

A CAREER WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF IT?

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By RAY ROCK

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That is the million-dollar question and one you should think about and consider very carefully. Whether you have just left one of the educational facilities to start your working career, or decided to change your career. There is a very important question that you must ask yourself and that question is. 'What do I get out of a career?'

It is only a small question when you read it but it covers a multitude of factors. There are many important factors that you must take into consideration concerning your career. Every one of these factors must be judged on their own merit. No one is more important than the next and none of these factors can be, dismissed.

Do you realise that eighty per cent of the work force is working in careers that will not give them the job satisfaction they are seeking. Unfortunately it is a fact of life that every single day of the week, thousands of people all over the world resign from their jobs, only to try somewhere else, and so the cycle and frustration starts all over again.

Unless you find an occupation that you love and are enthusiastic about, you are on a never-ending treadmill going nowhere, only becoming increasingly disillusioned. Which can have a knock on effect, not only in your working environment but also in your social life as well? To have a full and rewarding life you must find a career that is the right one for you.

So what are these important factors?

The first and obvious benefit for yourself is the wage you collect at the end of each week or month. However, should that be your main and only consideration?

The answer to that question is a big and resounding NO!

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There is a very good and logical reason for the above statement and that is. You may find a career that pay's you very well, but AT WHAT COST TO YOURSELF. It is no good having a career that has a great salary, if getting that salary exacts too high a price from you. That high price can come in a number of ways, but the main two are stress and long hours.

STRESS!

Only recently has stress been recognised as a disease by doctors and employers.

This alone accounts for millions of lost working hours every year. Stress brought on in any form does not appear like a cold or flu. It is more devious than that and creeps up on you mainly without you knowing it. Stress can come out in various ways like making you bad tempered. You cannot sleep

properly so you are continually tired; you go off your food so do not have a balanced diet.

LONG HOURS!

Is very similar to stress, the only difference is you are continuously tired. The other major factor is because you are always tired your powers of concentration are at there lowest.

To earn a good salary means having no money worries, and so you will be able to afford a good standard of living. We would all like a big fat paycheque at the end of each week or month. However, as the old saying goes 'money is not everything'. It is no good having a big salary if you are too ill or tired to enjoy the benefits.

So where do you begin to find the career that is the right one for you?

A TIP.

When doing the following exercise do not force yourself to come up with the answers. Let them come to you naturally, do not force yourself to think. Do not worry if it takes you a day or two to get your list completed and finalised. However, be sure to write down any answers that do come to you. At this stage do not worry about qualifications or anything else, but under no circumstances let anybody influence you when you are doing this exercise.

Your first step is to find somewhere where you are comfortable. Sitting propped up on your bed for instance. Then take some deep breaths to relax and clear your mind. Once you feel totally relaxed, take a sheet of paper and write in your neatest handwriting, at the top of the page, MY CAREER.

Underneath that write: –

ENVIRONMENT.

Write down where you would be happiest working. Break it down, for instance would you like to work outdoors, or indoors. Then break it down further, think where you would like to be for eight hours a day,

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a factory, a shop, or on a farm. For instance if you like the outdoor life, working in an office or factory will drive you nuts.

Next sub heading is: –

DUTIES.

Write down what you would like your duties to be, i.e. looking after animals, meeting people, tending the sick (a nurse for instance). Travelling, helping the public, the armed services, the emergency services. It may turn out that you would like a combination of more than one thing. For instance travelling and meeting people as a holiday representative.

Next sub heading is: –

HOURS.

Think of what hours you would like to work, do you prefer working nine to five, office hours. Would you prefer to work a shift pattern. However, bear in mind that this shift pattern covers all seven days with your days off rotating. Therefore, working weekend is definitely part of the equation, so think of your social life. Some companies may let you work at home providing you do the work in the allotted time scale. You may want to be self-employed and work the hours to suit yourself.

Next sub heading is: –

DRESS CODE.

Think of what type of clothes you feel most comfortable in. Do you like to dress smartly; therefore, your tendency would be towards an office career of some description. Do you like the idea of wearing a uniform as in say the police, fire brigade, security officer or nurse? On the other hand, you may prefer to be in casual cloths like jeans and a tee shirt.

Next sub heading is: –

AMBITIONS.

Think of the position you would like to achieve in your career. For instance would you like to get to the very top of your profession, or would you be happier at a lower level. Do you have ambitions of owning your own company some day? Do not worry about what qualifications you will need at this point. I will come to that later. The important thing for you right now is to establish how far you want to go in your career, nothing else. For argument sake if you would like to work indoors helping people, you may be thinking of a career as a nurse. OK so you are going to be a nurse, what type of nurse. Theatre nurses, a ward sister, a matron, do not limit your aspirations under any circumstances.

Next sub heading is: –

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YOUR MIND

This is a very important topic and one you should give your full attention. While you were at school or college your mind has been programmed to seek out knowledge. It is imperative that this seeking of knowledge is carried forward into your career, for two very good reasons.

1) Remember the one hundred and ten percent concentration I spoke about earlier when discussing long hours.

Well to keep that concentration going, your mind must be interested in the work you are doing. If it is not, then it will start to wonder because you are bored.

