

KNOW YOURSELF

Wisdom for Knowing How You are Wired for Your Career

Dr. Charles Mugaviri

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By Dr. Charles Mugaviri

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Purposeful Career Planning

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the millions of teenagers in and from the African continent. May your lives be consumed by a deep desire to build leadership legacies that will unlock Africa's potential and greatness. Africa is too rich to be poor. You were born for a purpose. You were born to leave Africa a better continent than you found it. Don't disappoint and don't settle for less.

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No task of this magnitude can ever be achieved without divine wisdom and knowledge. I would like to first and foremost acknowledge the LORD Almighty for granting me the love to inspire and empower my generation.

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I would like to also acknowledge the inspiration and motivation that I have received over the years from the legacy building individuals that I have worked with in the Church community, at the University of Zimbabwe and at LASOF Leadership Institute. Our journey together of inspiring and empowering thousands of learners to make purposeful career choices and become character based leaders ignited the desire and vision for this career guidance series.

Each learner, parent, school, company, government department, Church or NGO who came through our career and leadership programs in Zimbabwe and the wider African region has inspired us to continue the journey and they deserve special acknowledgement. You each made me believe this was a worthwhile cause.

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Introduction

The career world is diverse and dynamic. Before you make a career choice, it is important that you have an appreciation of the width and depth of the career world in terms of options that are available.

A career is a chosen pursuit, a profession or occupation requiring special training, followed as one's lifework. It is a path or course one chooses to follow to earn a living. It is the progression of one's working life or one's professional achievements, for instance a soldier or a teacher. A career is a course of successive situations that make up a person's occupation. A career is therefore doing what one does as a permanent occupation.

The term career is derived from the Latin word *carrera*, which means race. The verb was first attested in 1594 from the notion of a horse "passing a career" on the jousting field. A career is usually considered to pertain to remunerative work and formal education. One can have a sporting career or a musical career without being a professional athlete or musician, but most frequently "career" in the 20th century referenced the series of jobs or positions by which one earned one's money.

Perspectives on career planning

One of the most important choices you have to make in your life time is selecting a career. This choice has far reaching implications and it has to be an informed choice. The quality of information you have determines the quality of decisions you make. This book is a tool designed to empower you to make an informed career choice that you won't regret in the future. In this introduction, we are going to share some perspectives that you need to take into account as you make use of this book.

Purpose perspective to career planning

Take a moment and think of the best footballer in your nation. Think also about your favourite local musician. Can you imagine the two of them switching places? How do you think the footballer would perform on the music stage and the musician in the football field?

We were all created and designed to fulfill a specific purpose in life. None of us was created to do everything. You have a life purpose that will bring out your best. That purpose is your life assignment. You need to choose a career that is aligned to that assignment. In fact your career should be an expression of that assignment. The platforms for expressing your purpose may vary from one season to another but the assignment itself does not change. Its expressions may also change but your purpose will remain a constant factor in life.

Many professionals today are not fulfilled and satisfied with their careers mainly because of a lack of purpose perspective in the manner they selected their careers. Your career should be an expression of who you are and it must be an opportunity for you to utilize your gifts, talents, passions and other latent abilities. This is why you must first know yourself well before you make your career choice. This question of self-knowledge is fully addressed in the book “Know Yourself: A Foundation for Career and Character Development” which is the first book in the Career Education series.

Dynamic perspective to career planning

You also need to appreciate the career world is so dynamic and ever changing. Did you know for example, that the top ten jobs in the world in 2010 did not exist in 2004? You need to be aware that some of the jobs that are on demand today may not be relevant in the future. Can you imagine what is happening to someone who invested all their time in developing a career that has to do with manufacturing or repairing manual type writers?

The dynamism of the career world means you need to be prepared to continuously develop new knowledge and skills that are relevant to the ever changing career world. Multi skilling is also important as you will have to adapt to the changing socio economic and political environment.

Please note the career listing in this book is not exhaustive. There are other careers that are not mentioned in this book under this career cluster. The ones listed here are only samples.

Local perspective to career planning

When making a career choice, invest effort in developing an understanding of the economic environment in your country as it has a direct bearing on the labour markets. You don't want to spend years developing knowledge and skills in an area where there are limited or no employment prospects. You need to have some insights in terms of employment trends in your local job market.

For example, a country like Zimbabwe did not have diamond mining until a few years ago. Today, however, diamond mining is redefining the economic terrain in ways that have far reaching implications in terms of new career opportunities. Diamond cutting, for example, is a new career pathway that had never been explored before but that is becoming a major area of employment opportunity as Zimbabwe has the fourth largest diamond deposits in the world. We have other examples of countries in countries that have discovered oil deposits like Ghana. Such developments have far reaching economic implications that are reflected in new career opportunities.

Global perspective to career planning

We encourage all learning to also develop knowledge and an appreciation of regional and global economic and employment trends. There is a lot of migration of skills across nations and continents. Developments in other parts of the world will have some bearing on developments in your nation as well. It is wise to have a global perspective even when you are deciding to pursue your career locally.

In this book, we have looked at the Career world from both an African and global perspective. There will be many careers you may see that you have not heard about before. Some of them may be in your country but you have not been aware of it. Other listed careers may not be found in your country. This broad view should help you to appreciate local, regional and global trends in terms of the career world.

Entrepreneurial perspective to career planning

The rate of unemployment has been growing across the nations of Africa and the world. There is need to rethink the traditional approach to career planning and employment. It is important to observe that in most African nations the informal or Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector is growing rapidly. Many people are creating jobs for themselves and others instead of seeking and waiting for non-existent employment opportunities.

As you plan your career, you need an entrepreneurial perspective where you see yourself as a prospective employer not just an employee.

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CHAPTER ONE

Self-Knowledge and Self-Awareness

Definition of self-knowledge¹

Self-knowledge is about understanding who you are, your purpose and destiny. It is about understanding yourself and your personality. Self-knowledge is the understanding of one's self or one's own motives and character. The better you know yourself the more accurately you can determine how to spend your time and follow the career path meant for you in life.

Self-knowledge is knowing yourself closely. It involves knowing your thoughts and feelings, how they came about, and how they influence your behaviour. It is about understanding your needs, desires, motivations, beliefs, views and values. In short, it is about knowing how you tick and what makes you tick.

Example

Ayanda is a very confident student who loves being the centre of attention. Her friends and other pupils enjoy being around her and interacting with her because she is vibrant and Ayanda knows that. She knows what makes her tick and understands herself. When the time to select school clubs came, Ayanda joined the drama club. She performed very well, had fun and at the end of the year was voted the best drama student by the teachers and other pupils. Ayanda joined the drama club because she knew her personality, her desires and she decided to invest her time in drama because she knew what she wanted and followed a path meant for her. She had self-knowledge.

¹ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/self-knowledge

Definition of self-awareness²

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize oneself as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals. Individuals become conscious of themselves through the development of self-awareness. This does not suddenly occur through one particular behavior, it develops gradually through a series of different behaviors all of which relate to the self. Self-awareness includes the concept that one exists as an individual separate and different from other people.

Other definitions of self-awareness:

- Knowing what you like and do not like
- Knowing who you are and how you impact the people around you
- Good judgment about yourself
- Who you are and what you can become
- Knowing your own limits
- Knowing your own talents and gifts
- Knowing what is important to you
- Knowing what you are good at; your best areas of skill

Example

Every girl in Miranda's class enjoys the Food and Nutrition class but Miranda discovers that she does not like it. She is terrible at it and burns everything she cooks and can't seem to get any recipe right. The teacher is always scolding her but still Miranda does not improve. Miranda realizes that she is different from the other girls. When Miranda goes home for the holidays, her mother one day asks her to help her with gardening. After helping her mother a few times, Miranda realizes that she enjoys gardening. Everything she plants grows beautifully and before long her mother teases her and says Miranda has green fingers and is the family farmer.

Miranda tells her mother that she now wants to do Agriculture at school because she understands plants and enjoys working in the garden. Miranda knows what she likes and what she doesn't

² www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/self-awareness

like; she realizes herself as a different individual and recognizes her limitations and talents. She is worried that some of the girls might laugh at her but her mother convinces her that the most important thing is that she does what she loves and enjoys. Miranda has become self-aware.

Importance of self-knowledge

Self-awareness is about understanding your own needs, desires, failings, habits, and everything else that makes you tick. Self-awareness is important because when we have a better understanding of ourselves, we are able to experience ourselves as unique and separate individuals. We are then empowered to make changes in our lives and to build on our areas of strength as well as identify areas where we would like to make improvements.

Self-awareness is an important skill to acquire. We call it a skill because it is not a quality that is inherited. This means that self-awareness is something that must be consciously developed and constantly practiced for it to flourish. Self-awareness is important because it is the path to your fullest potential.

Self-awareness is important because the more you know about yourself, the better you are at making choices that suit your needs. Essentially, the more you pay attention to your emotions and how you work, the better you'll understand why you do the things you do. Being aware of your needs and acting on them can help you improve your self-understanding. You might not realize that what you're doing doesn't correlate to what you want. Self-awareness helps you to use your strengths better, develop where you can and avoid areas where you know you are unsuited. In brief, people who know themselves better, do better in their careers.

Similarly self-knowledge is important because it helps you to understand yourself better. Through better self-understanding, you are more able to be in control of your own life. You can then make decisions in your life rather than let life make the decisions for you. It also helps you to find answer to the more insightful and spiritual question - "Who am I?"

Through self-knowledge, we can change the quality of our life simply by changing the way we think and view the world around us. We can become happier simply by changing ourselves, without changing the world. Interestingly, when we do change ourselves, the world around us

changes as well. Self-knowledge allows us to recognize our error in thinking and correct it. It is therefore the means to a better and more fulfilling life - physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

CHAPTER TWO

Application of Self-Awareness and Self-Knowledge

Introduction

The skill required to understanding self-knowledge and self-awareness is introspection. This lesson will define what introspection is and what it encompasses. The next step after understanding introspection would be to carry out a practical lesson where each one goes through introspection and takes a long look at themselves.

