

SAMUEL T. REDDY

7 CAREER TRANSITION MISTAKES TO AVOID



From the International Best selling author of
Leavers to Leaders - 7 Steps To Reinvent Yourself
While in Transition.



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MISTAKES OF CAREER TRANSITION

Why Me?

My name is Samuel T. Reddy. I am a career strategist, thinker and author of the acclaimed best-selling book *LEAVERS TO LEADERS*. Through my accredited programme, we develop talented individuals who become influential leaders, stand out, become relevant and make meaningful impacts on organisations. We aim to support leaders at each stage of their life with an ecosystem focusing on creativity and lifelong learning, which is essential for a career with continuous disruptions and allows them to become relevant at work, rigorous in the workplace and responsive in the workforce.

As a training and development organisation, we operate in the UK with our headquarters in Hampshire. Our accelerator programme is based on the Leaders Operating System™ led by a team of academics, thought leaders & industry experts.

It's time to simplify and develop career leaders to pick up the right techniques and become proactive rather than reactive, adapting and further honing their approach as work, workforce, and workplace evolve.

The Leaders Operating System™ is a seven steps methodology developed over 25 years of practice for anyone to transition and become a leader in their field, as featured in the bestselling book *Leavers to Leaders*, which is now available in 17 countries.

My whole life has been about striving in uncomfortable situations and unfamiliar territory. As a 'sugar cane boy', born in Mauritius, I have successfully engaged and transitioned across government, military, business and the third sector to become an award-winning entrepreneur and bestselling author.

I believe environment dictates performance, and you gain more Experience by Exposing yourself to new Environments.

I am also the founder of TriExForces, an award-winning company of highly effective former military and academic leaders deployed globally to develop teams and impact organisations.

I regularly speak on:

- ▶ Change – REINVENT method
- ▶ Strategy – Leavers to Leaders
- ▶ Leadership – 3LOS™ of Leadership.

Over the last 25 years of transition, I've often heard, "I can't have the career I want because I don't have the right experience."

I felt the same way when I began my career transition journey at the age of 22. It started broad, wanting to better educate myself or to own a business. Although these careers seemed vastly different, they both appealed to me.

Then I realised *I* was the main obstacle getting in the way of *me* pursuing my dream job.

My first step was to stop focusing on what I "should" do and chasing other people's definitions of success. That approach gave me the energy to explore what I wanted and how to take my background and translate it into a career I was excited to get up for every morning. With clarity and less resistance, I was able to more easily see the next steps I needed to take for my ideal career.

“ *A transition takes place when you realise you are living a life of potential with no purpose, only then will you start to question the work you do, the impact you are having and the lives you are changing. It all starts with you.* ”

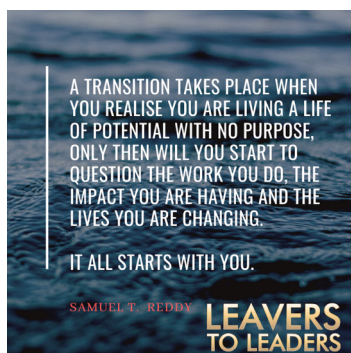
According to my LinkedIn connections, 76% of my network move to a new job/career as an employee after being at a company for 12 months. After two years, there is a 59% more

likelihood that they'll transition, and after three years, 48% have a new career.

True career transition starts with figuring out what you are suited for and growing in that area. 87% of people hate their job, and at the same time, they hope they don't get fired. That's what you called mixed emotions.

Einstein said,

“ *‘if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will believe it is stupid.’*



However, during my career transition from the military to an award-winning entrepreneur author and beyond, I encountered countless challenges and made numerous mistakes. One of the many beneficial aspects of the path that I chose is that I now know the most common mistakes and the action points to prevent them. Throughout this book, I have pinpointed the mistakes, and the action points based on working with various career leaders in transition.

MISTAKE #1
FEAR OF CAREER TRANSITION



The Solution:

There is no such thing as a job with or without a future. A job is neither a good nor a bad job. It is what we do with a job that makes it good or bad. Jobs don't have a future; people do. A job is a condition of circumstances.

