

My son wants to quit engineering and become a YouTuber.

Category: Personal Growth

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You

My son wants to quit engineering and become a YouTuber.

Stage 1 — Situation · Facilitator

Purpose: To understand the facts of the current situation without interpretation or judgment.

Before we look for a path forward, I need to understand the landscape of this transition. Please share a bit more about the following:

1. ****Current Status:**** How far along is your son in his engineering path (e.g., first-year student, recent graduate, or mid-career professional)?
2. ****The YouTube Plan:**** Does he already have a channel with a following, or is this a starting-from-zero ambition? What kind of content does he plan to create?
3. ****Timeline & Logistics:**** Is he planning to quit immediately, or is there a specific milestone he's waiting for? Who is currently providing financial support?
4. ****Dynamics:**** How was this news delivered, and what are the primary emotions involved for both you and him?
5. ****Constraints:**** Are there specific pressures like student loans, visa requirements, or family expectations that make this decision particularly high-stakes?

Would you like to add or correct anything about the situation before we define your objective?

You

1.engineering graduate 2.starting from zero 3.immediate 4.he told himself 5.family expectations no

Stage 1 — Situation · Facilitator

Thank you for providing those details. To summarize my understanding: Your son has recently graduated with an engineering degree. Despite having just completed this qualification, he wants to pivot immediately to becoming a YouTuber, starting from zero subscribers and without a pre-existing channel. This is a self-initiated goal, and while there are no specific external constraints like loans or visas, there are family expectations to consider.

Would you like to add or correct anything about the situation before we define your objective?

You

no

Stage 2 — Objective · Facilitator

Purpose: To separate the immediate problem from what you truly want to achieve. We need to distinguish between your reaction to the news and your ultimate goal as a parent.

1. **Success Definition:** If we fast-forward five years, what does a "successful" outcome look like to you regarding your son's career and your relationship with him?
2. **Core Concern:** Is your primary objective to ensure his financial independence, to ensure he utilizes his degree, or to support his autonomy regardless of the path?
3. **The "Why Now":** Why is it important to address this right now rather than letting him try and fail (or succeed) on his own for a set period?
4. **Impact:** If your son were to eventually return to engineering after a failed YouTube attempt, would your current objective be satisfied, or is the immediate pivot the core issue?

Would you like to add, modify, or clarify anything before we move to the next step?

You

no

Stage 2 — Objective · Facilitator

It seems I may have moved too quickly. To help us move to the next stage, I need to summarize what I believe your objective is based on our interaction so far:

Objective: To determine the best way to respond to your son's sudden career pivot, ensuring his long-term viability and well-being while navigating the tension between his new ambition and the investment in his engineering degree.

Would you like to add, modify, or clarify anything about this objective before we move to Stage 3 to look at the solution space?

You

no

Stage 3 — Solution Space · Facilitator

Purpose: The goal here is to identify the full range of possible paths without evaluating, judging, or choosing between them yet. We want to ensure no categories are overlooked.

Based on the situation, here are the potential categories of action:

- * **Total Support:** Fully backing his immediate pivot to YouTube, providing the time and resources he needs to start from zero.
- * **The "Dual-Track" Approach:** Proposing he secures an engineering job while building his YouTube channel as a side project until it becomes viable.
- * **The "Gap Year" / Phased Trial:** Setting a specific, time-bound period (e.g., 6–12 months) where he pursues YouTube exclusively, with a pre-agreed agreement to reassess or return to engineering if milestones aren't met.

- * ****Requirement of Proof:**** Asking him to produce a formal business plan or reach specific metrics (subscribers/revenue) while still at home before he officially "quits" the idea of an engineering career.
- * ****Professional Alignment:**** Finding a hybrid path where he uses his engineering degree to create niche content (e.g., educational engineering videos) to increase his chances of success.
- * ****Total Resistance:**** Insisting he enters the engineering workforce immediately and refuses support for the YouTube venture.
- * ****Information Gathering:**** Delaying the decision by seeking out professional career counseling or meeting with successful content creators to understand the reality of the industry.

****Questions to verify completeness:****

1. Are there any compromise positions you've thought of that aren't listed here?
2. Is "doing nothing" (letting him make his own choice without your intervention or funding) an option you want to include?
3. Have we missed any creative options, such as he works part-time in a non-engineering field to fund his own equipment?

Have we identified all realistic ways of achieving your objective, or is there another approach we should include before moving to the next stage?

You

yes

Stage 4 — Refined Objective · Facilitator

Purpose: We will now challenge assumptions and address the underlying pressures to ensure the objective is robust and free from reactive thinking.

****Removing Bias & Fear:****

1. ****Sunk Cost Fallacy:**** To what extent is the desire for him to be an engineer driven by the time and money already invested in the degree, rather than his future potential?
2. ****Status-Quo Bias:**** If he had graduated with a Film or Media degree, would your level of concern be different?
3. ****The Fear Factor:**** What is the specific "worst-case scenario" you are avoiding? (e.g., him being 30 with no work experience, or a permanent rift in your relationship?)
4. ****Regret Test:**** In 20 years, would you regret more being the "obstacle" to his dream that failed, or the "enabler" of a path that led to professional delay?

****Decision Stress Test:****

- * ****Failure Test:**** If he pursues YouTube and fails completely after two years, what is the plan?
- * ****Time Test:**** How will this decision look in 5 years if he is a successful YouTuber? How will it look if he is a struggling engineer who hates his job?