Introspection is the examination of one's conscious thoughts and feelings. It means looking inside yourself. It describes the act of thinking about your own actions and inner thoughts. When you examine what you do, say, think or feel and how it affects your life and the lives of others around you, that's introspection. Introspection is about getting to know yourself more closely, unpacking your values and deciding what the best action to take is. A busy life does not exclude this possibility of introspection or self-reflection but it does make it less likely that you will do so.

Exercise 3

The following steps will help you go through your introspection. They can be done anywhere but it's best if you build routines around them. Start small and do your best to build the habit of introspection in your life.

Step One: Create a quiet space

This may come in many forms. For some it may mean taking a walk in the park, having your coffee quietly alone or staying in bed for a few minutes longer. If you live on a farm or in a rural area, take a walk in the bush or up the mountain where it is safe to do so. The important element is to make sure that the environment is peaceful and you generally feel relaxed and there are no disturbances and interruptions because you are having some serious "me" time.

Step Two: Ask yourself deep ended questions

Take a few deep breadths and let your mind go blank for a moment. Enjoy that peace and quiet for a few seconds then ask yourself the following questions:

Who am I?

What do I love most about myself?

What are the things that make me happy?

What are those things most important to me?

What is it that I like most?

What is the one thing I haven't done I would really love to do?

Step Three: See what comes but do not make judgments

If this is your first time doing this you may be shocked or amused at what you will find. Don't judge whatever thoughts you have, it's all a part of you. Sometimes there are parts of ourselves that haven't been given the time to shine. When you start to give yourself space the deeper, passionate and playful parts of yourself all seize the moment and come out. Enjoy the process.

Step Four: Take notes

This can be done either mentally or with a paper in hand. Writing down your thoughts and reflections makes it easier to track themes that keep occurring and it gives you something to look back on. Think of it as a treasure search, you might want a map to record your experience.

Step Five: Reflect and repeat

After you've gone through this process let it sit with you and see how it feels. The more often you ask yourself these questions the more clarity you'll get. Think of it as practice. You'll never become a master of your craft if you only do it once or twice. Make it part of your routine and reap the massive rewards of self-knowledge. Slowly, but surely you'll build the tools to become captain of your own inner universe.

Taking this exercise helps you see where you are and where you want to be. It shows you a mirror image of the way you are and the way things are.

CHAPTER THREE

Model of Self-Knowledge and Self-Awareness

The Johari Window Model³

The Johari Window model is a simple and useful communication tool for illustrating and improving self-awareness and understanding each other as individuals. The word "Johari" is taken from the names of Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, who developed the model in 1955.

There are two key ideas behind the tool:

1. That you can build trust with others by telling them about yourself.
2. That, with the help of feedback from others, you can learn about yourself and come to terms with personal issues.

By explaining the idea of the Johari Window, you can help your peers to understand the value of telling other people about yourself (self-disclosure), and you can encourage them to give, and accept, constructive feedback.

Done sensitively, this self-disclosure help people build better, more trusting relationships with your peers, solve issues, and work more effectively as a team.

Explaining the Johari Window Model

The Johari Window is shown as a four-box grid, which you can see in the diagram below.

³ www.businessball.com/johariwindow



1. Open Area (Box 1)

This section represents the things that you know about yourself, and the things that others know about you. This includes your behavior, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and "public" history.

2. Blind Area (Box 2)

Box 2 represents things about you that you aren't aware of, but that are known by others.

This can include simple information that you do not know, or it can involve deep issues (for example, feelings of incompleteness, being bad at doing something, unworthiness, or rejection), which are often difficult for individuals to face directly, and yet can be seen by others.

3. Hidden Area (Box 3)

This box represents things that you know about yourself, but that others don't know.

4. Unknown Area (Box 4)

This last box represents things that are unknown by you, and are unknown by others.

The End Goal

The ultimate goal of the Johari Window is to enlarge the Open Area, without disclosing information that is too personal. The Open Area is the most important area, as, generally, the

more people know about each other, the more productive, cooperative, and effective they'll be when working or learning together.

The process of enlarging the Open Area box is called "self-disclosure," and it's a give-and-take process that takes place between yourself and the people that you're interacting with.

As you share information, your Open Area expands vertically and your Hidden Area gets smaller. As people in your team or in your class provide feedback⁴ to you about what they know or see about you, your Open Area expands horizontally, and your Blind Area gets smaller. Done well, the process of give and take, sharing, and open communication builds trust.

People who have a large Open Area are usually very easy to talk to, they communicate honestly and openly with others, and they get along well with a group. People who have a very small Open Area are difficult to talk to, they seem to keep to themselves, and they often don't work or learn well with others, because they're not trusted.

Other people might have a large Blind Area, with many issues that they haven't identified or dealt with yet. However, others can see these issues clearly. These people might have low self-esteem, or they may even have anger issues when working with others.

Using the Tool

The process of enlarging your Open Area involves self-disclosure. Put simply, the more you (sensibly) open up and disclose your thoughts, feelings, dreams, and goals, the more you're going to build trust with your team.

Tip:

Try to avoid "over-sharing" in your self-disclosure. Disclosing small, harmless items builds trust. However, avoid disclosing personal information which could damage people's respect for you. Another important aspect of enlarging your Open Area is accepting feedback from others in your

⁴ www.mindtools.com

team. This feedback helps you learn things about yourself that others can see, but that you can't. This is important for personal growth.

Self-knowledge and self-awareness are very important in career planning. A purposeful career life is one in which there is a clear agreement between who you are and what you do in your career. When this alignment is lacking, there is no meaning and fulfillment in the work we do. A lack of career guidance has led to many people making career decisions that are not aligned to who they have been made to be.

This is foundational to self-knowledge and has an important bearing on career planning. We shall then look at the skills required to gain self-awareness. Any person who is going to excel in their career needs to have the skills for self-assessment.

CHAPTER FOUR

Self-Knowledge, Self-awareness and Career Planning

Definition of career

A career is “an occupation or profession, especially one requiring special training, followed as one's lifework: He sought a **career** as a lawyer. It is a person's progress or general course of action through life or through a phase of life, as in some profession or undertaking.”⁵

Definition of occupation

An occupation is a person's usual or principal work or business, especially as a means of earning a living; vocation. For example, “Her **occupation** was dentistry.”⁶

Definition of job

A job is a piece of work, especially a specific task done as part of the routine of one's occupation or for an agreed price. For example “She gave him the **job** of mowing the lawn.” I can also be defined as a post of **employment**; full-time or part-time position.⁷

A lack of career guidance has led to many people making career decisions that are not aligned to who they were been made to be. Self-awareness and self-knowledge can help you visualize your ideal job or working environment.

Career selection is a process that takes time and effort. Through self-awareness and knowledge you can look at your skills, values, interests and personality and analyze where your strengths and weaknesses lie. This will help you and give you time to work on the areas where you realize you are lacking. This is important in choosing the right career. As humans we are not designed to do everything but specifically designed to make a unique contribution to the human race. You

⁵ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/career

⁶ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/occupation

⁷ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/job

cannot afford to bury your head in the sand and hope to leave your career choice to the very last years of your education. That is a recipe for disaster.

Knowing yourself and realizing what makes you tick, is like having a compass that helps you find direction as you explore a vast land. It leads you to the stage where you can map out the future through a career vision, guided by what you have learn about yourself as you become self-aware and self-knowledgeable.

We are going to explore the example of Bill Gates⁸ one of the richest man in the world and the creator of Microsoft, the computer software company. He showed interest in computers from the early age of thirteen. He went on to follow that career path because that is where his interests and strengths lay. Imagine he dropped out of Harvard University, one of the best universities in the world to pursue a career path that reflected his interests.

Example

William (Bill) Henry Gates III was born on October 28, 1955, in Seattle, Washington. Bill was the second of three children in an upper-middle class family. He enjoyed playing games with the family and was very competitive. He also loved to read. Bill became bored in public school so his family sent him to Lakeside School, a private school, where he excelled in Math and Science and did well in Drama and English.

Gates became interested in computer programming when he was thirteen, during the time of giant mainframe computers. His school held a fund-raiser to purchase a teletype⁹ terminal so students could use computer time. Using this time, Gates wrote a tic-tac-toe program .Later he created a computer version of Risk, a board game he liked in which the goal is to dominate the world. At Lakeside, Bill met Paul Allen, who shared his interest in computers. Gates and Allen

⁸ www.biography.com/people/bill-gates

⁹ www.linfo.org/teletype.html Teletypewriter **Definition.** A teletypewriter, also referred to as a **teletype** machine, is a now largely obsolete electro-mechanical typewriter that was used to communicate typed messages from point to point through a simple electrical communications channel.

and two other students hacked¹⁰ into a computer belonging to Computer Center Corporation (CCC) to get free computer time but were caught. After a period of probation, they were allowed back in the computer lab when they offered to fix problems in CCC's software. At age 17, Gates and Allen were paid \$20,000 for a program called Traf-O-Data that was used to count traffic.

Paul Allen worked on computers at Honeywell Corporation and convinced Gates to join him in starting a new software company in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They called it Micro-Soft. This was soon changed to Microsoft, and they moved their company to Bellevue, Washington.

Microsoft grew quickly from 25 employees in 1978 to over 90,000 today. Over the years, Microsoft has developed many new technologies and some of the world's most popular software products such as Word and Power Point. Gates has built Microsoft into one of the largest companies in the world.

Bill Gates is one of the richest men in the world. In 2012, his \$61 billion dollars in assets made him the world's second richest man according to Forbes Magazine. In 2006, Gates announced that he would cut back his involvement at Microsoft to spend more time on helping the poor through his foundation. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supports many causes including the fight to eradicate Polio, fighting AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; providing vaccinations for children; and even reinventing the toilet among many other things.

¹⁰ <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.hacking> Hacking is the gaining of access(wanted or unwanted) to a computer and viewing, copying, or creating data(leaving a trace) without the intention of destroying data or maliciously harming the computer.

CHAPTER FIVE

Career Assessment Tools

Most commonly used career assessment tools

1. Holland Codes¹¹

Holland codes are personality types developed by psychologist John L. Holland as part of his theory of career choice. Holland mapped these types into a hexagon which he then broke down into the RIASEC job environments. RIASEC: Acronym for the career-related personality types developed by psychologist John L. Holland.

