11 Career Zingers
Volume 2
Invitational Nudges to Boost Your Career

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Why Career Zingers?

Career Zingers gives you small nudges of advice, direction, and perspective for your career development.

It can help you when you feel confused, uncertain or lost in your career path, you are wondering what your next step is on your career, you want to sustain your career progress, you want to manage and master your own career, or you just want a quick idea to nudge your career.

We tend to think about career as an occupation or profession often requiring special training or education. Yet career also means to run or move rapidly along. The fuller view of career is a person’s progress or general course of action through life.

This is the second career e-book, comprised of Zingers 12 to 22.
12: The Fiction of Our Career

Is your career a work of fiction? I think most of us believe our career is non fiction – based on facts, real events, and real people. On the surface most of us fail to recognize our career is a work of nonfiction – a story of imaginary events, invention and fabrication as opposed to mere fact. It it time to acknowledge the centrality of nonfiction within our career because:

1. We must realize how much our internal thoughts and stories influence all of our career experiences, emotions, and actions.

2. We are both the protagonist and writer of our career story and therefore have choice and authorship in how we understand our career and how we act in mundane and challenging situations.

3. We are not prisoners or victims of a malevolent author (job, boss, marriage, health) — like all experienced writers we must realize the bulk of our work consists of constant iteration and revision.

Each of us is a book waiting to be written, and that book, if written, results in a person explained.

- Thomas M Cirignano
I was sitting at the gym and she came up to me, looked me in the eye and declared, “I can fly – you know.”

She took off with two quick steps, leaped into the air for a flight of about 100 milliseconds and an elevation of 3 inches, landing, taking two more steps, then taking flight again.

The belief and the action of this enthusiastic two-year old girl was inspiring.

In your career, when did you stop believing you could fly and why did you stop trying?

Don’t believe what your eyes are telling you. All they show is limitation. Look with your understanding. Find out what you already know and you will see the way to fly.

― Richard Bach
Precious means not to be wasted or treated carelessly.

Imagine today at work is your first day at work. Imagine today at work is your last day at work. Each of us, regardless of how long we work, will have a first day and a last day. If you knew it was your first day or last day at work what might you do to make it more precious or memorable?

Realize you don’t have to imagine today as either your first or last day. Each day, you and your work change — even if ever so slightly. Therefore, each day is your first day. Also, no day at work will ever be identical to the previous day so it is also your last day.

Although our career can span many years it can only be found and fully experienced within each precious day, hour, minute, and moment.
15. New Eyes

Are you able to refresh the I behind your eyes? Many of us are myopic in looking for something new in our careers when the newness may be to look at our career, our self, and our world with new eyes. You can have laser surgery to correct your vision but without a vision of what you are looking for you may fail to see what is right in front of you.

I invite you to give your eyes a rest by closing them for 60 seconds after you read this tip. When you open your eyes, strive to look at your world in a new way then extend this fresh-eyed approach to view your career.

*The journey of discovery begins not with new vistas but with having new eyes with which to behold them.*

- Proust
16. Authenticity - Empty Bowl

Authenticity is less about what you have and more about what you can hold.

I encourage you to think of authenticity as being an empty bowl. Your authentic core is not comprised of what is thrown in the bowl – it is the very bowl itself. You can’t “fake it ’til you make it.”

I encourage you to empty your bowl by meditating or determining who you really are without your achievements, possessions, and posturing. It is time to let the core of you shine through in all you do.

Authenticity is a practice we choose
in each present moment.
It is not a plan or a destination to get to.
- Henna Inam
17. Be Ignorant

Ignorance is essential for authentic career development
Ignorance means not knowing.

Stupidity is thinking you know when you don’t.

Often in career development we seek out experts, coaches, authors, and counsellors to tell us what we should be doing.

We can learn from others but deep and authentic learning can occur if we are willing to sit in ignorance and wonder about ourselves and our future without having to find a quick and easy ready-made answer.

Just because we start with ignorance doesn’t mean we need to stay there. When it comes to careers it is okay to be ignorant, just don’t be stupid about it.
I believe that work is significant, enriching, enlivening, and real when we distill engage the moment. The paradox is that moments strung together can create something momentous – very important: having great or lasting importance.

My simple definition of employee engagement is - good work done well with others every day.

We must determine the moments to do good, the moments that can go well, the moments we share with others, and key moments of every day. Once we know the moments then we need to instill the actions or behaviors that make these moments so engaging.

What are you going to do the moment you finish this post to make your own work or someone else’s work more engaging? Don’t just think of a response, engage the moment with a vibrant action.
Hope is in the future, experience is where we are right now.

I encourage you to be hopeless. I am not talking about depression, anxiety, or dread about the future. You don’t have to abandon hope but I do encourage you to give more attention and awareness to where you are right now. Hope can pull us through tough times but it can also distract us from what we need to do right now.

If you want a bountiful garden make sure you plant the seeds, water the plants, and pull the weeds.

I hope this advice was helpful without me simply hoping you would get the message.
20. Know Your Audience

I recently attended a Carlos Santana concert in Winnipeg. I enjoyed the show but there would have been no show without the audience.

You also would not have a career without others. You required parents to be brought into being and so many relationships will provide threads as you weave your unique career tapestry.

Don’t think solo in career, think about your impact on others, their impact on you, and the contributions you make to others from co-workers and customers to family and friends.

Turn the lights on in your career and see “your audience.”

Ask yourself: how well am I performing in my work to enrich, enliven, educate, enthuse, and entertain my audience?
Pause before your foot hits the floor.

Don’t let your cluttered mind drive you off in all directions. Before you leap out of your chair and embark on the next action in your life — pause — be intentional.

Ask yourself: Where am I going? Why am I going there?

Once you have a satisfactory answer to those two questions proceed because if the shoe fits, wear it.

Otherwise, take a few more moments and infuse more intention into your everyday actions.
In the game called your career, what puts you on tilt and how do you flip out of being tilted?

To play pinball well we must know just how much we can shake the machine to alter the ball’s path in our favor without tilting the machine. We also need to keep flipping the ball back into the game area to score points.

**Tilt.** Do you know who or what puts you on tilt, shutting you down, and leaving you feeling “out of the game?” Do you have common triggers and habitual ways of responding to being tilted? Once tilted, how long, in minutes, hours, or days, does your emotional and mental tilt leave you shut down?

**Flip.** After you have been tilted how do you flip your career around? Do you have a specific routine, person, or mental perspective that renews or rejuvenates your career quest?
Engage along with me, the best is yet to be.

David Zinger has spoken around the world and he wrote 4 books on work. He invested 24,000 hours in work engagement. David was a counsellor educator at the University of Manitoba and a career development coach and employee counsellor for Seagram/Diageo.

Engage with David today to improve, enhance, or develop your career. David offers fresh and invigorating speeches, workshops, coaching, and consulting on career development.

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