

# Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

## CHASING A CAREER CHANGE

### Time for a change?

Do you suffer from that sinking Monday morning feeling and it has nothing to do with the effects of Saturday night? If you have trouble convincing yourself to go to work it might be time for a career change. Thinking about your career path is important because you'll be spending most of your waking hours at work, and that doesn't count all that corporate entertainment and general overtime spent sucking up. So you had better enjoy, be passionate – can't wait for it – about the work you do. No good just watching the clock tick away until the next brown envelope at the end of the month that doesn't include as much as you think you deserve.

Career guidance is quite a new concept – in our grandparents time you didn't really have much choice. The sons followed in their fathers' footsteps and women were secretaries or nurses before becoming housewives. Jobs were for life. Those days are no longer. The choice of directions are mind bogging – our database holds 450 career options – and you can forget about doing the same job forever. In fact, new research in the U.S. shows that people go 'job-hunting' an average of 8 times during their careers, and learning is now a never-ending process. If you allow yourself to stagnate, sorry, you're out of the race.

Interestingly, people still tend to fall into a particular path mostly by default – parental pressure and nagging (you should be a doctor) still plays a big part. Other common influences include taking the course your friends are doing (because it sounds fun) and wanting to become a bank, manager because your aunt knows one and he drives a Mercedes ..... Its quite amazing how little thought people put into what is one of the biggest decisions of our lives (apart from who to spend that life with). But what is even more amazing is the lack of solid, unbiased guidance available. Schools, if you were lucky, offered you a cupboard in the common room with some tatty, out-dated prospectuses to flick through by way of deciding what degree to take. This means there is a whole army of 20-40 somethings, all incredibly educated, ambitious and successful, who really do wake up wondering whether they are on the right path. Recent research also indicates that 45% of all U.S. workers would change careers if they could, and 8.7 million Americans a year do change careers. It may be just that you need to find a new employer, or it may well be that you feel you are at a major crossroads and want to consider totally new avenues. The second option requires more time and thought; a willingness to find out more about yourself – warts and all. The results may surprise you! Luckily, it is normally a pleasant surprise.

It is never too late to make a positive change. And given the national mood of change, now may be apt. I've even guided candidates who have spend two successful decades in a particular field, to move on. But how are you meant to know which career is for you? What careers you would be good at AND enjoy? My next article will look at the proven methods of career guidance. Remember, a career change can change your life completely.

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