The letters in RIASEC stand for:

Realistic - practical, physical, hands-on, tool-oriented

Investigative - analytical, intellectual, scientific, explorative

Artistic - creative, original, independent, chaotic

Social - cooperative, supporting, helping, healing/nurturing

Enterprising - competitive environments, leadership, persuading

Conventional - detail-oriented, organizing, clerical

Exercise 1: Coding Your Career Related Interests¹²

Purpose: To identify personal interests related to your career through conducting an interest activity.

Instructions

- ◆ In the table below, circle any activities that are of interest to you.
- ◆ Count the number of circled activities in each column (identified by category such as R-Realistic) and write the totals in the spaces provided.

¹¹ http://www.quintcareers.com/online_assessment_review.

¹² acrn.ovae.org

◆ If there are not two main areas that interest you, ask yourself if the non-chosen activities are “interesting” or “very interesting.”

◆ Keep going until the top two areas of interest have been identified.

◆ Compare your code to the definitions on the following page.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	Fix mechanical things	Work on a scientific project	Sketch, draw or paint	Work as a Volunteer for a charity	Operate my own business	Operate office machines
B	Take a Woodworking class	Study the stars through a telescope	Play in a band or orchestra	Help others with their personal problems	Serve as an officer of a group	Computer business figures
C	Take an Auto Mechanics class	Solve a mathematical problem	Create photographs	Work as a speech therapist	Supervise the work of others	Take an Accounting class
D	Work outdoors	Investigate a crime scene	Take an Art class	Work as a nurse	Lead a group to accomplish a goal	Take a Commercial Math class
E	Operate motorized machines or equipment	Read scientific books or magazines	Act in a play	Teach children	Read business magazines or articles	Work in an office
F	Build things	Do a lot of thinking	Design fashions	Teach or train others	Meet important people	Write a business letter
G	Work alone	Use a microscope	Design interiors	Lead a group discussion	Give a talk or speech	Use a computer
H	Tend/Train animals	Do complicated calculations	Read fiction, plays or poetry	Play a team sport	Sell things	Keep accurate records
I	Pitch a tent	Understand physics laws and theories	Attend concerts, the theater, or an art exhibit	Help others resolve a dispute	Promote or spread an idea	Be responsible for details
J	Solve mechanical puzzles	Interpret formulas	Work on crafts	Participate in a meeting	Win a leadership or sales award	Type or use word processing software
K	Plant a garden	Learn about a new subject area	Work according to your own rules	Are good with words and talking to people	Take on a lot of responsibility	Work with numbers

L	Read a blueprint	Use computers	Use your imagination to do something original	Work with young people	Participate in a political campaign	Be very well organized
M	Play a sport	Perform lab experiments	Write stories and poetry	Plan and supervise an activity	Convince people to do things your way	Set up a system for doing something and stick to it
	R _____	I _____	A _____	S _____	E _____	C _____

Coding Interests Explanations

- The two columns with the most items circled will indicate what your code(s) are:

R _____	I _____	A _____	S _____	E _____	C _____
Realistic	Investigative	Artistic	Social	Enterprising	Conventional

R = Realistic

Mechanical and athletic abilities; likes working outdoors with tools and objects; prefers dealing with things rather than people.

I = Investigative

Math and science abilities; likes working alone and solving complex problems; likes dealing with ideas rather than people or things.

A = Artistic

Artistic ability and imagination; enjoys creating original work; likes dealing with ideas rather than things.

S = Social

Social skills; interested in social relationships and helping others solve problems; likes dealing with people rather than things.

E = Enterprising

Leadership and speaking abilities; likes to be influential; interested in politics and business; like to deal with people and ideas, not things.

C = Conventional

Clerical and mathematical ability; prefer working indoors and organizing things; like to deal with words and numbers rather than people or ideas.

RIASEC Table

RIASEC Type	Description	Sample Occupations
R Realistic	Mechanical and athletic abilities; like working outdoors with tools and objects; prefer dealing with things rather than people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpenter • Truck operator • X-Ray Technician
I Investigative	Math and science abilities; like working alone and solving complex problems; like dealing with ideas rather than people or things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemist • Microbiologist
A Artistic	Artistic ability and imagination; enjoy creating original work; like dealing with ideas rather than things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musician • Interior Designer • Actor
S Social	Social skills; interested in social relationships and helping others solve problems; like dealing with people rather than things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Clergy Member • Elementary Teacher
E Enterprising	Leadership and speaking abilities; like to be influential; interested in politics and business; like to deal with people and ideas, not things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyer • Retail Store Manager • Financial Advisor
C Conventional	Clerical and math ability; prefer working indoors and organizing things; like to deal with words and numbers rather than people and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Editor • Bookkeeper • Data Processor

2. Myers-Briggs¹³ Personality Type

Based on typological theories originated by Carl Jung, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment is a psychometric questionnaire designed to measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. The original developers of the personality inventory were Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers. The 16 different types are usually referred to by an abbreviation of four letters. One of each of the following pairs constitutes one's four-letter type: **E**xtraversion or **I**ntroversion, **S**ensing or **i**Ntuition, **T**hinking or **F**eeding, and **J**udging or **P**erceiving.

Personality is an important indicator that is often used in to help people choose a suitable career. How well your personality and career match can significantly influence whether you find that

¹³ http://www.quintcareers.com/online_assessment_review

career fulfilling, stressful, boring or challenging. The right match between your job and personality can increase your job satisfaction and productivity, while the wrong match may result in your career being stressful, boring or too challenging. Correctly matching personality and career will also increase your chances of enjoying long-term success and happiness in your career.

But before we go any further let us define the term personality type.¹⁴ Personality is a combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character. Basically personality refers to our attempts to capture or summarize an individual's essence. There are different types of personalities and it is sometimes difficult to classify a person into a single type as there are many different personality traits you can possess.

No two people are exactly the same not even identical twins. This issue of differences is very important to the study of personality. This means we are all created as unique individuals. The word personality comes from the Latin word, persona which means mask. The study of personality can be understood as the study of masks that people wear. These are the personas that people show and display. It can also be defined as an individual's nature. It is one's psychological makeup that shapes their understanding and response to life issues. It is the foundation of behaviour, moral fiber, integrity and reputation.

Now that we know what a personality is let's go further and explore the personality tests. Your personality type is an important career indicator. No test can give you all the answers, the answers are only in your head and your heart. This test is only meant to look deep inside you and get the answers out in the open, it is about self-assessment. The tests only work if you take them seriously and think carefully and answer them truthfully.

¹⁴ www.humanmetrics.com/hr/you/personalitytype. Instrument determine the expressiveness of each of the four **personality type** dimensions (Extraversion vs. Introversion, Sensing vs. Intuition, Thinking vs. Feeling, and Judging vs. Perceiving).

Taking the personality test¹⁵

Myers and Briggs¹⁶ were able to come up with personality types to careers by studying the personality types of people who had careers they enjoyed and were successful in. Myers and Briggs managed to test enough people to build a statistically valid model. Since then the work of matching personality type to careers has continued. They grouped or typed individuals based on their preferences or the way they chose to do certain things. They believed that an individual's preferences remained the same throughout his or her life.

MBTI Personality Types¹⁷

Your personality can be scientifically expressed as a unique combination of how you relate to people, how you understand information, how you approach problems and how you plan your time. There are options to each of these categories of behavior. These are:

- **E or I – Extraversion vs. Introversion.**

Do you choose to be around people as a source of energy (E) or do you prefer solitude to regain your energy (I)?

- **S or N – Sensing vs. iNtuition**

Do you think of yourself as being practical or as someone who knows things without learning or thinking about them (intuitive)? Do you tend to talk mostly about what's happening around you – the news, facts, things that are real and concrete (S)? Or do you like to think about the world of ideas, abstract concepts, and imagine what could be (N)?

- **T or F – Thinking vs. Feeling.**

When you make decisions, do you look at the choices from an impersonal, objective viewpoint (T)? Or are your decisions more personal, based on your values (F)?

- **J or P – Judging vs. Perceiving.**

Do you want things to be settled and decided (J) or do you prefer to keep things open (P)? J's feel a sense of urgency until a decision is made, while P's resist making final decisions.

¹⁵ There are several Personality Tests that one can do online.

¹⁶ www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics

¹⁷ www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics

Your personality type is a combination of one option from each of the four categories of your behavior. For example, extraversion, sensing, thinking and judging, which is abbreviated ESPJ and described as extraverted thinking with sensing or overseer. Each personality has unique preferences and needs. There is also a different mix of career matches for each of them.

CHAPTER SIX

Developing a Positive Self-image

What is self-image?

- How you see yourself or your self – concept;
- What you think you look like (physically);
- What kind of person you think you are;
- What you believe others think of you;
- How much you like yourself or you think others like you;
- How you see yourself and how you believe others see you;

What is self-esteem?

- How you feel about yourself as a person
- The value you place upon yourself as a being
- The confidence you have in your abilities
- The measure of how much you believe in yourself.

Meaning and importance of self-image

Your self-image is like the videotape in your mind. It contains hundreds of mental pictures of yourself collected over the years and put together to form the image you have of yourself. It is the end result of memories and past experiences as well as your reaction to them.

It is shaped by your own thoughts, but also by the opinions of others; bits and pieces put together over the years. Parents, siblings, childhood friends, school mates, teachers, relatives, peers,

spiritual leaders and others in your life have had their influence. People in your life can have a positive or negative impact on your self-image.

Your self-image is very important. Everything you do and become in life is based on the image you have of yourself. Self-image is one of the most important aspects of our emotional and psychological make-up. It influences what you do and how you live. It helps determine your choices and achievements in all spheres of your life including your career selection, who your friends and acquaintances are, whom you marry and even the nature of your relationship with your Creator.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Causes of a Low Self-Image

Background

Your background can affect the way you see yourself and the value you place upon yourself. It could be a result of one or more of the following issues and life experiences:

Causes of a Low Self-image

Background

Your background can affect the way you see yourself and the value you place upon yourself. It could be a result of one or more of the following issues and life experiences:

1. Poverty

If one comes from a poor family where you have limited choices in terms of what you wear and eat, it may affect your self-image especially if you continue to compare yourself with children from well-to-do families. Such comparison may make you feel less important than others.

