



HERE ARE A FEW career secrets from three of the most successful women i know. this guide shares how they've successfully abandoned their nine to five jobs in favor of careers that are more creatively challenging. their paths to success might inspire your own, so here's how they got from here to there.

THE BASICS:

JEN GOTCH SAYS - ASK YOURSELF:

- what is your reason for changing? emotional? financial? make sure you are taking this leap for the right reasons.
- at least one thing will go horribly wrong. do you have a support system in place?
- plan out strategic and financial goals for at least the first 6 months.
- constantly visualize success, but consider failure – even for a second – so you can be prepared if things don't work out.
- save money before you do anything drastic like quit your job. that's a mistake i've made on several occasions.

MIRANDA JONES ON SMALL BUSINESS RISK TAKING:

- make reversible decisions quickly and move on.
- never make an unprofitable transaction, no matter how tempting.
- keep your overhead as low as possible.
- practice top down planning. every month feels like razor's edge, but it's important to think big from the beginning, even if you aren't able to act that way just yet.
- you are going to work very hard. there is always something you probably should be doing. paid vacations are a thing of the past!
- be okay with a level of uncertainty.
- there are lots of great resources to answer questions that come up (people you know, government web sites). use them!

MAIA McDONALD SMITH'S FAMILY ADVICE:

- taxes – get a good accountant.
- insurance – be sure you and your family are covered.
- consider what sort of work environment you think you'd thrive in, which is related to who you want to work with.
- making a big career change is very similar to starting a family. you can plan and never feel ready. when it comes down to it, you just have to take the leap and make it work.
- when it comes to mixing work with babies you have to be really flexible.

THE PAYOFFS

JEN GOTCH :

- i love the freedom and learning new things on a daily basis. i'm gonna be here for awhile.
- we have a fun, productive work environment, and i'm so happy knowing that my intentions to create that workplace paid off.

MIRANDA JONES:

- it's difficult to leave something that's known, but just do it! the biggest risk is in not trying something new. change is exciting, and even if the change doesn't bring what you expected, chances are you'll have learned something very valuable about yourself.
- it's incredibly rewarding to watch something grow and gain momentum and realize that you made that happen!

MAIA McDONALD SMITH:

- technology allows me to work from home. social media connects me with so many people, whether it's new clients or someone who inspires me. i wouldn't be where i am today without either.
- i can work from bed if i want to!