

Career Coaching International

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CHANGING YOUR CAREER?

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People who seek a new career but are quite unsure of what they want to do, can, with a reasonable amount of effort, see themselves transitioning to a career, and the resulting job search, that inspires and excites. The joy you, as a new career seeker, can derive out the resulting epiphany is immeasurable. Here's how you can be sure to help yourself get there.

The Basics

As long as you reach back to basics, you can't go wrong. How often have you heard a hockey team after losing a match say "We have to quit trying to be fancy and get back to basics"? Well, it's true in the career field too. So what are those basics? From where I sit, they seem to amount to the following:

The first basic is to not presume that other people, even the experts, know what is good for you. They don't know; they can't even divine it. You've got to let all the information come in, swirl around a bit and watch the answer pop out – which it will.

The second basic is to let the chaos theory work its magic. It is the reason that networking meetings (which we call Information Meetings) work to bring in the job. Here it works its magic in accumulating what seems to be unrelated and disorganized information that will lead to a clear career definition.

Thirdly, make sure of the PAVF¹ fit. This is CCI simple terminology for basic human characteristics. If your PAVF characteristics don't fit the job or career, there will only be unhappiness down the road.

Fourth, take advantage of the enormous computer on your shoulders, as a job seeker. Brain power, while in weaker moments may sometimes seem feeble, in reality, is millions of times greater than the most massive computer humankind can construct. Tap into it repeatedly.

Fifth, do not be afraid of good old trial-and-error to help crystallize a direction.

The Operations

To start, get the career coaching fundamentals in place. Take all those steps needed to get the personal key words that capture the essence of the individual. These must be weighted towards personal characteristics (determined, organized, etc.) not trades or work characteristics (i.e. not: managed, coordinated, etc.). From that, create the resulting 15 to 20 Descriptors (CCI terminology), paragraphs that clearly demonstrate those characteristics at work and the results derived from them. While the primary purpose of the Descriptors is to assist in resume development, an equally important purpose is to have each individual's brain review the highlights of their past careers, their capabilities and their proud moments. All of this helps lead to an eventual crystallization of likes and the avoidance of dislikes.

I recommend to our own Career Coaches that they not give career searchers a thousand career options to ponder over by testing them or by providing any of the numerous lists available of career choices. Allow that immense computer in the career searchers' heads to do the work because that brain is far more efficient than Dell, HP or IBM, with a greater depth of the individual's background knowledge – the sort of information that is really needed.

It is also wise for you to list all the things you liked and disliked at your past three jobs – no matter how petty. Although these listed points usually confirm the PAVF, their greater purpose is to develop a personal honesty unencumbered by what you are 'supposed to like'. (By this method I have found people who like shredding paper, like housework and like sorting screws – more meaningful things too.)

Now invoke the 5 basics of the previous section above. Only one, I think, needs some clarification: PAVF. Very briefly, PAVF (© CCCC) stems from personality characterization by Hippocrates described around 350 B.C., which is the foundation for psychological testing today. PAVF keeps it as simple as Hippocrates laid it out.

P stands for *Producer* a very busy determined person.

A stands for *Analyzer* a very methodical, patient, precise and organized individual.

V stands for *Visionary* someone who sees or wants to see the next move, asks 'why?'

¹ See PAVF definition on the next page

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and 'why not?' is creative and innovative and thus takes risks.

F is *Friend*, a very empathetic, people-oriented person.

These are hard-wired characteristics accompanied by inexorable likes and dislikes. Unfortunately many people ignore their dislikes and end up in dislikable careers, thinking they can work their way around it. Eventually they discover that they can't, and end up seeking career guidance from career coaching firms.

Current Examples

A lawyer came into our office not knowing what he wanted to do except that he knew he did not want to be a lawyer. Through the processes described above we narrowed his likes down to three fields: politics, hospitality resorts and property management. In his case we had to invoke the trial-and-error approach with all three simultaneously. After messing in politics for about two months, he quickly became disillusioned because of the numerous unfulfilled promises he encountered along the way (note that we did not presume to tell him politics was a lousy field – he had to discover it for himself because for another person it might be the perfect field). A brief stint into hospitality showed him that lots of money was needed and it was not easy to come by. Finally as he moved along the property management direction, he discovered he had found his true calling. Today he is a happy, very progressive property manager. He may earn half the money he did as a lawyer but he is ten times as happy. And since most of us feel that money will lead to happiness, he took a shortcut that many people dare not.

A mathematics professor was sick of academia and his 'useless' life as a so-called icon of society. He needed out. With time we narrowed the field down to two trades: technical writing and patent development. Today he works for one of Canada's most respected high tech firms as a patent agent and says he has never been so happy in his life.

A career saleslady moved from purveying accounting software to high-level high tech software only to discover (trial and error) on the job that that type of sales work just didn't suit her. Within two weeks, she was very happily ensconced in the quality furniture field as a salesperson.

A recycled cook, highly reviewed in the most prestigious culinary magazines, turned in her spatula to search for a career in buying. As she put it one day: "I was born to shop. Why didn't I see this long ago?"

Through the process described above one young lady involved in a career in the restaurant trade suddenly discovered, after what seemed to her to be an agonizing introspection, that a career in the film industry really turned her crank where she now is putting her attention to becoming a junior in the field. She is a very happy person now, just thinking about it.

A consultant with a PAVF (*Note: the relative strength of the trait is indicated by the height of the letter*) personality told us she hated her job and resented even having to get up in the morning to go there. The position required immense detail (A, which was her lowest characteristic), was with an organization that continually procrastinated and delayed things (lack of P, her strongest characteristic) and the company was afraid of any changes she suggested (lack of V, her second strongest characteristic). Seemed pretty obvious to us why she was upset. So we focused on her strong PV combination – needed for running an enterprise – applying it in a field that helped people or working with people (taking advantage of her strong F characteristic). Now we can show you a very relieved lady.

Conclusions

- Keep to the basics.
- Keep it simple
- Let chaos reign supreme – it always gets the right answer.
- Don't ignore PAVF.

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