

**PROGRAMME: "NICE WORK"**

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**INTERVIEWEES:**

Roger King, chief executive, the Road Haulage Association

Paul Sellers, policy adviser, the TUC

Trina Gina - worker

Neils Zanwa - worker

Denise Taylor, chartered occupational psychologist

Naomi Tickle, personologist for Face Language International, California

Samantha Hamilton, psychic, Boston, Lincolnshire

Martin Burton, director of Zippo Circus and the founder

Dave McNeil, director of press and publicity of the Arts Council England

LAMB: Hello. What can you do if you feel that your career has reached a crossroads? You need some guidance about what your next move should be but where do you go to get it? It's a common problem and there is a huge range of advice on offer from personality testing and counselling to astrology and now even something known as personology.

TICKLE: We're looking at the structure of the face, the shape of the eyebrows, the nose, the width of the face, the texture of the hair and all of this tells us about people.

LAMB: Well, we'll have more on that later. We'll also be hearing how new licensing laws could put circus performers out of work for good. First though, a fresh development on an age-old problem, long working hours. The 48-hour week has been in force in the UK for more than five years now but long hours remain commonplace where there are one in four of us now habitually working more than 48 hours every week. That's made possible by the fact that about a third of the working population has signed up to opt out of the legislation and of course not all workers were covered by the Directive in the first place. Among others, domestic staff, the armed forces, police and some hospital and media workers are still exempt, although the Directive and particularly the opt-out is currently being reviewed by the European Commission. One key group which isn't covered right now is lorry drivers. Their hours are limited by Health and Safety legislation but many regularly work 60 hours a week. Next year that will change when the Road Transport Directive is implemented and their hours will have to come down to a weekly average of 48 as well. Haulage bosses aren't happy about that and neither are their drivers.

TRUCKER: I'll have mash, two eggs and ham and tea please.

HILTON: How many hours would you say that you work every week on average?

TRUCKER: On average round about 55 to 60 hours a week.

HILTON: So why do you choose to work longer hours?

TRUCKER: For the overtime, to give me a good take-home pay, one which I can live on comfortably.

HILTON: How dependent are you on that extra overtime pay, what difference does it make?

TRUCKER: Oh very dependent, very dependent.

HILTON: So what would your reaction be if somebody said you can't work more than 48 hours a week?

TRUCKER: I'd have to look for another job I think. Probably lose my house, get into debt, wouldn't be able to repay the debt. Got to work the hours to get the money.

TRUCKER: Steak and a bit.

LADY: How would you like it?

TRUCKER: Medium rare.

LADY: Can I have a steak medium rare please.

TRUCKER: I've worked for the company for over two years and they were expecting 60 to 70 hours per week. It went with the job, you had no choice about that.

HILTON: What kind of effects on other areas of your life does working those kind of 60 hours plus have?

TRUCKER: You really don't have another life. 60 to 70 hours over a five, six day period allows virtually no time for families, for recreation or in real terms for recovery times for the following week.

HILTON: What would it mean to people like that if the 48 hour restriction per week was introduced?

TRUCKER: I think you would find that the road haulage industry in the UK will be decimated. They could not afford to be lorry drivers at 48 hours a week.

LAMB: Lesley Hilton talking to truckers in Yorkshire. Well Roger King is chief executive of the Road Haulage Association. He's in our Westminster studio and Paul Sellers, a policy adviser at the TUC is with me. Roger King, we heard those drivers expressing very major worries about how much their incomes will fall when the new legislation comes in. What do you think this law will mean for the industry as a whole?

KING: Well certainly the hours that are worked are far too long and I think the industry recognises that. The trouble is it's such a competitive industry that no one single company can say yes, we're only going to work 48 hours. If the competitors are operating over 60 or 70 hours, it's not a viable option. So yes we can work down towards these figures, although it has to be said to do it overnight in March next year is going to be exceedingly difficult and a number of problems arise. We would have liked a four year period to get down to it.

LAMB: Well effectively you've had five years, haven't you since the Working Time Directive came in. You must have known that this was going to come.

KING: Eventually yes, although there's been an awful lot of negotiation and debate about this. The trouble is you can't do it unilaterally, you need to do it as an industry, a whole industry and that's where the law comes in. To a degree we support that, although getting there is going to prove extremely difficult and there's no doubt about it, the customer, I mean one isn't really anticipating the driver is going to take a substantial cut in pay over this, but the customer is going to have to pay more for his road transport.

