

Age is only a number – the expert guide on how to overcome career fear and find genuine happiness

Submitted by: Kin Communications2

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- January is the most popular month to change career
- Older professionals are more fearful than millennials
- Business psychologist Penny Strutton says it's never too late to make a change

New research from Think Forward Consulting has revealed that 75% of people in the UK are unhappy within their role. In a survey of almost 1500 workers, the findings were reflective of a largely unsatisfied workforce. This unhappiness appears to be down to three key issues: passion, recognition and environment.

Only 19% of respondents said that they were doing their dream job. A staggering 83% said that they were not recognised for doing a good job, and only 18% of respondents were allowed to work flexibly. These factors all conspire to create a largely unsatisfied workforce. The malaise gripping the UK workforce doesn't discriminate when it comes to age, but the tendency to stay in an unhappy situation does.

Last year a Deloitte survey of 10,455 millennials (professionals under the age of 35) uncovered some telling trends – 43% of millennials plan to leave their current jobs within two years and only 28% plan to stay beyond five years. This short-termism is indicative of a millennial fearlessness that eludes the older generation. Millennials are not as afraid to act upon their dissatisfaction. They believe they have options with a conviction that older professionals don't.

The Think Forward Consulting research revealed that over a quarter (26%) of respondents feel stuck in their role. This is particularly pertinent to professionals between the age of 35-44, amongst whom 28% feel stuck. 26% of professionals over the age of 55 believe it's too late to change things, compared to 12% of 18-24-year-olds. Business psychologist Penny Strutton says the career fear that comes with age can be overcome:

“It's common that people become more fearful with age: children, mortgages and other obligations combine to create an illusion that it's too late to change career. But this is just an illusion – people always have the power to change things, they just need a little reminder of that and some help along the way”.

Penny believes that it is never too late to change things, but that the relentlessness of work can make it appear that way. Her advice for older professionals is to step away from the rat race to reflect on what they truly want:

“Any big life change requires time and space. If you feel restless and trapped within your career, I would advise you take a break and restore the work/life balance that we are often deprived of. Our retreat centre provides an idyllic backdrop for you to work hard with specialists that can reconnect you with your strengths, interests and purpose, opening up doors to new job roles and improved life and wellbeing. We want you to return home with a defined outcome, ready to make the career change you desperately want”.

For Penny this one decision could be life-changing. In her view the feeling of being stuck is linked to the confinement of the work environment and an old belief that you have a job for life. The relative fearlessness that millennials enjoy is possible for the older professional. It's not an exclusive privilege.

For Penny, the key is stepping away:

“My hope is that older professionals develop the same attitude as millennials to their career. I'd advise them that age means little – one of our aims is to alter that mindset, and to show the older professional that their potential is limitless. Ultimately, we spend a lot of our lives in work, and we all deserve to feel happy in that environment”.

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Notes to Editors

For further information please contact Cash at IMN Group on cash@imngroup.co.uk or call 0207 158 0001.

About Think Forward Consulting

Think Forward Consulting are a consulting firm based in Nottingham who help private, public and voluntary sector organisations deal with the ever-evolving landscape of employment. They also run a retreat centre in the Pyrenees mountains which offers intense career coaching in a picturesque setting. They aim to help professionals make career changes and find their happiness again.

For more information visit Think Forward Consulting (<http://www.thinkforwardconsulting.co.uk>).