



Devil in the detail

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Embracing change

The prospect of a mid-life career change can be frightening for many people but it is something to be embraced, Liam Horan, Careers Consultant with Slí Nua Careers, tells *Declan Rooney*

Slí Nua Careers Consultant Liam Horan will be speaking at the Ballybane Enterprise Centre next week on the topic of change and how individuals embrace it or sometimes shy away from it, and how we can benefit from it.

As someone who has taken on a number of major career transformations in his time, Mr Horan is well positioned to advise on how to cope with the stresses involved.

"I suppose I am someone who has changed quite a bit in life, in that ten or 12 years ago I left the Irish Independent. I was Gaelic Games Correspondent; it was a very big job, a job I liked in the sport I love," says Mr Horan.

"But I decided to change because I had done it for five years and I felt I had enough. I was attracted to a new challenge at the time and, for the last 12 years, I have changed on a number of occasions.

"People sometimes see you changing jobs and they say: 'Oh that fella jumps around the place and can't stick at anything', whereas I see it as a willingness to try new things, a willingness to explore yourself and explore opportunities, and to challenge and stretch yourself."

In his current guise, Mr Horan heads up Slí Nua Careers, a company that advises clients on their career direction and works with a lot of people who are in the midst of change. But change needs to be met head on and embraced, he says.

"In my view, life is not about landing a job that is permanent, pensionable and staying in it for ever. For me, the excitement comes in the change and in the challenge, but you have to be able to be open and hungry for that," he says.

Through his work with Slí Nua Careers, Mr Horan meets a lot of people who are changing sectors, for example from the construction industry to another sector, and he says that, initially, many people start out "still in shock" that their business has closed down or that their sector is no longer providing them with employment. They then move to a point where they think about "doing something new".

"They then start to doubt their ability to transfer their skills from one sector to another and this gives them a fresh wave of anger

or depression. At that point, I would generally meet them and get them to look afresh at their talents and skills, what they have done and their achievements. Just because your achievements are in sector A doesn't mean it has no relevance to sector B," he says.

While many people find it difficult to change careers for reasons like family responsibilities, mortgage commitments or other forms of debt, Mr Horan believes there is always a choice that can be made to improve how you feel about your life situation.

He says that, ultimately, you always have the choice to do something yourself, even if it is to stop worrying about it and to adopt a more positive attitude about it.

"There is always a certain amount of choice in there for you. But I think our culture and western society has done a great deal of damage to people by removing the ability to be innovative or creative in how they approach things, like how to get by and how to make some money. We have created a lot of people who are dependant on jobs being created for them, which is very understandable in many ways.

"But there are still things you can do and what I'll be discussing in Ballybane is that those who understand that there will be change have a much greater advantage over those who resist change and try to achieve some sort of nirvana-type fixed state. That is the major lesson that people can take on board from people who do embrace change."

Liam Horan will speak at the Ballybane Enterprise Centre on Thursday 23 February at 6.30pm. For more information, call the centre at 091-386004, visit www.bbec.ie or email liam@bbec.ie, and for more information on Slí Nua Careers, email liam.horan@slinuacareers.com, visit www.slinuacareers.com or phone 094-9542965.



PROFILE LIAM HORAN

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CV: A former Gaelic Games Correspondent with the Irish Independent, former Editor of the Athlone Voice, Sports Editor with the Evening Echo and successful freelance journalist, Liam Horan is one of the country's leading writers. After running a number of successful businesses in the last decade, Mr Horan is now a careers consultant with Slí Nua Careers.