LAMB: Paul Sellers, is legislation the way forward because working hours have gone up, not down in the five years since we've had the Working Time Directive, then I think it was about one in ten people worked more than 48 hours a week, now it's one in four. So is there really any point to having more regulation if people just find a way round it?

SELLERS: Well the regulations that we've got have halted the increase in long hours. What they haven't done is brought long hours back down again.

LAMB: Because people opt out of them, don't they?

SELLERS: So we're actually campaigning to end the opt-out, that won't surprise you. This is a health and safety issue and it's right that there should be a road bus limit on working time as there is in the rest of the European Union. There is a question about people's health and safety on the roads and what happens to other road users as well. It can't just be about individual choice. It's right there should be no opt-out.

LAMB: So Roger King, from what you were saying earlier, am I right to understand that you're accepting you will have to pay your drivers more because otherwise they'll go and find another job because they just won't be able to make ends meet?

KING: The market will dictate that. I mean if you're going to say that the industry will only pay for 48 hours the sort of money that would cause drivers to go and work somewhere else, we're not going to have any drivers, the market will look after that and we will respond to the market needs. But the customer also has to understand. The customer in the UK plays one haulage company off against another to seek and to drive down rates. Supermarkets look for a 10% reduction in transport costs to bring goods to the High Street cheaper than ever before. Now that's not going to be an option. Transport is a big cost to the UK economy and

goods will go up in the High Street as a result of paying drivers a fairer wage for the job that they do. There's no escaping that.

LAMB: Paul Sellers, would you accept that the change is rather draconian. I mean next May drivers may see their wages fall off a cliff. I mean we've talked about the possibility that wages will go up, presumably some haulage contractors will feel that they just can't do that. Would it be fairer to phase it in or indeed let them opt out if they want to?

SELLERS: I honestly think the industry has had a very long time to get its act together on this one and hasn't done so. It's right that these rules should come in on 23rd March in 2005. Now to deal with the issue of maintaining pay and maintaining drivers, we need to do some productivity bargaining at this point. Now some companies in the industry are already doing that. ACC Transport just to quote, one case have struck a deal with Asda which gives quite a substantial pay rise over 2½ years, a pay rise of 18½% in exchange for productivity improvements. There is room for this kind of bargaining in the industry and that will square the circle.

LAMB: Paul Sellers, Roger King, thank you both very much indeed. I'm afraid I'll have to leave it there for now. We are a nation of unhappy workers, if recent opinion polls are anything to go by. 90% of us say that we are discontented with our jobs right now and a quarter of us are planning to change job. But talking about making a move is one thing and doing it is quite another. Trina Gina and Neils Zanwa both feel that they've reached something of a crossroads in their working lives. They both want to make a fresh start but neither of them is quite sure which direction to go in. So we've taken them to three different careers advisers ranging from the conventional to the extraordinary. Our reporter, Mike Johnson, has been sitting in on the guidance sessions and he's with me now. Mike, I gather you were absolutely inundated with volunteers for this experiment.

JOHNSON: Yes Philippa we were. I think those surveys you mentioned must be pretty accurate. When we appealed for people to step forward through Ceefax a few weeks back, we were actually overwhelmed with calls within hours really.

LAMB: Interesting.

JOHNSON: There's obviously a big big demand for advice on career change out there. One of the many people who got in touch with us was Trina Gina. She's 29, she has a high powered City job. She's head of marketing for a financial services company. The work's fast pace, lots of business trips overseas, weekend working, long hours. She absolutely loved it until that is last autumn when her first child, Cameron, was born.

LAMB: Always changes everything, doesn't it?

JOHNSON: Absolutely. Now Trina at this moment feels she won't be able to go back to that demanding job without sacrificing her new family life, which really she doesn't want to do. So she's looking for something new.

GINA: I'm confident that I will find something that's right for me and right for my family and very excited, very excited. It's not often in your life where you have a blank canvas and the support of your family to be able to choose what it is that you want to do and I really do believe that I'll find something that suits us all.

JOHNSON: Neils Zanwa meanwhile is just a little bit older than Trina. He's 30 and he's had a variety of jobs since he left school with one 'A' level. Neils now works nights as a machine minder in a print works and he hates it.

ZANWA: I can make a living out of it, but it's not really interesting. There's nowhere to go now, I haven't learnt anything for the last seven years. You just

come in and try and seek what solace you can with each other, you know, and that gets you through the night. Work is very boring. I want to not have to look at the clock when I'm at work, because I've been watching that for the last ten years, so I don't want to look at the clock. I want to get up in the morning and feel like I can't wait to tackle the next day ahead. It's a bit more excitement, just a bit more feeling that I'm living.

