

Project Manager



CAREER COACHING
TO MAKE YOUR MARK

I've worked for an international FMCG manufacturing company for about 12 years, doing several different IT jobs. I've always really enjoyed them, achieved well and got promoted.

Then, after being in this one role for about 18 months, I got to a point where I was just completely exhausted, I hated my job, and I was feeling more and more like I was doing the wrong thing. I had no idea how or why I had got to that point, because prior to that I had always coped and managed any scenario or situation I had been given.

I literally crumbled. I was now thinking 'I can't believe it, I'm the one who has coped with everything and now I can't cope, what's wrong with me? What should I do? Should I get out of the company? Should I change jobs? If so, what on earth could I do? My whole career has been in this company doing this same sort of work. I was in a very negative place at that time.

Very cleverly though, you got me to go home and write down a simple timeline of my life, showing the main stages and events. Then I looked back over it and thought of specific achievements, things that I had done well and that made me smile when I remembered them. It was a hard exercise but once I had got into it, I loved writing about those positive things.

Then we met up and you asked me to talk through some of my best achievements. I'm quite shy and don't like blowing my own trumpet, but you were very reassuring and you immediately started drawing out patterns or trends. I had been blind to those things - I had seen all my experiences as separate events with no red thread running through them. I was amazed at what you pulled out. You dug into a few key ones in more detail and that helped me to see the things I was good at and enjoyed doing.

After that we talked about what my ideal kind of job might be. Not just the work, but factors like the environment, the people and so on. We also discussed what I would want to avoid in my next job. I could answer these questions now, because you had drawn me out of that very negative place. You helped me look back over my life and actually remember the good things I had done or achieved. You drew out my skills, for example my leadership and motivation skills. You built up my confidence again in the things I could do and how they could be applied in the future. The coaching process was about me opening up and you listening, intelligently taking out the relevant bits, distilling important facts, joining the dots effectively.

A pivotal moment was when you asked me to write down what I wanted from a job. It was obvious then, why I had been so unhappy in that last job - it only ticked one of the six boxes I had now identified. Yes, it was in IT, a good job, but it was the wrong fit for me, the wrong setting for me. That was a real light bulb moment.

Having studied my notes with my husband, I decided to look for a role that ticked the boxes that would make me a happier, healthier person, even if it meant a pay or grade cut. It was counter culture for me, for my friends and for the company to do that - but when I got my head around the idea, I decided to start there, see how I got on, and then move up a level.

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Project Manager (continued...)

In most of my career I had been reactive, but now I was proactive. I went onto my company's job portal and blow me down, there was the exact job I was now looking for, being advertised. It was in my knowledge and skills area, with a team I had worked in before. I knew the work was spot on for what I wanted, so I applied and I got it, and I've not looked back since.

I'm managing IT projects, at a global level, responsible for my own area. It's a brilliant team, and I have a brilliant boss who's supportive and takes action when needed. I love the work, we are achieving things, and it ticks every single box."

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This testimony is the transcript of a 'client review' phone call and is used with permission.



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