

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy

Tuesday, 31 May 2016 14:39 - Last Updated Wednesday, 01 June 2016 06:30



Work Relations

Dear Aunt Bossy,

□□□□□□□□□□ *I am the mother of a very recent college graduate. He and all his friends keep asking me how they can know what they want to do “when they grow up.” I grew up in a different time and generally did what was expected of me. What shall I tell these young people?*

Pro Career Choice

Dear PCC,

Ouch. This is so tough, and getting tougher. Here is the only advice I can give you, and it is not the answer to anyone's prayers.

Unless the young 'un has a strong interest or passion, career goal, or education in something where it is possible to make a living, he or she (are we still allowed to say that?) should take the first job that is uncovered where the people already working there appear to be

happy and nice. While searching out that job, the seeker should buy *The Fire Starter Sessions* by Danielle La Porte. It is a great way to focus on moving forward.

Once our recent graduate has a job, his or her job is to do it with enthusiasm and cheerfulness and to be on the lookout constantly for people or things which offer opportunity or direction. They should make it a practice to ask for advice, to ask for responsibility, no matter the job.

If the only job available is ringing up burgers, our dear grad should pick the brain of the manager to learn how things work and how they are managed, which will apply to the future, whether it involves teaching yoga on a beach or running Google. In other words, we should encourage our offspring to act like happy sponges.

In the meantime, the worker bee should keep an eye out for another job that offers more of what he or she likes about the current job. If it is ringing up burgers, maybe the nice part is making people happy, or being part of a well thought out system, or interacting with the rest of the crew.

The key here is to keep on moving toward a job that has more of what our grad likes doing.

For example, I am a Presenter and Coach on Communications Skills. I didn't even know a career like mine existed, but I always had to deal with the public and inform people, whether it was behind the handbag counter at Macy's, in a high school classroom or in a briefing room full of tourists in a foreign country. I presented, even though I didn't really recognize that.

I didn't have a two-week plan, much less a five-year plan, but kept getting jobs where I did more and more presenting, until I ended up being trained to teach other people how to present, a job for which I am now highly trained, naturally gifted, and crazy about.

I might add that every new job I had demanded less paperwork than the last one.

So, my bottom line advice is to put one foot in front of the other and keep moving with the goal of doing the part you like best in mind.

If your student is lucky enough to have an actual career goal or vocation, the five-year plan (Get a book that outlines the system) is the way to start, but please do encourage him or her to be flexible. People change, and what a nineteen year old deems a groovy way to make a living, could be sheer hell in the long run. Professional aptitude tests are also useful in confirming desires.

You may say, "Yeah, but the kid wants to make some money." That is too bad, because that goal is so limiting at that age. Under thirties can live on peanuts. Six to a studio is no big deal, happy hour can produce a balanced diet in a big city, and they can grow their own in the country. There is so much that is free and cheap when you are young and imaginative, and they should go for it at the expense of having a high paying job they hate.

One of the most important tools in growing up and finding joy is learning how to ask for help and information. Most people limit themselves to asking the obvious people for help and advice. I say ask everyone you admire, are amused by, or envy. Find out what they know that will lead you toward your goal of being happy and feeling competent at work and in life. The kind of people who can't be bothered to respond positively to a request for advice are not the kind of people whose advice any of us need.

The secret, as usual, is there is no secret. Just advise your job seeker to talk to everyone, search out positive environments, and know that every step is a first step to somewhere.

Best, Aunt Bossy

Transformation

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Dear Aunt Bossy,

□□□□□□□□□□ *What do you think of the whole trans bathroom situation?*

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Vivica

Dear Vivica,

Firstly, I roll from the top down the front, except when I have a cat, in which case, the reverse is safer, although not foolproof.

Since I am rather long in the tooth, and have lived in both Provincetown and the West Village, I imagine I have shared many a bathroom with a transsexual, or at least a transvestite. Since I am a female, and we have stalls, I have never had a disturbing experience, and, if everyone would just behave, this could continue for all of history.

In the case of changing rooms without privacy, the situation is more complex and I have no answer. The people we have not heard from on this subject are some older trans people, who must have found a solution along the way.

Once something becomes politicized, it expands its potential for becoming a problem. I'd like to hear from those who have lived with it who are not special snowflakes with a newly discovered "problem" for society to solve.

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That being said, there is never an excuse for being rude to anyone, and that goes both ways.

AB

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