

Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

CAREER GUIDANCE – THE DO'S & DON'T'S

The first thing you need to realize, if you are feeling bored or trapped at work, is that you are not alone. It continues to amaze me how many people feel confused or guilty if they do not enjoy their work any more. There is a feeling that, since they are successful and well regarded in their present fields, they have no right to be unhappy with their lot. Therefore, the first thing that needs to be overcome in a guidance process is for managers to realize there is nothing wrong with them wanting to consider other options, review strengths and weaknesses or further training ideas. In fact, it is your right to make sure you enjoy your career, as you'll dedicate at least half your life to it.

To ensure that you get the full out of a career guidance method, there are some proven tips that need consideration. It is a fact that, like so much else in life, the amount of effort you put into a guidance process has a direct correlation to the benefit or returns you will get from it.

For a start, many systems will require some sort of self-examination, be it an interest questionnaire or responses to the questions asked by the career counselor during one to one feedback. You need to be totally honest, both to yourself and the counselor, if you are to get true feedback. Another thing to avoid is attempting to 'second guess' responses to different exercises, as this again will influence your scores and you'll just be cheating yourself. Anyway, the assessments we use, for example, have been in development since the 1940s and you will not be able to correctly guess what we are assessing at any one time.

Another common mistake would be to assume that the guidance system stops the moment you have your feedback report. Not so! You should be willing to invest time in the follow-up exercises, which in our systems would include investigating different career or training options shown, using the web-sites provided, before deciding on the way ahead. This part of the process will require you to keep an open mind- exploring all options, even the careers you may not have heard of before; don't discard suggestions just because you don't know anything about them, otherwise you'll just be focusing on options you are already familiar with.

After the report feedback, you will also need to invest time and thought to CV and interview preparation. Our system guides and suggestions on these areas, including carrying out an honest review of your present CV, but you will be left to perfect this for future use. Do not think just because you have done the assessment your career preparation is complete, you will need to take other constructive action to ensure it is!

The most important part of a guidance system, however, is the choice of a proper system. There are many 'career tests' available, including some on-line, but many are not reliable or well researched. So be a smart consumer. Since we saw the need for proper guidance amongst many of our management candidates, we have set up a separate guidance division. Luckily for you the system used by all the career guidance centers in UK is available locally, and offers an objective analysis on what strengths, weaknesses, interests and personality attributes you have to offer, as well as what careers would provide a strong fit to your profile. From doing an interest questionnaire at home, to sitting through a morning of assessments, you will be provided with a 30 page report at a one to one session. Thereafter, 'homework' on your CV and a series of focusing exercises will be set, so that at the end of the process, you are sure on the way ahead.

If used wisely and if you ensure you put in the required effort, career guidance can be a rewarding and powerful tool, as well as a life changing process.

Madeleine Dunford
Managing Director
Career Connections

