

## It may be time to take a career healthcheck

Whether you are just moving up the ladder or you are a seasoned veteran, it may be time to think about taking a career healthcheck. Quite often where you find yourself in your career is not as a result of good planning or natural sequential promotion, but frequently as a result of chance, good fortune, opportunity or lack of it - call it what you will. Are you in a good place right now? Is it the right place? Think about the job you are doing, the company you are in, even the sector you currently work in, is there a better option?

In terms of career vision, it is often useful to ask yourself 3 key questions: where am I now, where do I want to get to, and how am I going to get there. It may be that you really are in exactly the right role now that will help you grow and shape your ability to achieve what you want a few years down the track. If so, all well and good, but in my experience many individuals are not and this can vary in terms of career direction from being slightly off the track to being on the wrong path altogether.

For many people it is obviously a lot easier to continue for as long as possible in their current role, after all it's all a bit stressful dusting off your cv and starting to have interviews, meeting agencies and the like. Things may happen naturally for you and your career may miraculously take a giant leap forward - or maybe it won't and perhaps you should start taking responsibility now for your own good fortune.

Think about your skills and CPD and carry out an audit of where you feel you may be lacking. Extend your thinking beyond the formal and academic and start to think about what you may need in terms of raw ability or hard experience to get you to the next role. Then plan what you are going to do about it, and do something about it now.

Consider conducting an informal self-awareness exercise to gather feedback on how others perceive you. Ask one or two colleagues as well as one or two external contacts to give you some personal feedback. This could be as simple as asking them to give you 3 positive words and 3 negative words that spring to mind when they think of you. Then have an open discussion with them about what you should do more of and what you should think about doing differently. You might be amazed at how valuable this approach could be for you.

Lastly, have a good think about your networking effectiveness. Are you really networking enough? Who do you need to get closer to both in your own company and externally and who are the key influencers? In short, think about whether you are building the right relationships to help drive your career in the right direction.

**(Glenn Steward is a professional business coach and Director of The Trading Edge Co.)**