CAREER ANGELS

JOB HUNTING REPORT 2025

2025 in Summary

2025 marked **another milestone** in Career Angels' journey, as we celebrated **15 years** of empowering senior professionals through **strategic career advisory**. Over the past decade and a half, we've supported over 12,000 executives globally, navigating the evolving challenges of the job market. In 2025, we saw clear shifts in both how professionals approached their careers and how they **leveraged our services to thrive in an increasingly complex environment**.

The data shows that 2025 continued the trend toward **more strategic career decisions**. Nearly half of our clients found new roles, while 48% chose not to change despite (!) having offers. This split reflects the broader European labor market, where job mobility has slowed, job searches take longer, and the focus has shifted from more frequent moves to **more careful, risk-aware** (risk-averse?) **career decisions**. Clients are more cautious, actively testing the market, benchmarking compensation, and reassessing their options before making a move.

Our analysis of job search channels also shows a shift. Job ads remain a strong entry point, but for many, they no longer work as a standalone channel. Candidates who **combined job applications with direct outreach** and **networking** had a much higher success rate, underlining the importance of **multi-touch outreach strategies**. This confirms that the most effective job search is no longer about treating each channel in parallel yet separately, it's about activating **available tools strategically**.

Beyond job search data, 2025 was a year of **growth** and **learning**. We continued to **expand our educational efforts**, having trained in total over 200 professionals through our Career Consultant Courses. These courses are crucial as the demand for **high-quality career advisory services continues to rise**. We also continued to **share our knowledge openly** and hosted a series of webinars on job search and AI-focused sessions, tackling pressing questions such as why job searches feel (and are) harder in today's market and how technology is reshaping recruitment. These efforts reflect our **commitment to transparent** and **responsible career guidance**, especially as the job market becomes more competitive and technology-driven.

We continued our partnerships with business schools, including **POLIMI Graduate School of Management** and **WU Executive Academy**, and with leading professional organizations like **ACCA** and **CIONET**, offering valuable insights into the realities of today's professional world.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on helping senior professionals **navigate the evolving job market**. Whether it's through personalized **job search strategies**, **leadership development**, or simply serving as a **sounding board**, we are committed to providing **tailored solutions** that empower executives to make informed, confident career decisions. As we continue our journey, we look forward to helping our clients, partners, and the next generation of career consultants reach new heights of success.

Thank you for being part of our journey – here's to another 15 years of meaningful success and growth.

Career Angels Team (← click here to meet us)

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Commentary on the 2025 Results

2025 confirmed a structural shift rather than a temporary hesitation.

The almost **even split** between clients who **accepted a new role** (**49%**) and those who consciously **decided not to change** (**48%**), **despite having offers**, reflects what we increasingly see across European labor markets: **fewer moves** and **more risk-aware career decisions**.

Effect

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**2025**	
86%	75%	72%	90%	85%	58%	**49%**	Found a job
11%	16%	22%	6%	6%	38%	**48%**	Decided not to change
3%	9%	6%	4%	9%	4%	**3%**	Set up a company

This mirrors broader market trends. **Job mobility** across Europe has **slowed** to record lows, **job searches take longer**, and confidence in finding a "better" role has weakened. In this environment, experienced professionals are no longer changing jobs just to escape frustration. **They move only when the opportunity clearly justifies the risk**.

What stood out in 2025 was not passivity, but **conscious restraint**. Many clients **actively tested the market**, attended interviews, benchmarked pay and employment conditions, and checked demand for their profiles. After doing so, nearly half chose not to change. This aligns closely with the **"job hugging**" trend, where professionals prioritize stability, risk management, and long-term positioning over short-term gains.

In this context, **not changing jobs can be as strategic as changing**. For many senior professionals, remaining in their role after having verified the market is a conscious choice, not a lack of ambition.

It reflects clarity: knowing where they stand, what is realistically available, and when a move truly makes sense.

The 2025 data therefore signaled **greater maturity** in career decisions. Professionals are no longer asking "Can I change?" but "Should I change now?". And increasingly, they act only when the answer is clearly "yes".

These more cautious, validated decisions are directly linked to **how our clients navigate the market**. As outcomes became less about speed and more about fit and risk management, the way job offers were sourced also changed. In 2025, it became clear that treating job search channels as **separate paths** no longer reflects how **successful transitions** actually happen.