Remember it is not your fault to be born poor, but it is your responsibility to die poor or rich. The way you think is very important. You have to decide and always tell yourself I will not remain poor. I will not raise my family in poverty. You become what you think and do.

You may have been brought up in poverty but you need to tell yourself you are not poor. Real poverty is a state of the mind! Your current situation is not permanent. It is temporary. Tell yourself you will change that situation as you wisely choose and pursue a career that reflects your purpose.

You change your thinking first before you change your life. You become 'big' inside first before you become 'big' on the outside. It doesn't matter where you are today; you have a great opportunity to create a great future through a great career. This is what this book is about. I believe you have great potential to become big and you should always tell yourself you are big!

2. Single Parenthood, Absentee Parents or Being Orphaned

Many children the world over are growing up in environments where they have a single parent, are orphaned or have absentee parents owing to vocational commitments or divorce. Such situations can affect one's self-image in a negative way.

You need to forgive your parents where necessary and tell yourself I have a life to live in a positive way. At times you become exposed to a lot of negative treatment by other relatives and people around you. Many negative words may be said to you. However you have a choice to believe or not believe those words. If you allow such words to affect your heart in a negative way that will discourage you from moving forward and achieve your dreams.

You need to know you are not what people say. Choose not to take those words to heart. What you tell yourself is more important than what people tell you. After all you speak to yourself more than you speak to anyone else. What are you telling yourself?

You also need to always remind yourself that your situation of lack of parenthood is temporary in that it will not affect you for the rest of your life. You are passing through it. After some time it will all be a thing of the past as you will be able to stand on your feet and support yourself. So don't be discouraged and don't give up. Make best with what is available. The best is coming and you need to prepare yourself.

3. Failure to Accept Your Physical Appearance

Another major reason for having a negative self-image especially among teenagers and youths is the issue of your perception of your appearance. A lot young people have problems accepting their physical appearance especially if their peers criticize them. Many end up comparing themselves with others and tend to always think they are not good enough. At times there is a tendency to over focus on one's appearance and dressing.

You are not a photocopy of other people but an original. You were created to be unique and special in your own way. You don't have to be like any other person. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are not beautiful or handsome because of what people tell you. You are beautiful or handsome because you recognize it yourself. If you know and believe you were created a special person, then no

one can convince you otherwise. If they try to, you have a simple choice of discarding their opinion and not allow them to damage your positive self-image.

You will notice over time that the way you see yourself – yourself-image or self-perception has strong influence on the way other people perceive you. If you believe in yourself and believe you are unique, it will be hard for anyone to look down on you and tell you that you are a ‘nobody.’ If they try to do it, it will not stick and affect you.

You also need to know you are more than a body. Don’t over focus on your physical appearance as if that is all there is about you. You are what you think. What you think about yourself is more important than how you appear. Great lives are made from great thinking, not great bodies! You need to make wise decisions about life and act wisely if you are going achieve great things in your career. Making a career decision and planning for career success needs a lot of wisdom. Your career is more important than your appearance.

We are not suggesting that appearance is not important, but we are sharing wisdom on where true greatness lies. After all when you are great inside, it will be naturally reflected on your appearance on the outside.

4. Past Failures

Past failure is not your enemy but your friend. Choose to learn from it and do better next time. You need to pick out lessons from your past failures and move on. All people who achieved great things were willing to move beyond their failures and try again. If at first you don’t succeed try, try, try again!

The most important thing is that don’t allow your past failures to shape your self-image. Failing does not make you a failure! You need to have an attitude that allows you to learn and grow from your past failures. Become more mature and wiser because you are a student of your past failures. As you continue to grow and mature, you make mistakes along the way. What matters most is how you respond and learn from your mistakes and failures.

I will share a personal testimony to illustrate the above point. When I wrote my ‘O’ Levels, I came out with four subjects, 3 ‘As’ and one ‘B.’ I was naturally devastated because I expected to do well. This result meant I could not immediately proceed to ‘A’ Level as I had to repeat to get a full ‘O’

Level certificate. This set back became my source of inspiration. I reflected on my result and got to know I lacked study skills. I worked on my study skills and gave it another shot. I passed very well and today I am a holder of three diplomas and four degrees!

Get me right, I am not encouraging anyone to first fail their exams, but I am advising that should you happen to fail in any area of your life, don't give up especially when you know you have the potential to make it like I did. Often times, failure is success delayed and not success denied.

Lincoln's "Failures"?¹⁸

Below is one version of the so-called "Lincoln failures" list, shown in bold type. It's often used to inspire people to overcome life's difficulties with Lincoln as a model. Then look at the right column with other facts from Lincoln's pre-presidential life. History professor Lucas Morel compiled this comparison from the Chronology in *Selected Speeches and Writings/Lincoln* by Don E. Fehrenbacher, ed., 1992.

Year	Failures	Successes
1832	Lost job Defeated for state legislature	Elected company captain of Illinois militia in Black Hawk War
1833	Failed in business	Appointed postmaster of New Salem, Illinois Appointed deputy surveyor of Sangamon County
1834		Elected to Illinois state legislature
1835	Sweetheart died	
1836	Had nervous breakdown	Re-elected to Illinois state legislature (running first in his district) Received license to practice law in Illinois state courts
1837		Led Whig delegation in moving Illinois state capital from Vandalia to Springfield Became law partner of John T. Stuart
1838	Defeated for Speaker	Nominated for Illinois House Speaker by Whig caucus Re-elected to Illinois House (running first in his district) Served as Whig floor leader
1839		Chosen presidential elector by first Whig convention Admitted to practice law in U.S. Circuit Court
1840		Argues first case before Illinois Supreme Court Re-elected to Illinois state legislature
1841		Established new law practice with Stephen T. Logan

¹⁸ <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/education/failures.htm>

1842		Admitted to practice law in U.S. District Court
1843	Defeated for nomination for Congress	
1844		Established own law practice with William H. Herndon as junior partner
1846		Elected to Congress
1848	Lost re-nomination	(Chose not to run for Congress, abiding by rule of rotation among Whigs.)
1849	Rejected for land officer	Admitted to practice law in U.S. Supreme Court Declined appointment as secretary and then as governor of Oregon Territory
1854	Defeated for U.S. Senate	Elected to Illinois state legislature (but declined seat to run for U.S. Senate)
1856	Defeated for nomination for Vice President	
1858	Again defeated for U.S. Senate	
1860		Elected President

5. Negative Words from Other People

Many people suffer from a negative self-image because of negative words spoken to them in their family, at school or by their peers. Words have power build or destroy people's self-image.

You however have a choice to go on repeating to yourself all the negative words that were spoken to you. This will not help you but it will negate your self-image and self-esteem. You need to know that no one can hurt you without your consent. Many negative words may be said to you or about you but they will not affect you until you allow that to happen. Your power zone is in exercising your freedom of choice, i.e. deciding what you allow into your life.

Learn to discard words that don't help to build you up. Many people make the mistake of repeating these damaging words over and over again. The moment you do that you are like a person who is using a knife from your enemy to pierce your own heart. Learn to ignore damaging words that destroy your self-image. The secret is to know you are not what people say – you are who you think you are.

CHAPTER EIGHT

How to Develop a Positive Self-Image

It is important for you to know you can develop a positive self-image that will empower you to feel good about yourself. You have to take personal responsibility for this – no one will do it for you! Failing to develop a positive self-image will greatly affect you in a negative way and the career choice you will make.

Take the following suggestions and apply them to your life for your benefit.

1. Think positively

When you think in positive ways, you tend to act in positive ways and, you will get positive results. Remember what you think is what you get. This is called self-fulfilling prophecy. Make a choice to have positive thoughts about yourself. Be aware of the dominating thoughts that limit your potential that you have entertained for a long time.

Make a conscious decision to have positive thoughts. Your thoughts determine your life experience. Believe that you are going to have a great career dream and your life will start to move towards making a great career decision and everything in your life will align with such a dream. What you think and believe in will shape the way you speak about yourself and ultimately it will influence your actions and the results your life will produce.

2. Be yourself

Be comfortable and confident to be who you are. Accept yourself and be yourself. Stop imitating or wanting to become someone else because you cannot be no matter how hard you try. You can only be you and it's good and great to be you. Learn to accept and love this special person called you.

Stop trying to be and say what you think others want you to be or what they want you to say. If you are trying to be something you are not, you will perform much more poorly and create the very failure you fear. Be yourself, and let others like or dislike you as you are.

Life is about choices and consequences. The choices you make determine the consequences or results you get. You need to learn to make choices that will empower you to build a positive self-image. For example decide to associate or make friends with people who respect you and say positive things about you than those who undermine your self-image by saying many negatives about you.

3. Use positive self-talk

Did you know that you talk to yourself more than anyone else? However the most important aspect is, what are you telling yourself? Are you telling yourself negative things such “I am not as good as...” “I can’t do it...” “I am not good enough”

What you speak is an expression of your thinking. Positive self-talk comes from positive thoughts you have about yourself. You need to change the way you think about yourself. Start to think positively and speak positively. You are always speaking to yourself in your mind.

What are you telling yourself? Just start to eliminate all the negative statements and turn them into positive ones. For example change the ‘I can’t’ thoughts into ‘I can’ thoughts.

4. Allow ‘input’ into your mind that has life and affirms your dignity and self-worth.

You have two important “doors” to your mind that allow input for everything that comes to your mind, namely your ears and your eyes. You have to be careful what you allow your ears to hear, be it words or music. You also have to be careful about what your eyes see. It can either build or destroy you. What you hear and see will shape your thinking for better or for worse. What you think determines what you think about yourself and ultimately what you become in life.

Words have the power to build or destroy your self-image. Be careful that you don't allow words that erode your positive self-image. Screen and allow input into your mind that strengthens your self-image, dignity and self-worth. Remember you are fearfully and wonderfully made¹⁹ and anyone who has a different opinion is not worth listening to. You have a choice of what to watch and listen to. You have a choice of whom to associate with. Exercise that freedom of choice wisely. Don't entertain people who pull you down.

