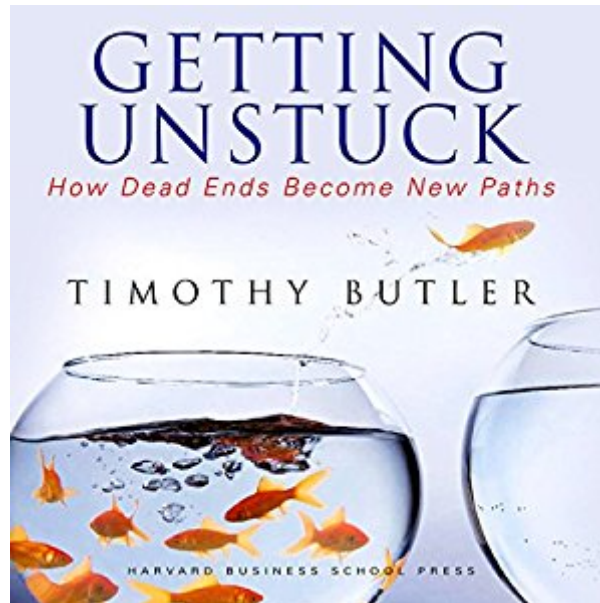


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# Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths



## Synopsis

You will experience psychological impasse many times in your life. During these times, you have the sensation that you're stuck or paralyzed. You're convinced that something must change, whether in your work or personal life. Though this feeling is normal, you need to move beyond it. Failure to "get unstuck" can put your career and personal life - as well as the healthy functioning of your team or organisation - at risk. In "Getting Unstuck", business psychologist and researcher Timothy Butler offers strategies for moving beyond a career or personal-life impasse - by recognising the state of impasse, awakening your imagination, recognising patterns of meaning in your life, and taking action for change. Drawing on a wealth of stories about individuals who have successfully transitioned out of impasses, "Getting Unstuck" provides a practical, authoritative road map for moving past your immediate impasse - and defining a meaningful path forward. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There comes a time (or many times, actually) in everyone's life when things appear to be at a dead end. You know you don't want to be where you're at, but you're in a quandary about how to move on. That's the subject of the book *Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths* by Timothy Butler. If you're willing to work his process and exercises, you may well find that "new path" to take you to the next level.

Contents: Part 1 - Impasse: Facing Crisis; Feeling Stuck and Doubting Ourselves; Opening Up and Letting Go; Shifting to a New Understanding Part 2 - Vision: Our Deepest Interests (The First Pattern in the Carpet); Learning to Let Our Passions Guide Us; Power,

People, and Achievement (Three Interwoven Patterns); Mapping Our Insights (Patterns in the Sand)Part 3 - Getting Unstuck: Moving from Impasse to Action; Living at the BorderAppendixes: Continuing the Journey (An Annotated Bibliography); A Note on Impasse and Depression; Scoring the One Hundred Jobs ExerciseNotes; Index; About the AuthorButler is a researcher and business psychologist who works with people who have hit a "dead end" in their life. Many of the stories in the book involve students who have gone to business school, have a number of options in front of them, but nothing seems quite right. His approach to getting unstuck is to allow the inner thoughts and passions to direct us towards what we probably already know the answer to be, but we just haven't tuned into it. Many of these exercises are covered in sidebar entries called "deep dives". These sidebars go into detail about how an exercise works and how to do it.

Butler's book has one of the best cover images I've seen in a while. A fish leaps into the air, leaving behind other fish swimming peacefully in their glass bowl. At first he seems bent on self-destruction, till we realize another bowl is waiting to receive him. It's mostly hidden at the edge of the page and it's emptier. The image is appropriate because Butler's book ultimately is about finding vision and image. He keeps referring to the Hundred Careers exercise: choose your top 12 from a list of 100. Then (and this is the important part) uncover common themes. Usually I get nervous when career counselors urge clients to work with specific choices, because most people carry inaccurate stereotypes of careers with them. Accountants can be extraverted and sales people can be shy. But I sense that Butler works with each person's unique perceptions of the careers, although he doesn't say so directly. Another reviewer suggests that a reader might need a guide to work through the process. I'm more concerned about translating insight into action. If you're an artist trapped in a banking career, how do you carry out the exploration you need? How do you find your new life? OK, a creative decides to become a freelance artist, but things get a little more complicated in real life. Every freelancer I know (including me) has to deal with creating systems to get the work done, marketing, staying motivated, and dealing with dumb things like more ink for the printer and why hasn't the bank transferred over your account forms. Of course, vision can be compelling. A strong vision can motivate career changers to find solutions, sometimes almost effortlessly.

Well before reading the final chapter of this book, I concluded that Timothy Butler is both a relentless empiricist (i.e. being keenly observant of human experience, especially his own) and a relentless pragmatist (i.e. leveraging this experience to apply lessons learned in terms of what works...and what doesn't). In the Introduction he focuses on the six phases of what he characterizes

as "The Cycle of Impasse." They are (1) the arrival of the [given] crisis and impasse, (2) its deepening and the attendant re-emergence of unresolved issues, (3) the dropping of old assumptions and the opening up to new information, (4) the shift to a new way of understanding our situation, (5) the greater recognition of deep patterns of our personality, and eventually (6) the decision to take concrete action." Once having carefully presented the "what," Butler then focuses almost all of his attention on the "how" of "getting unstuck." It is important to keep in mind that as Butler duly acknowledges, crises vary (sometimes significantly) in terms of their relative importance; also, impasses also vary in terms of their nature and extent; moreover, "getting unstuck" from one crisis does not mean that it will never recur; in addition, most people find themselves struggling to cope with more than one crisis at a time; finally, and obviously, it is highly advisable to prevent a crisis, if at all possible, and thus eliminate the need to get "unstuck" from one. The subtitle suggests another interesting aspect of this book's appeal: "How Dead Ends Become New Paths." I am among those who believe that every problem and, especially, every failure offers an invaluable learning opportunity. Long ago, Jack Dempsey suggested that "champions get up when they can't."

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