

What's Next?

Creating a career vision to guide you to the next level

Designing a career blueprint might not be as hard as you think. Leadership expert **Kate Ebner** outlines some easy steps to getting on the right path.



"What's next for me?" is the question that we often hear from our coaching clients. Many people are working very hard, focusing on doing their best in their current job, and warding off that uneasy feeling that there is a future calling to them that they might somehow miss out on. They often ask: "How do I know if I'm on the right path?" and "What should I be doing to get where I really want to go?"

If these questions are on your mind, it's time to create a vision to guide your life and career. Just as a company's vision statement and strategic plan serve to guide employees in the right direction, your own personal vision will serve as your North Star, guiding your journey. Your career vision will also help you align your passion with your goals and path.

Creating a vision for your career is easy. First, set a time horizon, such as three, five or 10 years, and spend 15 minutes imagining exactly what you'd like your life and career to be at that point in time. Do think "big," rather than letting your inner voice talk you out

of something that may seem like a stretch. Once you've imagined it in detail, write your vision down immediately. This exercise is your first step towards the career you're destined to have. Your vision statement will guide you to make choices that get you moving in the right direction almost right away. Now that you have your vision, ask yourself, "What two steps can I take this week to begin moving in this direction?" You've found the starting point on the path to making your vision real!

Now that you know your ideal destination, you can look at your current job and understand what it offers that's helping you prepare for that future. Often the position you're in is great training for your ultimate career. Your vision will help you shift immediately from passive to purposeful, inspiring you into action to get the life and career you really want.

Editor's Note: Be sure to keep an eye out for Kate Ebner's new blog, *The Inspired Leader*, which debuts this month on Kidscreen.com. And if you're planning to attend Kidscreen Summit, look into signing up for Kate's Leadership Training Day master class on Monday, February 6. You can find more info on the session at summit.kidscreen.com/2012/agenda_master_classes.html.

Seeing the vision

Make the leap to visionary thinking. Here are some tips on how to relax and imagine success on your terms.

1. **Be detailed and specific.** Really picture what it is you want.
2. **Give yourself full permission to be visionary.** Don't tell yourself "No."
3. **Replace your negative self-judgments with compassion and encouragement.**
4. **Be bold.**
5. **Envision from the heart—tap into your passion, rather than logic.** Visioning is a creative process, not a linear one.
6. **Be open to surprises.**
7. **Share your visioning with someone you trust and who will encourage you as you go forward.**

Top leadership coach Kate Ebner is the founder and CEO of The Nebo Company (www.nebocompany.com), a leadership consultancy based in Washington, DC. Kate teaches executives at Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits and government agencies how to use vision as a powerful and practical tool for manifesting the important changes they want to see. You can reach Kate via kebner@nebocompany.com or at 202-966-3201.

Out of Office

Tales from the frequent fliers club



Jennifer Lawlor

SVP of consumer products, Zodiac Rights



1. In my carry-on

you'll find a big scarf, water, gossip mags, various books, documents that I really should be reading, and flat shoes for the long walk in T5.

2. My go-to gadget

is my new iPhone (sorry, poor old Blackberry).

3. On the fly

I've learned that better technology and increased airport security mean less flexibility (i.e. it's possible to miss my flight!!).

4. Preferred in-air tunes

Something mellow like Adele or Newton Faulkner

5. Best in-flight food

is either Itsu sushi (I bring it myself) or the BA curry option.



6. Best power-lunch

Zodiac's yacht, of course!

7. Window or aisle?

Aisle—I like to see what's going on.