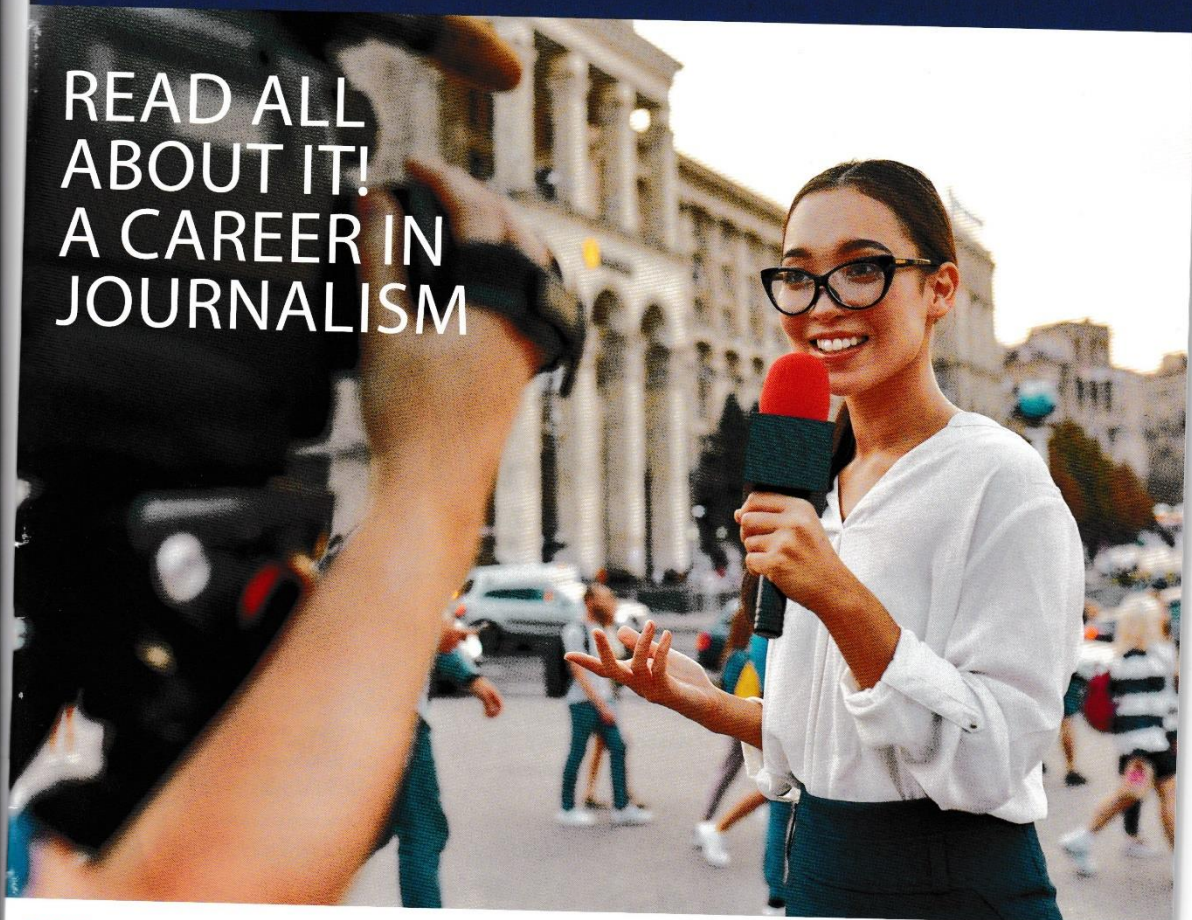


# CareerMatters

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

# **100** YEARS OF CAREERS

READ ALL ABOUT IT!  
A CAREER IN JOURNALISM



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“ Never have we worked in such a multigenerational workforce; however, Millennials and Generation Z are the largest groups. ”

# HAVE WE FORGOTTEN ABOUT OUR OWN TALENT?



**CAROLINE GREEN WRITES ON HOW TO DEVELOP A TALENT PIPELINE FOR THE NEXT #100YEARSINCAREERS**

I was recently asked by a Head of Careers to write some bullet points on my role as a Careers Adviser and what the student gets out of an appointment. It sounded simple, but the reality was there were just so many things I wanted to write a novel on the subject. Much like at dinner parties, I can often be found waxing lyrical about the importance of our sector. But how often do we shout about it when it really matters?

## A worrying trend

The #CDIBigListen survey in the January 2022 *Career Matters*, showed that I'm not alone, with 82% of respondents saying they are proud of the work they do. Worryingly, many also felt career development is poorly recognised, or valued, as a profession (63%), and 28% stated they are likely or very likely to leave the sector within two years. It is also apparent that we are not a very diverse group.

That same Head of Careers has a mantra, "Careers is everyone's responsibility." I love this idea, so expanding on this theme, to support the longevity of our careers

sector, what can we all do to help turn the tide?

