

The Implicit Career Search

Discover Your Work Purpose

Why the word “implicit” to describe career search, something we traditionally think of as very deliberate and active? The word “implicit” means “available but not apparent”. This suggests that something is lying beneath the surface, waiting to be discovered. And this is the key – the notion that there are deeper levels at which we can explore our relationship to career. Steve Miller’s model, the foundation of The Implicit Career Search®, is called “The Hero’s Journey”. The Hero’s Journey is Steve’s original expanded interpretation of Joseph Campbell’s work on mythology across all cultures describing the archetypal hero who searches to find a unique contribution that s/he can bring back to society.

The journey itself involves 2 stages:

1. The Inner Journey to discover one’s calling,
2. The Outer Journey to deliver it back to the community.

This is a journey like no other. The first leg, called The Inner Journey, introduces us to some unconscious, conscious, and superconscious ways in which we show ourselves to the world and understand our own identities. To understand our true calling, we need to travel this journey, through increasing levels of depth, from the Persona, to Behavior, Feelings, Self Concept, and finally, Essence. Essence represents our core self, stripped of any layers of defenses present at the other, surface layers. It is at the level of Essence where we can understand ourselves at the deepest level possible, in other words the person we were born into who is like no other person on earth. This level of awareness leads to an understanding of our unique contribution to the world through work.

The Outer Journey (the Career Development Spectrum) is visible to the external world. It refers to the stages of career development that must be experienced, step-by-step, to lead us to our calling. There is a hierarchical progression through these stages, ranging from Craftsperson (skills-building), to Manager (becoming stable), Leader (teaching my craft to others), Expert (solving problems in my field), to ultimately, Creator (making a contribution that changes the world, uniquely linked to me as the conduit).

The intersection of the Inner and Outer Journeys is where Essence relates to Career. This intersection lies in the understanding of what contribution you were uniquely meant to make to this world through work – many people think of this as their calling. In Implicit Career Search language, we refer to this as your Work Purpose. The Outer Journey component involves a superconscious level of planning through the entry point and landing stages of the Career Development Spectrum to realize your Work Purpose, and get paid for it.

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