden market [unsolicited approach by telephone, personal visits, e-mails, letters ...], 25% get their through the open social network market -LINKEDIN, etc.
- Your employability (hence your best chance to get the job] depends upon three factors:
  1. Your value [that you have discovered through self-assessment],
  2. The companies/markets that you survey by pounding the pavement [using the PIE method - [www.porot.com](http://www.porot.com)],
  3. The methodology that you use [using an unsolicited approach where competition is minimal to none and is much more efficient than answering ads where 150 or 250+ may apply].
- Using social networks and selecting the right keywords in one's profile there is free software called wordle.net to help with this).

## 10 NEGOTIATION / SALARY

### 10.1 Level of interest to demonstrate

**Question:** *How much interest should you have shown in the new area already (paid for courses yourself, applied for similar jobs, joined networking groups etc)?*

- Realize that, in a time of crisis, three criteria are key in the selection process:
  1. Enthusiasm – never underestimate its value,
  2. Persistence – don't take things personally,
  3. Commitment – leave no doubt that you will get what you are after.
  4. Show your enthusiasm by asking thoughtful questions during the interview.
  5. Demonstrate your persistence by using an organized system for follow-up.

6. Prove your commitment by saying "I have decided to ...(describe what you want to offer)" and not "I wish I could...I would love to....".

- Make sure to let your interviewer know how much you have invested to succeed in your career (time invested in your EMBA/MBA, other courses you have taken, activities you participate in to better yourself/familiarize yourself with the industry, etc.)
- Mention to your interviewer the names of the people that you have met with to validate your career choice and tell him/her why you have selected his/her company.

## **10.2 Securing the employer**

**Question:** *How to "sell" it, if potential employers might see it as a step back and therefore are afraid that you might leave soon again?*

- Make sure that you use words like career vs. job; show you are taking the long view.
- Demonstrate your willingness to make (even) more sacrifices than you've done in last 2 years, while you've worked on your EMBA/MBA.
- Insist on a positive attitude and show your ambition – you are highly motivated – and learn in any type of situation.
- Remember: "Experience is what you get when you don't get what you want to get."
- Read the sub-text of what the employer is thinking; you might have made a mistake in way you described yourself.
- Show examples of how you behave and what you've done in the past that demonstrate your persistence – it is not enough to tell an employer you won't leave!

## **10.3 Lack of experience for new job**

**Question:** *How to ensure someone of our capabilities when we have very little experience in a sector of activity? (When you start in the Telecom you remain in the Telecom. Usually very difficult to challenge that type of a statement with a recruiter).*

- Make sure that you reach the right person when you make an unsolicited approach. There are five different people to approach:
  1. Your future line manager (probably the best person).
  2. CEO, Number 1, President (practice first!).
  3. Major Shareholder (mostly in small to medium size companies).
  4. Person with "Vision" (the one most likely to see your uniqueness).
  5. Your Ambassador (someone you know or an alumnus).
- Remember that when you make a radical career change (i.e. Something which is unusual) . . . you have to stay away from traditional methods of job hunting [answering ads, using curriculum vitae, dealing with HR...]
- Identify [among all that you can offer] your particular areas which will interest an employer most and justify your move to a different area. Show the link between what you have done and what you will do in a different function/industry.



#### **10.4 Negotiating and changing career**

**Question:** *Financial compensation which is today based on the previous experience and success. Changing career path will most likely result in a big loss (?) How could we overcome that?*

- Start with the assumption that a change in career should not result in a drop in salary. If you think that you have to accept a decrease in salary, you will certainly succeed in getting one. If you do not make the assumption that there should be any reason for a lower salary, you stand a better chance to maintain your previous salary (and may even increase it with the addition of EMBA/MBA!).
- Figure out your salary expectation as to the share of the contribution that you would generate in your new job [increase of gains, decrease of costs, and avoidance of errors].
- Make sure that you never mention your last salary during an interview. There are many ways not to disclose it [the best being to talk of a “gentlemen's agreement” or non-disclosure agreement between your previous employer and yourself].
- Go to [www.porot.com](http://www.porot.com) and proceed to the “Salary” module and practice on the “Virtual Negotiation” quiz.

