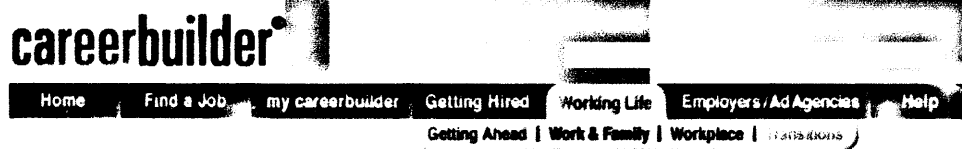


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Making Sound Career Choices

Job indecision is a major stumbling block.

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By *Helen Oliff*

I've heard it a hundred times: "The career counselor went through several tests and assessments with me. We looked at personality, behavior, skills and abilities, aptitude, and interests. She told me several career directions I could take. So I know what careers I can do, but I still don't know what I want!"

How could this happen? Why do so many people experience career indecision?

Workers who don't know what they want are out of touch--with who they really are and with the things that truly matter to them. Their thoughts, beliefs, and values are elusive; they cannot identify the things that uniquely motivate and define them. After all, how can we know what we want if we don't really know *who we are*?

If your whole life is riding on choosing the right career, the choice may seem impossible.

Some career choice candidates reach the decision point and just get stuck in indecision. This is no failure on the counselor's part. No one can tell you what you want, not even the best career counselor or coach! "Wanting" is an inside job. You must know your inner self first, then make a committed career choice based on that.

Perception vs. Reality

A certain amount of self-discovery is essential to this process. The inability to make a career choice proves one thing: A gap exists between who you think you are (and what you think you want) and who you *really* are (and what you *really* want.)

Career choice thus becomes a reason to look again, to find the "you" you want. In *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow*, author Marsha Sinetar makes a key point. Before we can choose to do what we love, we first must choose for ourselves. Only then can one make an authentic career choice. But this idea goes further back. As the German poet Goethe, in an essay titled *Commitment*, reminds us: The moment we definitely commit to a choice, all of providence will move to help us. But we must tell the truth about who we are and what we want.

We must learn to trust our choices, too. Best-selling author Marianne