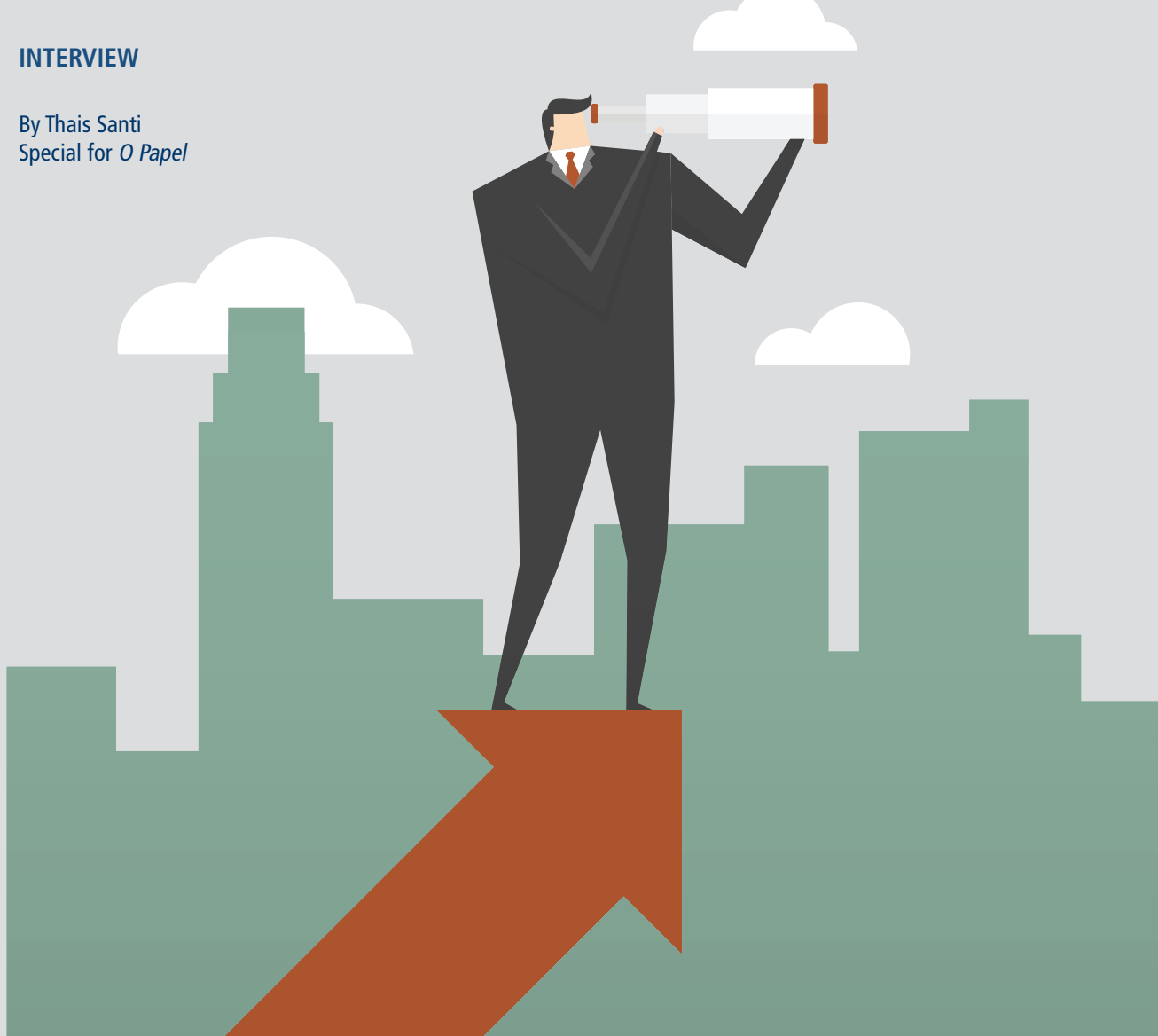


By Thais Santi
Special for *O Papel*



PROFESSIONAL HAPPINESS: WHAT'S THE PATH?

Starting a new career after a long trajectory can seem a bit scary for most people. For others, it can be liberating. In his latest book, "Impact", released in July, Maurício Sampaio, founder of Instituto MS de Coaching de Carreira and author of other books on this topic, defends that change in the pursuit of professional happiness can be inside each one of us, and not just in the models around us.

With this, it's possible to transform challenges into new opportunities. "We all have life stories full of emotions and learnings. This awareness can be the beginning of a new life and, more than that, these stories can become exciting and profitable businesses.

This is how people are enjoying success in this new world," said Sampaio in an exclusive interview to *O Papel* magazine.