#### **10.5 Discovering/validating**

**Question:** *How to assess our own capabilities being in adherence with required ones in the new sector we are looking for?*

- Do the PIE method and meet 3 to 5 people doing the job that you want to do. Ask them the six basic questions: ? + - ( ) \*\*\* >>>> (How, likes, dislikes, tasks, skills needed, others I can talk to)
- Identify the “relative skill” that you possess that could be unique in the new sector that you want to join. You will then have a tremendous “plus” versus your potential competitors for the targeted company.
- Make sure that you approach the right person in the organization of interest to you (probably the person with vision who can spot and value what is unique about you).

### **11 OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A CHANGE**

**Question:** *After an EMBA/MBA, should it be the opportunity to make a career change?*

- Embrace the opportunity to make a career change after completing an EMBA/MBA . It is a perfect time to position yourself for a radical career change as you have new tricks in your hat!
- Identify people with a background and/or experience similar to yours, who have made a radical career change after their EMBA/MBA and talk with them. Ask them, in particular, what sort of difficulties they had to face and which strategies they used/implemented to bypass/avoid/eradicate them.
- Make a list of all the things that you can offer to a company that you could not do/carry out before your EMBA/MBA . Similarly, inventory the skills that you have developed and can use with more professionalism than before.



**12 POSITIONING STRATEGY**

**Question:** *Where to start when we decide to change career? Surely not as the Big Boss but what can we pretend for in terms of a job level with little experience in that sector?*

- Make sure that you take one to four weeks to dream about what you could do [professionally speaking] if you had no constraints whatsoever. Jot down your ideas as they come to you. Keep a list/file on this and when you feel you have identified what is most important to you, write up your dream. Study it, revise it and write a final copy. When you clearly envision a plan, you can achieve it.
- Meet with people doing the job that you want to do (on the long-term basis and on a short-term basis). Ask them for advice about the best strategies to implement.
- Talk about yourself with where you are going, not where you've been. When you first talk with someone, tell them what you are passionate about and the job you are looking to transition to, then tell them what you do now. Start with what you want them to remember you for – so when they do remember you, they will think of your passion and interest.
- Listen to yourself [your inner voice] and compare the strength of attraction which pushes you to the future and the strength of retention which keeps you where you are. Only when attraction exceeds retention . . . will you move.

**Question:** *Things to consider when your new position implies an increase on the management side (and you lose on the technical side)?*

- Remember that management is primarily dealing with relationships with others and not technical skills. There is a big difference between being hands-on technical and managing people, so start out by determining which you like best. If you are an Introvert with a deep technical slant, then staying technical might be the right step. Conversely, if you are an Extrovert who loves engaging with others, then management could be the right path.
- For each career path, consider where it will take you in 5 to 10 years. If you are looking to management, how far will you go? Not everyone reaches the VP/CIO/CTO level, so try to determine where you would like to end up. If you are technical, where do you want to specialize? On the technical side, no matter what you know now, you will have to learn new tools and technologies moving forward. Does that excite you or make you groan?
- Identify three or four people in a position similar to the one that you want to reach and make them talk. Ask them about the toughest issues they have to face and what strategies they use to be successful.

**Question:** *Things to consider when your new position implies an increase on the management side (and you lose on the technical side)?*

- If you are being “forced” into a management role, you will need to find one or two people [call them: mentor or coach or advisor or friend or buddy..] that you can approach when the tough gets tougher.
- Find out what management classes/seminars you could attend to help your skills improve; consider attending on your own if the company does not pay.

## **13 RADICAL CAREER CHANGE**

### **13.1 Already had one**

**Question:** *How to explain another career change if you've already had one?*

- Identify the “red thread” [i.e. what is common] that links all the changes that you made in the past. This is how to find “consistency” in what otherwise looks like erratic changes.
- Tell your interviewer that since you already have made a career change, there is a greater chance that you will succeed if you do another one (since you have acquired experience).
- Remember that “explaining” is not too distant from “excusing”. You do not need to explain, unless and only if you are invited to do so. Concentrate and stress the plusses/ benefits that you can offer to all future employers.
- Accept that most people can expect to make many changes during their working lives and that flexibility begins with a quality core education and set of skills upon which to base future options. We are in a time where it is not unusual that a person might change jobs every 5 to 10 years and careers (radical) 2 to 3 times.

