

# SHOPPING FOR YOUR FUTURE

## TIME TO PLAN THE HOLIDAY OF YOUR LIFETIME

Just suppose you could go shopping for the life you want. Imagine popping into the travel agent to discuss all the choices and look at the brochures about your ideal life. Most of us devote a lot of time and trouble to choosing and planning our annual breaks. So why not put the same kind of effort into planning your future? After all a holiday only lasts a couple of weeks. But this is going to be the trip of your lifetime!

And as with any trip, its much easier if you work out your route beforehand. That route will depend on what is important to you e.g. how fast you want to get there, where you'd like to stop off on the way and so on. The secret of making the most of your job is to ensure it's leading you towards the life you've always dreamed of. Wherever you see yourself heading, this section will give you the best chance of getting there.

Planning your holidays can often start with a picture in your mind. You see yourself at your destination, lounging by a pool, sipping a drink, touring a city, walking through the countryside... whatever kind of holiday you enjoy most. The travel brochures are full of such pictures. And this can give you a great way to plan your life.

You just have to try picturing yourself in the future, say five years ahead, leading that life you've always dreamed of. Just imagine it. You are now doing all the things you've always wanted to do. You're achieving more than you ever expected.

You feel truly happy and fulfilled. You're actually living your dream – and more. That's fine, you've just spent the most amazing five years of your life. So now you need to look back over those past five years and imagine the route that brought you here. This will provide you with your route planner to the life you really want.

1. Make sure you have your notebook or loose-leaf folder to hand to record your answers.
2. Imagine you've had the most amazing five years of your life.
3. Fill in your answers to the points on the 'Picture Your Destination' chart.
4. Keep the tips in mind as you map out your route.

# JOB SHOPPING

## NOW PLAN YOUR ROUTE

Congratulations! You've now created a picture of the destination you're heading for – your ideal life. Now it's time to look back over those amazing five years that have brought you everything you wanted and plan out the route you took.

You can do this by answering three simple questions.

### ***In achieving all my goals, the biggest obstacle I overcame was...***

(It wasn't the smallest or medium problem but the most enormous obstacle that you actually overcame. Looking back what was it?)

### ***I overcame this by...***

(What did you do? What practical steps did you take?)

### ***The people who helped me were...***

(Who really helped and how did they make a difference?)

Congratulations. You've created a route planner to help you reach the future you really want.

It's now time to start using it.

## GET SHOPPING!

Below are ten tips to help you picture that life you want and plan out how you're going to achieve it. Put a tick against all those you think you can realistically use (for future reference).

- Always keep your eye on the destination you've pictured in life. Is the route you've planned giving you the confidence, capability and contacts to get there?
- Share your route planner with positive people (friends, family, colleagues) who can help you spot possibilities.
- If you struggle writing out your route planner, try sketching it out or talk it through on a voice recorder.
- Make sure the picture of your destination is as big and bold as it can be. Have no regrets.
- Develop a joint route planner with people closest to you. What can you do together?
- Re-visit your route planner at least once a year. It may need updating as your ideas change.
- Focus your energy on the parts of the journey that excite you most. Don't get held up by hours of unfulfilling work if it's no longer fun or rewarding.
- Use every sort of experience, particularly voluntary work, along the way.
- Live your own life – don't let other people dictate your route.
- Be honest with yourself about what really brings happiness, success and meaning in your life and go for it.

