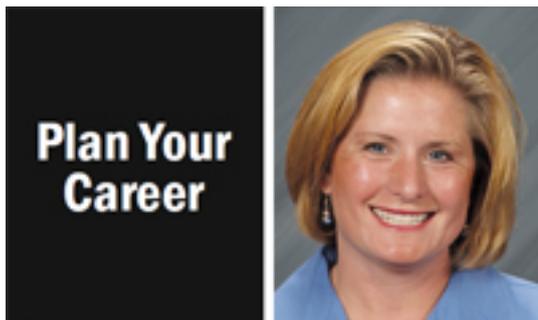


Written by Julie Desmond

Sunday, 18 September 2011 12:38



By Julie Desmond
julie@insightnews.com

A while back, Insight News shared a story about some extraordinary Minneapolis kids. These young people spent their summer revitalizing tornado-ravaged neighborhoods in North Minneapolis. They made a difference, and they made some money. What they did was awesome; the fact that they did it is awesome, too.

Motivating teens is no easy task. Teens generally live in this moment. They value their time and their ideas above suggestions from outside. So, getting teens to work means giving them buy-in. You require your kid to earn some spending money; how he does that has to be his idea.

Having a short view (generally, and only during the development stage they're in), teens value time. Their work needs to have value because there is too much happening around them to be wasting time. The definition of waste varies, of course. One teen in my life asked, "Why would I go serve hamburgers to people when I could be hanging out with my friends?" Money is a value, and a good reason to work. But a clothes discount, a friend at the same place, responsibility... these will keep a kid going back shift after shift.

Teens need to have the concept in their lives, too, if they're going to work themselves. When someone at home describes a meeting they led, an award received or a customer they dealt with, kids begin to see work for what it is: a part of real life. They can imagine themselves in a job, because that's what their people do.

Margaret is a Chicago schoolteacher who takes her kindergarteners through a vo-tech session every fall. A young gal in her late 50's, Margaret sits on the rug in the classroom and lets the children paint her nails, fix her hair, wash the dishes in the classroom, feed the goldfish, lead a lesson, and more. These are jobs, she explains. She hands them play money. When you're older, she says, people will give you real money for doing these things. For many in this classroom, this is the first they've heard of working for pay, but they are beginning to imagine their own possibilities.

Tell your kid he's capable. Tell her what it's like to work and to receive a paycheck. Tell your kids it's worth it; they're worth it. Start now and watch something extraordinary happen.

Julie Desmond is an employment recruiter in Minneapolis, MN. Write to julie@insightnews.com

Kids can work... Adults can help

Written by Julie Desmond
Sunday, 18 September 2011 12:38

[m](#)