**Good Morning Career**

**Exercise No. 7: Steps to choose your career**

**Step 1 – Stop being fickle minded**

The first thing to do is to stop being fickle minded. You cannot afford to keep jumping to conclusions by changing your mind every now and then.

**A fickle mind is like a fish in a bowl. It keeps moving in the hope that it will travel a long distance, but all that it ends up doing is move around in circles.**

You have to develop patience. You have to train yourself in the art of making mature decisions by looking at every situation from multiple per­spectives. You will need to weigh the options available to you, and only then choose the best way forward.

**Step 2 – Get into the neutral zone**

An influenced mind is a biased mind, which takes decisions based on impulse and when it comes to career, impulse cannot be trusted. So shun any prejudice or bias before you start weighing your options. The easi­est way to do so is to start thinking about your career as if you haven’t thought about it ever before. ‘Clean the slate’ and start afresh.

**Step 3 – Listen to your heart first**

This is the fun part. We often want to do what comes from the heart. So let us give our heart the first preference.

Write down ten career options that you would be very happy to pur­sue. Also mention what is the thing that attracts you about it.

1. My first career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My second career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My third career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My fourth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My fifth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My sixth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My seventh career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My eighth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My ninth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

1. My tenth career preference is …………………………………………………………………...

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………..

Congratulations! You have given your heart the preference it deserves. Now, neither you nor your heart can complain that you did not pay heed to your inner desire.

**Step 4 – Ask your mirrors**

You created a list of your mirrors in Chapter 4; it is now time to talk to them again. Ask each one of them what they think are the most suitable career options (2 numbers) for you. Let them give you the reason for their recommendation.

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**Step 5 – Recall the career options suggested by the career counsellor**

In the previous chapter, you were asked to seek career options from a trained career counsellor. Rewrite the options the counsellor had suggested.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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**Step 6 – Time for logic to take over**

In the above steps you now have in front of you, preferences by you, your well-wishers, and a professional. With the options on the table, it is time to make a decision. Be a harsh critic as you weigh each of the options on the scale of logic and practicality. Remember, you are trying to finalise a career, not a part-time hobby.

The following considerations can help you shortlist four best career choices from the above.

**A. Get to know the field from all perspectives:** It is essential that you know the good side as well as the demanding side of each pro­fession. Search about them on the Internet; talk to people who have performed well in them. Request them to share some of their expe­riences. The idea is to get a bird’s eye view of all these professions.

**B. Check your armoury:** Life and career are battlegrounds. Empty guns wouldn’t help you last long. Check what resources are available to you and how they can improve your chances of success in a par­ticular field. When you are considering any career, you should aim to become the best. To reach this level of performance, there will be some resources needed. Check whether you have these resources. If not, check whether you can acquire them as and when required.

C. **Don’t shy from discussing your plans:** Often we feel hesitant in sharing our plans. Probably we are scared of being discour­aged or made fun of by others. My strong recommendation is that whatever you are thinking, you should get it audited by your mir­rors. This will bring to light certain issues that you may be either overrating or ignoring altogether.

D. **Act timely:** Time is short; you will need to work on your fact-finding at a faster pace. To make it a little easier, first, choose the top four career options; let us call them your fantastic four.

**Write your Fantastic Four career choices, and state the ‘why’ behind them:**

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Why? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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So there you are, with your most preferred four career choices.

**Step 7 – Talk to experts in each field**

The next step you need to take is to find, meet and talk to an expert in each of the above four fields. The reason to meet these experts is to find out the true picture of these career options. It is important that you meet the person and not discuss this on the phone or mail.

A few questions that can help you during the conversation with the persons are stated below:

1. **What is this career all about?**
2. **What is the starting level position and what could be the highest position that one can reach in this field?**
3. **What kind of personality suits this career the best?**
4. **What kind of qualification is favoured in this career?**
5. **Which colleges are known to have the best placements in this career?**
6. **What are the most enjoyable aspects of this career?**
7. **Do people drop out of this career? Why?**
8. **What is the future of this field in the next ten to fifteen years?**
9. **What kind of earning can be expected in this career?**
10. **Based on your experience and my interaction with you so far, would you recommend that I choose this option as my career?**

By now, you will have a fair idea about all the above career options. You may, in fact, be in a position to take a call. But before you do, let me present you with a tool that can help you in your final evaluation.

**Step 8 – Use the chart given below**

I call it the ‘Career Evaluation Matrix’; this has been designed by me based on my experience and of those I have worked with. You may use any other method if you wish; the idea is to weigh your options in a measurable way.

**Fantastic Four Career Options Evaluation Table.**

**Fill in the blank spaces with ratings on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Career Choice 1 | Career Choice 2 | Career Choice 3 | Career Choice 4 |
| **Comprehension Factor**How well do I understand its opportunities and challenges? |  |  |  |  |
| **Sustainability Factor**How bright a future does this field hope to have in the next ten years? |  |  |  |  |
| **Capability Factor**How well are my personality and abilities suited to make me the best in it? |  |  |  |  |
| **Resources Factor**How good are the resources already available (or I can avail in the near future), so that I can flourish in it?  |  |  |  |  |
| **Encouragement Factor**What level of support will I get from my well-wishers in making my existence strong in the career? |  |  |  |  |
| **Purpose Factor**How well do I know, why I want to pursue this career? |  |  |  |  |

Remember, the above table is just one tool that can help you in mak­ing up your mind. You may come across other tools. If you like them, do use them.

**Step 9 – Decision time**

**Well, you have the options on the table and the respective scores for them. You are still free to choose or not to choose any one of the above on the basis of scores, but make sure that you know what you are doing.**

It is time you choose which career you want to go for. So write it down.

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Congratulations! A new phase in your journey begins now!