

## ***The Work You Were Born To Do***

In my 30 years of one-to-one coaching I have tended to attract clients for career and work success more than any other topic. So here are some thoughts on how to make your work and career even more successful.

### **Certainty but No Choice**

My father left school before the end of his primary education as did most of his school friends. At 15 he began to learn a trade and from this he had one career and worked for 3 different companies from age 15 to 65. When he retired we saw a new man because he hated work. However he had a working life of certainty. He had no choice, there were very few jobs, but he had certainty.

### **Choice but No Certainty**

I got a job in a bank in the 70's so I also had certainty but no choice as the 70's and 80's just seemed to be a procession of recessions. But then in the 90's work prospects improved, the economy was growing and at some point, without us noticing the job-for-life was gone but choice had arrived. I took advantage of this economic upturn and left the bank after 23 years to set up my business. It was a choice I could make.

### **New Certainty and New Choice**

Then the global recession hit and suddenly everyone had no certainty and no choice. However certainty and security are a basic human need and now that things are improving again maybe we need a new form of certainty that may create some new choices? I think we do and the good news is that the answer is not far away.

### **Internal Source of Certainty**

What if we could create an internal source of job and work security for the future that didn't depend on something outside of ourselves? The answer is that we can but it seems that most people don't think of this. Every career coaching session I've ever had the client always wants to start our work in the wrong place. They think that in order to improve their career and find a better job they need to figure out what they are going to do. This is a mistake.

### **Natural Talent and Ability**

The first place to start is figuring out what you have to offer. It turns out that you have a natural talent for something. Some lucky people have a talent for more than one thing but you are already a wonderfully talented person. This may sound like a very 'new age' thing to say but it's been proven now by psychologists using an enormous sample of people over a very long period of time that everyone has a fantastic talent for something. The problem is that most people don't know what their talent is!

### **The Cosmic Trap**

You've always had this talent by the way. But the Cosmic Trap is that because it comes easy to you, you undervalue it! You assume it comes easy to everyone. Nothing comes easy to everyone and there's a market for everything. Here are some of the clues to help you find out – when you are engaged in the activity you lose track of time, the activity is rewarding in itself, it comes easy to you, you love doing it, you experience 'flow' or being 'in the zone' easily. Now if we were very clear on what your talent is then what you should be doing becomes really obvious. Now you have a sense of certainty and security based on something that exists, that will always exist and that you love to do. People will always buy people who have an easy passion for what they do.

### **Foster Your Passion**

I'm not saying that this is all very easy. I don't like the expression 'follow your passion', I don't think it's that easy. I think you have to foster a passion, develop it, learn more about it, experiment, fail, try again and again. But apart from the above clues there is one great way to find out what you have to offer and I'm afraid it's going to be a little uncomfortable.

### **The Expert Panel**

It involves you picking a 'panel' of people who know you well and you ask each person the following two questions – 1. Please list the talents and abilities that you admire me for. 2. What would be the dream jobs for me right now? This is a fantastic exercise, never fails to be emotional, never fails to throw up surprises and of course, shows us your talent and ability described by an expert panel.

### **Human Potential**

Don't be the last to know what your potential is. People whom you and I admire have found their 'thing', and it turns out they are very ordinary at everything else. What if your future work and career choices were based on playing to your talent? This is a form of security and certainty that works in every economic climate. Of course if it turns out that you are a poet I'm not suggesting you leave your current job immediately and become a full time poet but, I hope you are being a poet at weekends. I hope you have an outlet for your natural talent and ability. Because who knows where a weekend poet may end up? Most people undervalue who they are and overvalue who they are not. When you know what you are you'll know what to do.

If you would like to find out more about Neil O'Brien's keynotes and workshops Please contact Vivienne at [Vivienne@personallyspeakingbureau.com](mailto:Vivienne@personallyspeakingbureau.com) and here is a link to Neil's profile – [www.personallyspeakingbureau.com/speaker/neil-obrien-minset-coach/](http://www.personallyspeakingbureau.com/speaker/neil-obrien-minset-coach/)