College Career Counseling: A look Beyond College Job Search

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, career counseling in colleges have focused on job search and preparing students for interview. Consequently, college graduates leave school concerned mostly about their first jobs. Furthermore, many students only seriously think about career and employment during the second semester of their junior year or for a great many during their senior year. Even when they think about career and employment, the focus is usually short term and not strategic. Most students do not really give serious thoughts to their career path beyond the immediate future.

College placement offices have tended concentrate on attempting to help students find immediate post graduate placement or internship rather than helping them to develop strategic career plans. College curricula on the other hand, do inadequate job in helping students understand the importance of life long career planning, which in my opinion should start from the first year of college. The career planning vacuum created during college years unfortunately create a situation where many professionals fail to appreciate that the ownership of their career progression lies within their hands.. Many of these professionals believe that their career path is the responsibility of their employers. Others believe that hard work is enough to assure their advancement in their organizations. These assumptions are in my opinion very unrealistic in today's job market. I believe that if career planning is approached from a personal branding point of view, the probability of achieving a more favorable career path would be enhanced.

The key questions answered by this paper include: What is a personal brand? How is personal brand developed? And how can personal brand be managed and measured over the professional life of the individual? The implication of this study is that a thorough understanding and utilization of personal branding is vital to strategic career success.