Career transition can be scary, and I remember thinking very hard about leaving the Military in 2007. Then I read an article from the *New York Times*: 'When it comes to careers, change is a constant'. As humans, we're wired for a desire for firm answers and a fear towards uncertainty. But nowadays, modern psychological science starts to suggest that uncertainty improves your decisions, promotes empathy, and boosts creativity. In his book *Nonsense: The Power of Not Knowing*, the author Jamie Holmes explains how a good dose of uncertainty can be helpful for our life.

I certainly live a life full of uncertainties and stories that many people are inspired by. So, we all have to face fear, the fear of having to find a place to live, fear of looking for a new job in a new industry, (civvy) street. Fear of the unknown. Fear of change. Now I think of it, all those fears were in my head, and I was caged by them. I still feel the same fear each time I venture into a new business or take a new investment. But I learnt to face the fear and do it anyway.

You see, human beings transition all the time, but notice that there are milestones and certain transitions that need more support than others depending on the transition you are on. I

called this S.P.I.T., which I elaborated on extensively in my book *Reinvented*. Transitioning from a teenager to an adult is a big transition that becomes intense at certain milestones.

In a career ladder, too, the milestones of moving from an individual contributor to a first-time manager can be viewed with the same intensity. That's why transitioning to something similar is easier than transitioning to something else. Transitioning to something else, i.e. military to civilian, requires thoughtful planning, especially if you have bills to pay and food to put on the table.

“ *Fear can stop you from applying yourself. Get out of your comfort zone and be your very best.* ”

ACTION STEPS:

1. Stop feeding your mind with negative thoughts.
2. Commit to making an effort not to give in to the negativity of others.
3. Surround yourself with positive people.

MISTAKE #2

NOT HAVING A BROAD MINDSET OR
CHOOSING YOUR OWN PATH



The Solution: It Is Important to Have the Final Scene in Mind as You Have the Power to Choose Your Own Path

In last spring's pandemic, our world froze. The crisis or recession cancelled or decreased our activity for a few months as companies prioritised solving their internal problems and did not bet on incorporating talent. I anticipated that the crisis would generate an increase in unemployment, and it did not because of lack of work and because of remote working. One of my friends had just lost her job, and we scheduled video conferences to advise her. And from there came the idea of writing this eBook, summarising the advice we usually give to people who want to change careers or are actively looking to reinvent themselves and keep repeating those same mistakes.

The professional world has changed significantly in the 30 years that I have been working. We used to look for jobs in newspaper ads. We would embark on a professional career and stay for decades in the company that would direct our learning. Currently, in the new world, changes are happening with incredible speed, and it requires the professional to take control of their career without losing a moment of sight of their employability in the market.

The LOS method – the roadmap – is a traditional marketing approach applied to professionals. Simply, the first step is to understand what product you are going to put on the market. What do you want to sell? How is your product different? If you are unsure what value you bring to the market as a “product”,

no one will be interested in you. Marketing has many product references that have been launched without a clear message of value and have not survived. Would you change your shower gel for another that does not have a clear message? No ... if you don't understand the differentiation, you won't prove it.

You have to be able to understand how you are different. We all have a combination of experiences and qualities that make us different. And you have to know how to communicate it, tell a story– storytelling – that justifies what you are selling yourself.

The second step is to think in which markets or niches this product has a place or interest. To what universe of “consumers” do you direct your product? You have to think in which industrial sectors you have a place as a professional, what type of companies ... because you will have to find out what problems they have, what they need, how they hire ... If you don't know anything about the companies that can hire you, in a conversation or interview you don't get the messages right. If you have little information, you can be wrong. Preparation is the key.

And finally, your “Go to Market” (as marketers say) is the way to place the product on the market. In your case there are three: social networks, employment agencies or headhunters and your contacts. But you have to learn to optimise each of the routes.

The CV is a synthesis of who you are, from which the company that values you deduces your “employability” and your poten-

tial fits with their needs. The CV must summarize, in a clear and organized way, your professional profile, your professional history and your achievements.

The headhunter is “owed” to the company that hires him. A false belief that some professionals have is that headhunters are going to help them in their job search. It is not like this. If we think of a simile, like the world of football, CR or Messi or Ramos, a club does not help them to find a way out or an option ... their agent helps them. In the professional world, the headhunter negotiates and searches for the company. The professional can be advised by their own professionals of the “outplacement”.