As the 'Big Listen' title suggests, the CDI is listening to what members want, but we need to dig deeper. In discussion with David Morgan, CDI Chief Executive, we summarised five key questions:

1. Is the profession visible enough as a career choice?
2. Is the profession attractive enough? (e.g. pay, being valued, diversity)
3. Is getting qualified a barrier? (e.g. affordability, time, options)
4. Are there sufficient progression routes? (e.g. promotion, personal development)
5. Where can a career development career lead? (leadership, specialisms, transferable skills).

## Start at the beginning

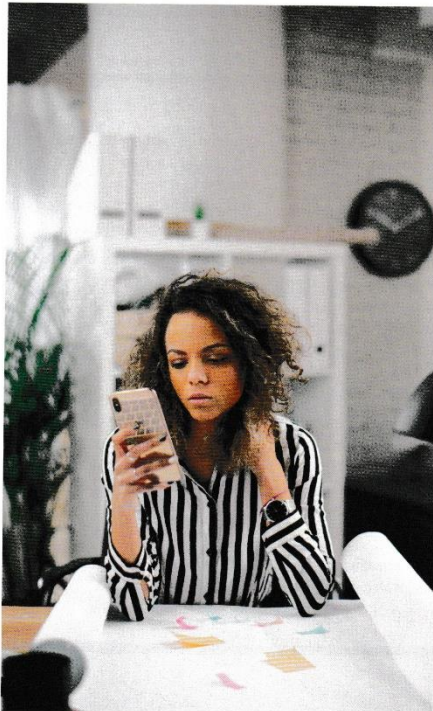
Working with many organisations on learning and development strategies, I spend a lot of time talking about talent pipelines, encouraging new recruits, whether they be new to the world of work, or transferring from elsewhere. This isn't a recruitment drive, it is about a long-term strategy to make the careers sector an enticing place, and we can all play a part in attracting a diverse range of candidates into it.

Never have we worked in such a multigenerational workforce; however, Millennials and Generation Z are the largest groups. Research shows that they are seeking roles where they can help people and make a difference in the world. If that's not the definition of a careers professional, I don't know what is! But we're so often helping clients explore all the options, or busy behind the scenes running career events and engaging employers, we forget that we are a profession that makes such a difference. Perhaps next time you're delivering a careers lesson, at a careers fair, or in a one-to-one session with a client, also remember to sell our own sector.

## Image overhaul

A recent bout of illness saw me sitting on the sofa binge-watching an old '90s TV show, following a group of teenagers trying to find their way in the world. In one episode, a main character was hauled into the Career Counsellor's office to discuss their future. He was tucked away in a dark office, giving off the air of someone who had failed in his own career and the only 'advice' he had to give was that the student would not amount to anything. I fear for many, that this image of what 'careers' is hasn't changed.

But to many of us, this picture, shared by a fellow careers professional recently on social media, better represents what we do. It is joyful, inspirational and vital work, where research shows the return on investment is high.





“  
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If we can convince others of this, acceptance, recognition and remuneration will follow, making this a more attractive sector for new recruits and those of us already in it. The #CDIBigListen survey showed that respondents felt we need more representation in the media, and to consider the platforms we have, helping raise the profile and image of what we do. National Careers Week is a shining example of sharing best practice but is just one week; sustaining this momentum all year with professionals inside and outside of the sector is crucial if we are to change the public perception of what we do.

#### Qualifications

Quality assurance and qualifications all play a part in a sector to be proud of. But are these a stumbling block, especially when establishing a more diverse sector? What qualifications are needed for different levels of provision; is there an 'entry level'; how do we ensure we maintain the rigour of 'full' qualifications?

#### Transferable skills and progression

As well as being a vibrant and exciting sector, there are a plethora of job roles within it. Off the top of my head, I can think of at least 30, but how many do those outside of the sector know about? In the sessions we have with clients, in our daily conversations and our social media, we must raise the profile of the many roles available.

The careers sector is not insular either. The skills required for success as a careers professional can also be found in other sectors. I was recently running a training day for Careers Advisers and was struck by how many came from other industries. Research also shows that Generation Z expects to change organisations and sectors

with a far greater frequency than ever before. Therefore, a sector that is a breeding ground for developing transferable skills will appeal to many.

#### Career development

However the feedback I hear from employers within all sectors, is frustration over low levels of employee retention, especially with younger employees. Research shows that a 'lack of development opportunities' is the second most common resignation reason. Crucial then that we understand, map and promote the development of progression routes within the sector; including the kind of 'squiggly' routes we likely discuss with clients about their careers.

The CDI is currently working on a professional pathways map to assist with this but evaluating the opportunities within your own organisation is also vital if you are to remain a competitive employer in this market. Work I have done with many careers organisations has seen an increase in recruitment opportunities and retention, when they have focused on better induction and onboarding processes (including for Associates), training and development opportunities and quality assurance processes, ensuring a sector we all remain proud of.

#### So, what next?

The CDI is opening up the debate and holding a webinar on Thursday 15 September, 'Developing the talent pipeline for the career development sector' which is now bookable on the CDI website. Remember that you don't need to run a company or be a manager to be involved in this discussion; careers is everyone's responsibility.

Caroline Green RCDP is a Career Development Expert at The Talent Cycle [www.thetalentcycle.co.uk](http://www.thetalentcycle.co.uk)

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