Until 2024, we could describe **accepted** job offer sources as **four separate channels**:

- speculative introduction (direct approach)
- networking
- executive search firms (headhunters)
- job ads

Source

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**Ø (3 years)**	
39%	32%	35%	30%	29%	26%	**28%**	Speculative Introduction
35%	23%	28%	21%	18%	19%	**19%**	Networking
8%	19%	12%	13%	18%	16%	**16%**	Executive Search Firms
18%	26%	25%	36%	35%	39%	**37%**	Job Ads

In 2025, this model still showed the numbers correctly, but no longer explained **how offers were really secured**.

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From 2024 onward, one pattern became clear: **job ads** remained the strongest single entry point (yes, even for senior executives!), but they stopped working as a **standalone channel**. Candidates who **combined applications with human touch points**, such as direct outreach and networking, moved faster and closed more offers.

In 2025, this was even more visible. We changed the chart structure not to change the data, but to **reflect what actually happens**. Since 2020, we have advised clients to **use all four channels in parallel**. What changed is not the strategy itself, but how the **channels interact**. Successful job searches no longer follow one dominant path. They **work as a sequence**, where job ads, direct contact, and networking **support each other** at different stages. The winning strategy is a "multi-touch outreach approach" by activating selected channels **in the right order** and **with the right intensity**.

Source

2025	
37%	Direct approach vastly supported by networking
27%	Job ads supported by networking & direct approach
16%	Executive Search Firms (standalone channel)
20%	Job ads (application-only approach)

The new breakdown highlights two main patterns:

Direct approach supported by networking (**37%**): this means that direct outreach works best when it is not purely cold – at least not for long. In a market shaped by automation, longer hiring processes, and higher risk awareness, decision makers respond more often when there is context: a shared connection, a clear reason for contact, or visible proof of expertise, such as a **strong executive CV** or **LinkedIn presence**.

This matches what we see more broadly. Job search is harder despite having more tools. **Technology increases volume, but not trust. Trust still comes from people**.

Job ads supported by networking and direct approach (**27%**): this is the 2024 trend taken further. Job ads remain effective, especially in ATS-driven and process-heavy recruitment. But **success** depends on what happens **after applying**:

- **reaching out** to the hiring manager or relevant leader
- **activating one's network** for internal insight or a warm introduction

… which **increases visibility** so the application is not "just another CV" in the system. In other words, job ads often start the process, but **human connection finishes it**.

Executive Search Firms as a standalone channel (**16%**): executive search firms handle fewer mandates, often **confidential** or **highly strategic**, and their processes are slower compared to other channels. **Maintaining relationships with headhunters still matters**, but this channel requires patience and should be approached with realistic, long-term expectations.

Job ads as a standalone channel (**20%**): this is the clearest signal – relying on job postings alone is **losing effectiveness** – down from 37% in 2024, not because job ads no longer work, but because competition, automation, and AI-driven volume have raised the bar. A strong, **ATS-compliant CV** is now a basic requirement, an absolute must have. And yes, this applies to senior executives too.

When applications look similar and heavily AI-generated, recruiters rely even more on trust, consistency, and **human proof**. This naturally **favors multi-touch strategies** over mass applying.

2025 confirmed that the **most effective job search channel** is no longer a single channel but **a multi-touch system**. Technology shapes access, but human behavior shapes decisions. Executives who treat job search as a **structured project**, using job ads as intelligence and entry points and reinforcing them with **targeted outreach** and **networking**, consistently outperform those who rely on one route alone.

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2025 at a Glance

52%	30%	18%
MB, MB-1	Managers 10+ yrs of experience	Professionals 5+ yrs of experience

For the first time, twice as many professionals chose to invest in their careers. Despite cheaper alternatives, they trusted Career Angels, recognizing the value of **premium support** in an increasingly volatile, AI-driven environment

50%	31%	19%
46-55 years old	35-45 years old	<34 + >56 years old

Our clients represent different generations, united by the willingness to invest intentionally in their careers. This is reflected in a balanced age distribution, led by experienced professionals seeking **strategic support**

6%	94%	84%
Outside of Europe	Within Europe	i.a. DACH, CEE, SEE

Our clients have looked for a new assignment on a local, **regional** and **global** level. The map on the left presents the **countries of origin** of our clients

