

# Career Coaching International

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## How is your Career Health? How is your Personal Health?

### CCI Newsletter: February 2007

**There is clearly a link between a healthy career and a person's healthy well being. The order of priority of life's events dictates how we react – except that career searching falls lower than its true rank because, a few years back, it was easy to find a rewarding career. In today's recessive economy, finding the right job is nearly impossible unless you understand the new dynamics of job searching or happen to be lucky. Now it is time to re-examine this key part of life's journey.**

#### 1. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LIFE?

It is our belief that life's priorities are:

- a. Personal health
- b. Family
- c. Career
- d. All the rest

#### 2. PERSONAL HEALTH

For most people, if personal health is at risk, nothing else matters. We pay attention to body failings right away. We drop that important meeting or whatever we are doing if we have a serious setback to our health such as would result from a fall, a traumatic pain or a heart attack. We will pay whatever money it takes to get ourselves back to normal. We know we cannot have much in life if our health is in jeopardy. This is true for most humans. (It is also true for most animals.)

#### 3. FAMILY

We all take steps to connect with our family, our parents our siblings our children, etc. We come home at Christmas and Thanksgiving days to be with our families. Airlines report these are their heaviest traffic days. It is obvious to most of us that if a family member's personal health is at risk,

just as with ourselves, and perhaps even more so, it receives the highest possible priority. We pay attention right away to the health problems of our close family members. We drop whatever we are doing to be near a family member whose health is at risk, such as their suddenly being admitted to a hospital. (Now, if our own health is poor, we cannot readily respond to the family member's situation; hence the first priority is our own health ['a', above].) Because of our emotional ties to our family, we are determined to take whatever steps are necessary to care for the ailing family member. Most emotionally stable people would not argue with this premise. (And most animal societies take very good care of their maimed or weakened family members. That is, these behaviours are fundamental to existence – human or animal.)

#### 4. CAREER

Careers is where the argument begins. While many people will accept intellectually that career is probably next on life's priority list, the behaviour of most people does not place it at such an exalted rank. If it did, most people would not be in unrewarding jobs. If it did, most people in unrewarding jobs would not buy such a flashy car, the Mexican vacation, the plasma TV or the 1000-watt stereo. (Often moving these purchases up the necessity ladder is because people rationalize the need to feel good since it isn't happening on the job – which merely confirms our point above.)

#### 5. ALL THE REST

The Ipod, the power boat, the fashionable gown, etc. may seem essential at any moment but let us put things in perspective. You buy them because (i) they satisfy an immediate need (ii) they are readily available. Your new career is not hanging around at the nearby shopping centre.

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Money is important but people do not move to new jobs for money. Or at least, if they do, their arithmetic abilities might be questioned: most people who move to new positions gain on average, a 5% salary increase. It costs more than 5% to make the transfer, not counting the cost of the stress of making a job switch, nor the time to search for and find that new job. And, if you think a job is about money, review paragraphs 3 and 4 above, which show that when push comes to shove, our priorities are otherwise. In survey after survey, money places about 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> on people's lists of key life factors.

### 6. THE HEALTHY CAREER

If you have a healthy career you will not notice the arrival of Fridays. Nor will you get depressed Sunday night with the thought of the return to the office on Monday. If you have a healthy career you will earn more money than otherwise because you will be excelling on the job. You will be very good at what you do. You will be appreciated for what you do. Not only that, you won't even be thinking about money. You won't be shopping around for a new job or surreptitiously glancing at the career ads every Saturday. Best of all, most of the time you will have a smile on your face – unless priorities 'a' and 'b' intervene such as becoming ill yourself (which is 'a') or having a family difficulty ('b').

We'll take it one step further. With the right job you will feel self-actualized and be intrinsically rewarded – feeling good about yourself – surely one of life's primary aims.<sup>1</sup> Thus, having a healthy career will enhance your personal health, especially your mental health. So, priority 'c' can lead to an enhancing of your first priority, your personal health. Perhaps 'c' should be up there with 'a'. If you don't believe it look around. Talk to your friends. Those who seem happy will usually be in the right job for them; those who are sad will often have sad jobs – can't wait for a new job, a new education or even

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<sup>1</sup> Self-actualization crosses all work domains. We have worked with people in happy careers as janitors, bus drivers, cleaners, artists, lawyers, Ph. Ds, doctors, etc.

retirement<sup>2</sup> – anything to get away from their current work drudgery or boredom.

### 7. THE REMEDY

"Is it realistic", you ask, "to expect that little old me can have an exciting job?" YES IT IS. "Ok, assuming that I believe you (and I am not so sure that I do), then how do I get such a healthy job?"

The two-part answer is that for the first part you have to: (i) Direct yourself away from the traditional job search approach of flinging your resume at every ad that seems to suit you. (ii) Re-do your resume so that it reflects your personality more than your skill set – and do it in such a way that they reader actually believes you. [Almost every resume says that the person is a good communicator, gets along with people, is flexible and hardworking – so employers knowing that not everyone is, including everyone presently on staff in that employer's shop, no longer believe anyone who says that.] (iii) Set up a filtering system so that jobs and job environments that are bad for you are deflected away from you. (iv) Conversely, create an attractor to you, so that people who share your values are attracted to you.

The second part of the answer is that we feel you should get a career coach from any reputable career coaching company. Why?

### 8. COACHING

We, at CCI being in the career coaching business will, of course, respond with our own biases. But let us attempt to put them aside and look at some telltale signs. CCI finds that:

- After coaching hundreds of people, more than 90% of these people, end up with the desired type of job.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> People who love their jobs do not accept retirement – lawyers, artists, performers, professors, etc. hang in till the bitter end.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics are available on request.

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- Most people who pass through the CCI doors end up with more money in the new job than they would have obtained, had they secured that job by themselves
- That new money is usually larger than the coaching fee – and that money repeats, year after year.
- Our Coaches say that if they themselves were unemployed they would never look for a job without a coach at their side. Coaches offer objectivity so important during emotional endeavors – which job-hunting is. (It parallels lawyers hiring lawyer for their legal defenses.)

### 9. CONCLUSION

You owe it to yourself to move the career search up to the level where it belongs in your life's priorities. Think about it and act upon it today, if you want to be healthy!

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