



Midlife Careers Newsletter September 2006

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Here it is September, yet another turning point in our year. You can even feel fall in the air, especially in the morning and evening. Evenings are cooler too. In fact today, I could really use a little heat, but I don't want to be a wimp, so I won't.

My tomatoes are in nice canning jars and halved in the freezer. I have some more to go and I am going to have a late crop of green beans and some nice turnips. Next year I vow to have help in my garden.

As we reach this fall turning point in our year, I'd like to speak to you about turning points in your journey. To date, you've reached many turning points in your life such as college or the decision for no college, marriage, children or the decision for no marriage and no children.

About Turning Points

Turning points are part of an ageless process found at many points in your life and career as you move along in your journey of life. Looking backward it always feels easy, looking forward it can feel like a freefall.

In my e-book (that is almost finished) and teleseminar recording that goes with the e-book (I call this my first talking book), I began by asking key questions of my client-participants.

#1 Are you reaching a turning point in your life?

I illustrate the point that turning points are an ageless process with a client Craig Smith, a 37 year old pilot flying sorties to Iraq and Afghanistan, who is about to re-enter civilian employment.

Freefalls

Craig asks during the teleseminar, "Does it feel like a freefall to you when you are about to change careers?"

"Always!" Came the answer from the teleseminar group.

Craig wants to come home to Rushville, Indiana be a political leader, a governor, someday, and maybe President of the United States.

Think this is impossible? I don't. Anyone who can lead a squadron can lead a district, state or nation. And I also know that we in Indiana had a very famous person run for President of the United States, Wendell Wilkie, born and raised in Rush County, family home of Craig.

Dreams

What about you? What's your dream? Write it down. I have my coaching clients write five scenarios of possible dream lives they would like to live. Why? Because a dream is the tip of your intuition. Somewhere

inside of you, you have a dream that perhaps got left behind. That little voice that is dormant, hidden from view may now need to be amplified.

To put a little structure in your journey is a good thing.

- Adding the knowledge that change, any change feels uncomfortable, a freefall, as expressed above; no matter what your present level of accomplishment.
- Knowing that it is important to listen to your dreams, yourself, the intuitive you - all of this is extremely important.

Your Destination

Have you ever had someone ask you if you had a 5-year or 10-year plan? I have never known what to answer to this, and now I'm glad, because I know that if you put a little structure and trust into your journey, the destination will take care of itself. So forget your 5-year plan, instead take care of your journey.

Obstacles

Obstacles, you say, what about obstacles?

There are plenty. Everyone has a different set and they are not all about money.

A high school friend of mine, Michael Graves is overcoming some obstacles. Any of you know Michael? He is a Harvard professor, renowned international architect, and designer of a cool tea kettle at Target. He has everything going for himself.

A few years back he had a cold that ended in a sinus infection and that developed into encephalitis that has left him paralyzed from the waist down.

What is he doing now? He oversees his architectural firms in Princeton and New York City ****AND he is designing wheel chairs. He now has designed a wheel chair that allows him to stand up and putt golf balls.

As I said, obstacles are there for all of us. They come in varied sizes, shapes, and conditions. They are part of your journey. Part of what you need to take care of on your journey,

Fire in Your Belly

I think the trick is to have a dream that is so powerful that it gives you fire in your belly. And that my friends is how you over come any obstacle.

So, get on with your journey, and as I said earlier the destination will take care of itself.

To be continued in October....

Stats, Sites and Stuff

Stats

Information particularly for women:

This information was taken from a recent from Career Masters Institute newsletter and I thought you women out there would be interested.

Good stuff for men to review too. Contributor: Barbara Safani, M.A., CCM, CERW, CPRW, NCRW Career Solvers -----

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While most job-seekers are intensely interested in how to negotiate the best package, few realize the importance of creating their own style and developing a set of best practices for their negotiations. The mechanics of the negotiation are the same for men and women, but the strategies often vary between the two sexes. Below are four female-centric negotiation trends:

Women tend to be more concerned with the relationship than the outcome.

