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ES Jobs

Want to feel like your work matters?

Too many teachers quit shortly after qualifying, yet research shows more of us want careers where we make a difference. But a reality check can reveal if it is really the career for you. By **Niki Chesworth**

INSPIRING a lifelong love in a subject. Taking a student from an E to a B. Helping a bright pupil to really excel. And a “thank you for helping me get my grades”. All of these can make teaching a job that is exciting and rewarding.

“It is the small number of pupils you help to fulfil their dreams that make teaching a job that is so fulfilling,” says Alastair Creamer, of Eyes Wide Opened (ewopened.com), which helps undecided and frustrated young graduates to make the right career choices.

His wife is a teacher, so it is a career path he knows well. “Even one pupil a year can make up for all the red tape, marking and hours,” adds Creamer. “That is what fills her with energy.”

In his talks – he has one on May 3 in Holborn with Psychologies Magazine and will be leading a career coaching weekend on May 6 and 7 in King’s Cross – Creamer looks at ways to find the right career for you.

“Millennials are going to work for 11,000 days in the course of their working lives, so it is important to find a career that fulfils you,” he says.

“For many of this generation, the prospect of owning a property is often a distant dream, so they have different values. Those entering the workforce today often want to do something good and to contribute.”

So how do you know if you are making the right choice?

“Rather than thinking ‘what do I want to do?’, think about what your strengths and weaknesses are, your personality and what you enjoy,” says Creamer. “Young people often think a career is interesting – for example, law or architecture. But if they do not understand themselves, or the realities of the job, they will not really know if it is for them. It

Inspiring: careers expert Alastair Creamer



Different class: two-thirds of teachers say they have the opportunity to inspire people every day

GRADUATING THIS YEAR? YOU COULD STILL TRAIN TO BE A TEACHER

GET Into Teaching’s registration figures show a strong appetite among career-changers and graduates to make the move into teaching. In the last academic year, January alone saw just over 21,000 registrations of interest in teaching – including about 14,000 from people currently working in other fields.

Yet the numbers being trained is still falling short of the numbers needed

by schools. So more trainee teachers are still needed. If you are one of the tens of thousands of graduates about to descend on the jobs market, it is not too late to apply.

Applications for teacher training are still open (and will remain open until late summer) and you could get a £25,000 bursary to support your training in selected subjects such as chemistry, computing, geography,

maths and modern foreign languages. Follow the advice of Eyes Wide Opened and gain some experience to make sure this is the right role for you (it is also a requirement if you are applying for teaching). You have from when you leave uni until the end of term to spend time in a classroom.

Find out more at getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/how-to-apply or call 0800 389 2500.

is vital to have some experience of the career you want to do. Either work shadowing, an internship, a summer job or work experience.”

Creamer adds: “Think about your personality and whether that will fit with the role. A lot of teaching, for example, is about crowd control. Do you have the resilience to deal with that? Do you have a strong work ethic and do you have

enough energy to bring to the role? Are you flexible, adaptable and open to change? Do you have good communication skills?”

“All of these things are important – not just the academic qualifications for the role. So explore different careers and put your toe in the water before deciding how you will spend the next 11,000 days at work.”

LOOKING FOR A NEW CAREER?

Career choices are not just made when you leave school, college or university. “In our longer working lives, we will have more than one career, often several,” says Creamer.

“Also, many graduates get their first choice wrong.

“Whatever stage you are at, it is important to get the choice right.”

One of the biggest trends for those entering the workforce is to find meaning in their work.

According to LinkedIn’s Purpose at Work report, 74 per cent of candidates want a job where they feel like their work matters, suggesting that people are increasingly in search of more fulfilment and purpose.

This is where teaching scores highly. Research carried out by the Get into Teaching campaign revealed that two-thirds (68 per cent) of teachers feel they

have the opportunity to inspire people every day – far higher than the 31 per cent of non-teachers.

This sense of fulfilment is what the teaching profession is trying to tap into in a new film produced by Get into Teaching, which features pupils and teachers who provide their take on what the profession is really like.

One of the teachers featured, Hannah Brady, a mathematics teacher at Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy in Croston, Lancashire, says: “Being a teacher doesn’t compare to any other job. I love the fact that I have an impact on young children’s lives.

“When I can see that they’ve learned something that day, that’s what gives me the enjoyment of my job.”

Helen Winter, assistant head at the school, adds: “It is the only job where I can honestly say you get 100 per cent job satisfaction.

“It is lovely to watch your pupils grow into young adults – and when they receive their exam results, and realise it was all worthwhile, there is no greater pleasure.

“Being part of helping shape a young person’s future is very humbling, as well as fulfilling.”

‘Teachers’ evening’ gives pupils chance to show appreciation

THE rewarding feeling of making a difference is what makes teaching worthwhile.

That is why the Get into Teaching campaign decided to flip the traditional parents’ evening and instead hold a “teachers’ evening”.

Pupils from two schools in England, including The Compton School in North Finchley, were asked to give

feedback on their hard-working teachers and describing the personal impact they have had on their lives.

In the heart-warming film, they spoke about how their teachers are passionate about the subject they teach, how they motivate them in the classroom and influence their lives.

One student from The Compton School said: “My teachers are really

important to me, as we’re with them five days a week and they make such an impact on my life and the quality of my life.”

Nearly four in 10 teachers (37 per cent) said that these transformational moments they get to be part of make all the hard work worth it.

Kanisha Thomas, a teacher at The Compton School, says: “When you

see them having a light bulb moment and getting it for the first time, that is the best thing about teaching.”

Roger Pope, chair of the National College for Teaching and Leadership, which provides a programme of support to aspiring teachers, adds: “Pupils feeding back on teachers is something that can be incredibly emotive and rarely gets filmed, yet it

is these positive comments from pupils that encapsulate the unique rewards of a career in teaching. It must be incredibly gratifying for the teachers to see the impact they are having captured in this way.

“As the research suggests, it is this sense of purpose and desire to make a difference that continues to attract people to the profession.”