

Career Coaching International

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ARE FREE CAREER SERVICES A GOOD INVESTMENT?

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Finding a new career is not an easy task. A major mistake can be made by not realizing how much money will be lost if the task is not approached professionally. Along with the loss of money is a loss of self-esteem, loss of control, loss of identity, loss of independence. This often leads to anger and depression. Hoping to help the situation, many schools, public interest groups, companies that are downsizing, governments, and government retirement guidance officials offer free career and employment services. At first glance it would seem that a person seeking employment would be wise to invest their hopes in these free services. Another option is to place your career in the hands of a recruitment firm. We believe that, unfortunately, using any of the above approaches is not the preferred investment strategy; here's why.

The Hard Facts

1. Assess your costs of being unemployed. It is approximately a month's lost salary for each month you are not employed.
2. Assess the chances of your gaining employment by the party that is assisting you. Ask them how many people they have attempted to assist over the past year and how many have obtained jobs working with them.
3. Ask the average time to gain employment with these agencies.
4. Ask if the jobs obtained by the successful people were truly satisfying careers or more jobs that provided needed income.
5. Ask how many people thus employed are earning more than they expected.
6. After you land the job, what follow-up guidance can you expect?

7. Look at where such organizations' primary interest lies. Is it with the employer, a third party or upon meeting some reporting statistic?

Assuming Numbers for the Facts

1. Being unemployed, the lost salary can net at least \$3,000 per month for most professional people.
2. Recruitment agencies have thousands of applicants on file. The numbers are very similar for most other 'free' agencies because their success depends on a shotgun approach. The more resumes they have the more chance they have of filling a position. Do you want to chance feeling like a shotgun pellet or being another file number?
3. The average time to gain employment with these agencies is not a statistic that will be readily shared with you. Yet it is of primary interest, especially since it is costing you \$3,000/mo. to remain unemployed.
4. Ask the service provider if the jobs obtained by the successful candidates were satisfying career position. Chances are, they do not maintain these statistics. Yet, since we are talking about your career, it is very important to you.
5. It is unlikely that these service providers have statistics about whether their successful candidates are earning more than they expected. Salary is a very personal and emotional matter. Most candidates need assistance to get the best possible income package.
6. Once the assisting agency has landed you the job many think their work is done. Will they leave you on your own?
7. If the organizations' primary interest is the employee, they will have answers to all of the above questions. *(Answers to each of these*

issues will be shared with you at the end of this paper.)

A View of Different Types of Agencies

Recruiters and Headhunters: Since the employer pays for the service, recruiting firms usually give the greater priority to the interest of their commercial clients. Often, many competing candidates will be presented for the same job. Salaries may not be negotiated – better to close the sale than risk it on negotiations.

Retirement Departments: Because a company's retiree-handling department makes a concerted effort on behalf of its own employees, it clearly has the interest of the employee at stake. However, since this often is a secondary task for the group, the results can sometimes be not very good. We suggest that less than one in 50 candidates is successfully placed in this environment.

School Career Guidance: Well-meaning school career guidance groups have the students' interests at heart. The raw statistics of the previous year gone by will attest to the caliber of help these groups can give.

Special Interest Groups: When suddenly the high tech bubble burst thousands of engineers were without work so some engineers formed their own network to assist one another in the job hunt. There is usually a focus on numbers – finding the maximum number of job opportunities via the Internet and other means with some degree of personal networking involved. The trouble is that published jobs represent only 30% of the available opportunities. And networking with others in exactly the same boat will limit the chances of success.

Downsizing Companies: Companies that are downsizing their staff number set up programs to help those who will be losing their jobs. Sometimes the assistance will be contracted out. In either case past success statistics should be examined.

Employment Insurance Groups: Recent numbers released in our city, indicate a time span of nine months for the average job find by Employment Commission participants. Yikes!

Career Specialist Answers

While we can't speak for every career coaching or counseling company, we can give a few examples of our own experience to the seven points above. Having said that, respectful career specialists cannot guarantee a job – there are simply too many variables to control. But coaching firms can refer to their past statistics.

1. Costs of being unemployed can range from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per month net. The cost of CCI services at about 1 month's lost wages is at the lower end of this range. A second point is that over 90% of CCI candidates report finding a job faster with CCI than by any previous means. We have examples of people spending two years on their own looking and then finding a job within two months using the CCI methods.

2. An examination of our current files reveals an over 90% success rate. At the time of writing this paper, for example, as many people were placed in the past month as new people who signed up in that time frame.

3. Statistics show that the average time for our clients to gain employment is 11.2 weeks. Naturally, some people take 2 weeks and others take 22 weeks. We have a mathematical model based on reasonable assumptions that we are ready to share with prospects.

4. At CCI we focus on creating a match between you and your skills and a challenging, self-satisfying opportunity. The testimonials we have from trainer in Winnipeg, an engineer in Portland Oregon, a physicist in Ottawa, for example, all use the word 'dream' to describe their new jobs via CCI.

5. Career coaching companies exercise techniques that help the candidate earn more money, based on an appreciation of human behavior, a clear understanding of when to act and when not to, all combined with plain common sense. A good career guidance company will negotiate an extra amount, which easily justifies the cost of the coaching service.

6. When you accept a job after working with your career coach you will have spent sufficient one-on-one hours together to form a respectful bond. In our own case that bond is extended with

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a no-charge Life Time Assurance providing coaching while you are on the new job, if and when required and for as long as needed – a lifetime, if you wish.

7. Career-coaching companies are paid by the prospective employees – you. Naturally, you should become the primary interest. While commercial enterprises often approach career-coaching companies for talent, a career coaching company should not accept payment from the commercial enterprise – thus, avoiding a conflict of interest. Many gratis placements are made this way. CCI has for example this past week has been advised of more than a dozen positions available in commercial enterprises along with interest expressed in nine of our prospects.

Conclusion

Finding a new career is not an easy task; in fact, it's a full-time job. Fortunately most people view it as challenging. Where the mistake is made is not realizing how much money can be lost if the task is not approached professionally. Along with the loss of money is a loss of self-esteem, loss of control, loss of identity, loss of independence that often leads to anger and depression. A professional approach can help you get back that control, identity, independence and income.

Good luck and good hunting.

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