

**RECORD OF SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES
1988 VOL. 14 NO. 3**

**MANAGING CHANGE:
DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER**

Moderator: DONALD L. HAASL
Panelists: SUSAN C. HOGUE*
FRANKLIN A. MALLINDER**
MELVILLE J. YOUNG
Recorder: MARK E. KINZER

- o How can actuaries prepare themselves for the inevitable discontinuities in their careers? What kind of reactions, personal and family, are commonplace? Types of changes to be considered include:
 - Voluntary versus involuntary changes
 - Intracompany versus intercompany changes
 - Changes to a different career

MR. DONALD L. HAASL: We want you to be alert because we have a very relevant session here. Very relevant to our lives. I ran across a statistic a couple of days ago. It was an ad hoc study of our membership and showed that approximately 1/3 us changed employers during the last year. Change is happening all around us, in every aspect of our lives, and all of the time. To put it into a different perspective, perhaps, growth requires change. Growth literally cannot happen unless change accompanies it. I know from personal experience that actuaries are extremely interested in growth and all its aspects, professionally and otherwise.

So, what happens when that growth requires a change in duties? Or, as the program talks about, a discontinuity in our professional career? Our first speaker is Frank Mallinder, who will be talking about the internal aspects of change. He has a background in training and development that spans 12 years. He has gone through three major changes of his own, both career changes and personal changes. He'll be helping us to guide ourselves through the process of change.

I will follow Frank on the program and try to translate his foundation into the specific situation of an actuary moving up, down, and across a single company. Most of my career has been at Credit Union National Association (CUNA) Mutual Insurance Group in Madison, Wisconsin. I'm a Fellow and have been at that company for 14 years.

Susan Hogue will be the third presenter. I asked her what the polite term for her occupation is and she says it's executive recruiting, and we all know what

* Ms. Hogue, not a member of the Society, is President of Hogue Associates in Lincoln, Nebraska.

** Mr. Mallinder, not a member of the Society, is Regional Manager with Zenger-Miller, Inc. in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

PANEL DISCUSSION

that means. Susan is a delightful person and I'm sure you'll enjoy her presentation. She's been in her profession for about eight years. She will be discussing what happens when change requires one to move from one company to another, whether it's voluntarily or involuntarily.

Our final speaker is Mel Young. He is an FSA and principal at Tillinghast in the Connecticut office and currently works in the reinsurance area. Mel will be reflecting on a personal level about change which accompanies a company switch. He will take what Susan has said from a global perspective and bring it down to a personal level.

MR. FRANKLIN A. MALLINDER: Quick. How many people have pencil and paper?

If you don't have them, get them very quickly because you need to begin writing. It's 8:30 in the morning, but it's time to go to work. Quickly write down the last major change you went through in your life. Personal, professional. Just a couple of quick words about it. We're going to use that as a point of reference for you. The last major change in your life.

Second, after you've done that, very quickly write down the name of a person you admire professionally. Your mentor. A peer. A subordinate. Write that name down as another point of reference for you.

We're going to talk about six major points this morning. First is the issue of the profile. What's the profile of an actuary? I'm going to be using as my reference point a survey that was done not long ago.

Second, we're going to talk about change. What are the stages of change? How does one progress through it?

Third, we're going to talk about stages in a person's life that naturally occur during adulthood, from the ages of about 22 on through 65 plus.

Fourth, we're going to talk about a mission. How do you establish your own mission and your own internal guidance system?

Fifth, once you have this mission and this guidance system in place, we're going to talk about some cues that you can be aware of that are going on in yourself and/or your company to let you know you're in the middle of a change.

And last, I'm going to say just a few words on how you prepare for change.

Let's begin and talk briefly about the actuarial survey I mentioned, which gave me some insight into how you think. About 1,500 of you were surveyed and of those 1,500, 43% of the people thought their future career opportunities were excellent. Now that, I think, is both good news and bad news because 41% of the people who took this survey were under 35. As I will talk about later, being under 35 means you may have an optimistic view of the future.

The next number that I thought was important was that 86% of you are satisfied with what you're doing professionally. Now, I think that's a direct result of another point in the survey which showed that 80% chose the actuarial field

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

because it was a practical application of math. You like math to begin with, so you fit right into a career that is heavily steeped and involved with math.

The next number that I think is important is that for those actuaries below the age of 35, 53% of their job was technically oriented. This is contrasted to actuaries between the ages of 50 and 54, when 48% of their job was conceptual and 29% managerial. Thus a total of 77% was non-technical in nature. So between the age of 35 and 50, obviously there are many changes going on.

The survey also had some information on personal characteristics. In virtually all the characteristics that were surveyed, the results came out as high with the exception of three individual items. One was risk-taking, which was considered to be average. A second was assertiveness, which was average. And a third was managerial ability, which was also only average. These are important because if you stop and think about what I just said to you: The job that you're going to have as you move into the latter part of your career is going to require that you get involved in conceptual, risk-taking, managerial, and assertive kinds of positions.

Again, the indication is that you need to be prepared for change. The actuaries who were surveyed clearly saw themselves as independent, result-oriented, and benevolent. Being independent and results-oriented may have some implications for the future as you look at what your career will be. My conclusion after looking through all of these results of that survey is that the mere fact that you're an actuary means that your career direction is naturally going to undergo a lot of change as you move through it. And unless you do something to prepare for this, you have the probability of getting stuck in a rut. And remember, the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth of the excavation.

So much for the profile. What I'd like to do now is to move on and talk about the second stage of this presentation, which deals with the four phases that happen as you go through a change.

What I'm reporting to you is some information that I've read and studied from two folks by the name of Cynthia Scott and Dennis Jaffries.

The first phase that you normally go through in any change is that you deny it. Now this is where we need to go back and look at the change that you wrote and begin to think, what were my reactions as I went through this? Did they parallel this? Were they the same? Have I gone through this?

In denial, what happens is that you really don't understand the meaning of change. It doesn't quite sink in. Some changes could be merger, acquisition, down-sizing, elimination of departments, a death, a decision voluntarily to leave a job, involuntarily to leave a job. We normally continue to work as usual for a period of time.

