

## 5 Great Tips when changing your career

### 1. Take an in-depth look at your whole life, not just your job/career.

Draw a 'pie' of a circle with 8 segments on an A4 page. Choose 8 categories into which you divide your life. For example - Career, Home, Friends and Family, Money, Health, Personal Development, Significant Other, Spirituality.

Personally, I prefer Vitality to Health as it resonates better for me, as does Prosperity instead of Money. Use the word or phrase that works best for you; see if all your life is captured in one of the eight areas. A friend chose broader sweeps such as Luxurious Self-Indulgence (as a busy lady, for her it meant a candle-lit bubble bath with a glass of wine), Making a Difference, Self-Expression, Putting Something Back, Fun....and so on.

What are you noticing? Are you satisfied with all the areas? If not, choose how you would change them. What is the point of having a great career but poor health, broken relationships and no social life? So, what will you design into your future career?

### 2. Examine Your Values - Know what is important for your new career/ job

Simply – what matters to you? Also, draw up a parallel list of what is not important. For example: making a high income, being respected, working in a prestige company, working outdoors, working with animals, working alone, working in a team, making decisions, having autonomy, having likeable colleagues, doing something useful, protecting the environment, managing others, managing resources, putting something back, status, having authority, travel, working in one location, having weekends and evenings free, taking responsibility.

Look at scope and scale – do you work on a large canvas in life, or prefer the small scale? Time is another dimension – some like immediate action and to see fast results while others can enjoy working on a 1-5-10 year project, whether engineering a new motorway, building a shopping centre or developing a technology project launch.

### 3. Do Lots of Research – The Internet is your friend

If you think you would enjoy a significant change of direction, the first two steps above will help you to be clear about how that change will fit in your life, how practical it is and whether you will be supported and be able to sustain it. Does it fill deep needs in you? A big picture person will be frustrated working in small chunks. A nature lover may pine indoors (though s/he may be happy to trade that off if weekends are free to roam hills or beaches).

Ask others about a role you are unfamiliar with, but which appeals to you. Many teachers are disillusioned when their ambition of 'developing young minds' turns into a daily battle for control of their classroom in an ill-disciplined school. Look at online forums – ask why people enjoy that job, that company, that industry? What attracts them, fulfils them? What annoys and dispirits them? Can they describe a typical day/ great day/ bad day? A brain surgeon has to become inured to losing patients, sometimes by their own mistake. Court lawyers could become cynical about the innocence of clients, individual or corporate. Journalists may love the hunt and the competition, but do they love dropping everything else at a moment's notice to pursue an urgent story? Or having a great story spiked by their

editor? As an accountant, do you want security, strategic involvement, routine, individual responsibility or just high earnings?

#### **4. Your CV is your Sales Brochure (not your life history)**

Your CV is to sell you into the role you seek. Its job is to get you into the interviews you want.

- Put yourself in the reader's seat. If learning about you for the first time, and assessing you against a job description and person specification for this role, what needs to be there to impress him or her?
- The fashion is for longer CVs now in order to sell yourself, so avoid a one-page resume, unless asked for a brief version.
- Have several versions that you can cut and paste easily to suit each specific role.
- Keywords are important – use them throughout your CV, as agencies and many employers process by computer software and select for the keywords they want. LinkedIn etc. use algorithms seeking specific keywords. So, to find a 'qualified cost accountant with retail experience', think of the keywords they will search by. There is a skill to this, which we teach our clients. You may have noticed, if searching large job boards, that selecting various keywords expands or contracts the selection you receive. The same happens when agencies and employers search by algorithm. Be findable.

By the way, if your job title is not the standard one for your role, how about using the well-known title and put yours in brackets after it?

#### **Which Style of CV to Choose?**

Decide if you are better served by:

- ❖ **A chronological CV** – (lists jobs from now backwards so the most recent/current one is first); useful if staying in the same industry or role; typically shows career progression.
- ❖ **A functional CV** (lists 4-5 competencies under which you give most information; your jobs are listed afterwards in 1-3 lines each); useful if changing industry or role as it demonstrates experience such as Business Development Success in the SME sector, Supply Chain Management, etc.

