

Career values and needs

A Guest Article by Steve Preston
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What are your values?

Our values are the things we hold dear and we all have a set of values. However, our values often change over time but we rarely audit them.

Our values when we are young may not be our values when we are 40, when family responsibilities or other factors have shaped our lives. Yet without understanding them it is almost impossible to find real meaning and fulfilment, which is especially important when it comes to finding the right job or career.

Your career values and needs are also inextricably linked to your personal life values and needs. Getting to know yourself will help you to work out what is going to make you want to stay in a job, career or organisation, move into a new one, or even become your own boss.

Are you out of synch?

People traditionally left their jobs because of a clear gap between their skill set and the organisation's requirements, either through redundancy or for other reasons.

In today's employment market, skills are not necessarily the issue. You might leave your job because you are unhappy or unfulfilled. You might feel you are a "square peg in a round hole". This could be the result of a mismatch with your skill set, but a far more likely reason is that your values are out of synch with the organisation, job or career that you are in. In other words, it has nothing to do with your ability to do the job.

For many people this is most unsettling and can cause self-doubt, which could make you a prime candidate for redundancy if the organisation is restructuring.

Being clear about what is important to you will be a great help to you as you move forward or change direction, as it will also:

- keep you on track and motivated
- help with decision making and provide a sense of purpose
- add to your sense of fulfilment.

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Examples of values and needs

As a result of your family situation – for example, having young children or caring for elderly parents or relatives – you may have come to the decision that work-life balance is now very important to you. This could become even more significant and turn from a value into a real need.

You may really value the opportunity to be able to work flexibly, possibly even from home one day a week.

Equally, you may value being able to give something back to the community and do voluntary work part of the week. This value may lead you to change career into the not-for-profit or public sectors.

Other typical examples of career values and needs are:

- feeling needed and appreciated
- choosing where you want to work
- making your own decisions
- developing new skills and experience
- managing others.

The list goes on, but it is not something that most of us are good at working out on our own. It is best to seek help from a career coach who can really help you to flesh out what is important to you, so that you can move forward with confidence to find the right job or career.

Steve Preston – SMP Solutions

If you would like more information on any of the points covered in this Guest Article, please contact **TCii** on **020 7099 2621**.