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More Numbers

623	4 781	2 150
Career Consultations	Completed Tasks	Stakeholders Researched

51%	84%	16%
Returning Clients	Referred Clients	Referred Clients By Content

2 422	563	67
CV Reports	LinkedIn Reports	ATS CV Compliance Reports
Best: **93%** Average: **54%** Worst: **2%**	Best: **4.7** / 5 Average: **3.7** / 5 Worst: **2.4** / 5	Best: **95%** Average: **55%** Worst: **18%**

82%	10%	8%
Delegated or outsourced up to 20 hours. 11% chose DIY: **Independent Job Hunter Program**	Sought support during **20+ hours**, e.g. research, CV and LinkedIn preparation, interview simulation, general advice	Chose to sit back and wait for interviews. We did (almost) everything, incl. **inbox** & **calendar management**

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For Your Company & Organization

Our journey as a company has always been client-driven. Over the past 15 years, as the executive job market has become more complex, less predictable, and increasingly shaped by technology, our **cooperation with organizations evolved naturally in response to the needs we observed** in practice.

What started as **individual career advisory** gradually expanded into **structured collaboration with companies**, **HR teams**, and **educational institutions**. Former individual clients invited us to support their organizations. **HR leaders asked us to train teams**, **coach employees**, and **share practical insight** into how executive careers and recruitment work today.

Cooperation with Organizations and Business Schools

In 2025, our **organizational engagement** focused primarily on education, dialogue, and **practical knowledge sharing**. We delivered interactive online **lectures**, **webinars**, **bootcamps**, and **coaching** sessions in cooperation with academic institutions, professional associations, and institutional partners.

Our academic cooperation included, among others:

- **WU Executive Academy** (Austria)
- **POLIMI Graduate School of Management** (Italy)
- **Warsaw School of Technology Business School** (Poland)
- **Kozminski University** (Poland)

In parallel, we worked with **professional and industry organizations** such as **CIONET**, **ACCA**, and **Leading Women**. In these collaborations, the focus was always practical: **career management**, **leadership development**, and the **realities of how executive recruitment processes function**.

Through this work, we also supported G/E/MBA students, alumni, and experienced professionals with hands-on insight into career strategy, job search decision-making, and market positioning.

Career Advisory Education

Educating the next generation of professional Career Consultants is a responsibility we take seriously. As job searches become longer and career decisions more demanding, the quality of career advice matters more than ever.

In 2025, we delivered **two open Polish editions of the Career Consultant Course**, bringing the total number of editions to **twelve** since the program's launch in 2019. In parallel, we conducted **six tailored in-house programs** for HR departments across different industries.

To date, **over 215 professionals have completed our career advisory education programs**. Participants include recruiters, headhunters, **Executive Search** consultants with **7-25 years of experience**, **coaches** looking to expand their offer, **HR professionals** aiming to better support their employees, as well as **consultants** and **career advisors**, both experienced and new to the field.

In parallel, we are finalizing the advanced **Career Angels Academy program**, designed to **deepen professional competence** in career advisory and reflect the growing complexity of executive career transitions. The program builds on our **long-standing methodology** and **practical experience** from individual, organizational, and educational projects.

As part of this initiative, we are **opening conversations with experienced professionals who would like to contribute** to the development and delivery of the Academy. We are particularly interested in practitioners who combine **solid market experience** with **analytical thinking** and **strong ethical standards**. Professionals interested in exploring potential cooperation are welcome to **reach out to us at Contact@CareerAngels.eu**.

Across all educational formats, our focus remains the same: **to raise the quality of career advisory services** and **share know-how** that reflects how the executive job market actually works.

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Open Knowledge and Responsible Support Initiatives

Over the past 15 years, we have observed **one consistent pattern**: as the job market becomes more complex, **access to reliable and practical career knowledge becomes more uneven**. Technology, automation, and longer recruitment processes have **made it harder for experienced professionals**, especially those who have not actively searched for a job in many years.

By 2025, this **gap became even more visible**. Many **highly experienced managers** and **executives struggled** not because of a lack of competence, but because their **job search strategies no longer matched today's market reality**.

As part of our **15th anniversary**, we deliberately focused on **opening access to job search knowledge**. Instead of celebratory campaigns, we invested in free and open **initiatives designed to help** experienced professionals better **understand current market realities** before making career decisions.

