

GOLDEN CAREER STRATEGIES

Career Tips

Spring 2007

To Change or Not To Change - That Is The Question by Anne Civiletto

If you are considering changing careers, it's important to examine your reasons for seeking change. Nine times out of ten, individuals change careers because they are unhappy in their current position. Consider what is causing the unhappiness; look underneath the feelings and emotions. More often than not, people make sudden career-change decisions motivated by feelings rather than logic. Emotions tend to cloud our judgment and keep us from making an informed, calm, rational decision. Don't let this happen to you. Before leaving your current position, take a look at why you wish to leave.

Career Change vs. Job Change

- Am I dissatisfied with my career or only my job?
- Could I find satisfaction in a related job within the same field/industry?

continued on page 2

THE ART OF LISTENING

by Myles Golden

Sometimes my wife, Ann, will say "Hello wall." That comment usually follows when she has tried to tell me something and she knows I did not hear a word she said. "I might as well be talking to a wall," she will say. Yes, we all have moments when we simply tune out someone who is speaking. It's a perfectly normal behavior from time to time, but it can cost you. You may end up in the doghouse or miss some important information that could bring you a career opportunity, a profitable transaction or simply get you a new friend. Experts claim that professionals earn 40%-80% of their pay by listening yet most of us retain only 25% of what we hear. In addition, surveys tell us that the best conversationalist is a good listener.

If you want to win in a competitive world you need to improve your listening skills.

What are the barriers to good listening skills? Most people don't listen because:

- ◆ They are thinking about what they are going to say next.
- ◆ They think they have heard it before.
- ◆ They have already made up their minds that the speaker does not have anything worthy to say.
- ◆ They love to talk and monopolize conversations.
- ◆ They are thinking about something else and pretend to be listening to be polite.



continued on page 2

"To find a career to which you are adapted by nature, and then to work hard at it, is about as near to a formula for success and happiness as the world provides. One of the fortunate aspects of this formula is that, granted the right career has been found, the hard work takes care of itself. Then hard work is not hard work at all."
Mark Sullivan

To Change or Not To Change cont.

Environmental Influence

- Are the working conditions the motivating factor for a change?
- If so, could I change my environment, or my attitude toward it, or is the only resolution a career switch?

Interests and Values

- Do I know where my interests and values lie?
- Is my present job congruent with my interests and values?

Skills and Abilities

- Have I taken an inventory of my skills and do I know what my marketable skills are?
- Have I acquired new skills that I don't have the opportunity to use in my present occupation even though I'd like to?
- Do I feel as though I could use more of my abilities and skills in another occupation?

Realities of Career Change

- Will a career change require retraining or further education?
- Do I feel that I have the patience to spend the time in an entry-level position to get to my goal?
- Am I willing to make sacrifices to start all over in a new occupation – such as taking a salary cut? Are the people who are dependent on me also willing?
- Exactly what will I be giving up and what will I be gaining to change careers?

Career Change Strategy

- Are there any ways that I can try out a new career without quitting my full-time job?
- What small preparations can I begin today to help with my career switch?
- Is there help in my community to facilitate my career change or to help ensure its success?

Golden Career Strategies assists clients in making successful career transitions. Powerful course modules accompanied by one-on-one coaching from a team of professional career management coaches help you identify the occupations for which you are best suited, differentiate yourself through a compelling resume and develop exceptional interviewing skills. The professionals at Golden Career Strategies can also help you tap into a commanding network of contacts, evaluate job offers, entrepreneurial ventures, and achieve greater success in your career.

“My wife and I decided to move to Greenville and I spent six months conducting a job search from California. I met with numerous executive recruiters in the upstate area and spent a considerable amount of time on the Internet and contacting several companies.

The GCS team helped me identify an entrepreneurial career path that I am passionate about and introduced me to the leading professionals in the area to help get me started. If you are conducting an out of state job search, stop wasting time and contact Myles and his team.

John Tripoli
Northwestern Mutual
Financial Advisor



The Art of Listening cont.

- ◆ They hear what they want to hear.

Some good techniques to use to improve your listening skills are:

- ◆ Maintain good eye contact.
- ◆ Lean forward to demonstrate your undivided attention.
- ◆ Nod your head occasionally to indicate that you are listening.
- ◆ Keep a relaxed posture.

Want to know how you score on your listening skills? If so, take the following assessment:

In the blanks at the end of each listening quality, score yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 as high and 1 as low.

1. I give every person I talk to my undivided attention. (___)
2. I seldom interrupt the person with whom I'm having a conversation. (___)
3. I listen, even when I don't like/agree with the person who is talking. (___)
4. I encourage others to talk by giving verbal feedback, paraphrasing and asking probing-type questions. (___)
5. I let others know I want to hear what they have to say by my body language (gestures, facial expressions, and posture). (___)
6. I am sensitive to the tone of the speaker's voice, expressions and gestures. (___)
7. I withhold all judgments about what a person is saying until he is finished. (___)
8. I hear beyond the words to the feelings and meanings the person is expressing. (___)
9. I listen for points of agreement, not mainly for points of disagreement. (___)
10. I respect all people's rights to their opinions, even if I disagree. (___)
11. I view every dispute or conflict as an opportunity to understand the other person better. (___)
12. I recognize that listening is a skill, and I concentrate on developing that skill in my daily life. (___)

To score, add up your points:

55—60 You are an excellent listener!

45—54 You are a good listener, but could use improvement.

35—44 You definitely need to work on your listening skills!

Below 35— Your listening skills need significant work.

Golden Career Strategies Round Tables

All Executive Roundtables are held
at our office on Monday mornings at 8:00 AM
Reservations are required.

Please see our website for upcoming topics at
www.goldencareerstrategies.com/news.html