#### **Structuring your Material**

It is fine to brain dump onto many pages, then edit down to the important information.

**Page One** - Name, contact details, address (unless you prefer not, but indicate location). List here the most important 1-2 competencies you offer.

**Maybe a Profile** (a few careful sentences describing what you have done and what you can do for the reader's organisation); some recruiters dislike profiles, so make it impactful. Avoid the generic claims... a great communicator... a dynamic executive...; be specific, focused and targeted, providing figures "achieved AVP in a leading US bank 6 months ahead of the rest of my intake of 22 graduates". That says you stood out from the crowd. Go on to describe how. Indicate anything unusual – seeking a role in a rural town, for example, or willingness to relocate abroad. If older and in good health, maybe emphasise that you are fit, energetic and have had 'only 3 sick days in the past 5 years'.

**For each role - List context, key responsibilities with the resources you had, and achievements.**

This paints a picture for the reader of the situation, what you were supposed to do and what you actually achieved. When I worked in Hong Kong many years ago, a bank manager in a US bank say, Citibank,

had a lending limit of HK\$50,000 while his UK bank's opposite number had much higher autonomy. He had devolved authority, so was much more senior in banking experience. This would only be clear in a carefully structured CV. Maybe, list lessons learned from various situations. Be prepared to discuss what you learned from any failure. Careful, the overall impression wants to be of success. Back your claims with evidence 'willing to take responsibility' – demonstrate how often you did, successfully.

## 5. Practise being Interviewed and Prepare

### Applications with a CV

Print your CV and the job you are applying to. Hi-light the key information in the spec, then work through it – can you match each requirement to experience listed in your CV? If not, cut and paste, maybe change the wording of headlines to emphasise the requested experience or competencies. Do your homework, make the application and start preparing for interview.

### The Interview

We may run whole day workshops on interview technique and practice but here are some basics:

- List questions you think may be asked. List questions you hope will not be asked. Practise a succinct answer to lots of them. Build your confidence in the ping-pong game of being questioned.
- Aim for relaxed alertness at a real interview. Use family, friends or colleagues for practice – including the hard questions. Imagine you are entering an interview (impressing in your smart appropriate appearance), being greeted (firm clean handshake and good eye contact) and sit down ('coffee?' 'No thanks' if there is any chance of a nervous spillage). "Now, Tell us, Ms Xxxx, about a time when you.....?" "and how did you do that?" "...and who specifically chose that course of action, and why?", "and what specifically was the outcome of that course of action?" "and what did you learn from that ....?" A competent interviewer will drill down into the detail. So, you will need examples of various required competencies, in succinct sentences. Practice is an easy way to give yourself an advantage.
- There are many easily avoidable errors – talking too long, unstructured rambles, weak examples, failure to learn about the employer, arriving late, being thrown by an unexpected question - so you lose confidence and stop eye contact, divulge a weakness or failure inadvertent. Or, have no questions to ask the interviewer or appear unenthusiastic. Or fail to have a good answer to a question about an awkward area – a lack of promotions, a gap in employment, an unsuccessful move, a demotion. It is important to handle awkward questions well or the whole interview can snag as the interviewer's instinct goes into overdrive.

Some factors in the career move process are out of your control. This is an easy win. Prepare, practise, project!

We use an NLP technique to set clients up with confidence and visualising their success. It is very effective.

**We trust that you have learned from our experience. In this competitive job market, work with us to remove the risk and uncertainty of making a change. Ensure success in finding and securing your next career move. For support to change your job or your career with confidence – Call Us on Tel: +44 131 237 6007 or email us on E: [barbara@diamonshr.co.uk](mailto:barbara@diamonshr.co.uk) to set up a no-obligation confidential chat.**