In any case, it is positive that the headhunter has you in mind or in a database so that they identify you in the opportunities in which your role may be of interest.

The market is looking for flexible, agile leaders who can evolve rapidly in the face of market changes, to react to unpredictable situations. Likewise, empathic leaders who generate enthusiasm and commitment in the teams are valued. They are looking for leaders with strategic capacity and, at the same time, execution capacity.

I have to admit I am not good at jigsaw puzzles, but I used to have a client with learning disabilities when I was in the care industry who was a champion at doing it, spending days and weeks completing it with the utmost patience. It was an art!

How much more important is it to have the final scene in mind, especially if you are rebuilding a career?

The main trouble for most people I work with, especially the military, is an identity trap. People associate their core skills and attributes with their old profession and assume those skills are less valuable elsewhere, when, in fact, they might actually be worth more in a new environment. I had the pleasure of working with those from the legal profession whose skills – presentation and communications, analytical thought, diligent preparation, and attention to details – are broadly applicable to all kinds of careers: business, politics, finance, sports coaching, fiction writing, and journalism. Some skills can seem like a commodity from inside an industry, but outside that industry, they can be highly valuable.

Even if you are in a narrowly defined job like an infantry soldier, skills like personal discipline, working in teams and leadership ability to perform under extreme pressure comes into play. It doesn't limit you to working in the security industry.. If I were to limit my skills as an infantryman, chances are I would still be somewhere working in that industry and limiting my growth potential to get where I am today. The combination of skills and talents matters in any industry.

You Have the Power to Choose your Own Path

When I left the Military, I had a choice between working endlessly for an employer or creating my own path. It was not easy; there were many downs but also a lot of ups. But I have

constantly challenged conventional wisdom, asking Why? What if? and Why not?

A vision for a better, more effective lifestyle is a good start as a leader. When you start with the above, you will gain new insight and discover a better way. See every job as a development opportunity, the chance to build skills and experience, and learn more about what you enjoy and contribute to a better transition.

ACTION STEPS

1. Surround yourself with people who will support you.
2. Build a network portfolio,, not just on LinkedIn but also offline. Studies show that most people find their next job within their network – those who already know, like and trust them.
3. Plan a career that fits your passion and gives you a work- life balance.

MISTAKE #3

**BEING COMFORTABLE AND TAKING THE EASY
DECISIONS**



The Solution: Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable

Easy options are not always the best options. Here are 7 reasons why:

- ◆ It is easy to eat junk food.
- ◆ It is easy not to exercise.
- ◆ It is easy to be busy with no time for yourself or your loved ones.
- ◆ It is easy to hurt someone's feelings.
- ◆ It is easy to be lazy.
- ◆ It is easy to stay in the same old boring job.

And it is easy to watch TV all day.

Eventually, by choosing an easy life, life gets harder.

In my experience, one of the secrets to getting comfortable being uncomfortable is to plunge into the uncomfortable; push, or be lucky enough to have someone push you, beyond your fears and your sense of limitations. And that's what I've been doing ever since I joined the British forces, overcoming my discomfort as I go along, even now, in business.