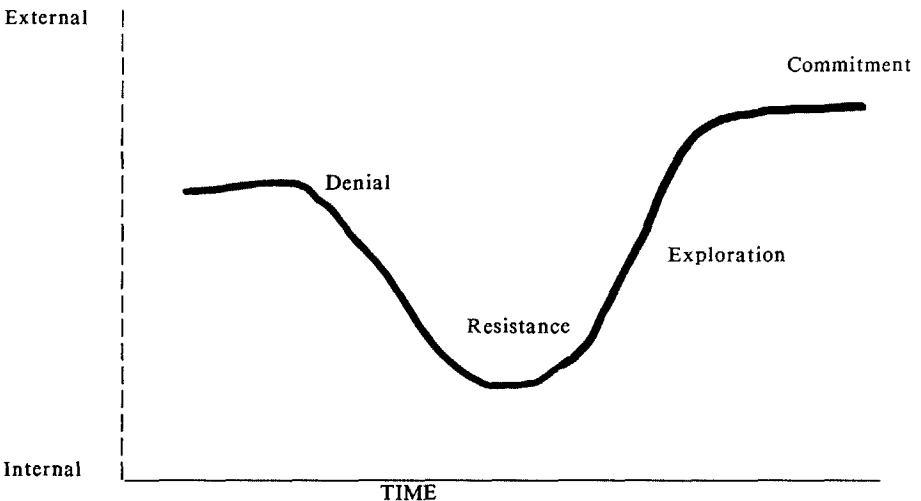
Eventually, we become aware of what's happened to us and we move into a phase called resistance. During resistance, you begin to experience self-doubt, anger, and fear. Can those of you who have gone through some changes recently identify some of these? Did you move through this process? The fear, the resistance, the hatred? You begin to focus internally on what this impact will be on yourself. You look at yourself. You begin to blame yourself. Very often you become the center of your world entirely.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Eventually, you realize that you've reached the bottom. You hit the low point, and you begin to see that things are starting to change. There is something that is going on and you're beginning to see things improve. Some indicators that you may find in yourself are you suddenly begin to once again sleep through the night. The headaches suddenly disappear. Your appetite gets better. You have a renewed interest in work as you begin the exploration. Your energy is released. You begin to look about, search and look into the future. What happens is you move from that internal focus to an external focus and begin to look around and see what's going on about you externally. You begin testing, experimenting and exploring. This becomes a time of chaos for most people. That is a good word to describe this period of exploration. It's really called chaos.

Finally, you move out of the period of chaos into commitment. You're now ready to move ahead. You have created a mission. You know specifically what your direction is. You know where you're going and you've got a definite idea of how it's going to happen for you.

How many of you are going through a significant change right now? Is this happening to you at all? Are you going through some of these phases and these transitions? Can you identify internally what's happening to you? Where are you in some of these stages? You don't need to say, but think about it. And the purpose when we're done today and when I'm done, particularly with this session, is to have some insights. To be able to build your own internal guidance system.



Above is an inverted "bell" curve to symbolize the four phases I've discussed. In this curve, you move from denial down into resistance, up into exploration and then, up to commitment. As you see as you move down, into the resistance, you focus on the internal. As you move out, you begin to look out around you and you realize that there are other people out there and you move from a focus on the past to looking at the future. Looking at the past into the future. At the bottom of the curve, it can be called the Valley of Despair.

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

What you want to do in your life is minimize the amount of time you spend right there.

One point to mention is that you can't simply skip the bottom of the curve. Very often what happens, particularly in an organization, is that in the early stage of denial you're really not looking at what's happening to you. The appearance is that it's business as usual. You think that what's happened is that you've jumped right over to commitment and things are just going to happen as usual. There's still a loss that has to go on. A grieving process. It is called a "Tarzan" swing when you go from one side of the curve to the other, skipping the bottom. You can't do that. It just won't work for most people, but you can shorten the amount of time if you want.

What I would hope is that ultimately your curve would have only a short downslope. And as you learn more about yourself and how you respond to change, and change is going to happen to you, you'll be able to have your curve look like this. That would be my goal for you.

I will next talk to you about the seven stages of adult life. This is really a compilation of information that came from a book that I read that I think summarizes very nicely many of the things about an adult life. The book is called *The Adventurers*, and was written by Janet Hagberg and Richard Leider and published by Addison-Wiley.

The first stage of adult life is provisional adulthood, which runs between ages 22 and 28. What characterizes a provisional adult is you're not quite sure where you are. You're making a transition from your school work to your professional work. You're trying out a lot of different things. You haven't quite made up your mind yet what's important to you. For those of you between the ages of 22 and 28, stop and think if that gives some indications of where you are. These are just tendencies. There is no hard and fast rule and some of us move through some of these phases a lot quicker than others do.

The next stage is the age 30 transition, also known as "I just lost half a step," for those of you who play sports. What happens here is you begin to question your original commitment. Commitments such as job, marriage, community, life-style. You begin to look at the long-range implications of the choices that you're making along the way. Life, suddenly you begin to realize, is more complex than what you thought when you first stepped off the college campus. You're realizing that there's an awful lot that needs to be done in your life to make it move smoothly. Those of you between 29 and 32, are you familiar with that? Some of that sound true for you?

Next, let's move into the root building stage, which is ages 32 to 39. During this stage in our lives we tend to buckle down and be more definitive in our attitude toward things. We choose a life-style. Our identity becomes wrapped up in our work. Our work becomes our identity. We spend long hours. That's when you'll find a lot of people working 60, 65, 70 hours a week. We can become trapped. Women in this particular period experience a great deal of frustration, if they're a professional in the work world, because this is their primary time for raising a family. How do you build identity at work and simultaneously fulfill all of those "should" messages about a family? This probably includes the first point in your life, around age 39, when you suddenly realize there's time pressure. You're going to run out of time. There's not enough. You say to yourself, "Am I going to live long enough to get all of this done?"

PANEL DISCUSSION

From there we move on to the infamous mid-life transition, which is between the ages of 39 and 46. This is normally characterized by a period of acute personal discomfort. It's a lonely time. Each person must go through it by themselves. You begin to ask questions. Some of the questions that you may be asking are: "When am I having fun?" "Why can't I be accepted for who I am?" "Why won't they just accept me?" The "they" being my boss, my family, my friends. Here's one of the crucial questions as you move into this time period if you perhaps aren't as far as you felt you would be in your career, "Is there one last chance to make it big?" There's no way to sail through this particular period or time frame in your life. If you do, what you've done is you've jumped, as I talked about in that Tarzan swing, from denial to commitment. You need to go through some personal searching and growth during that time.

We move from there into re-stabilization and renewal, which is the ages of 46 to 54. This may be what some people consider to be the best time of their life. You've figured out who you are and where you're going. You're unrushed, and there's stability and a feeling of security. You have enough security to stop running and struggling. Your career takes on a new meaning for you. Some of you may become at this point of your life a mentor and begin to look around to leave behind in the organization or in your community, someone who can carry on some of the working ideas that you've thought about.

