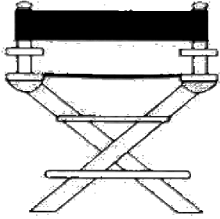


Director's Chair



"Identifying Your Career Values System"

by Ron West

- _ Who am I?
- _ What are my personal and professional goals?
- _ What are my skills and abilities?
- _ What are my career options?
- _ Do I have plans and strategies in place for my success?
- _ Can I relocate?
- _ Do I have a support system in place?
- _ What are my passions?
- _ What networks will I need?
- _ Do I have the confidence to compete?

Ever think about what matters most to you when it comes to your job, career, and life in general? Do you know what you value most and in what order? What ultimately determines and affects your decisions about work, professional, career, and personal relationships are your combined knowledge, wisdom, experience, and career "value system". Values, a small word with huge significance. Not often understood, too often misunderstood. A word representing tremendous implications. How we manage or mismanage our lives and our careers, what determines our destiny, the manner in which we view ourselves and others, how we perceive our personal and professional lives, images of employment, measure our individual success, and choose our life partners, can be directly attributed to the quality of our "career value system", or the lack of one. **The relationship you have with your value system means everything!!**

What are your primary values? How do you define them? Think about it! For technical definitions please refer to "**Webster's Dictionary**".

How do you recognize and determine your values in practical career and specific life terms? Set aside a few moments and take our "Value Hierarchy Quiz", there is no right or wrong. It is based solely on the choices you consider to be most important to you in your life and your job search in that order. **In the end, rank your top "3" choices in order of importance to you.** Good luck!

Honestly, which category do you fall into? The knowing or the not knowing. The confident or the uncertain. This is serious business, and not to be taken lightly or reduced to a guessing game. The "How will I? When will I? Can I?" career questions require not only being realistic and honest with yourself, they require thought, practical consideration, planning and professional assistance. These questions are not intended to have mystical or contrived fairy tale answers based on fantasy, unsubstantiated professional knowledge, or lack of research.

Choosing a major, thinking about a career, getting an education – these are the things college is all about. As you well know, some students arrive on campus and know their major and career ambitions, however, the majority of students do not. In fact, the majority of students do not. In fact, the majority of college students change their major at least once in their college careers, with many changing this decision several times during their years in college. All of these changes, while valuable in terms of personal growth and development, are often costly in terms of time and dollars spent.

In too many instances, students have unrealistic expectations based upon unrealistic career objectives and non-existent relationships. Professional goals and aspirations, which are unrealistic in their conception, are sure to become unattainable in the future. Students are asked specific questions about their chosen profession or occupation of choice. Too often their answers are not based upon any clear knowledge of the profession itself, the process of becoming educated, the geography of current workplace markets and employment specific trends, the competitive culture of the profession, available career options, or resource networks required to compete for placement.

More importantly many students have not been exposed to the critical personal skills and career assessment inventories designed to help them, with their initial career self-analysis, needed to make more productive, and practical career decisions.

Much of what we understand about ourselves is intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. Students need substantial facts and understanding to support and confirm their career decisions based on a balance between what's practical and realistic. For too many students and people in general make ill-fated career and life related decisions based on a lack of understanding and factual information. Far too much attention is often paid to people knowing too little about the critical relationships existing between a student's skills, interest, personality, and profession of choice. Forward thinking career strategy, can never come out of doubt and fear.

Having clear answers to essential career and value related questions is critical. Having the knowledge to confidently substantiate and verbalize your career and occupational choices is essential to your growth process. Having a practical and productive **career value system** in place will help manage your success and your ability to make more productive life and career decisions.

Career Zone and **DISCOVER** are now available to help you evaluate, and determine the relationship between your interests, skills, abilities, educational career expectations, and values. Take time to review these assessment resources by logging on to our site at <http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/career>.

Remember!

Knowledge = Positive results
Productivity = Opportunities for success



" Inside Tips "

- > Network - with friends, family, classmates, anyone you can.
- > Be willing to think outside the box.
- > Don't dismiss an offer because it's not your ideal job.
- > Once you land an interview, do your homework.
- > Practice your interview skills.
- > Update your wardrobe and get an interview suit.
- > Finally, don't give up.

“LOST YOUR JOB? DOWNSIZED? HERE ARE SOME TIPS.”

