

**Mapfumo,J. & Chireshe,R. (2009). *Career Guidance for Job Seekers*. Gweru, Mambo Press, ISBN 0869227998**

Reviewed by

Nyanga Takupiwa

Faculty of Social Sciences, Great Zimbabwe University

Career guidance for high school and college graduates is a contemporary issue, especially in developing countries such as Zimbabwe where job opportunities are very limited. According to the Central Statistics Office (C.S.O), Zimbabwe's unemployment rate is about 90%, which makes the issue of career guidance intermittent and crucial because of the concomitant pressures job seekers face. Consequently, the authors of the book have made an effort to provide readers with practical and relevant information on occupational choice. The authors have presented a collection of information on how to attune young people's skills and techniques in choosing a line of profession to undertake. The book is intended for young adults in high schools, colleges and universities, and vocational training centers.

The book, *Career Guidance For Job Seekers*, comprises of four stand-alone chapters, with well-presented and simplified job seeking ideas, techniques, and concepts. Throughout the book, there is a pervading theme of career guidance for job seekers encompassed by a range of hands-on activities and personalized terms, such as "we", "I", "us", which keeps readers fascinated. Chapter one deals with the conceptual framework of career guidance. It covers the 'what and why' aspects. The other three chapters deal with self-evaluation, the job hunting process, and entrepreneurial skills, respectively. The sequencing of ideas throughout the text is appropriate since all the four chapters feed into each other.

The book is also commended for presenting a plethora of practical, detailed information about career guidance. To simplify concepts, Mapfumo and Chireshe started by defining keyterms such as career, career guidance, and career development. These concepts were addressed in a way that provokes and stimulates job hunters to make informed occupational choice decisions. The book, with the aid of John Holland's view that certain personalities match well with certain job environments, discussed six personality types. This provides readers with insights into their own potentials, capabilities, and abilities. Job seekers need to identify what they can do best and identify their strong and weak points. The book advised readers to work on their weaknesses and maximize on their strength in order to smoothly pursue a chosen career. Steps to be followed by job seekers for them to find the right and satisfying jobs were also unbundled. The use of exercises is highly commendable since it makes the imparting of knowledge and skills easy.

The book is also applauded for providing a list of recruitment sources such as print media, telephone, employment agencies, e-recruitment, and Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. This strategically positions job seekers to have easy access to job openings in the labor market. The authors clearly explained what a curriculum vitae is and explored what it is used for in the

recruitment and selection process. Samples of the updated curriculum vitae and application letter were also provided, which is good since it equips job hunters with pertinent skills to draft and generate these important job-seeking instruments. The authors also did well to emphasize the need for job seekers to ensure that the details that appear on their curriculum vitae and application letters are true and authentic. To further make readers gain a competitive edge over other applicants, the book provided them with hints and tips of tackling interview questions. The interview do's and don't's are given in greater detail. Authors recommended that applicants conduct a mock interview a few days before the actual interview takes place. This is very important since most job seekers who will have just graduated from schools and colleges will have not attended any interview before.

The last chapter of the book focuses on entrepreneurship, which forms part of career guidance and the key to economic and sustainable development. Job seekers are made aware that they can create employment for themselves and others through entrepreneurship. To enhance entrepreneurial programs, most developing countries have set up government ministries that deal with small to medium enterprises. In light of this, the authors explained in detail the whole process of setting up a business starting from its inception right to the maturity stage. While this is commendable, the authors could have further enriched this part by providing readers with information on where prospective entrepreneurs could get assistance in the form of capital and business management training skills. The authors could have also considered integrating entrepreneurship with manpower training and sustainable development since all forms of development depend on the organization's human capital. While the authors are applauded for providing readers with all-encompassing information on job seeking strategies, they however did not outline the role of the teacher, parent, and lecturers in career guidance and development which, in other scholars' views, are important in shaping a high school or college graduate's career.

In summary, although the book has a few weaknesses it has, however, managed to provide more answers than questions to all its users. The book managed to realize its' intended objective of providing readers with contemporary job seeking skills and strategies. There are a number of issues that recur throughout the book, for instance the link between advanced level subjects and the career one is likely to pursue. The book is very beneficial to sustainable development since sustainable development heavily rely on the types of manpower in the labour market. Stakeholders such as secondary school teachers, parents, vocational training college lecturers, universities, employers and job seekers are key antecedents to development. The book assist employers to recruit the best candidates to their company hence influence development.

Nyanga Takupiwa

Great Zimbabwe University (Lecturer, Faculty of Social Sciences)