From there we move into integration, which is ages 55 to 64. This is really characterized by satisfaction and coming to grips with what you have accomplished and what you're not going to get to. There's only a certain number of people who are going to become presidents of companies or CEOs. In this period in our life, we normally become comfortable with "I've done this and this is where I am and this is where I'm going to spend the rest of my career." Eventually, though, in this period, you need to begin to figure out what you are going to do when you retire. How are you going to spend the rest of your life after the defined period of work is over? It can be a difficult time when you begin thinking about that and most of us resist doing that at all, because our life up until this point, at the age of 55 or so, has really been defined by our work. Our identity gets wrapped up in our work.

Then, for all of us comes the final stage, the 65 plus, which is really a new beginning. This is the 65 plus we often hear about on the news -- the graying of America. I think I read a statistic where there are more people over the age of 65 alive now than have existed in the prior 200 years. In this stage, work now becomes self-assigned. No one is any longer giving it to us. We have to search for new meaning in life. Unfortunately, what we are missing in our society today is role models. People who have successfully made the transition are difficult for us to find.

That concludes the discussion on the seven stages of adult life. There are some differences that existed. Most of this research is an outgrowth of longevity studies done on men. I will admit that. So there is a bias built in here. I tried in a couple of instances to tell you where the biases may create some trouble for women. But they're just now starting to do some of the research to see what happens to women as they progress through the stages of their professional career.

Let's move on to developing your own guidance system and thinking about it as you go through these changes. One of the things that becomes very clear and

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

has been made apparent in the research is that those people who deal best with change have established their goal and they're moving towards it.

They've established a goal and a purpose and they're able to keep that goal in mind. Does that goal always stay the same? No, it doesn't. It's something that's constantly moving and constantly being reevaluated. People who tend to deal well with change:

1. Are committed to something.
2. Feel in control of the situation.
3. Like challenge and change. They're willing to accept it.
4. Feel connected to their community, their family and to what their doing.

It's very clear it's important that if you're going to deal successfully with change, that you have a mission and that you're able to communicate. Communicate with people around you as well as communicate with yourself. And the communication with yourself can either be positive or negative, frequent or infrequent. Your chances for success are good if it's positive and it's frequent and you're constantly examining your life. The life that is unexamined is not worth living. In terms of establishing a mission for yourself, what I suggest you do is create a vision and use the visioning tactic to do it. And if any of you have used visioning, I'm sure you're aware of the power of it. If you've played sports, and a lot of this is done in sports today, you can create a vision. You see in your mind's eye what you want to have happen. People often stop there, though, and they forget that this is a multi-faceted vehicle for making happen what you want to have happen in your life. Not only do you need to see it in your mind's eye, you need to hear what's going on around you. What are the sounds? What's it like? What are people saying to you? You need to feel what's happening in the room. What's the level of excitement? What's going on around you? What are the emotions that are experienced? So you create this vision for yourself. You can use the vision process to rethink your mission statement.

Another thing that I would suggest to you that you use in helping to create your mission statement is to make a list of the 20 things you like doing. Put the 20 things down the vertical axis. Now, on the horizontal axis, what I suggest you do is list a few questions: Is it job-related or is it personal? What's the frequency that you like to do it? Once a day? Once a week? Three times a year? When's the last time you did it? Do you do it alone or with someone else? Once this is completed, a lot of people find once they get down about 15 or 16, things begin to slow down. Can you list 20 items you enjoy doing? Try it when we're done here. And then check off all of this. You'll get a pattern of what you're all about and if what this says is "Geez, what I enjoy is taking photographs. I'd like to do it once a week. I do it alone. The last time I did it -- 1975." Guess what? You're in the middle of a change and you never got off the bottom of it or you may still be back up in denial. Take a look at this and get a picture of what your mission statement should be.

Now, let's talk about some cues that exist within yourself to let you know you're in the middle of a change. Are you ever unable to get out of bed in the morning? One of the things we like to do is hide in bed and pull the covers up over our head and keep the rest of the world out. If you're experiencing that more than once a month, take a look at it.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Another cue is if you're afraid to see your boss. These are cues that something's going on; that there's changes happening; that you need to be aware of something. You're working long hours, but not enjoying it at all. You're just putting them in because someone is demanding that you spend that amount of time. Perhaps lunches used to be occasional, but now the lunches are an hour and a half, two hours. You're trying to find people who will go on long jaunts with you. You used to have iced tea at lunch, but now you have a martini.

You go home and someone says, "You know our son grew two inches?" You don't recognize your family. You don't recognize the folks around you. The people next door moved six months ago and the house has been vacant but you go over to see if you can return the hose you borrowed.

Maybe you are always bored or have major successes at work. People are congratulating you but they mean nothing to you. You're in the middle of some kind of change. Something's happening within you.

There are also cues you can see within your company. How many of you have experienced being left out of meetings? A meeting occurred and suddenly you find out about it? There's a change going on. Beware. Suddenly there's nowhere to go. You look around and you say "I'm as far as I can possibly go in this company." The top three spots are held by family members, and I'm not a member of the family.

If there's a merger that's gone on, regardless of what you hear in the merger, you should listen to the grapevine. I just read an interesting statistic, that the grapevine has an unbelievable amount of validity. Something like 90% plus valid, so if the grapevine says in the merger that we are going to get rid of all the people who we acquired and put our own managers in place, the probability of that being true, regardless of what's in print, is very high.

Maybe you've been passed over. This is now the third time that a job has come open that you want. You think you're qualified for it, but someone has said to you that you're too good to move. How many of you have heard that? You've really done such an outstanding job, you're technically proficient. You're doing it very, very well, you're just too good to move.

All these indicate that there's a change going on around you. What we're talking about is building awareness. Some things that you can say "Aha! I'm somewhere on this change curve and I need to be aware of it." And the goal, then, is to compress the denial and resistance, and move into exploration and commitment. Values conflict. Your personal values don't match up with the way the company is expressing their values. You can't figure out why, "What's going on? Why don't I enjoy this?"

Let me quickly jump out of the cues and into how you prepare for all of this. One, is be aware. Know that change is going on.

Two, is make a list of your accomplishments. Always have that list available. It's good for your self-esteem. It's good for the executive recruiter when he calls you, as you have it there to recite to him.

Three, is reading. I would encourage everyone to do as much reading as you can. Not just in your own specialized area of endeavor but as broad a base as you can possibly make it. Fictional and non-fictional.