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs in the last few years, and a solid list of job search techniques has emerged. Here are some points noted in a recent Washington Post story, **"How to Bounce Back from a Pink Slip."**

DO's:

Do make maximum use of contacts. Brita Askey, a Drake Morin executive, reports that less than 10 percent of jobs develop through leads on the Internet or print ads. Most job leads come from friends, business associates, former customers, trade or professional societies, and college alumni groups. Let your friends and colleagues know if you are looking for a job and ask them for any possible leads.

Do use exact wording from job postings in your letter and resume. Using the employer's terminology can improve your chances of moving your resume through a computer scanner or the first reader.

After considering your strengths demonstrated in past jobs, do identify the skills that you would bring to a new position. These may include such things as management of time and others, negotiating, motivating, and delegating tasks.

Do learn the going salary rate for the job you are seeking. If the salary cited is lower than you hoped, keep in mind that there may be negotiable bonuses, such as company-paid education, a fully paid health care plan, free or subsidized child care, flexible work schedules, or even a work from home arrangement.

Do practice your interview techniques. Many experienced workers assume they know all about job interviews and make mistakes such as talking too much, failing to verbalize a clear job objective, not relating strengths shown in past positions to the job in question, etc. The most useful preparation is to conduct practice interviews with friends who have hiring experience. By videotaping these sessions, you can see yourself as an employer does. Try to respond to an interview question with a two- to four-sentence answer and occasionally ask a relevant question of the interviewer.

Do work on keeping up your morale. This is a good time to remember the many things you enjoy in life (family, friends, teams, religion, hobbies, and other special interests) which can help to cushion the blow of unemployment. Keep in mind that this is a short-term problem and stay in touch with friends and family.

Do ask permission from references before you cite them. Keep them posted with copies of your latest resume. If there are skills in which you might be considered weak, describe how you are improving or working on these areas.

DONT's:

Don't just list job titles of past jobs on your resume. What is more important to note is how well you performed in these jobs and the kinds of skills you developed. Refrain from using italics or fancy fonts in an attempt to make your resume distinctive. Many resumes are scanned by computers and using unusual typefaces may make your resume harder to read.

Don't assume your letter is intended solely to introduce your resume. Make your cover letter a strong and personalized effort to show your sincere interest in the position. Address why you consider yourself a good candidate for the job, make it interesting to read, and persuade them to call you in for an interview.

Don't spend time criticizing a former boss or employer. You should portray yourself as a loyal supporter of all organizations in which you played a role.

Don't hide the fact that you were downsized or released from your job. Simply state that your position, department, or section was eliminated as a part of a reorganization. Brita Askey from Drake Morin Beam suggests you ask your former boss what he or she will say about your leaving and be sure to use the same language.

Don't put off job hunting on the assumption that the holiday season or summer months are bad times to look for a job. Actually, you may find them the best periods for job hunting. With so many secretaries and executive assistants on vacation, you are more likely to directly reach an employer by phone.

Don't use your home address if you are posting a resume on a Web site. Acquire a post office box to protect your privacy. Also, avoid putting your Social Security number on any document that can be seen by a number of people.

Don't use a casual or funny outgoing voicemail message to take your job-related calls. As adorable as they may be, this is no time for your children's voices. Switch to something more professional.

Career Opportunities
March/April 2003

“On the Job”

“GETTING AHEAD MAY MEAN MOVING SIDEWAYS”

Career Opportunities (March/April 2003)

In the past, career ladders have been precise and promising. Start as a junior buyer and you could move to buyer, senior

buyer, or product supervisor. And if you were really fortunate, you might become a purchasing manager.

But now many employees are more worried about having a job at all in six months than moving up a step on the ladder. In this time of economic instability, pay raises are minimal, health care premiums are increasing, bonuses have diminished, and promotions are being withheld. Many workers are finding themselves stuck in jobs with little or no hope for an increase in pay. Business Week labels this trend the "sideways labor market."

Workers are evaluating their current jobs, trying to assess job security and the possibility of promotion. Most workers, of course, prefer "treading water" to quitting and hunting elsewhere for a job. But wise employees are taking a serious look at career alternatives, including jobs at the same economic and status level as their current jobs but which may offer better chances for advancement in the future. Another position in the same organization may better utilize an employee's talents and skills and improve his or her performance record. Since companies with reduced resources are giving raises and compensation only to their best performers, this type of sideways move may prove to be the best choice.

