



CAREER VISION

Changing Perceptions of Careers

The many young adults just graduating from high school or college are entering a different work world from their parents and grandparents. How would you answer the following true or false statements about the future of the workplace? (answers at the bottom)

1. Most people will stay with the same employer for at least 10 years. **T F**
2. The company will provide you with the skills you need to move ahead. **T F**
3. Once you graduate, you won't need to take more classes. **T F**
4. Computer skills are optional. **T F**

Currently, there is a fundamental shift in the way career is viewed, and for many of us, we may want to adjust the way we think about the world of work. The prospect of finding and obtaining secure, long-term employment will be challenging. Most people will change employers more frequently due to a myriad of reasons such as: mergers, new company strategies and technological changes. Career professionals now recommend a self-directed focus on the development of personal talents and skills combined with a more entrepreneurial approach to work, because the traditional career path may no longer be available. According to workplace expert, William Bridges (1995), organizations are eliminating many full-time permanent employees and creating a workplace of part-time and contingent workers that meet specific project requirements.

As a result of these changes, young adults, as well as seasoned professionals, need to be opportunistic and flexible as they create self-directed goals to upgrade their skills. Highly valued skills in technology, communication, and project management can bolster a workers' opportunities and place their varied skill sets apart from others. Today's new worker may frighten those who still operate from the previous perspective that the organization provides stable employment for a lifetime and takes responsibility for our professional development. However, the changes in today's workplace aren't something to be afraid of! These changes offer us varied possibilities, including the independence to chart our own course, arrange flexible work schedules to meet lifestyle interests, increase self-directed learning opportunities, and often, an increase in income compared to colleagues waiting in traditional roles for someone to direct their development.

To be prepared, "individuals should consider themselves a collection of attributes and skills, not job titles" (Kerka, 1997). Having a clearer awareness and understanding of yourself can greatly enhance your ability to articulate personal vision and your value to employers. Are YOU ready for this more self-directed, entrepreneurial work environment?

(All answers are false)

© Copyright 2001, Career Vision. Article may be reprinted with permission.

Direction. Decisions. Satisfaction.



C A R E E R
V I S I O N

Changing Perceptions of Careers

Page 2

Resources:

Bridges, William (1995). Job Shift: How to Prosper in a World Without Jobs

Kerka, Sandra (1997). Will We All Be Portfolio Workers?

Educational Resources Information Center, Trends and Issues Alert <http://ericacve.org/doc>

© Copyright 2001, Career Vision. Article may be reprinted with permission.

Direction. Decisions. Satisfaction.

800 Roosevelt Road, E-200 • Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137-5866 • 630.469.6270 tel • 630.469.6279 fax •
www.careervision.org