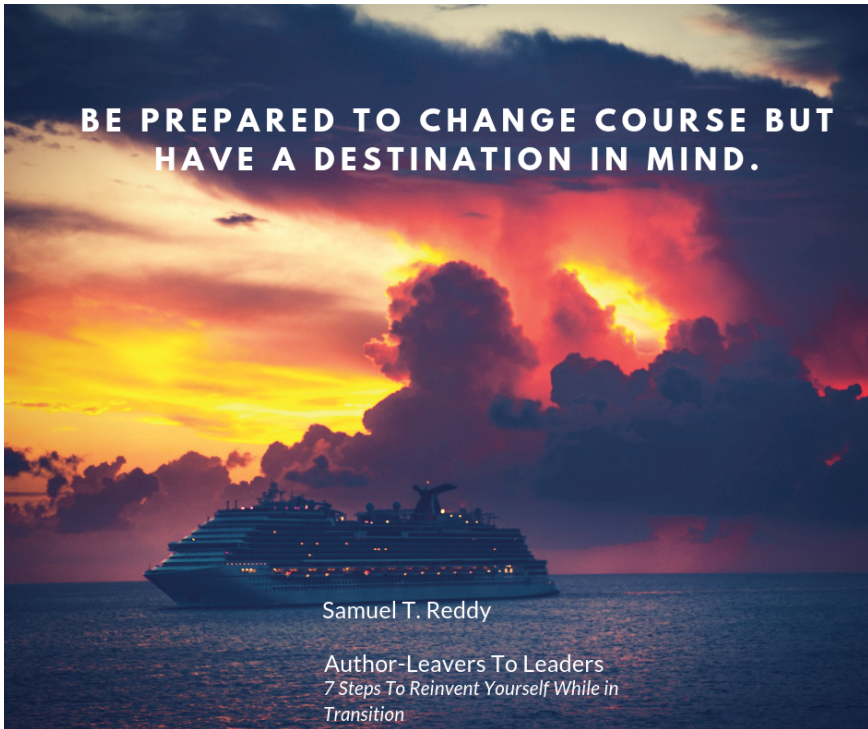
Career transition is an important part of life. The time you spend at work often exceeds the time you spend with the most precious people in your life. Nobody wants to be tied down to the wrong career for life. When you are unhappy doing what you spend 40 or more hours a week doing, it will wear you down.

On the other hand, transitioning too early will make it look like you're a job hopper with commitment issues – but transition too late, and it might be difficult to catch up with younger colleagues (maybe even take a pay cut). Generally speaking, the best time to make the switch is after you've mastered your original speciality and your growth has plateaued.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Take time off to reflect on your current career.
2. Ask people you know, like and trust to give you an honest feedback of your current situation.
3. Be open to change.

MISTAKE #4
**CHANGING YOUR COURSE AND ALTERING
YOUR DESTINATION**



The Solution: Be Prepared to Change Course but Have A Destination in Mind.

When you set off to start a new career, new job or a new business and you are in transition, sometimes things work out differently than you want them to.

In Southampton, where I live, we have around 500 cruise ships visiting us each year. Being a turnaround port, these ships carry about 2,500 to 4,500 passengers each, with a ratio of 1:3 for the crew on average. So, around 2 million visitors and 450,000 crew members per year. The itinerary for each ship is prepared years in advance as the cruise company has to book the berthing, arrange for resupply, transportation, fresh crew and more. This is logistics at its best.

The same as a cruise ship itinerary is set months in advance; timely logistics are put in place in terms of berthing, resupply, embarkation & disembarkation. The list is long. But sometime things don't go according to plan and the ship is delayed or misses its port of call.

You see, nothing goes according to plan in life. You cannot predict the next hour, even if you are at home, on the road or in the workplace. Things are constantly changing.

As a leader, you need to be prepared to change course but always have a destination in mind. One of my companies sells retail cruises where you can eat, drink, and be merry, enjoying the evening entertainments while the ship drifts

around in circles for a few days. I call them a cruise to nowhere.

When you are in transition, you need to have a destination in mind; otherwise, you will go around in circles, and it is not as much fun as on a cruise ship. Set off on your journey, have a destination in mind and be prepared to change course.

“It is all about having a plan, a plan that gives you a direction, an aim and a focus.”

When your destination is clear, you can keep coming back to the ship’s itinerary again and again and update your ETA for the next port of call. This brings us to the next important skill you need as you navigate in the open seas: your compass. (Read my blog on finding your compass).

So, here are a few action steps for you if your life and career is going round and round in a circle:

ACTION STEPS:

1. Step back and ask yourself: If you keep doing what you have been doing in the last five years, where will you be and what will you become in the next five years.
2. Think win-win. We all know by now that we should always place ourselves in a position where both parties win. However, I will add, think of the impact you will have on others around you and your social contribution. When we talk about sustainable

development in the business world, it is not just about the environment but also about humans in those environments.

3. Be Flexible. Flexibility allows us to make better decisions. In today's changing world, we are continually presented with new information. As we become better informed, we may realise that the decisions we made yesterday are not the best decisions today. It is never too late to make the right decision. Flexibility is an attitude that can help us succeed both personally and professionally.