“CAREER PLANNING AND JOB SEARCH IN A TIGHT ECONOMY”

Career Opportunities (March/April 2003)

No doubt if you are nearing graduation or are a recent college graduate you may be painfully aware that the national and regional economies are struggling. Since March of 2001, the national economy has shed over 2,400,000 jobs and the unemployment rate in New York City has risen as high as 9.2%. And, while there are signs that an economic recovery is underway, we are currently in what is termed as a "jobless recovery". This means that there are positive signs of economic growth but that the growth rate in GDP (gross domestic product) is not yet high enough to create new jobs.

This poses unique challenges for today's college graduates who are facing one of the most competitive job markets in the last 20 years. What follows are some suggestions and strategies for dealing with the current market.

Plan Ahead: Assume that your job search will take much longer than if you were searching in a healthy economy. Start the job search at the beginning of your last year of study and make sure that it is a thorough and concerted job search.

Know your career area and potential market: Do extensive research on your career area and the current state of the job market for your specific occupational goal(s). Great resources include your Career Planning or Placement Office, Vault.com, Occupational Outlook Handbook online, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Wetfeet.com, the reference section of the public library, professional and trade publications and professional associations.

Develop a comprehensive job search strategy: Make sure that you have developed a comprehensive search strategy. Spend time creating a top drawer resume (or resumes) and cover letters and practice your interviewing skills. Use multiple search strategies. Don't assume that simply responding to ads on line or in the newspapers is all that you need to do. Talk to people working in the field that you want to go into and ask them how people get hired and if they know of any current opportunities.

Utilize all resources at your disposal: Make sure to network. Most jobs are still gotten through networking. Utilize your existing network and continually expand it through such things as joining professional or trade associations (many have student memberships available), attend career fairs, industry or trade shows and professional seminars. Ask people in your network whom else they know that you should be speaking with. Check with your placement or career services office to see if they operate an alumni mentoring program. While alumni mentor programs are not specifically designed to be used for job searching, they can provide valuable information.

Ask for guidance or help: If your job search seems not to be generating results, get feedback from your career services or placement office or from people working in the field. Consider joining job search groups that can also provide feedback or support.

Consider your options: Be creative. Consider doing an internship to get some practical experience and to make some good contacts. Many internships have the potential to turn into full-time paid positions.

Look at the prospect of doing part-time employment or consider temporary to permanent positions. Temp to perm, or simply temping can be a great way of getting experience, making contacts, and developing job leads.

Consider changing industries or occupations until things open up in your field.

If relocation is an option, you can find regions of the country where the job market is stronger and job opportunities better than in the NY metropolitan region. The Bureau of Labor Statistics can provide you with regional unemployment rates.

If your long term goal is graduate study, you might want to consider if it makes sense to attend now while the job market is not so great hoping that it will improve by the time you graduate.

“JOB SEARCH INSIDE TIPS”

Daily News (August 3, 2003)

Two years of hard work - with some fun sprinkled in, of course may secure you a bachelor's degree, but it does not guarantee a job. With economic indicators presenting a picture that's cloudy at best, the competition for jobs is fiercer than ever. But don't despair, say experts. There are some solid strategies for getting through these difficult times.

Even if you never set foot in the college career center while enrolled, do so now. Many colleges will offer alums their services, from counseling to skill assessments, for free for up to a year after graduation.

While fields like Investment banking and technology are still in the doldrums, other areas are showing improvement. Healthcare, nonprofits, retail, the service sector, education and tourism are generating jobs, says New York State Department of Labor's Jim Brown.

For example, Marjorie Salvodon, 36, found a job as a registered respiratory therapist (starting salary \$45,000) within a month of graduating from Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Network - with friends, family, classmates, anyone you can. You are your own best marketer, so don't be shy. Even consider affiliations, such as the Girl Scouts, that you had during childhood, says New York University's Career Services director, Trudy Steinfeld. A cousin's boyfriend, she recalls, obtained a job after reconnecting with friends he made at camp.

Be willing to think outside the box. Rather than focusing on a job title, says Sophia Demetriou, Ph.D., director of City College's Career Center, consider "what skills you like using. You can then look at organizations that would give you those skills, opening you to opportunities."

Don't dismiss an offer because it's not your ideal job, says Steinfeld. "One of the things we try to instill in our students is that this may not be their dream job today, but the focus is to learn something. When they develop different skill sets, they should be able to move within that organization or out to a job they prefer."

Once you land an interview, do your homework. Nothing impresses a potential employer more than displaying an understanding of the company and the position. On the Internet, knowledge is just a click away.

Practice your interview skills. It may sound cliched, but you don't want to flounder on a question like, "What college experience taught you the following skills?"