### **13.2 Showing expertise while changing industries**

**Question:** *How to highlight your expertise (technical) when you change industries?*

- Realize that, when you change industries, a major contribution is the new view and fresh set of eyes you bring to them.
- Get involved in the new industries you are targeting (choosing 1 or 2 industries to focus on) and find the companies in those industries that you are interested in working for. Start following those companies on LinkedIn and with Google Alerts. Join and get active in the LinkedIn Groups in those industries to build relationships with employees. Become a knowledgeable industry insider by spending 1-2 hours per day learning the companies, the products, the issues, the customers, the divisions, the players, the industry thought leaders, and of course all the employees in your chosen industries and companies. (If you can't devote that much time a day, figure out how much you can and make sure you keep up with this.
- Identify your targeted industries “blogs” and read them everyday. Follow the thought leaders on Twitter.
- Interview people doing the job that you plan to do and determine what parts of your expertise can be transferred from your old industry to the new one you have targeted.
- Convince potential employers that the number one “plus” you have is mostly your self-management skills and transferable skills. When you talk of these skills, back them up with quantified achievements and tangible proof.

### **13.3 Making a radical career change**

**Question:** *And when you decide to move to something completely different (from engineering to biotech, finance...)?*

- Meet with people who have done the change that you anticipate to make. Ask them to describe to what extent their past experience has benefited their employer in their new job.
- Place a value on each of your future contributions (which will reduce the anxiety of potential employers) and add value to your application.
- Consider taking a two-step approach. You may need to take a “buffer” job to start with [for 1 to 3 years] which will position you for the better job you will eventually move to.

### **13.4 Tips and tricks to change industry**

**Question:** *What are the tips and tricks to change industry?*

- Realize that you are making a change which may scare up to 70% of employers (who are conventional and highly value security). Therefore you have to choose to approach employers who are more willing to risk and are less conservative/traditional. They often will use unusual avenues [social networks, an unsolicited approach and not rely on ads] and often prefer “lighter” communication tools [no resumes and less “paper” and more telephone calls and one-on-one meetings].
- Learn the vocabulary of the field you are heading to. Usually it is only 50 to 100 words [except in the medical field]. And make sure you use those words when you approach them. Talk like an “insider” and you will be thought of as an “insider”.
- Discover the key ratios they use in the industry that you want to join. Verify that you can match them with your skills and experience.
- Fill your gaps. Figure out what else you need to make the leap and go get it. Usually, the gaps are in three areas:
  1. Skills and knowledge – Learn to show how transferable skills relate to a new job.
  2. Accomplishments and experience – Learn to value what you have done that overlaps with the new industry.
  3. Network – Find people in the new area and cultivate relationships.

## **14 TIME AND WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT URGENCY IMPORTANCE**

### **14.1 Change of career during the EMBA/MBA (balancing need to perform in new role alongside EMBA/MBA workload)**

- Be careful and do not accept responsibilities that you may not be able to master. You may hamper your image, your career and, worst of all, your self-confidence. The longer hours you work at your job, the less likely you will find work/life balance.
- Find out if your current employer has any sort of work/life balance program and if so, determine if you can adjust your job description and include more challenging tasks/responsibilities and delete some of the ones that are not key. If flexible work hours or working from home occasionally is offered by your employer, try to benefit from it for the time you are working on your EMBA/MBA.
- Points to consider:
  - Give equal importance to your EMBA/MBA as you do your work
  - Have your boss on your side
  - Effective Time management is the key
  - Form a support group in class (when together)
  - Network with peers (via email)
- Practice stress management techniques
- Relate your classroom learning to your immediate environment at work
- Develop a rapport with the faculty
- Set your priorities in writing and jot down the risks that you would take if you do not stick to them.

**15 SPECIFIC TARGETING**

**Question:** *I'm an Architect with an EMBA/MBA ... What can I aim for? I think something related to Real Estate... But what's the "range". Any other "fields"?*

- Accept to invest time [5 to 10 working days or something like 30 to 100 hours) to approach alumni/contacts who have a background in architecture. Make them talk about what they do, and see what they do that is not "traditional".
- Make a list of all the fields of interest that you have and combine them with architecture so as to identify niches or "vertical markets", ( i.e. healthcare – how to make hospitals more "green"; non-profit – building low cost homes, real estate development - working on specific projects).
- Complete the "Targets" module on [www.porot.com](http://www.porot.com). Do the "My targets" exercise (this will take you 15 to 25 minutes). Redo it a second time. This will help you generate new ideas of fields you could consider.
- Use a search engine to combine fields of interest and see what comes up.