This included a structured **series of job search webinars**, addressing the full job search process step by step: from defining a realistic career goal, through **CV and LinkedIn** optimization, to **strategic outreach**, **networking**, and **interview preparation**.

The strong interest in these initiatives confirmed what we see in our daily work: **professionals are looking for clarity** and **orientation**, not motivation slogans.

In parallel, we delivered a **dedicated AI-focused webinar series** addressing one of the most frequent questions we hear from experienced candidates: "Why does **job search feel so much harder** than it used to?"

The sessions focused on:

- how **AI** and **technology** shape the recruitment funnel,
- what happens to **applications before a human ever sees them**,
- why **relying solely on job postings** delivers diminishing returns,
- and how candidates can **realistically adjust their strategy**.

The emphasis was practical and experience-based. We did not promote tools for their own sake, but showed where **technology changes the rules** and where **human judgment still determines outcomes**.

Alongside open education, we continued our **CSR activities**, offering **structured career support** to professionals facing prolonged job search challenges. In 2025, 41 candidates applied to our CSR initiative, and **4 experienced professionals were selected for cooperation**. Half of them secured **new jobs** or interesting **projects** even before completing the program!

This initiative reflects a reality often overlooked in public debate: **even senior professionals can find themselves stuck** when market dynamics shift faster than their strategies. Providing realistic, **structured support** in such situations **remains an important part of our responsibility** as career advisors.

As part of our 15th anniversary, we also shared a **series of real client cases documenting career transitions** after redundancy, uncertainty, or major change. These cases show how experienced professionals navigate complex decisions in practice: from regaining stability to choosing growth-oriented paths.

After 15 years, these stories reflect the same principle that guides our work today: in a more **complex, risk-sensitive,** and **technology-driven** job market**, preparation** and **strategy matter more** than speed.

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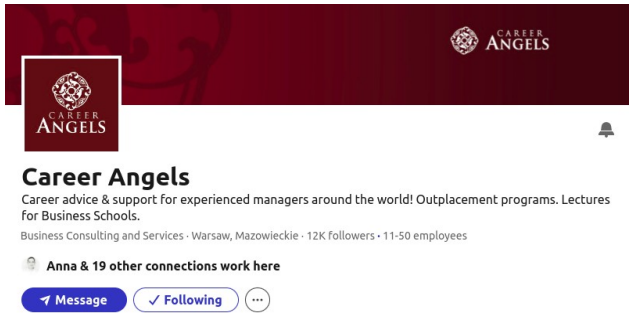
Resources For Experienced Managers and Executives

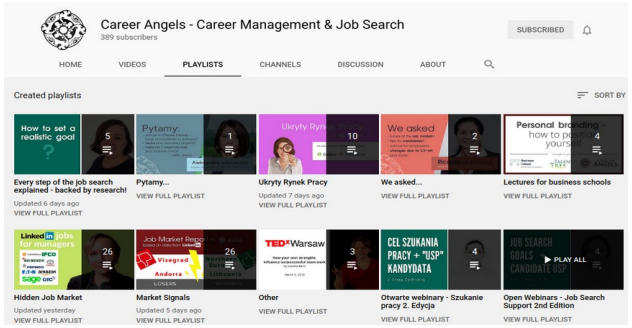
Here you'll find resources that can support executives at every stage of their career management. Simply click on the boxes! Some of these resources wouldn't be possible without our partners like ATS Element.

If you are an active job hunter on a budget, **watch** the playlist called "**Job Search Webinars**" where we walk you through the **full job search process** – from goal setting and positioning to outreach, networking, and interviews.

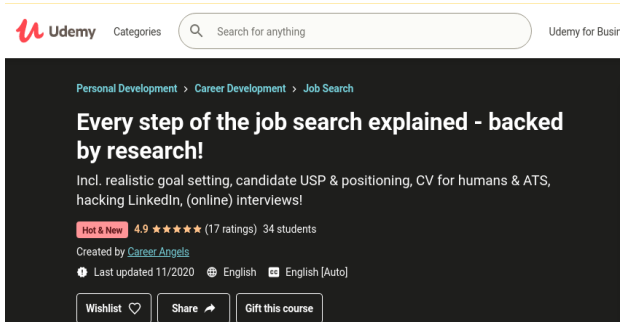


Follow our LinkedIn Page "Career Angels" for daily posts around: career management, job search, job market, inspirations, **HR trends** – always practical and wherever possible backed by research, data and/or real cases.

