

The cost of not having a career health check

Have you ever considered scheduling a regular career health check-up? If you're like most, the answer is likely no. Unfortunately, we often treat our careers like we do medical check-ups - only seeking help when we realise there's a problem.

When we hit these stressful times in our careers, often our better judgement can be clouded by emotion or external factors. It's times like these when we find ourselves making impulsive decisions such as investing in expensive training in something we might not even know we want to do, or aimlessly applying for jobs, clutching to the first opportunity that presents itself.

Stumbling along on a career half-heartedly; panicking in a job search; or paying to do a course to get skills for a career you don't even know you'll enjoy, can suck the life out of the bank balance as well as your overall career satisfaction. Yet many aren't willing to invest in – or are unaware of – the benefits of visiting a professional adviser to help steer them on the right career track.

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Why you should consider scheduling some time with a career adviser:

Caroline Cleland, a professional member of the [Career Development Association of Australia](#), says getting the right advice on the jobs to apply for and sending out an appropriate resume is important for those who are unhappy in their career or those looking to get ahead.

But help is not only reserved for those looking for work now.

“Put yourself in the driver's seat and know where to go next,” she says. “In even a short visit, a career professional can clarify with the client what it is they want to do and work

out some steps to move forward.

Cleland highlights that as the career landscape continues to shift, some professions that have traditionally seen strong employment numbers are morphing into new professions with new skill-set requirements and responsibilities, so it's important to be on the front foot and have a progression plan in place. A career professional can help with that.

Support from a career professional can range from a few simple pointers on writing a modern-day resume to learning about the right opportunities in new sectors that are suited to an individual's skill sets, passion and talents.

"Friends and relatives give you advice from their view of the world – well-intentioned as it may be, sometimes they are not as objective or as knowledgeable as they could be," she says.

"A trained career adviser knows what opportunities are out there and they can help guide a person, not tell them what to do."

Investing in your career can have a big payoff for you in the long run.

Here are some of the sums for you to consider:

- Five coffees a week – \$20 a week, \$80 a month, \$960 a year
- One dinner a week – \$30 a week, \$120 a month, \$2400 a year
- Lunch three times a week – \$30 a week, \$120 a month, \$2400 a year

Or ...

- The average career consultant's charge is between \$100 and \$200 an hour
- Potential pay-off: a new job, paying \$5000 more a year

If, after reading this, you're now ready to schedule a career health check, a great place to start is by doing some online research into careers advisers near you.

This article has been adapted from the original first published by Cara Jenkin, Careers Editor at News Corp Australia.