



THE MAN'S GUIDE TO

FINDING THE RIGHT JOB

(So you'll never really work again)

► It's said that you can only live life forward and understand it backward. The same is true with careers. While it's virtually impossible to know where any given job will take you, most jobs send out signals about how right they are for you – or not. No matter what the job, you should look for those signals.

PEOPLE

Everything else about a job can be perfect, but if you do not enjoy working with your colleagues on a day-to-day basis, work can be torture. Look for a job where you share the organisation's overall sensibilities. If you join a company where your sensibilities don't match those of your co-workers, you'll find yourself putting on a persona just to get along. What a career killer that would be, to fake who you are every day.

OPPORTUNITY

Any job you take should feel challenging. It should make you think, 'I can do most of the work, but there are certainly skills and knowledge this job requires that I don't have yet. I'm going to learn something here.' Having growth opportunities will energise you and make work even more engaging. And while the possibility of screwing up increases at jobs like these, you should also make sure you join a company where learning is valued, mistakes aren't always fatal and there are people around who can act as coaches and mentors.

OPTIONS

The options signal is about finding a job that helps you if you leave. Some companies will open – or close

– doors for you because of their reputations. Ultimately, your job should provide a credential you can take with you, whether it's experience at a prestigious company or a managerial position at a small start-up.

OWNERSHIP

So often we hear about a person who takes a job based on someone else's needs or dreams – say, his spouse wants him to travel less. Then he loses out on a promotion because of curtailed mobility. Sometimes blame gets flung around. Other times, the resentment simmers. The hard reality is that as you get older, life and relationships can become complicated: a son might need help with college tuition; your spouse has his or her own career. The only real defence is to be explicit with yourself about why and for whom you are taking a job.

WORK CONTENT

Every job has bad days or rough periods and yes, there will be times when your main interest is in making ends meet. But in the very best job scenario, you love at least something about the work. The customers, the travel, the camaraderie at the Tuesday-morning sales meeting – whatever it is, it makes you want to come back day after day. Every job has its ups and downs, but if a job offer doesn't excite you on some level, don't settle. As you hunt for the right job, keep in mind that this is a process that takes time, experimentation and patience. Choose something you love to do, make sure you're with people you like and give it your all. – **Jack and Suzy Welch (2009), distributed by The New York Times**

for your time in the position, wish the company well and insist on staying in touch. Part of being nice is about understanding that a bad reputation can follow you forever. It's also about realising that you'll need references and might even want to come back. Leaving with your head held high is something to be proud of.

CONCLUSION Ultimately, you've got to do what's right for you. Think about the timing, benefits you might forfeit, bargaining power with a new company, being seen as a hopper to future employers, and whether something else exists to keep you financially afloat. Then it's just a case of following your gut. – **Eugene Yiga**

ACING THE INTERVIEW

► So, you've almost made it to the job of your dreams. Ace the interview and you're hired. Don't think of it as an interrogation: it's about finding a fit that works both ways.

BE CONFIDENT

When meeting the interviewer, shake hands firmly, maintain eye contact, sit up straight and smile. Even though a sense of humour has its place, being sincere is better than simply trying to wow them with your forced charm.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Spend time beforehand looking into the industry, company, and specific job you're applying for. Read about industry trends and jargon in a trade magazine. Better yet, talk to someone who already works there.

KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

Who will be interviewing you? Will you be alone or in a group? Will there be testing involved? Get these clear so you aren't caught off guard. Know what you'll be wearing and make sure your clothes are spotless. Make sure you get there on time.

PLAN YOUR ANSWERS

Rehearsing the answers to some basic questions is a good first step but you've got to go further. Come prepared to talk about how you've dealt with and overcome weaknesses and failures. Have examples of successes and achievements. Everything you say needs to be a reflection of your best self.

► **LISTEN CAREFULLY** Don't be afraid to ask the interviewer to repeat or rephrase a question if you're unsure. Take a second to think before answering. Speak slowly and clearly, keeping your responses relevant and to the point without giving

yes/no answers or talking too much.

ASK RELEVANT QUESTIONS

When it comes to asking questions, don't talk about money or other benefits. Instead, ask about corporate culture, opportunities for personal development, international relocations and flexible hours. Referring to something they mentioned earlier is a great way to show you were listening.

GET FEEDBACK

Spend some time after the interview thinking about what happened. What went well? What went wrong that you can work on for next time? Getting an objective perspective about your performance is highly valuable. It also shows you're the type of person who cares about personal development, which is something they'll likely remember you for.

FINALISE THE OFFER

If all goes well, it shouldn't be too long before they make you an offer. Ask for something in writing if what they gave you was simply an informal and non-binding acceptance over the phone. Once you've received your contract, review it for a day or two and gain clarification on any terms you're unsure about. Remember that it's not about the money. This is about getting a job you've worked hard for and will be able to grow in.

MOVE ON

Of course, there's a chance they might say no. Perhaps they don't see you fitting in with the organisational culture, which means they're doing you a favour by saving you the frustration. Or maybe they're making a huge mistake. Don't stop looking. There's always something somewhere that will work for you.

– **Eugene Yiga**

CALLING IT QUILTS

DON'T WASTE TIME: When it comes to your resignation letter, don't be vague. Start by saying you've decided to leave (with a brief explanation as to why) and give the exact end date.

Usually one month is custom but this varies from place to place. Check your employment contract if you're not sure.

MAKE IT EASY: In addition to delivering the letter in person (NOT via email), sometimes it's a good idea to stay until someone who can replace you is hired.

DON'T BURN BRIDGES: Express appreciation