Clarion Review

Young Adult Nonfiction

Teens and the Job Game
Beverly Slomka
iUniverse
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Five Stars (out of Five)

This well-intended and well-executed guide to getting and keeping work gives teens a foundation for preparing themselves to be a whole person, a worthy goal that standard job guides sometimes overlook. In *Teens and the Job Game*, readers can learn to dress appropriately and craft a resume, but, as Beverly Slomka notes, it is the way they present themselves that will make all the difference. The book features quotes from people who are doing well in their work endeavors and from teens who have successfully landed jobs and internships. At the end of each chapter there is a set of questions and writing space to reflect, which will be good for readers who need to reinforce what they've read. Slomka, who has a BA in psychology, writes with a comfortable tone, not at all condescending or overly friendly. She is straightforward in sharing some of her personal and professional challenges.

The book emphasizes preparation—you don't just wake up one day and go get a job without putting some thought into it first. Slomka addresses the value in mastering subjects that readers don't especially like or don't think relate to their career goals. She also notes that a student's attitude towards school will likely carry over into their working life.

Rather than promoting the notion that "you can do anything," Slomka advises teens to play to their strengths. Through the examples of her own life and others, she demonstrates how people tend to "reframe" their goals throughout their career, applying what they know to jobs they may not have considered earlier. Slomka, a senior recruiter and team leader for a nationwide healthcare search firm, was formerly an executive at Merrill Lynch. In addition to her psychology degree, she has an MS in education / rehabilitation counseling.

In her book, she provides a great deal of very practical advice; the sort that many bright teens only find out through trial and error. Slomka aims to give teens some "best practices" before they arrive for their first day at a job or internship: "In almost any job, good employees

go into their supervisor's office with a notepad ready to take notes, and have a list of questions and notes to discuss with their managers." She addresses issues such as communication, follow-through, workplace ethics, handling constructive criticism, and workplace interactions and conflicts.

The book includes sample resumes and cover letters and prompts for calling or writing to ask about potential work. The brief resource guide mentions some very good books and a few websites, intended to get teens in the right mindset to go out and get the information they need. Slomka talks about dressing well and being aware of behavior. She also notes that a teen who has engaged in drug use, or become a parent, should not despair. However, she does not touch on the importance of online image, an especially important issue in a time when teens use social media without thinking of the consequences of sharing too much personal information, and the effect it can have on one's career.

Overall, the book is a great resource for teens who don't know how to begin their job search, and for those who are on the right track but may need some pointers.

Jada Bradley