True personal transformation happens when you recognize that there has to be a process of elimination by substitution. You don't just stop doing certain things but you also have to start sowing seeds of life into your life.

5. Know, accept and act the truth about your true identity

Always remember you are not what people say. You are a special person who deserves the respect of others. However you need to start by accepting your true identity – you were created as a unique and special person. It's up to other people to accept that truth. If they don't, it's not your problem, let it remain their problem. What you tell yourself is more important than all the negative words others may say. Repeat to yourself the words “I am fearfully and wonderfully made”²⁰ as many times as you can for as many days as you can.

Because you are a special person, treat yourself respectfully. When you respect your mind, your body and your life, other people have no choice but to treat you with respect as well.

6. Know, embrace and act on the truth about your life potential – Focus on your strengths, gifts, talents, abilities, passions etc.

Your life has been blessed with great potential. You need to recognize and focus on developing this potential. Don't focus on what you don't have and what you are not. Focus on your strengths, your gifts, talents, passions etc. There will be self-discovery tools in the following

¹⁹ Psalms 139: 14

²⁰ Psalms 139: 14

chapters that will help you know gifts, talents, passions etc. Take responsibility to develop each of them. This will significantly boost your self-image.

7. Know, embrace and act on the truth about your purpose – why were you born?

When you know your purpose, no one can make you feel your life is worthless. Purpose unlocks a deep sense of self-worth in you because you will understand you were born for a noble cause. You are special and you have a unique contribution to make to humanity. You were born to make a difference and there is greatness hidden in you waiting to be released as you pursue your purpose.

In the next chapter, we focus on this important subject of how you can know your purpose. Your career has to be an expression of your purpose – otherwise you will have a boring career life. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are a special person in your generation. You are the only one of your kind, this is why there is only one 'you.' Don't look down on yourself either because you don't deserve that. You are going to make a special contribution to your community, nation or the world and get yourself ready for such an important life assignment.

8. Choose and plan to have a successful and significant life

One important way of developing your self-image is to focus on your future. Don't continue to focus on negative experiences or words from the past. There is no future in the past! Make a conscious decision that you are going to have a successful and significant life.

We are going to focus on career life visioning in another book in this series. Open yourself to dreaming big about your future. It's a choice you have to make and follow through. There are no limits to what you can achieve in life. Develop a clear vision and plan for your life: set worthwhile goals – create a better future for yourself and others.

9. Recognize and celebrate the beauty and blessings of your life

You are a blessed person in more ways than you may realize. You have the gift of life. This is a special gift for every person. When you have life, there are endless possibilities for you. It doesn't matter at which level you are currently operating, rich or poor – your future has exciting possibilities only if you are willing to make the right choices now and follow your dreams. Life is a great blessing that carries the seed and promise of a better and brighter tomorrow. Make the best of it – after all we have one life to live on earth.

You have other blessings to think of – the blessing of family. It's so special to belong to family. It's good to have people who love and care for you. Some families may not be as perfect as we want them to be – after all there are no perfect families. Celebrate the gift of parents (whether alive or departed), the gift of sisters and brothers – from your family or extended family and the gift of relatives. There are those special ones who care for us most and make us feel special and loved.

Celebrate the blessing of good and great friends – those who care deeply for you and want to bring the best out of you. Celebrate the gift that you are to your family and friends as well. Celebrate the blessing of belonging to your people, community and nation. You are a special part of this great people that make up your community and nation. Celebrate the gift of resources that your nation has been blessed with. There are enough resources for you and future generations – isn't that wonderful!

10. Take action

Do something for others and yourself. Don't live your life in chains. Believe in the future, remember you can do anything you set your mind to. Live your dream, do something that you feel is important to you. Make sure you accomplish it.

Many people live wishful lives. Stop wishing and start acting. Don't focus on what you can't do but on what you can do for others and yourself now. You can do something to add value to your life and other people's lives.

Achieving your dream and goals will naturally boost your self-image. You will start to believe in yourself more and more. You will develop the ‘I can do it’ mentality. It is however important to know that you need this mentality even as you start to act. Tell yourself you can and you will do it.

11. Socialize

Keep yourself in relationships with positive thinking people. This creates positive energy which you need to succeed in life. Make new friends if you have to.

Involve yourself actively in matters that interest you. Join clubs, networking organizations associations or groups of similar interest and participate actively. Being part of a group gives you a sense of belonging, acceptance and appreciation. Knowing that you are part of something important and meaningful does a lot to develop your positive self-image.

In your socializing seek opportunities to serve and bless others. You can make a big difference to your community and choose to use your gifts and talents to make such a difference. Such actions will strengthen your self-image in a big way. We were all created to add value to our communities.

12. Stand up for yourself

Don’t allow people to put you down and don’t allow other people's expectations to thwart what you are capable of becoming. Don’t put up with people or situations that negate all the positive things that you can do. Stand up for your dreams!

You are not an object of public sympathy. Stop hosting ‘pity parties’ where everyone has to feel sorry and pity you all the time. You are a champion and not a charity case! You can stand on your feet. You are able to do it. If others can do it, why can’t you do it too or do even better?

Don’t allow other people of your age to run your life for you and to make decisions for you as if you don’t have a mind of your own.

CHAPTER NINE

Self-Image and Career Planning

Importance of self-image to career planning

Self-image is central to everything you do. It affects your behavior and thoughts. It changes how you feel about and value yourself. Most importantly it affects the choices you make. For example if you have a poor or negative self-image, you are likely to choose a low ranking career because you will be feeling you are unworthy of a career that is highly regarded.

Self-image can be the difference between career success and failure. It can affect your thinking, causing your outlook to be positive or negative. It will be difficult for you to plan for a bright and exciting career life when you have a negative self-image. A negative self-image will undermine your confidence and performance in your studies. It makes you feel you don't have what it takes to succeed and you tend to focus more on your past failures.

Your potential to achieve what you most desire is directly related to your self-image. On the other hand, failure is much more likely when you suffer from low self-image because you will believe others when they tell you why you cannot succeed.

Self-image affects your confidence negatively. If you want to rise to any challenge you must believe in yourself. Without confidence in what you can do and in who you are what chance do you have of career success?

Low self-esteem means that you will have a poor image of yourself and this will result in a loss of confidence. Your social skills will also suffer and you will find it harder to socialize because others will respond negatively to your lack of confidence.

Do you value yourself? If you don't others won't value you either. Value yourself, your ability and your contribution to the world because you are unique. You cannot value and respect others

unless you first value and respect yourself. Any career you choose involves working for or with other people. If your social skills are poor because of a negative self-image, your career life will suffer as a result.

Link between self-image and career planning

There is an important link between career guidance and having a positive self-image. Below we highlight some key issues related to the relevance of self-image to career guidance.

1. Career choice requires self-confidence

Choosing a career is an important decision that one has to make. Like other important decisions in life, it requires one to have self-confidence. A negative self-image undermines your self-confidence. When confidence is lacking, it leads to poor decision making. A person with a negative self-image tends to over rely on the opinions of others. Your career choice has lifelong implications as you have to live with consequences of that decision for many years.

Your career choice will determine the subjects you study at high school and the program of study at tertiary or university. That choice will also determine your career development path for years to come. You need a healthy self-image to make a quality decision. You need to have a healthy self-image that will inspire you to make an informed career choice.

2. You need to believe in your potential to achieve

You have great potential that will help you select and achieve your career dream. Identifying and maximizing your potential requires a positive self-image based on self-belief. If you don't believe in yourself, you won't even believe in your potential. As a result you may select a career that does not match your potential. You are likely underestimate what you are capable of achieving hence settle for a less challenging career. A negative self-image will also affect your current academic performance which will have a negative bearing on your future career prospects.

3. You need to overcome fear of failure

Selecting your career requires a positive self-image and a positive attitude that overcomes fear of failure. It is not uncommon for all of us to experience failure at one stage of our lives or another.

However we need to pick ourselves up and move on – otherwise we become slaves of our past failures. You should never allow yourself to be enslaved by your past but you should instead be tied to our potential.

A negative self-image ties you to fear of failure. This directly affects your career choice and your capacity to pursue your career. You therefore need to develop a positive self-image because this is an important foundation to your career development.

4. You need an “I can do it” attitude

Choosing and being developed for your career is a daunting task that requires one being stretched intellectually. It doesn't happen overnight. It takes years of investment in education and training. In order to reach the dizzy heights of career achievement that you set for yourself, you need an “I Can Do It” attitude based on a positive self-image. What you think and believe about yourself is of paramount importance. The greatest hindrance to your success is not external but internal. We shall later look at how you can develop a positive attitude.

A positive self-image is a must have as you make and follow up on your career dream. Somehow it is like climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. You need both mental and physical stamina. You may have a strong body but if your mind tells you ‘you can't do it’ then you won't do it because your body follows your mind.

5. Take personal responsibility for choosing your career

One of the biggest challenges of a negative self-image is that it makes you a victim of circumstances. Other people are likely to have a greater say about a decision that will affect your future. Remember a career decision is like a marriage. You will have to stay with the wife or husband you marry. In the same way you have to live with your career decision. Of course you have room to change in the future if you find you don't like the career but it will cost you time and effort just like a person experiences the pain of divorce.

It is better to make the right decision now rather than make repairs in the future. A positive self-image empowers you to make a sound decision that you have confidence in. By developing a positive self-image, you are empowering yourself to make such a sound decision.

6. You need to have a career vision for the future

You become big on the inside first before you become big on the outside. You start by conceiving a big career dream before you eventually achieve that dream. The vision comes first before the actual career unfolds. If you can't see it, you can't have it.

The size of your career dream is determined by levels of self-belief among other factors. You cannot dream bigger than what you believe about yourself. As we highlighted earlier on, your-self-image is the foundation for achieving your potential. Strengthen your-self-image and you are strengthening the foundation of your career dream.