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Four, develop your management skills. It's very clear that management skills are very important; for those of you who are not yet in management positions, you are going to move from technical to non-technical as an actuary. Move from being an expert in an area to being a manager. Develop those management skills. Begin working on them right away.

Five, if you can see it, you can do it. You need to see it before you get the job. You need to constantly work on refining your mission statement.

Six, networking is important for you. Networking is important for two reasons: one is that it adds meaning to your life. Getting involved in other activities, your church, business activities, whatever. It adds meaning to your life and provides a safety net for you and it gives you that connection thing that helps people do better with jobs.

In conclusion, I was recently reading what one person said about changes that affect you and the necessity for perseverance. I'm talking about Thomas Edison and the thousands of times he experimented with filaments for the light bulb. He said three phrases that I would share with you that I think are extremely important relative to your life and your career. "Don't ever give up. Don't ever give up. Don't ever give up."

MR. HAASL: There's a lot of material there and I will relate to the stages Frank was talking about. Especially the moving through an actuarial career from the early to the middle to the later stages. Frank talked about the seven personal phases one goes through and I can attest that the profile of those are perfect in my life. I'm tracking right along with those.

What I'd like to do here is talk about four major transitions that occur in an actuary's career.

The first transition is when you supervise for the first time. Another is when you're promoted within the actuarial ranks, which is to say that you're still reporting to an actuary. Third, is when you report to a non-actuary for the first time. And, finally, the move to a non-actuarial role. It's uncertain, of course, as to how many of these transitions any particular person is going to make.

To give you a sense of where I'm coming from, I'll just run you through my own career very quickly. I joined CUNA Mutual 14 years ago. That was the only company change I made. I became a supervisor at the same time for the first time and also became a fellow at that approximate point in time. I had a couple of early promotions in my career. They were rather nondescript. Not memorable. They were slight changes in status that really reflected things that I was already doing. Four years after joining CUNA Mutual, though, the company was moving from a functional to a line of business orientation and the line of business I was in, credit insurance, was the line that was the first from our company that was pulled apart and set aside as a management team. I was the lead actuary in that effort.

Finally, during the last three to four years I have been moving into a non-actuarial role, though still within the credit insurance operation. For a couple of years, I had the actuarial department reporting to me, plus other departments. Over time I lost the actuarial responsibility entirely. Now I'm doing

PANEL DISCUSSION

strategic planning, various types of quasi-marketing, and the coordination of our product development effort.

Briefly, I'd like to talk about supervising for the first time. I don't want to dwell on this because I presume that most of you have already made this transition, but it's a profound transition and if it's done properly it lays the foundation for a lot that will follow. If it's done right, it is truly profound because you're no longer managing things, you're managing people and you are accomplishing your goals and objectives through other people. In my terminology, you're no longer the chief doer, you're not just the lead technician; rather, you're getting other people to do the work for you.

In terms of preparation, I think first of all you should be a good technician. Get those exams out of the way. Do good work at the job that you're in. These two are always going to be criteria for advancement. Have a role model or a mentor, like Frank was talking about, who is able to help you visualize what the next step is going to be. And go about getting the management training you need. Typically, this is going to be people-related. It involves motivating people, delegating to people, and communicating to people, both orally and in writing. There are several ways to get practice at management. Serve on task forces within the company. Manage projects where other people are assisting you. Volunteer within your community.

The rewards, of course, include money and status. The ability to get more done, which is the positive way of saying more power. After all, you're not limited to two hands and one mind anymore. You've many hands and many minds working for you. Increased responsibility. For many people this is enough reward. And finally, the chance to meet the challenge, for actuaries who are typically goal-oriented, is a very significant reward.

There are penalties that come with promotion to supervisor, of course. There's the fear and uncertainty with any type of change, as Frank was talking about earlier. You may very well not be prepared properly. After all, the exams have come first, while other development efforts have had to be deferred to some extent. And often it happens that the company need or the opportunity is there before you're ready for it. So what do you do? You jump in and do your best and you're not quite as well prepared as you should be. There's a loss of control that goes with supervision because again you're working through people so you depend upon what they're doing to achieve your goals and objectives. There's less technical work, which can be a significant disadvantage for people who entered the profession as an opportunity to apply mathematics.

You have fewer peers. A smaller grapevine. You're leaving behind people who used to be peers. Lastly, along with any kind of promotion comes the fact that there's higher demands on your time, and less time available to spend with your family and for yourself.

Now we're going to move on into being promoted in the ranks of the actuarial department. But what I'm going to be saying here really applies generally to any type of promotion. First of all, in preparation, as Frank was stressing, you need to know yourself very well. One of the actuaries I talked to before putting this program together, who's a bit older than I am, gave this advice: "Make sure that you do your own career planning. Do not rely on your boss." And he said this with some bitterness. I was quite surprised. I'm sure he

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

feels he would be further along in his career and it would be more satisfying if he had done some of the thinking Frank has been talking about for himself.

Obviously, be good in your current role. If possible, perform at the next level, at least in some aspects, as much as you can. Acquire the skills you need for that level. It might be time management, project leadership, report writing. Whatever it is that you're weak in that you need strength in, is where you should concentrate. And where you have strengths, of course, those need to be developed as well. Don't rely on your own opinion. Ask the boss, ask your mentor, and ask other people whose opinions you respect.

This next one's a favorite of mine -- become dispensable. That is not is misprint. Build a staff that is so good that they literally do not need you because if you're going to be promoted they won't have you. And in many organizations, it's a prerequisite that to be promoted you need to have a qualified successor. The thing to do here, I think, is to elevate your own people every chance you get. If you have to go to a meeting where there's an oral report to be given, bring them along and have them participate as much as possible. If there's a written report to be made, delegate that down to the lowest level possible. Because if they shine, you shine. And it looks like your whole department is vibrant and upwardly mobile.

One of the things that this allows you to do is to be free to roam. They don't need you, right? There was one point in my career that was very pleasing; I figured I was needed by my people only 70% of the time. So the other 30%, I roamed around the company, taking leadership roles on task forces. Going after personal crusades of one type or another was not only fun and getting some things done, it also built new skills. It can gain you visibility within the organization and it builds a network of people that you can come back to later.

So my advice is to build the best doggone staff that you can. Delegate ruthlessly. At that point, as the lead actuary in a \$200 million a year subsidiary, I literally was responsible for one written dividend report a year that I had to do myself. Everything else -- monthly, quarterly, annual reports -- were delegated. And if I was around, some of them would be reviewed by me, while if I wasn't around, they went on as they were. If you can get into that type of a situation, you're truly mobile within the company.