Women tend to value relationships over outcome and are willing to compromise in an effort to keep the relationship intact. They can be people pleasers who generally do not like conflict and confrontation. Many women associate salary negotiation with conflict. In a 2002 study by Babcock, Gelfund, Small, and Stayn, entitled Propensity to Initiate Negotiations, men and women participated in an internet survey to identify if they believed it was appropriate to negotiate in various work-related fictitious situations. Women as a group were less likely than men to choose negotiation as an option, even though they recognized that negotiation was appropriate.

Recommendation: Women can be successful negotiators by positioning their needs as part of a collaborative process. By listening to a potential employer's needs and recommending outcomes that benefit both parties, women can get what they want for themselves and preserve the relationship at the same time.

Women view salary in terms of what they think they need rather than what they want.

Many women make decisions about salary based on what they feel they need rather than what the market will bear. They use past salary as their benchmark and may rationalize that a similar or slightly higher salary is what they should request. Since employers tend to reward people no more than what they require, women are at risk for receiving less competitive packages than their male counterparts. Despite the progress women have made professionally over the past 30 years, our culture often discourages women from asking for more and brands them as aggressive or difficult to work with when they try to negotiate.

In a 2003 study by Small, Babcock, and Gelfund, entitled Why Don't Women Ask, participants were asked to play a game and offered \$3 as compensation. If participants asked for more, they would receive \$10. Almost nine times as many males asked for more money, suggesting that men ask for what they want more frequently than women.

Recommendation: Women can improve their negotiation skills by knowing their market value. Sites such as <http://salary.com/> help job seekers define a potential range of salaries for a particular job. Professional associations and trusted friends in the industry are other valuable sources of information. By coaching our female clients on how to conduct salary-related research and teaching them how to present the business case for their requested salary, they can improve their bargaining power and diffuse potential gender biases.

Women often believe that external factors influence rewards and recognitions.

Women are more likely to assume that hard work alone will be recognized and rewarded with a promotion and/or increased monetary compensation. They often wait for external factors and group consensus to determine their opportunities for advancement. In Propensity to Initiate Negotiations (Babcock, et al), researchers studied people's propensity to see possibility for change in their circumstances and found women were 45% more likely to score low on the scale. Their analysis was that women are less likely to see the importance of asking for what they want.

Recommendation: Women can increase their opportunities for promotion by taking a proactive approach to their career development that includes reporting accomplishments regularly, taking on high-profile assignments, and developing influential networking relationships within the organization. As career professionals, we should stress the importance of such an approach with our female clients.

Women set more modest goals than men.

Women set more modest goals than men and they generally make concessions earlier in the negotiation process. As a result, women typically have lower salaries than men in similar positions.

A 2003 study by Riley, Babcock, and McGinn, entitled Gender as a Situational Phenomenon in Negotiation, revealed that men typically set goals for negotiation conversations that are 15% higher than women. By going into the negotiation process with higher goals, men can often receive better initial offers and additional leverage in the negotiation process. Candidates who set high goals for salary negotiations benefit not only from the initial salary conversation, but from all subsequent negotiations as well. Employers often assume that applicants with better compensation records are more capable than those who have been paid less; high goal setting may result in more opportunities for men as they move through their careers.

Recommendation: Women should adopt a negotiation style that meets their individual needs, but should incorporate ambitious targets into their negotiation strategy. When your clients negotiate their compensation package, they are not just negotiating their starting salary--they are directly impacting every salary increase they receive from that point forward. Employers expect candidates to negotiate. In addition to the financial rewards associated with salary negotiation, they will gain the respect of the hiring manager and increase their credibility within the organization.

Stuff

My E-book, Retire, Rewire & Restart will be launched sometime in October - for sure! The book is now in the hands of a wonderful editor, who wrote me about wanting to do editing online and asked how could she get started?

I put her to work! :)

She's wonderful! Her name is Marge Downs - if you need a top notch editor. But don't steal her from me just yet.

In support of you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.