



Careers are out of control.

The stress of high-pressure work environments has caused people to feel burned out. They feel their careers are slipping out of their control. In January 1997, human resources professionals were surveyed on this issue; 65 percent said their career is not where they expected it to be and 63 percent felt burned out in their jobs. Interestingly, when asked if they had set a specific course for their careers when they entered the field, only 47 percent said yes. And 53 percent indicated that they were optimistic about moving ahead in human resources during the next two years.

Workforce Magazine
April 1997

COMMENTARY

Many professionals feel out of control in the management of their careers. Of course, many of them didn't plan to have personal control over those careers anyway. There's an uneasiness here that suggests that indications are good for career growth, but more direct control will be necessary. If they want to move ahead, as their potential suggests is possible, they'll have to assume some personal responsibility for making that happen.

An interesting additional piece to this sign is that the survey polled human resource professionals. If they have these feelings, how will that influence the way they respond to others who come to them for counseling? How will their discomfort stimulate them to advise their strategic level superiors?



Demand for liberal arts graduates is increasing.

In a study by Hobart and William Smith colleges, Geneva, New York, 75 percent of the parents surveyed believe the purpose of college is to get a practical education and get a decent job right out of college; 85 percent of the students surveyed felt the same way.

Business leaders took a different view. They called the humanities essential to developing critical thinking (90 percent) and problem-solving skills (77 percent).

FORTUNE Magazine
May 12, 1997

COMMENTARY

Tomorrow's jobs will require the kinds of skills acquired through a liberal arts education, rather than specialized training in narrow fields like engineering or public health. Employers will look for graduates with a broad, general background (liberal arts) that gives them a greater understanding of the big picture and historical trends. While this focus doesn't diminish the need for specialized education, it does suggest a much stronger demand for liberal arts graduates in the business world.

Expect to see liberal arts colleges add general courses in business to help students understand this important employment environment. Skill development will include creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, and collaboration. Corporate recruiters will seek grads with broad backgrounds. The demand will make it easier for college-bound high

school students to justify the investment in a quality education that doesn't have a specific job waiting at the end of the commencement recessional.

Small liberal arts colleges will become a more powerful force. They'll attract more funding from the corporate sector, equipping them to do even more. Astute employers will sponsor valued employees to attend weekend college programs such as the design pioneered by Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio. Some workers with college degrees will eagerly return to the campus to take the humanities courses.