The rewards obviously include money, status, power, and responsibility. The higher level of challenge is very important. The penalties include fear and uncertainty coming with doing something new, less technical work as you move up the ladder, and even fewer peers.

Let's talk about reporting to a non-actuary for the first time. I guess I could portray that, in a way, as culture-shock. What used to take three sentences to tell your boss will take 30 minutes or three hours, or maybe longer, maybe three days. Your boss will have an emphasis towards the sales side. Even if he's a product manager type person who has equal responsibility for sales and profits, his attitude tends to fall toward the sales side. And you, as the actuary, have to pull him back to a balanced position. And to do this without causing interpersonal problems is not always easy because you want to be able to retain this relationship and make it profitable for both of you in the future.

There's a jealousy of new peers, and perhaps even your boss. Actuaries have an elevated status. We're on an accelerated development track with the exams.

PANEL DISCUSSION

We have a study program in most companies that sets us apart. And, of course, our salaries are higher than a lot of the people we're working around. So all of these cause problems. In terms of preparation, all the things I mentioned earlier apply, but especially the people skills. Interpersonal people skills to handle these culture-shock components are very important.

The rewards include greater independence. Your boss doesn't understand what you're doing that well. You're free to do it your way. You're given the opportunity to stand out because your peers are not actuaries and may not be as well prepared for the future as you are. You have a better chance to understand the role of the actuary and other folks about you.

The penalties include the communication hurdle that we just talked about and the fact that you can get caught between the chief actuary and the boss. I want to spend a moment on that. Eight years I was at risk, reporting to whom I would call a militant non-actuary. He missed no chance to denigrate actuaries in private or in public. He supported me and my people, and relied on me, but I had to have a very thick skin, because he would pick on us whenever he could. And he had a very strong personality. Eight years I kept out of trouble in the sense that I could chart a course to fulfill my responsibilities and keep both the chief actuary and my boss relatively happy. Eight years of dividend resolutions, annual rating plans, and setting reserves. I kept out of trouble on all these things. But what would you think I fell down on? A couple of partitions.

My chief assistant, Keith, one day, ended up with four-by-six partitions because someone nearby us had moved and there were extra ones lying around. He did not qualify, according to the current company rules, for partitions. A couple of his actuarial peers complained to the chief actuary who said, "They've got to come down." Well, my boss, who would normally not spend a nickel of the company's money if possible, would have wanted them down too until he found out that the chief actuary wanted them down too. Then he insisted that they stay up. So here I was caught, one saying yes and one saying no. There was no room for compromise whatsoever. Fortunately about two weeks later, we moved to a new area of the building. Keith's walls disappeared during the move and everyone was relatively happy.

Let's talk now for a moment about moving into a non-actuarial role. Here, knowing yourself is really critical. The risks are high. Think of all the thousands of hours spent studying for those exams, and you know as you move away from an actuarial job that you're leaving that behind. Sooner or later, the exam knowledge is going to get dimmer and dimmer. And so the balancing of the advantages of moving versus the penalties are very difficult to deal with. My advice is to do it gradually. In my case I had a couple of years to make that transition. It wasn't an easy two years because I had both marketing and actuarial responsibility at the same time, so I was in a conflict of interest situation often. It was difficult especially when the actuarial role was not represented in a meeting and I was the decision-maker with no other actuaries present. I had to come forth with the actuarial viewpoint, while the marketing people were there clamoring, and be the decision-maker at the same time. That was much more difficult than I had expected it to be.

To make this move, you need to have a solid track record. It's tough enough moving away from your speciality if you have a good reputation. I would hate to see what would happen if it wasn't the case. Of course, we're talking about

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

an ideal situation here. Sometimes these moves aren't voluntary, as Susan will talk about.

For a move to a non-actuarial role, you should know about your new discipline. You should be a very good communicator. You should have good general management skills.

The rewards of moving into a non-actuarial role include that you're broadening into non-technical, or at least different, situations. There is greater opportunity. For me this meant I was able to pursue a job that was more suitable to the person I had become. I am not the same person who started taking actuarial exams 18 years ago. My current job is much more reflective of the person I now am. There's broader opportunity because there are more career paths open to you. And you're able to apply your actuarial skills in other situations.

The penalties include the fact that you leave a safety net. This is significant. You're no longer functioning as an actuary, so why should you be compared to actuaries relative to salary and job status? You'll be compared to other folks who aren't at the same level that we've become accustomed to, and that's difficult. And finally, the technical skills obviously will be weakening increasingly.

Our next presenter, then, will be Susan Hogue, who will tell about the process of change that occurs between companies.

MS. SUSAN C. HOGUE: First of all, I want to talk about progress. How many people here have ever changed jobs whatsoever? Raise your hands please. Keep your hands up, please. Now, how many people have ever hired anyone? Keep your hands up. Anyone ever fired anyone? Anyone been married? Had children? Gotten divorced? Well, by now everyone should have raised their hand. Everyone has experienced change here. And that's what we're talking about -- progress, change.

This is a quote from Robert F. Kennedy: "Progress is a nice word, but change is its motivator. And change has its enemies." I'm going to talk even more about some of the enemies you may encounter.

There are many reasons for changing jobs and everyone has his/her own personal reasons. Before fellowship, many actuaries change jobs because of study time. Other actuaries may be in an insurance company and they want to try some consulting or vice-versa. These bright, young associates get bored staying in one area or one company two years. They might miss their mother, or their wife might miss her parents. There are many, many reasons.

For new FSAs, a lot of the same reasons apply. They may be planning their career goals and not liking their current situation. It would be nice if someone could make that ultimate change and know that they're never going to change again, but as we've mentioned here, they do. Career goals change, just as people change.

There are many reasons for involuntary change. None are nice. It happens. The usual reaction is to ask "How come? Why me?" Everyone takes it personally. It's not personal. It's happening more and more. Would anyone have known Lee Iacocca? Where would Chrysler be if he had not been fired before? As Colonel North said, "No failure is final." Don't take it personally. It's not

PANEL DISCUSSION

final. But the reality of it is it's here. It's happening now to actuaries even though it never happened before.

There is a Chinese word which means opportunity. If you take away part of the last syllable, it is also the word for crisis. They're almost alike. Crisis and opportunity. They're really one in the same. For every crisis that happens, it just opens up a new opportunity. So it can be a very, very positive experience.