Update your wardrobe and get an Interview suit. More and more companies are reserving casual clothes for Fridays, so it's important to look sharp and professional. Still, says Monster.com founder Jeff Taylor, remain true to yourself - to a point. "Generally speaking, the first interview is not the place to wear a lot of hardware. If you normally wear 12 pieces of jewelry on your face, wear one."

Finally, don't give up. Glen Schwartz, who graduated from Ithaca College in May with a journalism degree, devoted a couple of hours a week, beginning last September, to his job search. Finally in April, the 22-year-old son of a locksmith and speech therapist received an offer as an account coordinator at publicrelations firm Weber Shandwick.



“ONLINE JOB-SEARCH TIPS”

Career Opportunities New (March/April 2003)



When planning your career, a Web-based job search is a good tool, but only if you use it correctly. Washington Post staff writer Mary Ellen Slayter offers these tips on how to make the most of the Web's vast job hunting resources.

- Use the Web to search for facts on workplace trends: hot jobs, good employers, and salary ranges. Look for sites with career advice, such as sample cover letters, resume do's and don'ts, and interviewing techniques.
- Use e-mail for networking.

- Use the Web to research specific companies.
- Don't have high expectations from online job boards. Slater refers to a survey by a human resources consulting firm that found that 5 percent of job hunters had success with online job boards, compared to 60 percent of people who found their jobs through networking.
- Limit your responses to only those job openings for which you think you will be a good match.
- In addition to job-search sites like Monster.com, HotJobs.com, and CareerBuilder.com, look for sites that post jobs specific to your field, such as sites of professional associations.
- Don't use e-mail lingo in your resume or cover letter. Make sure to use correct grammar and punctuation, the same as you would in a printed resume.
- Make sure the printed version of your e-mail resume looks as good as it does on screen.

“With Good Jobs and Good Pay, Why Do People Quit?”

Career Opportunities News
(March/April 2003)

They've been programmed for much of their lives-by parents, schools, and society. The deal was to work hard in high school, be involved in extracurricular activities, enroll in and graduate with honors from a top college, and take a promising job with a good company. That's more or less what passed for "high achievement" for the last few decades.

But as many in their 20s and 30s are discovering, that kind of life can be severely limiting. As a result, many young corporate careerists are dumping their respectable jobs and traditional career paths. Most of these individuals have never been hungry, or even really short of cash, so monetary career incentives may be weak. Others have more exciting, worthwhile, or individualistic careers in mind. They're prepared to give up "the good life" to live their own life.

So who are these individuals bucking the corporate ladder? Among those profiled in a Washingtonian article is a former "super-overachiever" at J.P. Morgan, who is now much happier in her new line of work as a yoga teacher. Another example of one of these nonconformists is an ex-economic researcher who after joining friends on a trip to Chile,

decided to become self-sufficient making and selling chocolate chip cookies. One young lawyer quit a promising job with a large law firm to become the owner of a curbside burrito cart. Another lawyer left a job with the Department of Health and Human Services to open up a bakery with the appropriate name of CakeLove.

These individuals are among the many that are dropping off the career ladder to lead a more individualistic life. Their stories have inspired the book *Quarterlife Crisis: The Unique Challenges of Life in Your Twenties* (J. P. Tarcher, 2001), by Alexandra Robbins and Abby Wilner, which points out that many in their 20s are confused about life because their parents never gave them the freedom to interact with the real world.

Regardless of the cause, many young workers today are adopting a new view of what makes for an ideal life.

“What Entrepreneurs Need to Know to be Successful”

By Simma Lieberman and Kate Berardo
Black EOE Journal, Vol. 9, No. 2

When it comes to entrepreneurship, there is no clear path to success. The challenge entrepreneurs' face is to find their own means to success given their business, situation, timing, and style. A wise entrepreneur spends a good deal of time learning from the mistakes of his fellow professionals who ended up on the well trodden path to failure. No matter what your industry, business plan, or idea, the following ten tips are basics for building a successful business.

Stay focused on the most important tasks that need to get done. Entrepreneurs multi-task daily. It is easy to get off track and spend time on tasks that won't get the business going. Decide each morning what the most important tasks are for that day. Start with these tasks and don't switch tasks until they get done.

Delegate. Entrepreneurs who succeed know what they do well, and what others do better than them. Decide what tasks should be outsourced and delegate these tasks to others. Trying to do everything or do things that aren't your specialty ruins your efficiency and the quality of your end product or service.