2) If you have nothing to stimulate your mind, it will very quickly get into passive mode. What do I mean by passive mode? Well you will carry out your duties using just enough of your brain to do so. The rest of your brain will promptly go to sleep. This is an accident waiting to happen.

By the time you have completed your list; you will now have a good idea of the type of career you want to pursue, and under what circumstances and in what environment. Now here is the secret, once you have completed your list read it, then put it away. The best time to read the answers you have written down is just before you get into bed. Do not force yourself to think about it. Just let your good friend, your sub-conscious sort it out while you are sleeping. The next night just before you climb into bed take your list out and read it again. You may find that some of the answers you wrote down do not appeal to you anymore and you want to change them.

Don't worry or let this upset you just take out a fresh sheet of paper and follow the same procedure, only this time write down your new answers.

For example, your first list may have gone something like this: –

Indoors, looking after animals, working nine to five, wearing a uniform, to be head zookeeper, working with all types of animals.

Your new list may look something like this: –

Indoors, looking after sick animals, working the hours to suit, wearing a uniform, to be a veterinary sister, working with all types of animals.

The reason your list has changed is your sub-conscious is telling you, you would be far happier working hands on with the animals rather than becoming a head keeper, which will eventually make you into an office worker. Head keepers have an awful lot of paper work to do, which you will hate. You would be much happier working and tending the sick animals. You would get a great sense of achievement and satisfaction when the animal recovered. Which you would not get being tied to a desk shoving bits of paper about.

Keep repeating this exercise until your answers no longer change. Now you have the foundation of the career that you will love and enjoy. More importantly, you now know the type of career you want to pursue.

So where do you go from here, you have the bases of the type of career you want and under what conditions you would like to work. The next obvious step is to find out if you need any qualifications to secure a position in your career and if so what they are. How do you do that, well there are a number

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of ways, the most obvious being to ask somebody? Say you have your sights set on being a police person, then go to your nearest police station or precinct and ask.

Another way to find out what qualifications you need is to go to your local library. Alternatively, you can see a career's counsellor and they will tell you exactly what you require.

The next step is to obtain any qualifications you require, which may mean going back to college or university. I know this is not always as easy as it sounds, mainly because how do you live while you are obtaining your qualifications. This unfortunately is the main obstacle for most people. However, not all is lost because there are ways and means to get around the problem. However, the main ingredient for your success will depend on your determination and willpower. One of the most common ways for you to attend further education is a grant of some description from the government. How do you find out about these grants, again simply ask. Look in your local phone book under GOVERNMENT, then under Department of Education. Telephone them and ask them what is required for you to qualify for a grant and what grants are available. If for some reason you do qualify for a government grant; do not panic, all is not lost yet. If you are lucky enough that your parents can afford to send you to college or university and help you, until you get on your feet. Then you don't have a problem, if on the other hand your parents are not in a position to help then there is another course of action you can take and that is to do a home study correspondence course. To find information for which is the right course for you, look in your local phone book. Under one of the following, Career Counselling, Colleges or Universities and telephone them. They will be very happy to help you and point you in the right direction.

The latter is the most difficult of all the above because it calls for a lot of willpower and determination on your part. The simple question you have to ask yourself is "how bad do I want to succeed". A home study course means just what it says, you study at home and send in course work at regular intervals. This course work is marked and kept on file to become part of your yearly exam. However, there are a number of drawbacks with home study courses and this is where your willpower and determination

come in. Firstly is the cost of the correspondence course, how do you pay for it. The answer get a job, "hang on" I can hear you say "you are taking me on a wild goose chase". No I am not. I know it looks complicated and you feel like you are going round in circles, but believe me you are using a means to justify the end result. Again we get back to your willpower and determination, how soon do YOU want to get your qualifications. The obvious answer is as soon as possible, so you do a little maths. If you are living at home with your parents you work out how much money, you need to earn per week to pay your way. Your board and lodgings for example. Then you find a part time job that will give you the necessary funds for you to survive.

Makes sense doesn't it. However, there are other drawbacks to home study courses. The most common complaint is that you never actually get to see your tutor. It is all done either over the telephone, through the mail or by e-mail.

Set yourself a programme on paper and hang it up on your bedroom wall where you will see it everyday. Your programme must be set up in such a way as to take in all your requirements. For instance you are working (at your part time job) X amounts of hours a day, on X amount of days per week. So you will study from A TO B hours every day. Except on the weekend when you want time to relax, enjoy yourself and recharge the batteries for next week. Then stick to it regardless of the distractions. Make

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your friends and family aware. That these are the hours you are going to devote to studying. Therefore, you do not want to be disturbed. Make sure you get your assignments in on time and before you know it. You will have your qualifications.

OK, so now you have your qualifications now where do you go?

The next step is to find a company that is willing to employ you. This is not as easy as you think. For one thing, you will come up against the old adage 'have you got any previous experience'. The obvious answer is NO, because you have just left school, college or university. (Except if you have done a home study course. But your part time job may have nothing to do with the career you are now trying to enter into). So how do you get experience if nobody will give you a chance? The way to get round this is you may have to take a job that requires fewer qualifications and does not need any previous experience. For example, if you want to be a police person you may have to take a job as a security guard in the interim to gain experience.

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LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB, A NEW CAREER OR BETTER PAY!

By Tony

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