There are emotional stages to change. Don't think it's very easy in a voluntary change, either. You still go through the same feelings. You have the fear of change. It's just human nature. Just like it is with involuntary change -- very strong. Human nature is totally against change. Comfortable is secure. And change is not comfortable. It's really not. You worry about the effect on your family, too. Usually a change does everyone good. If you are happy with your job, you spend more waking hours working. Your attitude when you go home, if you're happy with your job, is good. However, when your boss says that something's going wrong at work, you kick the dog when you come home. Even though you go through a change, it can be the most positive thing that happens.

After you make a change, you're the new kid on the block. You ask, "How do I fit in?" This is again human nature. Every time you make a change, you have to take that step. Whether its in the company or with the new place you move to. I just moved to Lincoln, Nebraska. Now, I didn't even know where Lincoln, Nebraska was until all of a sudden I was realizing I was moving to Lincoln, Nebraska. I bought a home and I didn't know anyone. A lot of people aren't as bold as I am, but I went out three days after the furniture was delivered putting invitations in all these strangers' mailboxes in the whole block. I met all my neighbors, and had a lovely party. I didn't want to wait to meet them one by one. I wanted to meet everyone then. It's a way of breaking ice. Another way of breaking in would be joining the church.

The first reaction I find people have in an involuntary change is shock. Pure shock. This couldn't be happening to me. Disbelief. No one realizes it when they go home, but you wake up in the morning and it's there. Fear. Terrified. Depression. Anger. Now these intersperse and come and go. The depression does come in and out of all of them. The more you can fight depression, the better. The hardest thing a recruiter has to place is a depressed candidate. They're their own worst enemy. If you work on depression the rest of it will work out. I've seen people just get in a rut so much that unless they get themselves together it's going to be impossible to work with them.

Breaking the news to the family is one of the hardest things anyone will ever do. It's very hard. You're one family, though. You're all together in this. Be open. Be honest. You control your fears and your depression, they'll control theirs. You can be like supporting pillars to each other.

Organizing yourself is a big step. Not just mentally, but physically and emotionally. You've got to get a game plan going. Organize your career goals. You must be realistic on this. Not critical of yourself, and no pie-in-the-sky dreaming. You have a change to make. You've got to realize your strengths, too. If you've been an individual health specialist all your life you're not going to all of a sudden switch to be a pension actuary. You've got to realize your strengths and your weaknesses, too, because everyone is full of those also.

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Work on your resume. Make a list. What are your strong points? What are your weak points? Everyone has weaknesses, so you must be aware of these.

Now I'll talk about what resources you have in a change. One resource in a voluntary change can be your current coworkers. Once you have looked at a potential change a little bit you may realize that you've got it made right where you are. First, talk to your supervisor if you have a problem. That's the best thing. Lots of times a problem can start off very minor, and manifests to being downright large mentally, but it's not. Talk to your supervisor. Things can work out. If it doesn't work, your personnel department can be quite good. They know a lot about problems. If you're still getting nowhere, your boss's boss can be a resource. Now this can lead to involuntary change, so be careful, but if nothing else is helping, don't be afraid to go to your boss's boss. Of course, actuarial executive search consultants are another resource. We can be your best friend, confidante, help you even stay where you are. Many, many times you're happy in the job you're in right now. You may talk to us because you're going to be hiring someone else. It's not like we're going to grab you out of another job. I think that we do some of the work of a psychologist.

The SOA meetings are also a good resource. A lot of people come to the meetings. They're here not just to see what going on in the industry, but to see what's going on in the job market, too. Recruiters come here for the same reason -- to make friends and meet contacts. Want ads are another resource. The Society puts out a job placement sheet that people advertise in that they send to you. Also, the *National Underwriter* is good. Now, on a voluntary change, don't be afraid to sit at your desk and look at the want ads there. Your boss always opens it from the back to the front. Have you ever seen anyone open a *National Underwriter* from the front? Never. Don't be worried about that.

Confidentiality is one of the big things we need to hit on, here. Whether you're working with a recruiter or working with friends, you need to stress confidentiality. If you're working with a recruiter, you set the rules from the beginning. It's very, very important. You don't want to be mass-marketed all over. You want individual treatment. Do your homework. Do research on companies. See if the company is something you'd want. That's very important. A bad recruiter, on the other hand, is an unemployed actuary's nightmare. I've seen people really hurt out there. So you do your homework. You set the rules.

Another resource can be company outplacement services. They're very, very good at helping you organize your head. They're very supportive on that. They can help you set your goals. They can help you get your head together and realize you're not the only person that this has happened to. They work on your resume. A lot of times they put you in offices with people answering the phone. And they are helpful.

Let me mention a bit about the pros and cons of marketing yourself. I should have said cons of marketing yourself. I'm not much for this, even though a lot of people have been able to do this. As long as it's just with the friends and the contacts that you have already, it may work okay, but marketing yourself can actually make you not able to see some situations at all because you weren't presented in the right way. Very few people buy homes without a realtor, and this is similar. I think that it is very, very important, that it's done the right way.

PANEL DISCUSSION

My final topic is selecting support. That is, I cannot hit higher on this. Your spouse is very, very important, but what you really need is someone to talk to. Tell them your fears. Tell them your wants, your dreams. Tell them your problems with the family if there are any. Someone to talk to. I cannot stress enough. Even if you can talk to your spouse, someone else that you can go to still can be very helpful.

MR. MELVILLE J. YOUNG: I was asked to participate on this panel because I probably have the record for the most jobs. Actually, I know I have a record. Gary See, who used to be director of the Society, and I once were talking about putting together an actuarial book of records and we came up with some real good ones. There was some guy when they only had ten exams, who had gotten ten straight sixes, which was Gary's favorite record. There was some other guy who got caught in the first few transitions and needed to pass 18 exams to get his fellowship, but that's not so meaningful anymore, with you guys needing about 50 exams. My record was that it wasn't until my last company, General Reinsurance, that I passed two exams at one place. I passed the first nine exams at nine different companies. So I am particularly qualified to talk about change. And I've had some personal changes as well. You can get technical if you count the merged companies and the company I was at after the merger. I've been with something like 13 companies. There have been six either bankruptcies or mergers, and I thought things were going downhill when I was with the only accounting firm that was ever bought. It was bought by Cooper's and I thought things had finally settled down. Then two companies back, I had only been with a company for three months when they were bought and, of course, I had to move again. Then I settled down with General Reinsurance and I was actually at one place for 15 years and that was terrific. I thought I had finally struck it when I went to General Reinsurance. I had all these mergers behind me. I was there 15 years and then they were bought, too. I then decided to go to Tillinghast and they, of course, were merger-proof. Well, I was with Tillinghast three months when we were merged with Towers-Perrin. So hopefully that's the end of mergers in my career.