MISTAKE #5

INDECISIVENESS



The Solution: Be Decisive

Unfortunately, the process of figuring out what you want to do and then doing it isn't necessarily simple. Some people hold on to jobs too long for all kinds of reasons. For some, it's loyalty to co-workers at a company you've outgrown, or for others, maybe you spent a long time thinking you were just about to get promoted, but have never been put forward. Or perhaps you had a lot going on in your personal life, and your somewhat boring job felt steadying. Whatever the reason, if you've stayed in a job long after your growth and learning have plateaued, you need a plan to decide for your future. Unlike cancelling your subscription, which can be completed with an email or phone call, setting up your life so that you're doing what you really want to do can take months.

Your task will be easier if you know what you want to do. Simply make up your mind to make the switch, and then do it. The process will no doubt include research, making new contacts, updating your CV, possibly going back to learn, maybe making a move across town or across country, and in some cases starting all over again.

If you don't know what you want to do, you have the added burden of figuring it out, which could mean research, testing, counselling, experimentation, and then, as above, figuring it all over again.

I have developed a free tool for my readers of *Leavers to Leaders* which gives you 14 questions to identify your influence and a 4-

page report. I hope it helps you with your next decision. Click on www.leaverstoleaders.com/scorecard

But having successfully engaged and transitioned across government, military, business and the third sector, each time I had to spend time figuring out what it was I wanted to do, and then arranging my life so I could do it.

I can tell you it is worth whatever complications you have to go through to get there, and it will definitely simplify your life in the long run.

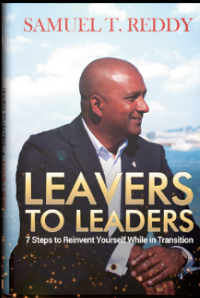
ACTION STEPS:

1. Shift your mindset to see opportunities around you.
2. Use your current network to build your new career.
3. Have a higher vision for your life and career.

MISTAKE #6

LIMITING YOUR OPTIONS ON SKILLS

**If you don't know where
you are going, it will be a
long journey!**



Samuel T. Reddy

www.LeaversToLeaders.com

The Solution: Don't Be Limited by What you Cannot Do!

Sometimes, because we don't know everything, we limit ourselves. In 2014 I launched a ground transfer service for the cruise industry; I had no idea about the travel business, but together with a team of former service personnel and former police officers, we did our best. Two years later, I launched a cruise brand. We still had to figure out about this new cruise business quickly, and we still did our best.

Discover your talent stack. Which is a combination of skills, talents and values that have you combine to help you stand out from the crowd.

The combination of skills and talents matters in any industry.

The good news? You are already highly skilled if you have been in the working industry for 20 years. One of the exercises we do in the Leavers to Leaders programme is to discover the mountain of value you are already standing on, or simply sitting on. Most of our participants go back on this day, realising the power they have; how unstoppable they are.

“Don't let what you cannot do right now get in the way of what you can do.

Continue to do what you do well and build on that.”

ACTION STEPS:

1. Discover your sweet spot; this is the intersection of your skills, talents & values.
2. Develop new skills and talents on a yearly basis.
3. Have a budget for your personal learning and development, including books, seminars & workshops. Remember, environment dictates performance.

MISTAKE #7

NOT STRIVING TO BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE



The Solution: be the best and nothing less

Being your best is about holding yourself to a higher standard and realising your full potential. We all have the need for belonging, and this need is met by pushing ourselves to a moderate level of achievement based on the society we live in. Should we be letting other people set the pace for our success or lack thereof? Do you tend to base your own potential on the potential of 'the crowd' and see those successes as exceptions? Perhaps it is time to compare our potential and ability to the only person who really matters by leading ONESELF.

There is nothing wrong with striving to become a better person. There are those who fear they will become one of those people who act like they are 'too good' for others or have a 'holier than thou' attitude. You are not, nor ever will be, better than any anyone else besides the person you are now. You will not only have greater respect for all others, but they will also have greater respect for you.

A lot of talented people join our accelerator programme after a disruption of having to switch jobs or careers and then figuring out how they can apply their current professional skills in a fulfilling new way. The good news is that other industries may value your talents just as much, if not more, than your existing ones, but you need to understand what those talents are and package them in a way that makes their value to others apparent.

