

Career Choice

Parents still take pleasure in asking their children what the latter would like to become when they grow up. However, the answer to this question today is ever more difficult to give because the time has gone full circle with regards to career choice and many related concepts and attitudes have simply become irrelevant in the recent years with developments not only in the world of work *per se* but also with the advent of new technologies.

It is a fact that the line of demarcation between the various domains of different professions is becoming more and more blurred. There is more interdependence today between engineers and graphic designers than there ever was at a time when scientists and artists fell in different and distinct categories. Consequently, the great divide between subject domains like science, arts and humanities, commercial studies and technical studies are being bridged with considerable areas of overlapping between them. Academic qualifications have ceased to be “the be all and the end all”. They are regarded rather as indicators of potential. College level qualification, for instance, indicates the ability to grapple with the basic concepts of a particular domain. Undergraduate qualification shows a preparedness to tackle more complex levels of choices and problem-solving skill. It is therefore not uncommon to find banks offering jobs to science graduates, which was previously the reserve of holders of accountancy diplomas. Even postgraduate studies rarely “lock” scholars in one field of specialization and the possibilities for multiple specializations are also present, especially with the advent of e-learning.

On the other hand, traditional notions of personality traits like introversion and extroversion, which used to guide some to particular types of jobs, are no longer considered as determinant factors. Today, we work more and more with the machine which is our closest collaborator. We also work from home and at home, now called the electronic cottage. Face to face meetings with the other members of the team is only periodic. Most of the time, coordination of work is done through the medium of electronic communication. It is true that management remains the only field where one “works” with one’s personality and where persons make the difference. Besides, at no other time in human history has the world of work been so dynamic and shifting. Experts say that it is becoming practically impossible for anyone to stay in a job longer than a decade.

Techniques and technologies evolve so fast that workers must at all time upgrade themselves so as to keep up with the pace of change. Consequently, much more than academic qualifications, what is required is the ability to adapt, to be flexible and eclectic. These attitudes increase the worker's employability, not just locally but also on the world market. After all, we are living in a global village and the horizons of the world of work have widened to assume universal dimensions.

Thus, choosing one single career for life is becoming neither plausible nor desirable. In fact, most people will be brought to transit through various careers in their professional life.