Every week, we share **carefully selected job ads** from the "hidden" job market for experienced managers and executives. **Request to join our group** on LinkedIn called "Hidden Job Market for Experienced Managers in Europe"!



Subscribe to our YouTube channel called "Career Angels – Career Management & Job Search" for high-quality content, incl. weekly updates on the (hidden) job market or recordings of practical webinars.



If you don't feel like putting the materials together on your own, **sign up for our Udemy course**: Every step of the job search explained – backed by research! Over 14 hours of content, as well as, downloadable resources!

Answer 9 short questions on our **Job Hunting Efficiency** page to receive a **quantitative analysis** of your job search efforts – with **built-in tips** and **recommendations** on what and how to improve.

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Dedicated Services for Senior Executive Clients

At Career Angels, we specialize in delivering bespoke **career management solutions for senior executives**, including board members of major organizations, regional VPs, and global or group officers. These professionals trust us to provide a **comprehensive and tailored approach** to navigating the complexities of their career transitions. Here's how we deliver exceptional value:

Comprehensive job search strategy
We take a strategic approach to job hunting, leveraging networking, direct contact with decision makers, reaching out to headhunters, and optimizing job applications for ATS and human recruiters. This **multi-channel strategy** maximizes your exposure and improves your chances of landing a job aligned with your goals.

Strategic connections with Private Equity & Venture Capital networks
If you are targeting leadership roles within portfolio companies, we identify and contact relevant Private Equity and/or Venture Capital funds. These introductions **open doors to opportunities** where expertise and leadership can drive growth and innovation.

Personalized interview preparation
To give you an edge, we provide you with detailed research briefings with customized insights into prospective employers, industries, and competitors, along with tailored **interview simulations** to practice responses and scenarios for confidence and clarity. This preparation ensures you are ready and stand out as the top choice for executive roles.

End-to-end career management support
We understand the demands of senior executives, which is why we offer **fully outsourced career management solutions**, including inbox management, LinkedIn optimization, and calendar coordination, allowing you to focus solely on decision-making while we handle the logistics.

Transparency and results
Our **full-service projects** typically range from **100-300+** hours, depending on complexity and the number of targeted countries. Comparing the final value of the investment (a fraction of your annual gross remuneration) to the perspective outcome – it's definitely worth considering! **In almost 90% of the cases, our clients received (and accepted) their desired job offers**.

Career transitions can be unpredictable, but we stay committed to creating opportunities. Whether you face scheduling issues, motivation lapses, or personal rethinking, **we've seen it all**. Despite setbacks, we've always been able to **generate interviews with premier employers and top executive search firms**. The final step – **turning those opportunities into placements – lies fully in your hands**.

Needless to say, we are more than a service provider – **we're your partner in success**. We motivate, course-correct when needed, and provide unwavering support as you find your way through the job market labyrinth. Choosing us means **working with a dedicated team** focused on your goals and achieving outstanding results.

New tools for your convenience
In 2025, we introduced **two brand new tools**:

- **Online consultation scheduling**: you can easily book consultations at your preferred time,
- **Direct phone line**: need a quick advice? Our phone line connects you to immediate support. You will reach us at +48 732 081 803.

Did you know?
Career Angels doesn't just work with individuals. We also offer a **full range of services for companies** and HR departments, including **outplacement** programs, **HR consulting**, and training to equip leadership teams and HR professionals for success. For more details, visit Career Angels' B2B page.

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Women in Leadership: Empowering Women with Career Angels

At Career Angels, we are dedicated to **supporting women** in their professional journeys. Through our collaboration with initiatives such as **Leading Women** or our **proprietary mentoring programs**, we empower women to achieve their **leadership aspirations** and **break through barriers** in the workplace.

Women on Boards – are you ready to hop on board?
Our **Women on Boards** program provides mentorship, knowledge-sharing, and networking opportunities, creating a supportive community for **women ready to take their careers to the next level**. This initiative enables us to address challenges such as **hitting the glass ceiling**, career advancement, and leadership representation.

