

The how playbook

Why is a sideways career move a smart move?

Uncover how sideways career moves can be game-changers for growth and skill-building

FEATURING



Rebekah Di Blasi

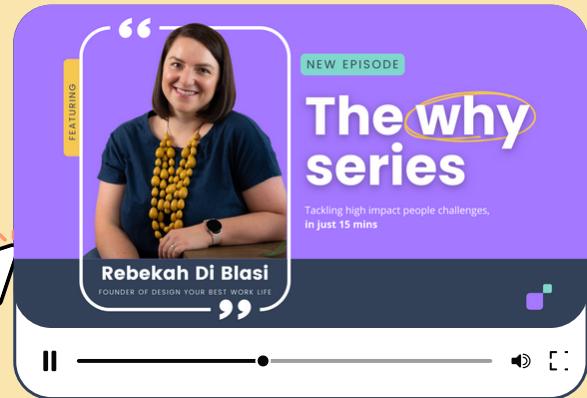
FOUNDER OF DESIGN YOUR BEST WORK LIFE



This quick read follows a 'The Why Series' micro webinar.

We ask a wonderful thought leader five insightful questions that uncover the 'why' behind high impact people challenges.

In this edition we heard from Career Coach Rebekah Di Blasi.



 **Watch the 15 minute webinar**

Question 1:

Why does a sideways career move feel risky or more like a backwards step?



Expert Insight

A sideways move often feels risky because many people associate career success with upward mobility. We've been conditioned to view promotions and climbing the corporate ladder as the ultimate measure of progress. A lateral move can challenge this perception, making individuals fear that they're stepping off the ladder and losing the momentum they've built.

Insight to Impact

- **Shift the Narrative:** Emphasise the value of gaining diverse experiences rather than simply climbing the ladder. Talk to your team about how lateral moves build a broader skillset and enhance long-term career prospects.
- **Frame Moves as Growth:** Highlight how sideways moves can offer learning opportunities, exposure to new areas, and can make someone more versatile in the future.
- **Celebrate Diverse Career Paths:** Normalise and celebrate team members who take non-linear paths to success, reinforcing that career growth isn't always upward.



Question 2:

What prevents us from exploring sideways moves?

Expert Insight

The hesitation around sideways moves often stems from a fear of the unknown, the perception of failure, and a lack of support from leadership. Additionally, there's a belief that lateral transitions might dilute one's specialisation, which can cause professionals to hesitate in making these moves.

Insight to Impact

- **Create a Safe Space for Exploration:** Foster an environment where exploring different roles or functions is encouraged without fear of judgment or failure.
- **Develop a Support System:** Build frameworks that support lateral transitions, including mentorship, career coaching, and the option to return to previous roles if needed.
- **Highlight Lateral Success Stories:** Share examples of people within your organization who have made successful sideways moves, helping to reduce stigma and increase motivation to explore new paths.



Question 3:

What's the trade-off between being a specialist and a generalist?

Expert Insight

There is a trade-off between depth and breadth. Being a specialist can lead to deep expertise in one area, making you highly valuable in that niche. However, being a generalist allows for greater adaptability and the ability to move across different functions. Both paths have value, but specialists might feel limited in broader opportunities, while generalists may struggle with being seen as 'masters' in any one area.

Insight to Impact

- **Assess Organisational Needs:** Evaluate your organisation's current and future needs—does it require deep, specialised knowledge or more versatile, cross-functional skills?
- **Encourage Hybrid Skills:** Promote the development of both specialist and generalist skills by encouraging employees to take on projects outside their main focus.
- **Align Career Paths:** Provide clear pathways for both generalists and specialists to advance, ensuring each is seen as equally valuable to the organisation's success.



Question 4:

Why do managers hoard talent?

Expert Insight

Managers often hoard talent because they fear the loss of high-performing individuals and the impact it may have on their team's productivity. The instinct to protect one's own team can lead to a reluctance to let employees explore other opportunities within the organisation, even when it could benefit the company as a whole.

Insight to Impact

- **Reward Talent Mobility:** Create incentives for managers who promote internal mobility and support their team members in exploring new roles within the organisation.
- **Promote a Culture of Growth:** Encourage managers to view talent mobility as an opportunity for growth and cross-pollination, not as a loss. Frame the development of their team as part of their success.
- **Build Succession Plans:** Help managers build strong succession plans so they feel more comfortable letting go of key talent, knowing there's a pipeline of skilled individuals ready to step up.



Question 5:

Why are hiring managers attracted to 'perfect on paper' profiles?

Expert Insight

Hiring managers often gravitate toward candidates who seem 'perfect on paper' because they represent a safe choice. These candidates typically check all the boxes of experience, education, and skills, which reduces perceived hiring risk. However, this often leads to overlooking candidates who may have high potential but don't fit the traditional mould.

Insight to Impact

- **Challenge Conventional Thinking:** Encourage hiring managers to look beyond the résumé and assess candidates based on their potential, adaptability, and cultural fit.
- **Redefine Success Profiles:** Work with hiring managers to redefine what a successful candidate looks like, emphasising soft skills and growth potential over a checklist of qualifications.
- **Implement Structured Interviews:** Use structured interview processes that focus on assessing broader competencies rather than just matching job descriptions. This will help identify high-potential candidates who may not be 'perfect on paper.'





Contact Information

How can The Career Conversation help you?

TCC crafts awesome short-form videos that talent can't get enough of!

Our CareerReels library is packed with ready-to-use videos offering actionable advice for recruiting, onboarding, and developing talent.

With curated playlists, creating campaigns is a breeze - think Hiring Manager Development, Interview Skills, Internal Mobility.

Ready to elevate your engagement and development game with stunning video content? Let's chat and swap some ideas! 🕶️💡

🌐 <https://careerreels.info>

How can Rebekah help you?

Meet Rebekah, an experienced Career Coach at Design Your Best Work Life. She offers practical, evidence-based coaching for career transitions like change, redundancy, and parental leave. Rebekah also partners with organisations, empowering employees to navigate change, identify strengths, and explore new career paths in today's evolving workplace. How Rebekah can help:

- ☀️ Personalised Career Coaching
- ☀️ Career Transitions & Outplacement
- ☀️ Values & Strengths Exploration
- ☀️ Resume & LinkedIn Optimisation
- ☀️ Interview Prep & Mock Interviews
- ☀️ Workshops & Speaking Engagements

Support your employees to thrive—connect with Rebekah today!

🌐 www.designyourbestworklife.com