

## Cars, computers and careers

Career coach Max Eggert says it's time to put some effort into learning to use your skills and knowledge to develop your career.

Which of us jumped into a car and was able to drive it immediately?

Do you know anyone who will unpack the new computer or laptop that Father Christmas leaves for us who expects to be able to use all the computer's functions immediately?

People who can do this are few and far between. I don't know about you but it took me two or three months before I was driving competently – and that was with lessons - and even after a year or so using my laptop I am still discovering the mysteries of what my equipment can do for me.

How different is the way we treat that more complex machinery - ourselves?

How much time do we put into driving or understanding the potential of our careers? Most people spend more time planning their annual holiday than they do working on the direction of their life and career.

Most of us certainly spend more money on our holiday for one year that we do on five years of our own personal career development. So, there should be no surprises when things at work don't go as well as we would like.

We don't come with a career instruction manual when we hit the job market after school or college.

If we don't get on to the right career track by our mid-twenties then, because the job market is so age conscious if not discriminatory, unless we are very lucky we are unlikely to reach our full potential.

In this life there is no reincarnation for careers and fresh starts become more difficult with increasing age.

How many middle-aged people do you know who would prefer to be doing something different but are victims of career drift because they did not plan or work on making themselves employable?

As we all know it is never over until the obese person sings but it is certainly better to sort out and work on your career aspirations today than it is tomorrow.

So today's message: treat your career like your car or your computer - invest in time learning to drive it - the rewards and satisfaction will be awesome.

\* Max Eggert is chief psychologist for career coaching firm Transcarer.