CHAPTER TEN

Developing a Positive Attitude

Definition of key terms

We are going to start by defining key terms such as attitude, feelings and cognition. Feelings are an emotion or reaction to something. Feeling is an emotional state or reaction.²¹ It may be negative feeling such as the feeling of uneasiness or positive such as the feeling of trust.

Cognition²² is the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through experience and the senses. It is a set of all mental abilities and processes related to knowledge, attention, memory and reasoning. It refers to all of the mental activities that are involved in learning remembering and using knowledge. An attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling about something or someone.²³ It is made up of what you think, what you do and what you feel. An attitude can either be positive or negative.

Negativity can be like a drug. As much as you know it's unhealthy and something to be avoided, it's addictive and consuming. However, for those wanting to develop a positive attitude toward life, there are some simple steps that can be taken that may help. Although these steps are simple, they may not be easy. However, with a bit of determination and focus, developing a positive attitude toward life can be done.

Think of practical ways of applying each of the following to personal life situation. After each point, you have to answer a life application question.

1. Stop complaining

This is easier said than done, but a simple trick may help. Wear a bracelet or a rubber band around one wrist. Whenever you find yourself complaining, switch the bracelet to the other wrist. Your goal should be to have the bracelet stay on the original wrist as long as possible.

²¹ www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/feeling

²² www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/cognition

²³ www.thefreedictionary.com/attitude

2. Turn negative thoughts into positive ones

We all have negative thoughts from time to time, either about ourselves or our situation. While it may be impossible to stop negative thoughts from forming, it is possible to change the thought to something positive when you notice the negativity. For example you may have fears about the coming exams and how that may shutter your career dreams if you fail. Instead of entertaining the negative thought “What if I fail?” Change the thought to a positive question, “What if I pass?”

3. Be grateful

No matter how difficult your life seems, there is always some reason to be grateful. Even if it is just gratitude for being alive, for breathing, for the beautiful weather—there truly is something positive occurring even when things seem the most dire. Make a conscious effort to recognize all that is right in your life instead of always focusing on what is wrong. Learn to live your life with an attitude of gratitude.

4. Decide to love yourself

Contrary to what many people think, loving yourself really is a conscious or deliberate decision. Too many of us focus on our faults or mistakes instead of recognizing how truly special we are.

5. Decide to love others, no matter what

This doesn't mean you should accept bad behavior or allow others to treat you poorly, but realizing that acting lovingly toward others will go much further than acting maliciously or selfishly. Not only that, but doing nice things for others can help give you those warm, fuzzy feelings that will help you feel good as well. Career life in any area is about serving others and love is an important foundation for excellence in service delivery.

6. Let go of the past

It's hard for many of us to forgive the wrong things of our past, but it is only through forgiveness and acceptance that you will be able to be free. Forgiving doesn't mean that you accept what happened, but rather that you refuse to allow yourself to be held captive by that negativity any longer.

7. Adopt the motto “Everything happens for a reason”

By convincing yourself that this statement is true, you’ll start to see a bright side to almost every situation. People often fail to realize that we grow the most during periods of pain and struggle. By always asking yourself what an experience is trying to teach you, you will start to see struggles and challenges as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles toward happiness.

8. Surround yourself with positivity

Choose to hang around with positive people, watch positive shows, listen to positive music, and read positive books. Like begets like and surrounding yourself with positivity really will help you be positive yourself.

9. Get your mind on your future

Forget about what hasn’t worked out like you thought it would, forget about who did this or that to you, forget about who is to blame, and focus instead on where you want to go, and what you want to see happen in your career dream. Be determined to focus all of your mental and physical energies on developing a crystal-clear vision of where you want to be and what you want to accomplish from this moment forward. Take the proper actions to begin heading towards the clear, positive picture you have of your future career.

10. Become solution-minded instead of problem-minded

Achieving career success is not an easy walk. You will encounter obstacles that you will need to figure out how to overcome. Become the kind of person that focuses on solutions instead of just harping on the problem. This, by default, transforms you into a positive person, because solutions by nature are positive, while problems by nature are negative.

11. See mistakes as learning experiences instead of failures

Mistakes can many times be your greatest teacher. Whenever you make a mistake, instead of thinking that you’re a terrible, or incompetent person, rather see the mistake as a means by which you can gain accuracy in understanding how to do a given thing. Everybody is terrible at something before they get good at it...and they come right.

12. Be determined to look for the “silver lining”, no matter how dark the cloud may be

No matter what challenges you face, make up your mind to find some type of good in it, and something to be grateful for right in the midst of it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ATTITUDE AND CAREER PLANNING

The effects of a negative attitude to career planning

Career planning requires a student with a positive attitude because a negative attitude can cause you to fail in your career journey. Our predominant thoughts influence our behavior and attitude, and consequently our actions, our life and our achievements.

We are what we think. This means that it is of great importance to be careful with our thoughts, especially thoughts that we often repeat. Thoughts are like a video cassette or DVD that we play in the VCR or DVD player of our minds. What we play is what we see with our inner eyes. What we see in our mind is what we think about. The thoughts that we repeatedly think shape our lives.

If you repeatedly tell yourself you can't make it or do it, you won't make it. It becomes self-fulfilling prophecy. Finding and fulfilling your career plan requires that you have a positive attitude that is based on a strong "I can do it" mindset.

Most people have a negative attitude that blocks their potential. If you underestimate your potential and abilities, it will affect your career choice in that you may choose a career that is less challenging and you may perform below your potential and exclude yourself from academic programs that are more challenging.

Importance of a positive attitude to career planning

A positive attitude helps you to cope more easily with the daily affairs of life. It brings optimism into your life, and makes it easier to avoid worry and negative thinking. If you adopt it as a way of life, it will bring constructive changes into your life, and make your life happier, brighter and more successful. With a positive attitude you see the bright side of life, become optimistic and

expect the best to happen. It is certainly a state of mind that is well worth developing and strengthening.

A positive attitude leads to happiness and success and can change your whole life. If you look at the bright side of life, it affects not only you and the way you look at the world, but also your whole environment and the people around you. If it is strong enough, it becomes contagious or it affects other people around you.

Having a positive attitude will result in your life experiencing the following:

1. Constructive thinking

A person with a positive attitude will release a lot of constructive ideas. This is very beneficial to your career planning and development. Purpose empowered career planning requires that you see yourself as a solution to a need in your generation hence your career becomes a platform to provide such a solution.

2. Creative thinking

Being a solution provider calls for creative thinking on your part. Creative thinking releases your potential. You will find that such thinking empowers you to be innovative as you deal with issues related to your career and life in general.

3. Expecting success

A positive attitude expects results and the best out of life. It will inspire you to achieve more in your studies and career development plans. It brings the best out of you because you will dislike being an average person and like to pursue excellence.

4. Optimism

A positive attitude boosts optimism in you. Optimism is having a positive outlook to life that is full of hopefulness and confidence. An optimistic person will see opportunities even in a crisis. Optimism will propel you to great heights of achievement in your career.

5. Motivation to accomplish your goals

Career planning and development requires goal getters and a positive attitude positions you well for goal accomplishment. Purpose empowered career guidance will require you to achieve academic goals at high school level, University level. You will also need to achieve professional development goals. You will need to be self-motivated in all your efforts so that you overcome obstacles on your way.

6. Being inspired

A positive attitude empowers you to live an inspired life. Nothing can stop an inspired person from reaching their dreams. You are inner driven, focused and you will your all to achieve your destiny.

7. Not giving up

Not giving up is a major strength to your journey to achieve your career dream. In many ways achieving your career dream is like climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. It requires resilience and mental and physical stamina. A positive attitude will inspire you never to give up.

8. Looking at failure and problems as blessings in disguise

A person with a positive attitude is a lifelong learner. You will seize every opportunity to learn and grow including learning from your failures and problems. On the road to career success,

there will be moments when you experience failure but that should never become your permanent station. A positive attitude will empower you to move on.

9. Believing in yourself and in your abilities

A positive attitude will empower you to see the treasures hidden inside you. You have great potential and capacity to achieve more than you realize. You need to believe in yourself as we highlighted in the previous chapter. Believe in your capacity to achieve.

10. Seeing opportunities

Life is full of opportunities and possibilities. It's not all eyes that look that can see. Seeing opportunities requires a positive attitude. Such an attitude will both see and seize opportunities that are relevant to your purpose and career.

If you have been exhibiting a negative attitude and expecting failure and difficulties, it is now the time to change the way you think. It is time to get rid of negative thoughts and behavior and lead a happy and successful life that will positively shape your career life.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Pursuing and Fulfilling Your Life Purpose

What is purpose?

Purpose is the reason that made your birth necessary. You were born for a specific reason and that reason is your purpose. You were born to make a distinct contribution on earth and that contribution is your purpose.

Purpose is an explanation of *why* something was created or made, the *reason for its existence*. Life purpose is the *why* that explains the *reason* for a person's creation – the answer to the question “Why am I here?” or “Why was I born?” Purpose can also be defined as the original reason for the creation of a thing, the end for which the means exists and the cause for the creation of a thing.

Purpose is the need that makes a manufacturer produce a specific product, the destination that causes the journey, the expectation of the source, the objective for the subject and the object one wills or resolves to have.

Merriam-Webster dictionary²⁴ says purpose is:

- Reason for existence;
- To design; to determine;
- Determination

²⁴ www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/purpose

The three definitions suggest that your purpose is about:

- Who you are (*reason for existence*). You derive your identity from your purpose;
- What works especially well for you (*design*)? Your abilities are directly linked to your purpose.
- What you really want (*determination*) in this world. Your deepest desires directly linked to your purpose.

A purpose perspective to career planning focuses on empowering the student to make a career choice that is aligned to their purpose. It is paramount in this approach to have the tools that empower the student to first know their purpose and then introduce the student to the career world. One will be able to easily identify a career pathway that is aligned to their purpose which will help the student pursue a fulfilling career path.

We shall start by looking at how one may know their purpose after which we look at benefits of this approach to the student, their family, their school, community and the nation. In the next chapter we will then discuss the career world by which time you should be able to identify your purpose empowered career.

Characteristics of purpose

Compelling - A purpose draws you, attracts you and makes you want to take action and overcome obstacles to achieve it. It feels worth achieving and worth the effort.

