

# UNSTUCK IN THE MIDDLE

**Visionary Senior Manager manifests a new role that utilizes his strengths, ignites his passion and enhances the bottom-line of his organization.**

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*The coaching experience gave me a chance to reconnect to my passion, assess my skills and think beyond obstacles and challenges. Having an action plan I can work from keeps me focused and excited about the future.*

—Michael

## Lessons from a Career Explorer:

- ✓ Don't assume a new role is impossible before you even have a chance to define it. Pretend anything is possible.
- ✓ If you feel like your stagnating, update your resume highlighting your achievements and passions. It's a great way to check-in with yourself and your career.
- ✓ Test the waters with upper management to see how amenable they might be to an expansion of your role. (Make the business case for it.)
- ✓ Create a plan that includes actionable steps to address challenges and develop new skills and change perception.
- ✓ Have faith that even if that ideal job doesn't come right away, you are focusing your energy on expanding – that effort is never wasted.

## THE CHALLENGE

Michael has worked as a senior manager in the IT world for almost twenty years. Michael is a visionary, who spends a good deal of TIME thinking about how technology can enhance the legal process. He is currently in a senior leadership role that has him reporting both to the global CIO and to the Executive Director. This dual reporting reflects his influence and value in bridging the gap between the legal and IT sides of the business.

Michael does not want to be a CIO nor does he want to be an Executive Director. He has considered these roles carefully and does not feel that is the best use of his talents. He is no longer challenged in his current role, but would like to stay at his firm as he likes the people and gets a lot from his connection to them. Michael wants more but he isn't sure what that is.

## THE CHANGE

In our first session Michael was clear about what he didn't want but not as sure about what he wanted. When asked to choose anything at all, he was able to describe a role that excited him (his body language, demeanor and tone of his voice became lively and engaged) was visionary and would provide a tangible benefit to his organization.

Michael's energy shifted as soon as he started thinking about obstacles and challenges. Statements like, "there is no way this could happen" and "my boss would never let me do this," drained him, his shoulders slumped, his voice got low. While Michael had legitimate concerns about the challenges, we agreed he would put those temporarily aside so we could focus on building an actionable plan.

Michel jumped into a series of exercises and engaging questioning we designed to help him clarify what he wanted, define the role he was seeking and assess his strengths and areas for development. Michael was able to develop a detailed development plan that included actionable tasks mapped to his larger goal.

## THE IMPACT

Michael began working different aspects of the plan. His first priority was to establish himself as an expert by using his existing professional network and affiliations. Michael got himself on speaking panels and wrote several articles for influential trade newsletters. He has also started having exploratory conversations with upper management.

Michael has also expressed a new found sense of commitment to his current position as his focus has shifted away from his dissatisfaction to his interest in creating a new role that parlays the experiences from his current one. Having a plan that he works off of is a reminder to him that he is not stagnating.

Michael has scheduled check-in coaching sessions as a way to hold himself accountable to the tasks he has committed to in his plan.

*Please note: The names of clients, their employers and certain identifying details have been changed to respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality.*

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