If you:

- have experience in managerial or director-level roles,
- seek to advance your career by joining a board,
- embrace challenges and are eager to develop your leadership skills,
- value constructive feedback and apply it effectively,
- are ready to commit – both time- and energy-wise,
- recognize the importance of diversity and wish to contribute to positive change,
- know what motivates you,
- are patient and systematic,
- appreciate expert knowledge that accelerates your career growth and are ready to take advantage of it…

… **then you are ready to take the next step in your career**. Don't know what to begin with? We've got you covered – **with our support, you will achieve your goal(s) in no time!**

Overview of the program
The program consists of 7 interactive sessions during which you and your Career Angel will be working together on:

- developing an effective application strategy,
- refining your leadership skills,
- prepare for the challenges that come with holding a board role

Before each session, you will receive materials to read & "homework" to do. After each session, you will walk out with palpable material, knowing exactly what to do next and how to do it.

Flexible program options
We understand that every individual's journey is unique. That's why we designed two versions of the program:

- **DIY**: complete the tasks independently, on your own, using our detailed resources and guides,
- **Outsourcing**: delegate selected tasks (e.g. CV writing or LinkedIn optimization) to us for a smoother, more efficient process.

Why focus on women in leadership?
Conditions on today's job market favor **women who want to reach for more**. Although they are still underrepresented on company boards in Europe, a new European Union "Women on Boards" directive helps to change that. **In 2026, women should make up a min. of 40% of the supervisory boards of the largest companies in the EU**. This is your chance to advance and join the board – and **to influence key decisions**.

It is not only a matter of representation, but also of **bringing diverse perspectives into decision-making processes**, which benefits entire organizations.

Ready to take the next step?
Don't wait to invest in yourself and your future! Reach out to us today to discuss your goals and how we can support you in achieving them.
Email us at Contact@CareerAngels.eu.

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BONUS: Everything You Need To Know About Managing Your Career

What influences how we manage our careers?
Why do we **choose one offer over another?**
Is it really bad to stay **12 years at the same company?**
Should we denounce people who change **jobs frequently?**
What about buying into the **rat race?**
Does it make you happy to climb the **corporate ladder?**

You really prefer **atmosphere & people** over money & prestige?
They call you **immature for not choosing** a serious path?
Your main driver is **self-development?**
Do you catch yourself thinking, "**I hate managing people!**"?
I'm 42 years old. **It's too late to change** anything.
Frustration kicks in when there's **too much routine?**

Answer the following two questions honestly:
1) How would you define a successful career? 2) If everything was possible, **how would your most satisfying and fulfilling career path look like?**

36% of the respondents would answer both questions (almost) **identically**, whereas **64%** would give two slightly or completely **different answers.** This information comes from Decision Dynamics, a company that has been collecting and analyzing data on i.a. people's careers for over 40 years. **What else does the research tell us?**
1) There's a **"brain-level"** and a **"heart-level" response** 2) **There are common patterns**

Decision Dynamics' Career Model consists of four main Career Concepts or views of an ideal career:

The Expert Career Concept is the most stable and historically dominant view of a successful career as being a **lifelong commitment to a profession** with which one identifies. Success means to be the best, i.e. the expert in one's area.

The Linear Career Concept is instead focused on **rapid movement upward** the "corporate ladder". Success is measured in the level one has reached, which can be translated in responsibility, power and influence.

The Spiral Career Concept is a less traditional view where one rather discovers one's career through **periodic (5-10 years) lateral changes of occupational fields**. Success means frequent opportunities to widen one's competence base and get new experiences.

The Transitory Career Concept is the **most change-oriented** and least conventional view, even to the extent that many consider it as not even a career. The more different and frequent the changes, the better.

By now you should have realized that everybody's definition of a successful career is equally wrong as it's right. There simply is no one right answer. **Different things make different people happy.**

We really, really hope that you are not among the **36%**, but if there's a slight chance that you are, talk to a certified Career Angel.

You'll receive:
- an online questionnaire
- a report showing the differences between the career path you've chosen and the one that motivates you the most
- a comprehensive feedforward session that you'll leave with concrete next steps

If you are interested in receiving an offer or more information, please contact **Contact@CareerAngels.eu**.
Please note that this model can also be applied throughout an entire organization for better candidate, role and culture fitting.

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