

DEFINE – Your 3 W's - #2 WHAT

Every job seeker has their own story. Along with their unique story comes a sense of urgency for getting back to work. Many factors determine that sense of urgency along with influencing your decision about taking a gig job versus a more permanent job. How long can you go as you are, without doing anything, before you end up in a financial bind?

Do not wait until that happens.

How can you hold on to your money longer by spending less? There are ways of cutting your costs that will keep more of your hard-earned savings in your pocket. Let us define WHAT influencers affect your next career choice and your current spending habits.

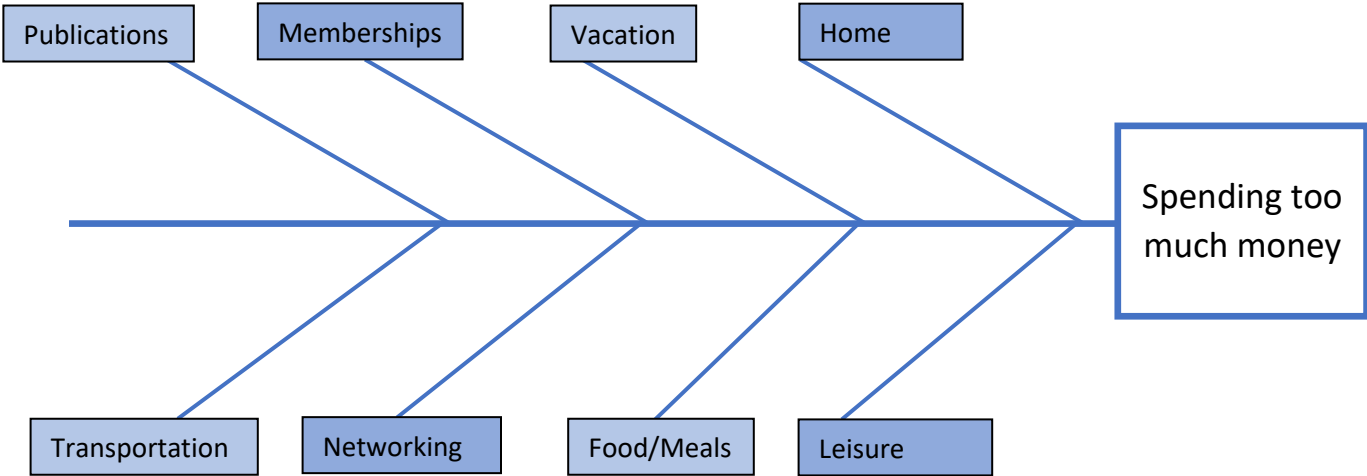
- Social Media:
 - WHAT are the current and future demands for the products or services I provide?
 - WHAT do the numbers say regarding the increase in demand for my type of service or product?
 - WHAT research confirms I can make a living doing what I want to do?
 - Have comments to my LinkedIn posts or articles, confirmed my decision or have me questioning my decision and next steps?
- Education:
 - Do I need additional training, education, or degree in order to position myself as a top qualified candidate for this role?
 - Can I find an internship or shadow someone doing what I want to do?
 - Are certifications required or preferred for my targeted job?
 - WHAT volunteer opportunities are available to gain experience in this field and to strengthen the skills I already possess?
- Timing:
 - WHAT date do I need to start working again, my Plan A?
 - If I fall short with my Plan A, WHAT is my plan B? WHAT is my plan C?
- Expenses:
 - Do I need a budget to monitor and control my monthly expenses?
- People: Family, friends, mentors, colleagues

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- What people in my life do I allow to influence my next step decisions?
 - Do I need to find positive accountability partners to keep me moving forward with the right attitude, energy and creativity?
- Finances:
 - I work to generate income in order to support myself and my family. During job search, living on monthly unemployment checks, a reduced income or no income and pulling from savings can make things tough. I need to find places where I can cut back and look at my discretionary spending. WHAT spending do I have direct control over?

A Cause-and-Effect diagram, aka Fishbone diagram, can determine WHAT your discretionary spending looks like and WHAT you may need to adjust to get through this time and keep your money longer. Feel free to include your own categories. Be creative. WHAT else might you be able to cut back or drop?

Each fin represents part of your discretionary spending. Can you reduce that spending or eliminate it all together? Your fins will be different. These fins are for explanation purposes only to get you started on your own diagram.



Publications	Periodicals / Books -magazine, newspaper, and on-line paid subscriptions. Alternative: Borrow from the library when it opens again, read free online, form a book-swap club-watch your social distancing and disinfect the books your loan and borrow
Memberships	Health Club, Golf Club, Ski Club, Swimming Club, Car Club, Book Club, Time Share Maintenance fees

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	Alternative: Work out at home, walk/jog with your dog if you have a dog, sell the Time Share
Vacation	With social distancing still in place, traveling is deferred until stay home order is lifted. Alternative: Staycation, but you know that already
Home	Electronic network bundle (TV, Phone, Internet); apartment rent or home mortgage is not discretionary, explore alternative payment options. Alternative: Cut back or remove Cable TV / Dish, remove landline phone, clip coupons for grocery and other goods. Be careful buying used goods, from consignment shops, neighbors, and garage sales, due to threat of spreading the corona virus. Rent and mortgage payments could possibly be deferred a month or two, consult your Rental office or mortgage lender.
Transportation	With stay home order, transportation has already been reduced. Alternatives: Reduce gasoline and car expenses, drive less, once social distancing is over-use rideshare-carpool-UBER, LYFT, walk or bicycle, increase phone meetings.
Networking	Alternatives are already in place and growing every day. Attend free networking events; cut back or eliminate fee-based networking groups or find a sponsor to defray the cost. Reduce or eliminate face-to-face meetings and move to online meetings.
Food/Meals	Take out of prepared food Alternatives-Have food delivered fresh or prepared. Prepare more meals at home. When social distancing lifts-share a meal with a family member, friend, colleague, or neighbor. Change your diet, cut out wasted calories-food with no nutritional value but a ton of calories, remove or reduce snacks, sweets, costly beverages.
Leisure	With Social distancing and stay at home orders, many leisure choices are reduced, expect for the electronic versions: Video games, virtual games and sports, movies (aka Netflix) and outdoor events like walking, hiking, fishing, hunting and boating.

This was a partial list of some of the many influencers that impact your career decision and your ability to find your next opportunity. The financial fin was a short list of where you can reduce your discretionary spending during this season of your life. I hope both have generated some new ideas to keep moving you forward.

Meet Benedicte



I was a few months into my job search with an international profile and no significant return. I changed my resume several times, adapted it, applied advice I received. Still no real traction, even after having a few interviews. I really needed to go further so I connected with people able to give me real feedback, the ones I really needed to hear, and those who continue to push me forward. –Benedicte G.