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ACP International Book Review Series

Featuring: What Next? The Complete Guide to Taking Control of Your Working Life,

By Barbara Moses, Ph.D (DK Publishing)

**Review by *Bruce Harrott*, Employment Consultant, ACP International
- Toronto Chapter, Board Member. Email: bruceh@interlog.com**

Looking for a colourful, well-designed, up-to-date, and comprehensive step-by-step career-planning workbook for your clients? Then be sure to take a look at “What Next?” by Toronto-based author, speaker and columnist Barbara Moses. In the introduction, Moses describes the two key principles underlying the book: “Express your authentic self in your work” and “be a career activist [which means] you expect – in fact demand – good work as a right, not a privilege.” Great advice.

The book is bursting with visual appeal – excellent graphic design, with lots of colourful photographs and easy-to-read text. The first three chapters (“Know Yourself”, “Find Your Perfect Path”, and “Find Great Work”) offer a series of self-assessment exercises and plenty of helpful information and practical tips. These chapters are designed to move the reader from self-reflection right through to negotiating an offer. The final chapters (“Overcome Career Challenges” and “Boost Your Career Intelligence”) cover such things as age-related dilemmas and how to become a career activist.

I appreciated the short, informative sidebars that are sprinkled throughout the book with headings such as “Case study” and “Career counsel”. They provide helpful nuggets of information and a visual break from the main text. Another series of sidebars titled “Assessing yourself” gives the reader a great way to navigate through the book. Having been self-employed most of my life, I especially appreciated the segment on “Working for yourself.” Moses points out that while most people envy the freedom of the self-employed, freedom has its own challenges. She writes, “Yes, you have the flexibility to take time off work to watch your child’s soccer game, but you also are flexible to work until 2 A.M. to deliver your project on time.”

I really have just one issue with this outstanding book. Nowhere, that I could find, does Moses suggest that the reader might seek support and guidance from a career professional (like me for example). In fact, in the introduction she states, “I hope that you will think of this book as, in effect, your own personal career counsellor and coach.” Perhaps in the second printing of her book Moses will follow in the footsteps of author Richard Bolles and include an appendix titled, “When Books Are Not Enough and You Want a Live Person to Help You: Career Counselors and Other Resources.”

Review by *Nick Hawkins, CMF* — World Council Member and Past President of ACP International – UK, Fellow Practitioner and Governing Board Member of the Institute of Career Certification International. Email: NJHawkins@aol.com

This book deserves to become a classic in the field of career management. Barbara Moses' core concept is that of the Career Activist – a person who believes they have a right to good work, and the self-knowledge and skills to make it happen.

Step by step she takes the reader through the essential steps of knowing oneself, identifying the right career option, making it happen, overcoming problems and maintaining both job and life satisfaction. She does this in a well-structured, user-friendly way with numerous appropriate questionnaires, enlivened by little inset vignettes of career successes. I personally found this oscillation between the more theoretical parts and practical examples effective, though others might prefer a less varied diet – chacun à son gout!

The book works on a number of levels – possible, though somewhat indigestible, if read a whole; but each section can stand on its own and be referred to individually. So you want to write a good CV – it's here. You need help in analysing the direction your career should go next – it's here. You need to pin down what you have to offer the recruitment market – It's here. Your career is stuck or unsatisfactory – help with that can be found here too.

This book makes it easy to learn the fundamental principles of good career management: namely how to identify, obtain and keep a satisfying working role, and it encourages the reader along the way. Perhaps for some, driven as they may be by financial imperatives, the approach is too idealistic; but even in this predicament "What Next?" will help an individual keep the main goal in sight, despite the need to eat temporarily overriding all other considerations.

For anyone involved in giving, or personally needing, careers advice, a well-thumbed copy of Barbara Moses work would be a useful item on the bookshelf.

Review by *Meg Montford, CMF* — ACP International – Past President of ACP International Kansas City Chapter. Email: meg@abilitiesenhanced.com

In her new book, "What Next? The Complete Guide to Taking Control of Your Working Life," Barbara Moses, Ph.D., covers all the bases for anyone wrestling with today's major career issues. From knowing yourself to overcoming career challenges and finding your perfect work, Dr. Moses creatively and with her own passion, guides the reader down the path to career fulfillment. She provides a comprehensive career coaching toolkit between the covers of an intelligently written and aesthetically appealing how-to manual.

"What Next?" asks the tough questions in its quest to get readers to connect with themselves and others, clarify what's most important to attain career fulfillment, and then commit to doing the real work to make it all happen. The two main principles from which Dr. Moses writes her book are these: Be authentic in your work and be a career activist. Just as she provides the structure to help do both, she motivates the reader to accept these principles for career life design.

Authenticity comes from a place inside each of us based upon our values, motivators, skills, talents, and work-related desires. When we are true to ourselves, we show up in the workplace with integrity, commitment, and purpose. Dr. Moses facilitates the understanding of this key concept and supplies exercises to help us define and affirm our authentic selves.

"Work is a constant audition and you will need to prove and re-prove continually that you have the right skills for the job," proclaims Dr. Moses. How do we do that? By becoming career activists as we become responsible for our own careers. We need to seek information on workplace trends and develop our career intelligence so that we are prepared to flex with the needs of employers while remaining true to our own career goals.

As a practicing Career Coach specializing in assisting clients to navigate career transitions, I found "What Next?" to be one of the most refreshing and captivating career help books available to consumers in today's marketplace. The assessment tools are thorough, the tips up-to-date, and the advice appropriate for all persons regardless of their industries, career levels, or ages. It compactly addresses the components of my career coaching program. In fact, I am so impressed with the book that I am considering including it in conjunction with my career coaching service packages, using it as a workbook to complement the career coaching that I do with each client. The content reinforces the career coaching methodologies that I currently utilize in helping people discover how they can work their passions.

I look forward to reading more books from Dr. Moses as she definitely has a visionary approach to career management that can only enhance the proactive stance we all need to take in today's ever evolving world of what constitutes job security. She inspires readers to assume control for their own career destinies, an action plan that will serve us well as we move forward from career survival to career enjoyment.