For such, the coach encourages professionals to make decisions pursuant to a method based on planning and self-awareness. Below, Sampaio talks about career transitioning and the coach's role in this process, as well as other themes related to professionals and the corporate management.

O Papel – You just published your book *Impact*. What is the main lesson it teaches people, considering the current corporate world and its professional challenges?

Maurício Sampaio – The book talks about career transitioning. The target audience of this book are managers, directors, executives and people looking to change their life style and who already feel suffocated by what they've been doing for so long or tired of the pressure from today's corporate world, and begin to think about what makes sense

in their life moving forward. This is not a book earmarked for those looking to conquer more space within their current work place.

For most professionals, this self-questioning tends to surface between the ages of 30 and 45 and, many times, increases in times of economic crisis, when companies end up, due to restructuring, making those who stay on assume much more work than what would be appropriate for a balanced life.

Therefore, the content of this book centers on encouragement for

professionals who are undergoing a moment like this and presents the method on how to make change in a structured manner. Otherwise, I can see people getting fed up of the company they work for and, all of a sudden, quit their job without having planned anything, especially financially, which is fundamental in this professional transition process.

O Papel – In your opinion, what is the role of coaching today? Is there any relationship with therapy?

Sampaio – It's important to point out that coaching is not therapy. The basic difference between the coaching process and therapy is that therapy is based on your historical process: it works on changing the present through a vision of your past, trying to discover things that happened and that provide answers in the present. Coaching, in turn, works on changing the present with a vision of the future, what you can do moving forward for your life to be different.

There are people who apply the two methods without a problem, since one methodology does not exclude the other. Nonetheless, if a person is depressed, for example, it's much better for him or her to do therapy because coaching is a much more pragmatic process that focuses on establishing targets, objectives, strategies, behavioral changes to make more assertive decisions, and this somewhat pressures people.

O Papel – So, when is it most recommended to seek career coaching? How long on average does this process take to produce a satisfactory result for a professional?

Sampaio – Precisely at the moment when you want to change and want to learn to make better decisions, establish targets and objectives and, more than that, want to achieve them. Defining targets and objectives is easy; changing your habits to achieve what you're pursuing is more difficult.

As such, coaching works on changing habits, attitudes, behaviors, thoughts so that you can truly achieve your objectives and goals more quickly. The coaching process is usually done in 10 to 12 sessions, which takes around three months. This is the average time frame in today's market.

O Papel – Considering that changes in the corporate environment are urgent given the current speed of the market, how have companies contributed to the development of their employees through support from human resources professionals or coaching itself?

Sampaio – Companies have provided support in a direct manner. In the ranking of best places to work for, the top 15 or so companies contract coaching processes

for their executives and managers. It is something that truly yields results when you develop people.

Contracting lectures is also important, as it provides people the first insights for coming up with solutions to a problem that, many times, is right in front of them but they don't see it. Lectures work during that period of 90 to 120 minutes, but the tendency is that, a week later, people return to their usual behavior.

Therefore, it is interesting to introduce coaching after a lecture, since it's a medium to long-term systemic process that's going to accompany people for a given period of time until transformations truly occur.

O Papel – Do different generations also have different internal issues to be resolved? What aspects are worked the most in coaching processes? And what about the retention of young talents today in companies? What's your opinion on this?

Sampaio – Yes, generations have very different issues, since the younger generations as they learn very quickly, they tend to lose focus on the subject. In turn, the older generations have more focus, but they don't have such an accelerated learning process and this needs to be worked on. Demand exists on both sides and in different manners.

It depends on how the company deals with this. There isn't a right or wrong profile. What exists is the right person for the right place. All we have to do is identify this. There's no such thing as what's wrong with the millennium generation or what's wrong with Generation X, for example. What exists is the need to allocate the right people to the right places and this is a truly challenging process for management professionals.

O Papel – What advice would you give to a professional who's unhappy with his or her career, would like to change professions, but is scared?

Sampaio – We all carry in our life a history of learnings and experiences acquired. So, I always try to tell people to look at their life history and see what they can bring to a new project. For example, if you entered a company very early and ended up becoming a great leader, wouldn't you be able to teach another person to do the same thing based on the construction of your history?

If you were to work with coaching, wouldn't you be able to teach people to become great leaders, just like you did? Many people end up pursuing new ventures looking at the neighbor's lawn which is greener. But what they forget is that their history carries lots of learnings and experiences that can be put into practice and taught to other people, and that they can make a business out of this. This is the starting point. ■

The coaching process can help identify whether it's time to make a career change or adjust professional objectives