****Refined Objective:****

Based on our discussion, the refined objective is:

*To facilitate a career transition strategy that balances his desire for creative autonomy with the necessity of professional stability and financial independence. This approach intends to preserve the

value of his engineering education while providing a structured, measurable window for him to test the viability of content creation. The ultimate goal is to foster his self-reliance while minimizing the risk of long-term professional obsolescence or permanent financial dependency.*

Would you like to add, modify, or clarify anything before we move to the next stage?

You

no

Stage 5 — Abstracted Objective · Facilitator

Purpose: We are moving to a higher level of thinking by removing specific details like "YouTube" or "engineering." This helps us find a timeless guiding principle that would apply regardless of the specific career paths involved.

Looking at your refined objective, we can elevate it from a specific career dispute to a broader life-management principle.

****Original Refined Objective:**** To facilitate a career transition strategy that balances his desire for creative autonomy with the necessity of professional stability and financial independence, preserving the value of his education while providing a structured window to test viability and foster self-reliance.

****Abstracted Objective:****

"To establish a framework for high-stakes life transitions that harmonizes individual pursuit of novel ambitions with the fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security, ensuring that exploration is protected by calculated risk management and the preservation of foundational assets."

By looking at it this way, we are no longer just talking about a YouTube channel; we are talking about how a person manages the tension between ****innovation**** and ****security****.

Would you like to add, modify, or clarify this abstracted objective, or do you feel it needs to be defined at an even higher level?

You

no

Stage 6 — Boundary · Facilitator

Purpose: We will now condense the abstracted objective into a single, high-level guiding principle. This sentence serves as the boundary for the final decision, containing the specific requirements that must be satisfied.

****Boundary Sentence:****

The transition strategy must function as a framework for high-stakes life transitions that harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions with the fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security, ensuring that exploration is protected by calculated risk management and the preservation of foundational assets.

****Sub-objectives (verbatim phrase fragments):****

1. "framework for high-stakes life transitions"
2. "harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions"
3. "fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security"
4. "exploration is protected by calculated risk management"
5. "preservation of foundational assets"

Would you like to improve this boundary definition before we search for solutions?

You

no

Stage 7 — Out-In · Facilitator

I will now take the verbatim phrase fragments from the boundary sentence and answer them directly to move toward a solution.

1. **"framework for high-stakes life transitions"******

- This requires a structured agreement that defines the rules of the transition. It involves setting a specific start and end date for the "trial phase" and establishing clear, non-negotiable milestones (e.g., quarterly reviews of progress). The framework must explicitly state what happens at the end of the period, whether the result is success or a return to the baseline path.

2. **"harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions"******

- This involves validating the creative drive by allowing the pursuit to exist without immediate suppression. Actions include providing the mental and physical space for him to create content, recognizing his goal as a legitimate startup attempt, and encouraging him to define what "success" in this novel field actually looks like to him.

3. **"fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security"******

- This moves the focus toward financial independence. It requires a concrete budget and a plan for how basic needs are met. This could mean he contributes a minimum amount to his own expenses through part-time work or freelance engineering tasks, ensuring that his pursuit of a new path does not lead to total financial dependency or a loss of the habit of earning.

4. **"exploration is protected by calculated risk management"******

- This involves limiting the "downside" of the venture. It translates to a "stop-loss" mechanism—identifying a specific point (either in time, e.g., 12 months, or in funds) where the experiment is considered concluded if it hasn't reached a self-sustaining level. It also involves treating the YouTube channel as a business with a strategy, rather than a hobby, to increase the probability of a return on time invested.

5. **"preservation of foundational assets"******

- This ensures the engineering degree remains a viable "Plan B." Actions include maintaining professional networks, staying current with industry software or certifications, or spending a small

percentage of time each month on engineering-related projects. The goal is to prevent his skill set from becoming obsolete while he is focused on content creation.

I will now move to Stage 8 to hand these sub-objectives back to you as the specific questions you must investigate to reach your decision.

You

sure

Stage 8 — Solution Synthesis · Facilitator

Purpose: I am handing these sub-objectives back to you as the specific areas that require concrete answers. The combination of your answers to these questions will constitute your final decision and strategy.

****Boundary Sentence:****

"The transition strategy must function as a framework for high-stakes life transitions that harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions with the fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security, ensuring that exploration is protected by calculated risk management and the preservation of foundational assets."

1. *****"framework for high-stakes life transitions"***** — Go find answers for this. What concretely will satisfy "framework for high-stakes life transitions" in your situation? (e.g., What is the exact duration of the trial period and what are the scheduled dates for progress reviews?)
2. *****"harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions"***** — Go find answers for this. What concretely will satisfy "harmonizes the individual pursuit of novel ambitions" in your situation? (e.g., How will you verbally and logistically validate his ambition to ensure the relationship remains intact during this pivot?)
3. *****"fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security"***** — Go find answers for this. What concretely will satisfy "fundamental requirement for self-sustaining security" in your situation? (e.g., What is the minimum monthly income he must generate, and through what means, to avoid total dependency?)
4. *****"exploration is protected by calculated risk management"***** — Go find answers for this. What concretely will satisfy "exploration is protected by calculated risk management" in your situation? (e.g., What are the specific performance metrics—subscribers, views, or revenue—that must be hit by the 6-month mark to justify continuing?)
5. *****"preservation of foundational assets"***** — Go find answers for this. What concretely will satisfy "preservation of foundational assets" in your situation? (e.g., What specific actions will he take to ensure his engineering knowledge doesn't expire, such as maintaining a professional license or technical certification?)

These are your sub-objectives. Find the answers to each one — the combination of those answers is

your decision. I will not answer them for you.