

Chapter Three

The Right (and Left) Approach!

The following sections give you some exercises to help you think through your own brilliant career questions and start to prepare.

We are going to use the two approaches, factual and imaginative, right and left brain, which will get those two halves of your brain working well together to give you the greatest chance of coming up with the best results for you!

Your Vision

This is more than the simple “where do you want to be in five years time?” question. This is about you developing a clear personal vision of what *you* want *your whole life* to be like.

If you were to put together an idea of your perfect career what would it look like?

Take a few minutes to consider each of the following questions and then add some of your own. This will work best if you are not sitting at your desk but somewhere not associated

with your current job. It might be helpful to print off this particular list of questions and take them somewhere else. Allow yourself to be as free and as creative as possible.

What don't you like about your current job?

Your Career Questions:

What don't you like about your current job?

Be very specific as this is important. If, when you have answered this, it seems that certain people loom large and unpleasant in your working life

then you need to consider if a change of career is what you really want. It might just be a change of employer or department! Your answers to this question will help you decide your responses to the following questions so be as honest as possible. List as many things as you can; the following questions will help:

Is it the task, the actual work you have to do?

Is it the ethics of the organisation?

Is it the pay or salary or bonus scheme?

Is it lack of prospects?

Is it too much emphasis on advancement?

Is it the attitudes of other workers?

Is it your current manager?

Is it the location?

Is it too easy for you/undemanding?

Is it too much of a stretch at the moment?

Take a page in your notebook to answer why your current employment (or last job) does not meet all your needs and then move on to the next questions.

How would your working day begin?

How would your working day end?

Would you be travelling?

How would you be travelling?

Would you be home based?

Would you be in an office?

Would you be based outdoors, in contact with nature?

Would you be in a team of other people?

Would you be working totally alone?

Would you be the boss?

Would you be running your own business?

Would you be employing other people?

Would you be managing other people?

Would you have a business partner?

Would you be in a large global company?

Would you be working for a small local business?

Would you be in the public sector?

Would you be in the voluntary/charity field?

Would you have plenty of development opportunities?

What is a development opportunity for you?

What would make you think 'job well done' at the end of each day?

Would you be earning more or less than now?

If you *love* your job, how important are the financial rewards to you?

Add anything else that has come to you.

Maybe *your* goal is to slough off some of the responsibility you currently have? To downsize, or to have a role that leaves you free to pursue other goals in life. Sometimes we get trapped in other people's aspirations for us, parents, mentors, peers, when actually we would be most fulfilled with a completely different kind of life. I often coach people who come to realise that their sense of disquiet comes from the fact that they are living out their parent's dreams, and not their own.

Try to be completely honest with yourself. This is about what YOU want. Live YOUR life!

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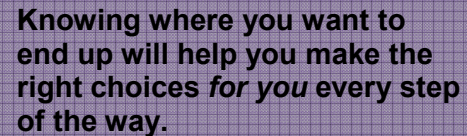
Daydream

Read through this paragraph, and then close your eyes for a few moments and imagine you are arriving home at the end of a perfect day in your brilliant career. Reflect on what you have been doing all day (and with whom you have been doing it) to make it so perfect.

In a moment, I'll give you a visualisation to try (and you can actually listen to me reading this visualisation on the web site if you wish at www.changingpeople.co.uk), but for the moment we'll continue with the logical left brain approach.

There is research to show that a clearly understood *personal* vision acts as a “gravitational pull” towards where you want to be (your “path of least resistance”).

Knowing where you want to end up will help you make the right choices *for you* every step of the way. It improves your entire decision making. If you know your ultimate destination you can decide it might be worth while treading water for a while. Or you may decide it is reasonable to take a sideways move, if it is still leading you where you want to be. If you know you want or need to retrain you may decide to stay in a dull, but well paid, job for longer than you'd like, as it is taking you nearer your ultimate goal. You are less likely to be influenced by others who encourage you to move up, or want you stay where you are. Your plan will give you a focus.



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Age

You possibly have some old notions of age discrimination in your head. You may even be discriminating against yourself, with little bits of internal mail popping up like

“I am too old now”,

“I should have done this when I first left college or school”,

“People will think I’m mad to give up this great job after so long”

and so on.

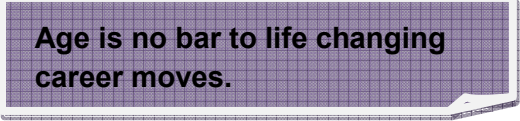
Inner Voice

If any of the above is similar to a little dialogue going on in your head, repeat after me now –

Age is no bar to life changing career moves.

The population statistics are telling us that older workers will soon be highly valued and sought after. It's already beginning - look at how advertisers are chasing the grey pound!

In the UK particularly the population trends are such that fewer younger workers are coming through with each successive generation; employers are being forced to look again at older workers, and guess what? They are beginning to realize what an amazing and valuable resource they are with their wealth of experience and ability to change!



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You'll be in good company. One of Britain's most popular and favourite artists, Beryl Cook, didn't start to earn a living from her art until she was in her sixties. Likewise the novelist Mary Wesley didn't publish her first novel until she was seventy one! It really is never too late to pursue your dreams!

And if you are younger and starting out this is good news for you too! Not only can you look forward to a long and varied career but you will also be highly sought after as employers look to have a good mix in their workforce! Win-win all round!

All Your Life

Another important point about **your** personal plan is that it embraces your whole life, not just your work life. Many people try to plan their career in a vacuum, without taking into account the other factors in their lives or their personal value base. That is not a great recipe for success.

Try to talk to the significant people in your life about your plans. Their support or otherwise can be the difference between success and failure, but it is amazing how often they can get left out. We all need some support in life so take a few moments now to consider *who your* important people are and enlist their support early on.

In your notebook jot down the names of people in your life who are important to you in this process.