Aligned - Your purpose must fit with who you are; your personality and skills. This requires full understanding of what you are as an individual; what makes you tick and where you would like to go in life. It requires your understanding of what will work for you.

Distinctive - No people are exactly the same and as such the path one is meant to follow should be specifically aligned to a certain person. It does not help following the purposes of other people because it runs in the family or is seemingly the most fashionable thing to do. Everyone is unique and it is impossible to take another's vision and try to make it yours and expect it to work

for that matter. There is power in a purpose that is clearly and distinctively aligned and relevant to you.

Clear - Your purpose must be clear even to yourself. This does not mean that it has to be simple but it ultimately has to follow a map that you yourself can understand easily. Your purpose needs to describe a clear picture of what your future will look like, something you can actually see in your imagination. It should picture the end result.

Unlike animals, which are driven simply by the need to survive, we humans crave more from life than mere survival. Without a sense of purpose, we can quickly fall into disillusionment, distraction and a quiet sense of despair. The alarming increase in rates of drug and alcohol abuse, depression and suicide, along with the growing reliance on antidepressant medications, seem to indicate many people are doing just that are falling into despair and disillusionment.

One way to know your purpose is to look at all the components of your unique design, things like passion, talent, personality type, right or left brain dominance, temperament, intro/extroversion etc. Each of these things is a thread in the entire make up of your life purpose. They each give a small clue or indicator into the type of purpose empowered career that you should pursue.

Purpose and career planning

The power of purpose is similar to the energy of light focused through a magnifying glass. Diffused light has little use, but when its energy is concentrated—as through a magnifying glass—that same light can set fire to paper. A clear sense of purpose enables you to focus your efforts on what matters most, forcing you to take risks and push forward regardless of the odds or difficulties.

A purpose perspective to career planning involves asking and responding to the following seven career questions. By the time you answer all these questions, you would have made your career choice and will be having a plan on how to pursue and complete it. We must emphasize from the beginning that selection and planning for your career is not an event but a process.

Answering the following questions helps lay strong base for career selection and planning.

Who am I?

Knowing yourself is foundational to your career and character development.

Why was I born?

This question helps you unlock your purpose. Your career is a purpose platform. Knowing your purpose empowers you to know what you are best wired to do in life.

What are my career options?

This question opens the doors for exploring the career world. There are vast options and opportunities and we want you to make an informed career choice that matches what you have been best designed to do in life.

How do I make a purposeful career choice?

After all the exposure to the career world, a short list and final career choice must be made. You were not born to do everything. This question empowers you to go through the process of making the best career choice for your life.

How do I create a career vision?

Making a career choice is not the end but beginning of your career journey. Once an appropriate choice has been made, there is need to engage in a serious process of career life visioning. This question takes you through the career visioning process.

How do I achieve my career vision?

Having a clear career vision is not enough. One needs to define clear steps and plans for fulfilling their vision. This will go beyond the theoretical life planning knowledge to the actual fulfillment of your career plan.

What will I be remembered for?

When all has been said and done, you must leave a legacy on earth. Your career must not just sustain you and help you to be fulfilled, it must ultimately empower you to leave this world a better place than you found it.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Developing a Solid Character

What is a character?

Character is the moral force or integrity: a man of character. Character is also a combination of traits and qualities distinguishing the individual nature of a person or thing.²⁵ In the African context, character is *unhu* or *ubuntu*.²⁶

Why character is important

Character in life is what makes people believe in you and is essential both for individual success and for our society to function successfully. Each individual must do his or her part every day by living a life of integrity.

Integrity is adhering to a moral code of honesty, courage, strength and truthfulness – being true to your word. When you don't exhibit integrity, other people get hurt. But you hurt yourself even more.

When you cheat, your “success” is false. When you break a promise, you are showing that your word is meaningless. When you lie, you deceive others and lose their respect. Our Character is what determines how we respond to the situations and circumstances of life. It is those character qualities, those character traits; that determine a person's response in any given situation.

For example, a person with a strong character quality of truthfulness is much more likely to accurately report the facts in a given situation than a person who tends to be characterized by

²⁵ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/character

²⁶ www.thepatriot.co.zw/.../hunhuubuntu-as-the-cornerstone-of-african-edu.

cheating. Someone who has the character trait of alertness will be more likely to be a better, safer, driver than a person who does not see or recognize the potential dangers around him (carelessness). A person with the character quality of tolerance will be more accepting of others and is less prejudiced.

Since success or failure in any situation or endeavor usually depends, more than anything else, on how we respond to events and circumstances, it follows that it is our character that determines our success. Of course, that doesn't mean that "good" people will always experience more "success" than "bad" people. There are, however, some character traits that tend to lead to "success" and others that tend to produce "failure." The question is, "What are the "good" character qualities, and what are "bad" qualities?"

Everyone has character. People sometimes think of character as something a person either has or doesn't have. They may say, "He has character," meaning he has good character. We intuitively recognize the truth that everyone has "character" and we distinguish between "good" and "bad" character.

By breaking character down into its basic elements in this way, we are better able to focus on building specific qualities into our lives. As we work on strengthening specific good character qualities, our overall character is improved.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

How Character Affects Our Lives: The Link Between Career And Character

It has been said that character is the foundation for all true success. A person may have money, position, or power, but unless he has “good” character he or she is not considered to be truly successful. On a more immediate and practical level, our character is what really determines our success in any area of life. Our character guides our responses to any situation or circumstance in our life. It is why we do the things we do and it is why we do things the way we do them. Since how we respond to the various things that come up is what will determine the results we get, it follows that the success we have in any endeavor are determined by our character.

Your personal character consists of the attitudes you have toward challenges you face in your career. Having positive personal character traits will improve your chances of success and achieving your goals. Negative traits hinder your efforts and your job performance.

Questions you may have include:

- How do personal character traits affect job performance?
- How do negative personal character traits hinder your career?

Let us answer those questions.

Performance factors

Personal character traits are sometimes called your work ethic. They concern your attitudes towards performing difficult tasks, fulfilling requirements and specifications, following orders, being organized, and working up to your capabilities.

There are also other factors in your personal character traits that indirectly affect your ability to complete tasks and achieve goals, such as the manner in which you spend your money or take care of your body. They also can affect your performance.

Positive character traits admired

Having positive character traits mean that you are able and willing to do good work—both for your satisfaction and that of your employer. These traits relate to attitudes you have toward challenges at work. Typical traits are determination, organization, courage and responsibility.

Harry had an assignment that needed to be completed by Monday. It was a difficult task, but he was not afraid to work hard to complete it. His teacher knew that Harry had the type of character with which he would commit to overcoming the difficulty and achieving the goal.

After the job was done, the teacher gave Harry recognition for a job well-done. Having a good work ethic will result in having good performance.

Negative traits not wanted

Negative personal character traits include carelessness, laziness and irresponsibility.

Phillip was a very skilled worker, but he often was careless in what he did. He figured his work was good enough, especially since he wasn't too interested in the task.

Sometimes the work he did had to be done over again by someone else. Although Phillip was talented and skilled, he was a drag on the department's success and was ultimately fired.

These negative character traits or attitudes can hinder your ability to achieve goals or to satisfy job requirements. Employers typically do not advance workers with negative character traits.

Summary

Personal character consists of the attitudes you have toward challenges in your career. Having positive personal character traits will improve your performance and chances of success.

Negative traits hinder your efforts.

In this concluding section we will explore an example of a famous person who was at the top of their game but then went through a down fall all because he had negative character traits that he let prevail.

Tiger Woods

In 2009 Tiger Woods was a well-known sports man; he was a golfer at the top of his career, with many titles and awards to his name. He was sponsored and endorsed by many companies. The National Inquiry Newspaper then leaked a story that Tiger Woods had cheated on his wife Ellena with a model. It was at that moment that Wood's problems mounted. Just a week later another lady came forward claiming that she too had had an affair with the Sports Star. That wasn't the end of it, more women came forward all claiming they had affairs with the golfer until the number rose to seven. The Sports Star released Tiger Woods' statement in which he said,

“I have let my family down and I regret those transgressions with all of my heart. I have not been true to my values and the behavior my family deserves.”

Accenture, one of Tiger's sponsors then dropped him and cut ties with him and say that he is not the right representative of their company after the incident. Another sponsor also followed suit and cuts ties with Tiger. It was at that time that Tiger Woods took leave from the game of Golf to try and work on his problems.

Here is an example of a man who was at the top of his game, and had everything working for him but because he failed to remain true to his values he lost the trust of his family and his sponsors and his sport career slowly went into decline. This illustrates the link between character and your career.

“Our character is much more than just what we try to display for others to see, it is who we are even when no one is watching. Good character is doing the right thing because it is right to do what is right” **Abraham Lincoln**

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Developing and Following Guiding Values

Importance of values

Important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values have major influence on a person's behavior and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. For example some common business values are fairness, innovation and community involvement.²⁷

Values have influence on a person's behavior and attitude and serve as guidelines in all situations. Understanding your values helps you to have a clearer vision of what is most important to you.

We grow to understand core values by studying and discussing them, observing behavioral models, and resolving problems involving the values. We learn to care about core values by forming caring relationships, developing good work habits, taking on meaningful responsibilities, helping to create community, hearing inspirational stories, and reflecting on life experiences. And we can learn to act upon core values by striving to do the best and be the best in all areas of life. Values are what make up your character.

Principles

Your principles are your values of life. In other words, they are how you intend to conduct yourself during your life. You must clarify what you will and won't do. These principles are your guides for living, doing business, relating to other people, and relating to others in life.

²⁷ www.businessdictionary.com/definition/values.html

Character and guiding values

It's not always easy to be ourselves. Sometimes, when we're with other people, we make choices or act in ways that are different from when we're alone. Here are some ways to prevent that from happening:

- Know your values and stay true to them.
- Make your own choices; don't just go along with the crowd.
- Respect yourself.
- Think about your goals and act accordingly.

Knowing your values

Your values are your personal inventory of what you consider most important in life. We all have values, but unless we take the time to think about those values, we can easily overlook them when we're making important choices.

