

SOME QUICK TIPS FOR PROVIDING CAREER COACHING TO THE RENAISSANCE SOUL

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THINK ABOUT HOW YOU PUT THINGS:

- Be careful to phrase everything as a plural. Renaissance Souls don't have one thing that they want to be when they grow up. They don't have one thing they wanted to do as a kid which someone talked them out of. There isn't one person whose life they'd like to experience. If they could do whatever they want, they still wouldn't want to do just one thing. They won't ever find their "it" and just do it! If you feel that identifying their Myers-Briggs profile would be helpful, they'll be much more comfortable with the **Do What You Are** continuum approach (Tieger & Barron-Tieger, Little, Brown and Company, 1992) than the more standard either/or version.
- Watch out for blanket adjectives. Asking Renaissance Souls to think about what they find "interesting" or "worthwhile" will not be very helpful, for on any given day they can find just about anything and everything interesting/worthwhile.
- Avoid any implication of "rest of your life". Renaissance Souls cannot imagine anything so interesting they would want to do it for the rest of their lives or "until retirement", any more than they could imagine being asked to pick one food to eat until they died. When discussing any particular option, therefore, it is far better to suggest varied paths that any particular choice under consideration can open than to talk about "a career in....".

REMEMBER THAT NEW IS OFTEN BETTER:

- Just because Renaissance Souls have done something before, doesn't mean they want to do it again, so looking over a resume and seeing years of human service work may not tell you a thing about the area of work that will appeal next
- Similarly, just because Renaissance Souls are good at something, *can* do it, doesn't mean they *should* do it. Just because they may be bright enough to be doctors/lawyers, doesn't mean they will be happy in fields that tend to require so much specialization.
- Even the more flexible skills set resume may not provide much guidance, as Renaissance Souls are often more interested in acquiring a new skills set than in transferring an old one.
- Career aptitude tests and vocational preference tests often aren't very helpful. Renaissance Souls can show interest/aptitude in almost every category and/or they indicate a preference for just about anything they haven't already mastered and therefore still consider interesting!

BROADEN THE DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS:

- Help Renaissance Soul clients overcome the old assumption that specialist means financial success and generalist means "dilettante, jack of all trades". Even during the tightening job market facing the Class of '01, jobfind.com reported that companies weren't as interested in specialists as in generalists and team players

- who could be trained in the company's particular business practices.
- Remind Renaissance Souls that it is possible to change fields over and over without relinquishing the opportunity to be considered an expert. I myself was a Regional Master Trainer for the Commonwealth Literacy Corps, when I was in literacy work, was a nationally known expert in the field of innkeeping who was flown across the country for television appearances and featured in the *NY Times* and *Country Home Magazine*, when I was a bed & breakfast owner, and now am quoted as an expert in the life coaching of Renaissance Souls.
 - Show the way a new interest and a new skills set can build on something done previously, so developed networks and knowledge base are still of use but the challenges are new. A "burned out" general building contractor who watched fascinated as an independent computer specialist brought his contracting business practices "into the modern age" now has all his old building contacts as happy customers in his own new computer consulting business. From his "old life", he knows just what they need--yet he is living a "new life" that is satisfyingly different and challenging for his Renaissance Soul!

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