

Career changes are daunting but following your heart pays off

When daily life loses its charm and your inner voice endlessly nags about embarking on a new life adventure, it's time to change. Changing vocation is a daunting decision, for one has to choose between a challenge and security.

Wisemen teach: "Those who follow their heart, eventually find joy and fulfillment in their lives." Obstacles could be easily overcome if there are supportive specialists and an inspiring environment.

A choice between security and opportunity

Jolita Medelinskienė (36) worked as a kindergarten teacher for many years in her native Lithuania and later in the UK. However, the routine drained joy and excitement from her life. After a day of work, she returned home irritable and tired. On Sunday afternoons, she felt a heaviness on her chest and anxiety. "Back to work tomorrow," she sighed.

Jolita has worked as an early childhood educator for almost two decades. At sixteen, she helped at children's 'summer camps. In 2016, she came to the UK to study early childhood care and worked in a kindergarten in London.

She enjoyed working with children, but her childhood dream was to study medicine.

"I was always curious about anatomy and biology. I wanted to understand how medication affects our bodies. Sadly, I lacked the confidence to apply to study medicine in Lithuania."

One evening, after a long day at work, Jolita returned home exhausted and felt piercing back pain. She realized she no longer wanted to compromise her health and watched how her life passed by. "My life lost all its colors. It became unbearably mundane. I had no motivation to improve my professional knowledge or advance my career in childcare. I counted minutes till the end of my shift every working day," said Jolita.

She realized she had two options: to keep working in a job that didn't bring joy or build courage and make a change. She was not sure what kind of change she would make, but she knew it was necessary. Once, she aimlessly browsed the Internet when her eye caught an ad for a vocational school Dental Tutors.

The ad invited prospective students to study to become a dental nurse. Jolita did not hesitate for long: "I felt attracted to school's advanced teaching methods, short course duration, and the possibility of finding a job quickly."

Innovative teaching methods

The London-based vocational school Dental Tutors trains students who want to become dental nurses and those who seek UK dental accreditation. (ADD MORE?)

Training courses combine traditional and innovative teaching methods. It aims to ensure that students of different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and reading and writing, could quickly learn new material.

Innovative teaching methods and a supportive culture are rooted in the school founders' dreams and experiences.

Aida Kromelytė, the co-founder and CEO of Dental Tutors, has always been fascinated by visual effects, animation, and dentistry. She graduated from Vilnius Academy of Arts, London Metropolitan (BSc), Ravensbourne (MA), and Kansai Gaidai in Japan. (Degree?)

During her studies at Ravensbourne University, she came up with an idea to combine dental studies and visual effects. Aida started looking for a colleague who could help her fulfill her dream.

She met Simas Senavaitis, a graduate of London Metropolitan University, where he acquired a degree in 3D Modelling and Design. They joined their efforts, passion for animation and education and started building a library of innovative teaching materials. It was the foundation for Dental Tutors school.

They created educational videos that are clear, easy to understand, anatomically correct, and aesthetically pleasing. "We wanted to ease the learning process for our students. Some abstract concepts or biological processes are easier understood when using visual materials. Our films help students learn anatomy, understand how the human body works, and explain treatment procedures. Films also help memorize medical terms," explained Aida.

Childhood dreams motivate change

During the introduction lecture at the Dental Tutors course, Gabija Balevičiūtė (31) felt lost and confused. She felt intimidated by new medical terms and information. But she did not give up. Gabija was determined to fulfill her childhood dream of becoming a dentist. "I was afraid to go for dental check-ups, but the dentist's work always fascinated me," she recalled.

Instead of studying dentistry, Gabija enrolled and completed information and communication studies at Vilnius University.

She began her career at a marketing company, Eylean, in Vilnius, Lithuania. In 2014, she moved to England and worked as a manager at Asorti Food in the Beckton area of London for seven years. Her life flowed in a stable and well-established way.

"Enrolling in Dental Tutors course was a spontaneous decision," recalled Gabija. She found the school's ad online and gave it a chance. Gabija's reasoning was simple: she could always get back to her old lifestyle if she failed at school.

Although the introductory lectures sparked fears she would not master medical subjects, Gabija persisted. "The professors and administrators were very supportive and responsive. I could reach out to them at anytime, and they always responded to my questions and listen to my concerns," she said.

Dental Tutors assist in job search

Well-established professionals often avoid changing vocation for fear of decreased income, as their studies would have to reduce their working hours or even require them to leave their jobs.

School founders explained that many dental clinics accept students with no work experience. Thus, prospective dental nurses are not only trained in a professional environment but are paid a salary.

The school has professional links with many dental clinics and professional organizations in the UK, and by using this network Dental Tutors helps its students to find job placements.

One of Jolita's fears was not finding a job after leaving kindergarten. Student lifestyle was not appealing to her: "When I learned Dental Tutors provide an opportunity to study and work, without a doubt, I enrolled in the course."

School staff help students prepare job descriptions (CVs) cover letters and find work in dental clinics. Throughout the academic year, the school administration informs students about new jobs.

"We help students at every stage of their studies," said Aida. The school staff answers students' questions 24/7, helps fill in necessary documents, and assists in preparation for exams.

Dental Tutors' lecturers present course material using an information retrieval method: "We constantly repeat past lessons, and it helps to memorise study material and expand it."

The number of students is growing at Dental Tutors. People of different walks of life enroll in the course: secondary school pupils, students frustrated with their studies at other dental schools, professionals seeking to acquire a dental qualification in the UK, and people looking to change careers.

"When a mature student, who is considering changing a vocation, approaches us, we remind them that they will be qualified specialists in a year. As we know, the time passes quickly," said Aida.

Determination leads to a fulfilling career

Career advisors from Indeed.com, a job search ad platform, suggest that those pondering a career change should ask themselves what activities make you jump out of bed and work with a smile throughout the day.

People avoid changing their vocations for two main reasons: fear of change and loss of income. The retraining process could be full of conflicting emotions and doubts. However, a change might bring unexpected rewards: new knowledge, broadened perspectives, the discovery of new talents, new friends, and enriched life.

Jolita was among the first Dental Tutors graduates. Although she has completed a year-long course, she had worried that her English skills were not sufficient at work. Her first employer was a very kind dentist from Scotland. "But I hardly understood a word he was saying. I kept recalling visual materials I saw during classes, and it helped me assist the doctor during treatment sessions," she said.

During her two years at Dental Design Studio in London, Jolita was promoted. Now she works as a senior dental nurse and teaches students who do internships in clinics. Jolita also learned to work at the reception.

"Once I started following my heart, I regained energy and motivation to improve. Challenges become lessons that gave me new knowledge and skills," Jolita said.

The successful start of Jolita's medical career motivated her to seek more knowledge and she enroll to study radiography at Dental Tutors.

After graduation, Gabija goes to work with a smile every day: "Every patient is an individual, and their needs are unique, making my work exciting and different. It's not always easy to achieve your dream, but it's worth it."said Gabija, who now works at Millharbour Dentistry and Cosmetics on the Canary Wharf in London.

Gabija's decision to change her profession broadened her worldview and revealed unique personality traits. "This experience has given me new knowledge and self-confidence," she said.

A dental nurse diploma could be a stepping stone for those seeking a dentistry career. Students could continue their studies and become oral hygienists, dental therapists, dental technicians, dental clinic managers, and dentists.

Dental Tutors also offers Continuing Professional Development courses. The nine-year-old school is gaining a reputation among professional organizations. In 2020, Dental Tutors won the best Dental School of the Year award hosted by Cambridgeshire Prestige Awards.