Keep a business journal. Write down your business thoughts and ideas. In planning stages, these ideas can be both powerful and fleeting. Make a point at the end of every week or month to review your notes for ideas and potentials that you forgot to capitalize on.

Find a support group. Part of being an entrepreneur is being bold, risky, and independent. But you are far from being alone in your endeavor. Join up with a group of entrepreneurs online or in your community for support. Many starting entrepreneurs need the same type of services (web designers, printers, etc.), so you can exchange resources and save time and energy in doing solo research.

Address your fears and doubts. People often view entrepreneurs as the bold explorers of the business world. Don't let your expectations of what it means to be an entrepreneur override your feelings. Fears and doubts are normal. Expressing this anxiety can be cathartic and help prevent it from becoming a roadblock to success.

Follow the golden rule of the business plan. Yes, create a business plan, and develop it thoroughly. Stick to it, but don't treat it like the end-all be-all plan. Often once you get your business going, you'll find that unexpected opportunities arise. Doors open once you get on your feet. Don't pass by them because your business plan dictates that you continue on a certain path. Instead, carve out some time to explore and evaluate these opportunities to determine if they should become part of (or the new focus of) your business model.

Decide what your business hours are going to be and stick to them. It is easy to overwork, especially as an entrepreneur who's business is in the house. As an entrepreneur, there is always work to be done. Remember that there is life after work and if you don't have a life, get one. On days and weeks where you have to put in extra work, plan an award for yourself (a massage, a day-off, a night out, etc.)

Exercise regularly. Make exercise part of your business routine. It is easy to get overwhelmed by all the decisions you have to make. Exercise clears your brain to make decisions and keeps you healthy so you'll have less sick days.

Keep abreast of the industry you are in. Read trade publications, talk to people in the industry, and learn as much as you can. The most informed entrepreneurs are the most successful ones. If you are still talking about the power of CDs in the age of MP3s and DVDs, your idea is already dead, and your business will be too if you don't stay up-to-date.

Keep a sense of humor. You have made a choice not to punch a timecard or work for someone else. Times are tough and humor is the best recipe for getting through the day. Find the humor in situations and find sources of humor in your life (comics, sitcoms, and funny friends). Stay away from people who complain, whine, or give out negative vibes.

“When Majors Matter Most”

by Leslie Berger

Education Life, August 3, 2003

Majors are crucial if you're heading directly into the workplace after college, says Anthony P. Carnevale, a labor economist and vice president at the Educational Testing Service.

But most liberal arts students go on to graduate school or professional programs, so their undergraduate majors become less significant over the long haul. That said, some fields of study suit certain pursuits. Plenty of political science and history majors go to law school. Philosophy may seem completely impractical, but a philosophy major can exploit skills in logic and math for business school. "If you know math, that opens a lot of doors," Dr. Carnevale says. And a clever sociology major might parlay knowledge of statistics and behavior into a marketing career.

"Liberal arts majors are the distance runners," Dr. Carnevale says. "They're the investors."

But for the vast majority who start working right away -- 70 percent of college graduates, according to the National Center for Education Statistics -- "it becomes crucial what you choose," he says. For these students, repeated studies have found a clear link between college major and future earnings.

"The findings of this study confirm what has been reported consistently in other studies about earnings," begins a 2001 report for the Department of Education. "College graduates who major in the applied fields of engineering, business, computer science, nursing and other health fields earn higher-than-average full-time salaries.. In contrast, education and humanities and arts majors experienced the least favorable outcomes."

According to the study, graduates with degrees in health earned as much as 58 percent more than those whose degree was in the humanities and the arts.

The same study said that graduates majoring in applied fields like nursing, education anti-engineering were "very likely to be employed in jobs related to their majors." Communications and journalism majors were the big exception: These students were more likely (33 percent) than graduates in any other field to be working in service jobs like retail or, hospitality.

For academic fields, roughly 25 percent of students majoring in biological science, math or physical sciences worked as teachers, and 25 percent in research or technical

work. Social science majors were likely to work in business occupations (32 percent), followed by service occupations (18 percent) and protective services (16 percent).

Clifford Adelman, a United States Department of Education senior researcher, cautions that employers look at a student's breadth of knowledge and skills, so courses outside a major count, too. "Courses taken are just as important as the major in determining what happens in the labor market," he says. "What's in my valise?" is the phrase I like to use. "What am I carrying into the labor market?"



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