Some people may remember a guy in "Li'l Abner" who walked around with a black cloud over his head. His name was Joe Btsflk, or something to that effect. General Reinsurance was very reluctant to hire me because they said, "Geez, we don't know." Fortunately, I was there 15 years and I think that those of you who are young and are going to go through some career changes, it's useful after a while to stay at one place for awhile. If nothing else, it gets rid of some of the tarnish. Somebody said to me the other day, "Well, all those jobs don't matter now. You've only been at two places the last 20 years." And that's about right.

There are some positives and some negatives about going through all this change. One negative is that it does create a lot of wear and tear on your body. Sometimes, although a lot of my job changes were of the involuntary type, the ones that were voluntary ended up being that the grass really wasn't any greener on the other side. So you should really take a hard look at your own situation as you don't know what the negatives are of the job that you're going to. In my career, I got to be thinking that I was living on a fault in California's earthquake zone, things were changing so rapidly for many years.

There are some positives to changing companies. I'm going to talk a little bit about characteristics of companies and types of companies and knowing those characteristics and knowing yourself. In order to know yourself, you really

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

need to have some experience with the different types of jobs and the different types of companies. To do that you either need to change jobs a couple of times in your early career so that you gain that knowledge, or you need to be in a company that allows you to rotate and move within the company to gain that knowledge in your early career. Now there are some actuaries who have stayed at one company their whole career, but I think that's rather infrequent. My situation is carrying it to the other extreme. The advantage of rotating or changing jobs is you are going to get some knowledge about how things are done in other ways. And that's important. As part of that, you learn some flexibility, I believe, which is extremely important. Be able to react to all of the things that you've heard this morning, so that you're not set in cement. Flexibility is extremely important in your job, your career, as you get on in life.

And the thing that I gained most from my 13 different jobs is that I got to know a lot of people. That is a very important thing as well both personally and from a career point of view. I did get pretty good knowledge, during the first 11 of those years, before I joined General Reinsurance, both about myself and about what actuarial careers were like out there. I worked on almost everything an actuary could do. When I started out in my career, my objective was eventually, 15 years later, to get my boss's job as being chief actuary of the little company I worked with. I was going to develop family income riders and things like that, which were brand new at the time. And that's how I was going to spend my career. After a few of those job changes, I knew that that was not what I wanted after all.

Obviously, as you move on, you get other goals. As you achieve some goals you set new goals. One of the things that I began to know about myself was I didn't want to have a job where I sat behind a desk and calculated all day. I wanted a job that had some marketing potential. That's why I ended up at a reinsurer. When I made that job change it was a semi-voluntary change and I only interviewed reinsurers because I said, "That's what I want." I think that's important for all of you to do. Get to know about yourself and get to know about what the different types of companies are out there and in the process hopefully you'll end up making a good job change to the place you're going to end up ultimately.

One generality I have observed, is that during your early career, the amount of responsibility you have increases as you view the spectrum from large to medium to small company to consulting firm.

I had one exam and I was the chief actuary of my third company and I had a great deal of responsibility. That's probably one of the reasons I had only one exam, because of the time spent on the job. I used to be very envious of one part of the job of some of my friends who worked for Metropolitan or Prudential. They worked perhaps only 30 hours a week and had a great deal of study time, while I was working 60 or 70 hours a week, and went home to sleep because I was too tired to study. Job pressures, which vary almost as much, can be as important for those of you taking actuarial exams as time spent on the job. If you have a job that has got a lot of pressure and a lot of responsibility, you're not going to have a lot of energy left at the end of the day to study for actuarial exams. Some people can do it. And some people, like myself, made the decision that I just couldn't work for Metropolitan because I just couldn't see myself adding up columns of numbers all day. And that's what they did back then, in the olden days.

PANEL DISCUSSION

The variety of what you do will also increase as you move across the spectrum, and that was something very important to me. Rewards vary as well. Rewards are monetary and rewards are pats on the back and again they increase across the spectrum. I want to emphasize that we're talking about early career. I'm going to go back and look at this same set of characteristics in your later career. Marketing opportunities increase too. If you're at a major northeastern mutual and you're early in the first ten years of your career you're probably not going to get involved much in getting out of the company or getting out of your department, even. At a smaller company, you're probably going to get exposed to marketing in the organization and perhaps even get involved somewhat in marketing.

Job interest, travel opportunities, training, can also be compared. When you're at a small company you learn an awful lot about many things and you have an interesting job and the job training for your early career is terrific. Whereas, usually, for most of the bigger companies, although you have some rotation opportunities you're generally pigeonholed and you're not going to learn an awful lot. That's why, for one of those jobs I was a three-part actuarial student and I was competing, typically, for a new job with people who already had their fellowship who came out of some place like Metropolitan. This is because if you were going to a smaller company, the job search is viewed as a trade-off between somebody who had a fellowship and didn't know anything about much, and somebody who had three exams and had quite a bit of experience. I would have just gone crazy if I felt I wasn't making a contribution to a company. So that's why I didn't go to a big company, you see. Obviously, in a small company, or in a consulting firm, you can have those kinds of satisfactions. And management duties come sooner as well. I was chief actuary of a firm on my third job with one exam.

There's another side to the coin. In your early career, there is a large amount of support available to you at a bigger firm, while you're on your own in a smaller firm. In a consulting firm, generally, but particularly in a small firm, you're on your own and there isn't a great deal of support that you have available to you. There's no peer interchange, because its very often you and maybe one other actuary at a small company; of course, there's a great deal of peer interchange at the larger companies. Job security is similar. We can go back through my career again and we'd see the same pattern. Exam performance also varies and that's why unless you're a special kind of person, if you want to get through the exams its the large, or maybe the medium-sized company at which you're going to have a much greater chance of success.

An interesting thing happens, though, in your later career. I believe that many of these characteristics start going the other way. As you move on in your career, once you've been at a large company for 15 or 20 years, you're going to end up with a greater breadth of responsibility than in a small company. A consulting career maybe doesn't fit here, but as far as the companies go, in a small company you're going to end up plateauing. You're going to reach a level of responsibility where you're just not going to get anything more. In a large company, as you go up the ladder, that isn't so. However, I think that as somebody becomes more senior at a smaller company their time spent on the job either plateaus or perhaps even goes down, whereas at a large company with more responsibility and more pressure, you end up spending more time. The person who's moved into senior management at a big company, I believe, has a greater variety of responsibility. They get into many more interesting subjects. And those people have a greater chance of reward.

