A FIELD GUIDE · NO. 01

When Your Vision Starts to Feel Impossible

Five ideas for navigating creative tension in a career transition

I
See
Understand the gap

II
Move
Experiment and learn

III
Evolve
Refine the vision



Imagine a rubber band stretched between two pegs on a geoboard. One represents your current reality; the other, the future you imagine. The distance creates tension. We can respond by changing our reality, bringing our vision closer to where we are, or learning to hold the tension while we find a way forward.

I See the Tension

Three ways to understand the gap

01 The gap creates tension

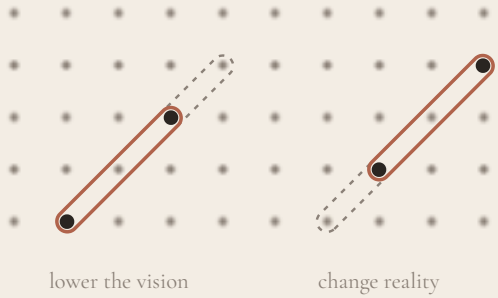
Holding a compelling vision alongside a clear view of current reality creates what's known as creative tension.

02 Discomfort isn't the same as creative tension

Creative tension is the gap between vision and reality. Emotional tension is the anxiety or discouragement that may accompany it. Feeling uncomfortable doesn't necessarily mean your vision is wrong.

03 Notice how you're resolving the tension

We can lower our vision to match reality or begin changing reality to move toward the vision. Distinguish thoughtful revision from retreating out of fear.



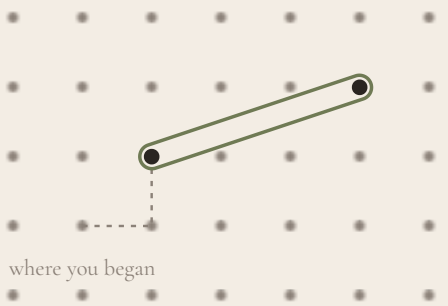
Two ways to close the gap. We can lower the vision toward current reality or begin changing reality to move toward the vision. Both reduce the tension, but they lead to very different futures.

REFLECTION

Am I reconsidering my vision because I've learned something new, or because the gap feels uncomfortable?

II Move Before You Know

Clarity follows action



One experiment, then another. Each step can change your circumstances, challenge an assumption, or reveal a possibility you couldn't see before.

04

Movement creates clarity

Career reinvention unfolds through experiments, relationships, and trying on possible working identities, not introspection alone.

REFLECTION

What's one small experiment that could help me understand what's possible?

III Let the Vision Evolve

A direction, not a contract

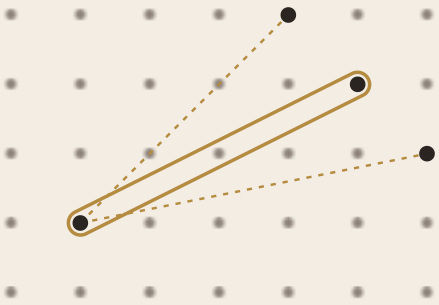
05

Your vision is a direction, not a contract

Your original career goal may be one expression of deeper values. As you learn, new ways of living those values may emerge.

REFLECTION

What am I really seeking through this career change, and what other paths might offer it?



More than one possible destination. As we learn, we may discover different ways of creating the working life we want.