I have switched careers eight times so far. I went from being a freeport officer working at the airport and port to an infantryman and left the military as a linguist, translating and liaising between the French and British military. I ran successful businesses in the health sector and travel and tourism, working with top executives and business leaders. Since then, friends and strangers have sought my advice about career transition. From those conversations, I learned a broader way of reinventing oneself, and putting them down onto 212 pages which has now become a bestselling book and distributed in 17 countries.

My first contact with the British military was at Strand career office in London and those three words from the British army have had such an impact on my life to date – ‘Be the Best’. I recognised I had a long way to go and since then I have also realised that the next three words are also important – ‘And Nothing Less’.

Being your best and nothing less is a goal that should be at the top of your list, at home, with your loved ones, in the workplace and in the community.

Change is inevitable, none more evident than change in oneself; your best today is not likely to be your best tomorrow. Aiming to be the best means you don’t wait around for something to fall into your lap, start the work now and figure out what your best needs to be.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Go to bed and examine your day.
2. Write or voice your most unwanted feelings.
3. Don't think of being a perfectionist; no one is perfect.

DOES THE ABOVE MAKE SENSE?

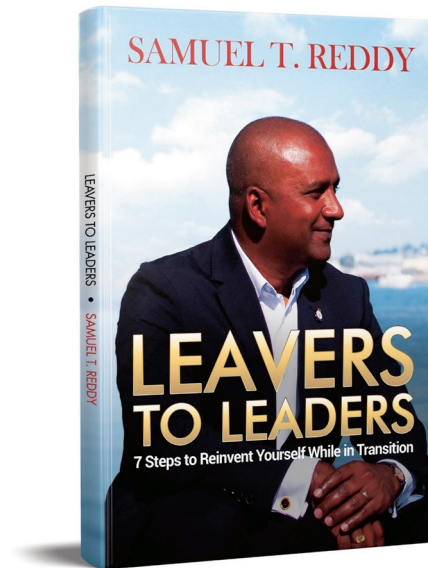
The good news? You are already highly skilled if you have been in the working industry for 20 years. As organisations seek ways to innovate, inspire and adapt, many leaders are increasing their investment in leadership development as a critical part of their business strategy. However, truly visionary leaders will be those who are willing to understand where they need to evolve and what new skills they need to master.

Therefore, as the CEO of your career, it is important to have a career-driven campaign where you assess your present situation in line with future expectations, with an assessment for you to understand how broader trends in industry volatility affect your employability. In short:

“*‘To keep challenging yourself, to keep finding new things to do and keep finding new challenges in life.’*”

You must learn how to preserve the value of your accumulated experience while carefully examining whether your current position is helping you acquire new talents and enduring skills. Your education does not stop when you finish school; you don't stop learning to drive once you have your driving licence. If you are not developing new skills every year, you are most likely stuck in the past. Spending time adding a new skill to your belt will put you way ahead of your competition.

ABOUT LEAVERS TO LEADERS



Leavers to Leaders is for those who want to reinvent themselves due to change in the workplace or who want to

build a new career as a leader based on the Leaders Operating System. The book is an Amazon best seller in the UK, USA, Australia & Canada.

Our career-driven campaign:

Our career-driven campaign takes place online in a board-room-style session with our team. During this session, we elaborate on the Leaders Operating System and the impact of change at work, in the workforce and in the workplace. We take a snapshot of your current leadership journey based on your leadership influence in line with current trends in the market to decide the best possible outcomes. If you would like to be invited to the next strategy session, simply complete our leadership influence test below. You will also receive a 14-page report with your personalised score and explanation. A member of our team will then be in touch to discuss your score and invite you to one of our career campaign strategies.

www.l2lscorecard.com

You can also follow me on social media @Samuel T. Reddy or you can contact my office at L2L@SamuelTReddy.com

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Website: www.LeaversToLeaders.com

Blog: www.samueltreddy.com/blog

Interview: www.samueltreddy.com/youtube

Podcast:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/3kthULquzPCy3EG3iku2Eo>

Email: L2L@samueltreddy.com

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/samuel.t.reddy/>

Best Regards,
SamuelTReddy.com