Here are some guidelines for identifying your values:

- Find something that you feel is important to you? Why is it important to you?
- Do you feel good about this being important to you?
- Would you feel good if people you respect knew that this was important to you?
- Have you ever done anything that indicates that this is important to you?
- Is this something you would stand by even if others made fun of you for it?
- Does this fit in with your vision of who you are?

Often times we find ourselves in situations where we have to make a choice between two values that are in conflict with each other. At times like this we must be ready to distinguish between our higher values and our lower values.

The following session will consist of a few exercises that you have to carry out either alone or in groups in order to fully comprehend character and guiding life values. It will give you a chance to rediscover yourself and your values. Be as honest as possible and have fun!

Personal value system explained²⁸

A personal value system is a set of principles or ideals that drive or guide your behavior. It is a set of standards and beliefs that you want to achieve and keep for a long time. Your personal value system gives you structure and purpose by helping you determine what is meaningful and important to you.

It helps you express who you are and what you stand for. If you are unaware of, or become disconnected with your values, you end up making choices out of impulse or instant gratification rather than on solid reasoning and responsible decision-making. Your values define your character.

They affect every aspect of your life including personal and school behaviors, your interactions with family, friends and co-workers; your decision making processes and the direction you take in life. This is why it is so important to know what you value and what is important to you.

Four categories of a personal value system

Personal values - Personal values are those traits we see as worth aspiring to, and that define our character.

Spiritual values - The values that connect us to a higher power and give us a sense of purpose beyond our material existence.

Family values - To love and care for those we are close to; our children, our parents, other family members, and our friends.

²⁸ www.essentiallifekillsnet.com

Career values - The best use and expression of our talents and skills for the purposes of contributing to society and for personal reward through pay and other benefits.

Universal values

No matter what tradition we are brought up in, there are characteristics we value in others which go beyond social, economic and religious boundaries. We find that there are the same important values held almost everywhere we go. Some of these characteristics are:

Integrity

This is trustworthiness, honesty and uprightness of character. We value people of integrity because we know what to expect from them. We know they will act honorably and that they will do what they think is right. We want people with integrity as our friends, on our teams and in our organizations.

Respect

Respect is honoring the worth and dignity of all people. Those who respect others treat them with fairness and courtesy. They treat others the way they themselves wish to be treated.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a commitment and faithfulness to a person or cause. Those who are loyal to their family, friends, organizations and country stand behind and support them during good and bad times. They can be counted on to be there when the going gets difficult and to help out when the chips are down.

Responsibility

Those who accept responsibility are reliable, dependable and willing to take accountability for who they are and what they do. They believe they have a moral duty to help others and to make a contribution to the society they live in.

No matter what values we choose to live by, it is vital that we look at the big picture, assess what we want our role to be, and map out how we intend to conduct our lives.

Importance of a personal value system

Once you know your value system, you set a certain consistency of behavior. This works well for you in the following ways:

- Your value system introduces consistency in expectation and behavior. People will not wait around or expect a different response to something that you've already set a standard for.
- People would know ahead of time certain decisions based on your value system. They would avoid bringing anything to you which they know you will do not approve of. You won't even have to fight such cases.
- A solid value system helps build trust around you. People around you know that you will stand for something based on your values and admire you for that.
- Persons with strong value systems are seen as an inspiring source of strength and naturally attract followers. Moving to leadership becomes a logical, resultant and natural next step.

Negative value system

Similar to positive values negative values are equally noticed.

Example

Anna was very enthusiastic at starting new initiatives to improve her class decorations. Gaining support from her teachers and other classmates, starting work on the initiative and encouraging her teams would all come naturally to her. Unfortunately, once the initiatives got underway, she would lose steam, experience self-doubts and the projects would stall. Most of her initiatives met the same fate. As a result, she has multiple failed projects. Needless to say, this pattern became evident after a while, and in the end people did not want to work with her anymore.

You want to avoid building up such values.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Choosing Your Guiding Values

Use the following points to guide you as you choose values to guide and provide a solid foundation to your career and character:

1. Choose values that enhance your personal leadership

If you can't lead yourself it will be difficult for you to have influence and credibility which ever career you are pursuing. As you plan for your career, remember it will work for you to exercise high levels of personal integrity at a personal level.

2. Choose values that have stood the test of time

Such values will guide you through every season of your life – good season, bad season or a season of uncertainty. They will be an unshakable foundation that will sustain you through times of great fortune and incredible pain and misfortune. We live in turbulent times where the rate of change is mind-boggling. Societal values are shifting fast especially in the context of dynamics of youth cultures. To survive and thrive under these conditions, you need a solid set of long lasting values that will be like an anchor to enable you to approach change, challenges and opportunities in a calm and confident manner.

3. Choose values that inspire and empower you

Your highest values should come from within and reflect who you really are, rather than those imposed upon you from outside. Let your conscience be your guide. A lot of times, young people go by external discipline from parents and school authorities. You are now being challenged to move beyond that and lay a foundation of personal guiding values that you cherish and live by.

4. Choose values based on truth so that you build your life on a solid foundation

Most people tend to be influenced by a desire to earn lots of money and acquire material things when choosing a career. However; the enduring truth is that there is more to life than acquisition of money and material goods hence orienting your whole life around such a desire is not wise. A purpose perspective to career planning reveals that your life is a gift to your generation and you need to think in terms of what you will give and contribute to society, not just what you will get and gain. There is value in serving others.

5. Choose values that take care of your health and well-being

It doesn't matter which career you want to pursue in life, you need to be alive and well to fulfill that career dream. Your health and well-being is of uttermost importance. Taking care of your health and avoiding habits that destroy your spiritual, physical and mental health is one of your most important responsibilities.

Purpose demands that you serve others. However, your dedication to serve others should not compromise your health through stress, exhaustion and burn out. This will diminish your capacity to serve hence it becomes counter-productive. Your health is your responsibility. Be a good steward of your body.

Developing your personal value foundation

As you freely choose guiding values that should inform both your choice and development of your career, the following insights are worth your consideration. Look at the list and choose and tick any values from there you think are appropriate. Don't be limited by this list because choosing guiding values is your personal responsibility. Take note of the values you may want to make your own from the following list:

- Live my life with personal integrity and courage;

- Take good care of myself spiritually, physically and emotionally so that I can be productive and happy;
- Maintain inner peace and live life in a peaceful, calm, relaxed state of mind;
- Be spiritually strong, vibrant and joyful;
- Rejuvenate myself by playing, relaxing, and exercising
- Listen to others with a sincere desire to understand them and be understood by them;
- Communicate an work with people in a positive and cooperative manner;
- Approach my life from a proactive, choice stance, rather than from a reactive, victim stance;
- Live consciously. Know my purpose and what I want out of life; know what's working and what's not. Be ready to make timely adjustments and get help when I need it;
- Be aware I have choices in every situation, no matter how tough and how stressful. Even if I can't do anything about the situation itself, I can choose how I look at it, think about it, and deal with it;
- Be in control of what I can control – my thoughts, emotions and actions;
- Have a life focused on making a difference in people's lives rather than on accumulating things or serving myself;
- Have a career and life where I bring out the best in myself and in others;
- Be fair. Treat all people with respect and love;
- Be loving, compassionate, caring, giving and forgiving;
- Be mentally tough and focused and emotionally resilient;

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Guiding Values and Career Success

Introduction

History is littered with professionals who destroyed their growing and blooming career lives through faulty characters and lack of guiding values. When one has a faulty character, their life is an accident waiting to happen. Sound and solid guiding values guarantee lasting career success. We need you to put that solid foundation now as you process the career you want to pursue. Every career demands that you become a leader with integrity. Lack of personal integrity based on solid values will most certainly undermine your career success.

Guiding values are strongly held principles that influence how you relate to life. They determine how you approach your career life and any other sphere of your life. You are responsible for carefully choosing your guiding values and committing to treasure and live by them. Your guiding values reflect your *personal brand* – the kind of person you want to be across all the roles in your life. Your guiding values constitute the ideals that form your character qualities – what you want to live by on a daily basis. You must be ready to be guided by your values at any cost.

Guiding values as a foundation for lasting career success

Guiding values are foundational to lasting career success and they are like your life compass. Once your values are clear, you will minimize the need to make choices that contradict your values. Your behaviour becomes automatically right because it becomes anchored and grounded in your core values.

As you grow, you are forced to make choices daily. In the face of such decisions, your core values are revealed. Your decisions and choices mirror your guiding values. Your guiding values

will empower you not to give to negative peer influence and make choices today that will compromise your success and career achievements tomorrow.

One of the great threats facing the people of Africa and the world is that of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Many solutions have been offered but it remains clear that keeping away from premarital sex remains the best preventive option especially for the youths. One needs values that embrace abstinence as a guiding value. Such a value will empower you and lay a solid foundation for both your career and family life. Self-control is a virtue that you will always need throughout your life. Failure to manage your sexual life in your youthful days is a threat to your future family and career stability.

Now is the time to lay a solid foundation of guiding values. There is a time and a season for everything. You patiently wait today because you know tomorrow is coming and you will be ready to be involved responsibly in the context of a loving and secure marriage relationship. Waiting for the right time shows maturity and responsibility on your part. Exercise that choice and walk in freedom. It may seem unfashionable to your peers, but it is the right and best choice available. It will make a big difference for a better tomorrow.

Guiding values with a clear life purpose and compelling life vision will empower you to keep on course, to make life choices after evaluating their potential consequences and the ripple effect of your actions. Such guiding values make you a wise person and will go a long way in building your integrity and credibility as a leader today and in the future.

Your guiding values are the foundation of building a successful career. As you choose and develop your career, your foundation must be deep and firm. The higher you want to build, the deeper the foundation you need. Remember your foundation will be tested by winds and storms, but it must remain firm and strong.

You are responsible for your life and don't allow people to make decisions for you because you will have to live with the consequences of those decisions and choices. Today we have many young people who were influenced to make wrong choices by their friends and they are going through a lot of pain as they bear the burden and pain of undesirable consequences. Choose and live your life guided by values that will make you a victor not a victim.

