

What Steps Can You Take To Stay Career Fit In BANI World

By Prabir Jha

New career opportunities are mushrooming even as we see the collapse of many others. We need to shift the mindset from "career illness" to wellness. Don't wait to get ill on the job — act now to preserve your career health.



I get requests for help when people lose their jobs or see careers plateau, but much fewer when people think their careers are in good health.

We forget that every 'career illness' starts when work is robust. Here are five suggestions for career wellness, irrespective of the phase:

Stay Curious: Careers of tomorrow will not just be sustained by what we learnt or did till yesterday. They will get more interdisciplinary and networked. One must be curious to know what is changing in the world beyond our little cosy contexts. Without being open and curious, you will deny your vulnerability. And eventually not learn wider or deeper skills, only to lose your agility and relevance.

Active Experimentation: Careers now are likely to be less black-and-white than those in the pre-BANI (brittle, anxious, non-linear and incomprehensible) world. One must get comfortable with risk-taking and doing a variety of roles to pick up varied experiences. Sticking to an industry, company, geography or function is convenient. But picking up a range of experiences is going to keep you on your toes, almost like mandatory daily exercising. Some moves will not turn out right, but you will still have learnt. And through these experiments, you reinvent yourself all the time.



Personal Reputation: In present times, our reputation precedes our resume. Ensure your personal reputation,

preferably brand, never loses its lustre. Every year, take stock of what you did to add shine to it, what your new high-impact accomplishment was, and where you helped & collaborated beyond the usual. Did you do anything that may have impaired the brand? Have you experienced siloed or disrespectful behaviour? Reputation and brands can never be taken for granted. Do your Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) seriously.

Seek Help: No one has the strength or virtue to always be a winner. But the best career builders reach out for help

with consummate ease and practised humility. They are comfortable with saying 'I don't know'. They can connect with anyone, whether it is across formal hierarchy or a wider ecosystem, to seek counsel. They believe in building teams that are better than themselves. They acknowledge the help and give credit to others. And in all this, they stay stronger and healthier, in both their impact and reputation.

Stay Honest: Whether the going is great or tough, make it a habit to stay honest. If you are not sure, you can solicit an ho-

nest friend or a well-meaning critic or hire a professional coach. You can neither get too celebratory nor excessively self-critical. Ask yourself: What **Black Swans** could hit your career? Are your strengths slowly becoming your weaknesses? Are there certain career muscles that need toning up?

"Career illness" calls for remedial intervention. Prioritising career wellness ensures resilience. Stay fit, maintain health, and be ready for future challenges in an ever-evolving professional landscape.

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