

CHANGE YOUR CAREER! ENJOY NEW CHALLENGES! BECOME YOUR OWN BOSS!



MANY RECENT NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLES HAVE PREDICTED THAT 'LIFE COACHING' WOULD BE ONE OF THE TOP CAREER CHOICES FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM. WHY DOES THIS CHOICE OF CAREER SEEM SO POPULAR?

MARK SHIELDS INVESTIGATES

So you want to be a life coach? So do many other people – as shown by the number of applications to become professional life and business coaches – they have gone up tenfold in the last three years.

Is this career all that it is cracked up to be? Does it meet everyone's personal aspirations and expectations?

It's true more and more of us seem to be getting increasingly frustrated and insecure in our jobs year on year, as the credit crunch bites and employers are shedding more staff. With unemployment at 2.5 million and increasing all the time, it appears many of us seem to be taking our destiny into our own hands.

It is now common to see people in their early forties, after experiencing twenty years in the corporate arena, now choosing to do something completely different.

It is interesting to see how the work culture has changed. Long gone are the days when you started a job straight out of school or university and stayed in that company for most of your life. Nowadays people are looking to experience life in a very different way, and they believe they can break out of the monotony of their jobs and experience new and fresh challenges.

Some people have become plumbers, electricians and carpenters - and moved to Australia and never looked back. More people are subscribing to learn the manual trades as they offer a chance to be their own boss.

And also, adhering to the same principle, an increasing number of people are engaging in utilising their people skills and joining a people business, such as life coaching or hypnotherapy.

INCREASE IN COURSE ATTENDANCE

It is no surprise that a large majority of attendees on recent life coaching and NLP

courses have come from the financial sector. One national board went from having 500 members to nearly 5,000 members in less than two years and there are many regulatory boards of this nature.

The Channel Islands' biggest employer is the financial services sector. The Island is home to many international banks, trust companies and investment companies. In order to ensure success, the staff need to have strong interpersonal and influencing skills and are normally experienced in dealing one-to-one with staff and clients. In addition they have high business acumen and are focused and committed. These skills are easily transferable to life coaching.

It is not just bankers looking to change careers, although perhaps with today's challenges it is understandable. Also, a large number of delegates attending their first life coaching course are ladies in their forties looking for not just for a career change, but a life change as well. Again these ladies seem to come from previous

jobs that heavily involve dealing with people, often from other roles within the alternative therapy market.

A DESIRE TO HELP PEOPLE

The one common theme running through all new potential life and business coaches is the desire to help people and businesses wherever they can. They receive a great deal of satisfaction from helping people and this keeps them motivated.

I have found that when running training courses, delegates have boundless energy, unlimited enthusiasm and a renewed sense of purpose. The challenge and excitement of starting a new career fills them with positivity because they are finally doing something active to change their current situation.

So what happens once they have done their training? There are so many areas that a life coaching qualification can take you. Stress and anxiety are rife in today's society and these areas alone offer many opportunities for life coaches to offer these services.

FEEDBACK FROM THE FRONT LINE

I think it is important to take a look at a number of new life coaches and see how they are getting on a year on from completing their training. Have their personal expectations been met? More importantly, have they sustained the high

levels of enthusiasm and commitment from a year ago?

Hillary Jane Evans
Clinical Hypnotherapist & NLP Practitioner. Jersey.
Previous Occupation: Jersey Airport

"The whole world of life coaching and NLP fascinates me. I entered this business with a view to helping other people and make their lives better if I can. It has exceeded all my expectations.

No regrets. I love every second."

Michelle Sinclair
Clinical Hypnotherapist and NLP Coaching Practitioner.
Clearly Now Counselling, Letchworth, Hertfordshire
Previous Occupation: Teacher

"I started my own company after qualifying and aptly named it "Clearly Now Hypnotherapy". It's great when it all comes together. I found it important to specialise in a certain area and really focus on that one area. I have learnt a lot about myself and am far happier with all aspects of my life.

I find myself constantly using the life coaching model on myself by setting my own goals and re-planning where necessary. I have found it increases my self confidence and gives a huge sense of self belief.

I get the most satisfaction when helping people and seeing results".

Pauline Dickson
Pivotal Health Solutions, Croydon
Clinical Hypnotherapist. Coach & NLP Practitioner.
Previous Occupation: Student and Osteopath

Pauline loves working with people and had spent years training to be an osteopath and runs a successful clinic. By training to be a life coach she was able to bring an holistic approach to her practice and enhance the service she offered to her client base.

I was a manual therapist for years as well as running several businesses and bringing up my family. Doing the life coaching practitioner qualifications really enabled me to help my clients on a different level and take my business forward. I feel it really empowered me to really help my patients. I love my job now and feel I can confidently deal with anything. I am proud of my new company Pivotal Health Solutions. I now have a full set of tools in my kit bag. I am really glad I started this business when I did.

Alison Parkin
Happier for Life Counselling,
Hertfordshire

Clinical Hypnotherapist & NLP Practitioner.
Previous Occupation: Event Manager

Alison used to be an Event Manager until she gave up work to look after her three children. When her children eventually went to school she decided that her old occupation would not fit in with her family lifestyle so decided to try something new.

Becoming a life coach really broadened my horizons and put life in perspective for me. Starting my own business, "Happier for Life Counselling", gave me a real sense of purpose and I now approach life and business from a completely different angle. I wouldn't change anything for the world and love every minute. I also get to spend more time with my family.

SUMMARY

Well there we have it. Real life experiences shared with us all. My own personal advice before making any major career change is follow a number of clear steps before you reach any firm decision.

These are:

- Choose an accredited trainer to ensure you get a recognised accredited qualification at the end of your course.
- Think it through thoroughly.
- Make a business and marketing plan.
- Do your research and identify your market and the opportunity.
- Research business costs, office space, telephone, computer, advertising etc
- Study to become a life coach in your spare time, don't give up the day job straight away.
- Once qualified, offer sessions at weekends initially to test the water beforehand.
- Model successful life coaches and take one step at a time.

I believe it will be very interesting as we progress through the new millennium years to see if these trends continue, and if more and more of us choose to utilise our current skills for other careers and have the confidence to make the necessary change to ensure a happy and fulfilled life.

For more information on any points relating to the article or questions you may have about training as a life coach please contact Mark Shields direct at:

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