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

The case can be made that marketing opportunities, job interest, and travel opportunities flip-flop between the beginning of your career and your later career in terms of their level versus the size of your company. The main lesson in all this is you've got to know what's important to you and you've got to know what you're good at and then, you should get to know something about the characteristics of companies. I haven't talked about reinsurers as opposed to a primary company or where you're going to be in a company, but it's important to be gaining that knowledge in the early part of your career so that you'll be making any career moves in an intelligent way.

I think the major purpose of my being here was to give you an extreme case of a job changer. I've talked about identifying your strengths. I've talked about planning ahead, knowing yourself. I've said to myself at times in my own career, "What do you want to do? Where do you want to be? What do you have to do to get there?" And I don't have to go into the personal side of all of that, but I think I was somewhat successful in pointing myself in the direction that, at least, I set out for myself. Also, in many ways I'm happy about those decisions.

One thing I'd like to add to Susan's remarks that I don't think she mentioned: When you are going through a job change, it's important for you to really know you're making a very important decision and that the grass may not be greener on the other side of the fence. You may be getting into something that's different than you think it is. It's important for you to ask real tough, honest questions of the people who you're thinking about going to work with. And don't be bashful about asking those real tough, honest questions.

MR. PAUL J. SULEK: Two brief observations and one question. One is that it was a last-minute decision to come here and it was a very valuable session. The other observation is I've been on both ends of involuntary terminations and have found them to be extremely personal experiences in many respects. It was observed that they aren't personal. I'm not quite sure how to take them as non-personal. The third is kind of a question, it may be directed to Sue Hogue and Mel Young: I find the most difficult thing about making a job change is to know the company. Even when I have asked direct questions I have found that sometimes the company has been deceptive with me. I've made at least one or two bad decisions in retrospect, because I wasn't able to know the company as well as I needed to know it before I got into it. I wonder if you have any reflections on how you can better know the company. Note that executive recruiters haven't always been helpful in that respect either.

MS. HOGUE: I feel that everyone should do their homework. Just don't go by their annual statements. Don't go by what's printed in Best's Reports. I think that once you interview with companies you should talk to the people who have come there from other companies. You can find out about the people that you're interviewing with. Where they came from, what their track record's been. Keep up with *Best's Review* and *National Underwriter*. Do your homework on the opening and know that all recruiters cannot cover every job. But a lot of it's up to you. You've got to research it all. And ask all the questions. Like Mel just said -- don't be afraid to ask the tough questions.

MR. YOUNG: I guess I would echo a lot of that. The major source of information about the company will be people who used to work there and so you may get a colored answer, but I think that you can find out a lot about a company from people who used to work there. I think there are other ways to find some

PANEL DISCUSSION

things out about the company. You can talk to reinsurers, and as Sue said in her presentation, very often reinsurers have a great deal of knowledge of people and companies and they're a very useful source of information. Lastly, I would add that I'm an unusual case. I've been through a lot of job changes and some of those along the way, at least at some point, have been really traumatic. You live through it. What's the worst thing that's going to happen if you make a mistake? My feeling is that if you're a talented person, you might make some mistakes along the way, but that talent will ultimately come to the fore and that mistake will get rectified somewhere else down the road. You're not making a decision that cannot be changed.

MS. ELLEN M. TORRANCE: Right now I am involuntarily making some sort of a job change, I hope. I have some comments to make. One is that I wish I had known ahead of time that it's very important to come to some kind of an identity of who you are apart from your position and where you are. At any minute you may find out you're nobody and nowhere. You need to have an answer ready as to who you are apart from being such and such position in such a company. It's important to already know someone outside the company you can talk to. If you're not married and the only people you know are at the company and you are suddenly shut off from them, you can be very, very alone. I find it's a little like getting mugged. It can be a tremendous shock, have incredible pain, and be a tremendous financial loss. You'll be living on your savings and your pension money you've earned. And what hasn't vested, you'll no longer be able to count on when you retire. Unemployment compensation turns out to be not so much as you may have expected. It took an entire week's unemployment compensation just to pay my SOA dues for one year. So you need to have savings, even if you think that it can't happen to you. You may be living on savings. You literally do not know, from one minute to the next, whether you're going to have a job five minutes later. I didn't know about this. I used to joke, "I sleep at the apartment. I live at the office." And this was a mistake. It took a long time to move out. It took me a whole day, but you may not have a whole day to move out of your office. When you learn, you may be given an hour, so I would recommend that you should have only your coffee mug and your pictures and your SOA journals and your gym clothes in a bag. Everything else should be at home.

I also have a question. I had outplacement counseling as a fringe benefit, but basically all they gave you were these tests to see what you want to be when you grow up. And when you've slogged through all the actuarial exams, this generic advice is no help at all. What can you do? A second question I have is: Do you recommend taking a vacation? One thing I read said, "You may be tempted to take a vacation, but don't do it." So I plunged right into job hunting even though I was still burnt-out from my last job. Now it turns out that everyone wants me to go to work immediately. Some recruiters say, "Wait until after you've found a job and take your vacation." What do you recommend?

MS. HOGUE: First of all, I feel to immediately take a vacation is wrong. You need to start organizing yourself and everything else. Also, you should get an answering machine. You can go play golf or whatever, and people can still get hold of you. You can return their calls.

As far as outplacement services are concerned, I think they do help. They keep you busy right at first, which is very important. They organize your resume for you and help you with that. Some give you a desk to work out of, give you a few ideas, and help organize your head. Not all of them are bad.

MANAGING CHANGE: DISCONTINUITIES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Of course, not all of them are good, either. I don't think they're going to find a job for you. But I think for what they do, they're quite good.

MR. YOUNG: I would recommend just getting involved in some job and not to wait a year for the perfect job to come along. One time in between jobs, I tried marketing. I developed computer illustrations for an agent for a particular company and I sold those to earn a few bucks while I was looking for a job. There are a lot of things you could probably do professionally, even if it's on a part-time, temporary basis. You can ensure that your own vision of self-worth and your worth in the marketplace stay high. Interviewers automatically have a lower opinion of someone who is not currently employed in some useful endeavor. I think that if you know yourself you can see where you might be of use to somebody. You can probably find something, somewhere where you can be involved at least on a part-time basis and that would help a lot of the problems you identified.

MR. HAASL: A couple themes, obviously ran through almost everything we said today. First, get to know yourself and your needs and the needs of your family, and second, remember that change is an integral part of growth.