LAMB: Okay, I mean they obviously could do with a bit of help from what they were saying. Where can you go for careers advice as an adult because as I understand it job centres tend to concentrate on finding people work, they don't really advise them about careers, do they?

JOHNSON: Well that's exactly right. To be honest if you don't have much spare money your options are pretty limited in this area. There's no real state-funded advice available out there if you don't actually know what you want to do. So it's the private sector people have to turn to and you can end up spending hundreds of pounds in the process of doing that. Now we took Neils and Trina to three advisers. Now they each had radically different approaches. One of them was a fairly conventional career coach, we covered that sort of area on this programme before. This sort of coaching, it's long been a popular route for people experiencing in what you call a mid-career crisis.

LAMB: We're all familiar with that.

JOHNSON: Oh yes and it's often a service that employers actually offer themselves. Next we called on an American technique called Personology.

LAMB: Now this is this very strange thing. It's about the study of facial features, is that right?

JOHNSON: Exactly. Personologists promise to reveal your personality and so your ideal job just by looking at your face alone and the people who practise this say a number of big companies are now actually using it to help recruit their top managers.

LAMB: Okay, and finally I gather you really threw caution to the winds and you took them off to see a psychic.

JOHNSON: Yes I mean there's one thing you can't deny, the world of astrology and the paranormal, it really has always held a certain kind of fascination for many people. Millions of us read our horoscopes in the newspapers every day and it's a multi-million pound industry in its own right. These days though it's not just for the information they contain about your love life. Many astrologists and psychics they're carving out new careers of their own offering consultations on work life as well. First up though was our career coach. Now Denise Taylor, she's also a chartered occupational psychologist. She explained to me how she uses a variety of written tests to match the right person to the right job.

TAYLOR: When people want to think about what sorts of jobs they want to do, they come to me because they want to take an assessment that enables them to think about what are their abilities, what are their interests, how does their personality style help you decide what's the best job for them. So I do assessments that help people to understand a whole range of things, then helping people to make the right career decision for them.

JOHNSON: Denise specialises in what's called psychometric testing. That literally means tests to measure the mind. The idea is to find out if people are logical, outgoing, are they best working with other people or on their own and so on. Before we brought Trina and Neils face to face with Denise, they'd already completed a battery of these tests. According to the results, Trina's a good listener. She picks things up quickly, she has a flair for design and she's very

perceptive. But she's not so good in a crisis and she likes structure and predictability. So the million dollar question for Denise was what kind of job Trina should go for now.

TAYLOR: We have you coming across as much more of an extrovert than an introvert. I think just how I've got to know you already Trina is very much that you're a people person, you enjoy spending time with people, you like communicating with others. You want to make sure that you get sufficient people contact.

GINA: Absolutely.

TAYLOR: There's a number of jobs we can identify. So, for example, social work, police work, sales, stockbroker or travel agents, cooking. So what do you think about these different jobs that have been identified?

GINA: They're actually all areas that I've never really thought about. So the great thing is that based on the assessments and the tests that we've done, certain things come out. I like the idea of working in travel. A couple of the tests threw up areas such as Eco-tourism which is, that sounds of interest. Police work and social work, although the tests have shown that I have a high level of patience, I don't actually feel that I do, so, plus you need a lot of training. So although I may well have the ability to do them and some level of interest, to train now as a policeman or a social worker, that's not practical with a small baby.

JOHNSON: Next into the hot seat was Neils. Now despite his current job minding a printing press, the tests say he's actually more interested in people than machines and it turns out Neils would actually make a good policeman, speech therapist, social worker or probation officer. Neils is pleased with the verdict. He'd already been considering the police and he felt inspired by the idea that he might be able to strike out into new areas like speech therapy. Now it was time to

venture into less familiar territory. Our personologist, Naomi Tickle, runs a business called "Face Language International" based in California, where else you might sceptically ask. She explained to me how she worked.

TICKLE: I read the structure of the face and this is a system that was started back in the 1930s by Edward Jones who was a Judge in Los Angeles. It's about 92% accuracy for a personality assessment.

JOHNSON: But what people must be wondering is, can you really tell from the way somebody looks whether they'll be suitable for a particular job?

TICKLE: Well, we're looking at the structure of the face. The shape of the eyebrows, the nose, the width of the face, the texture of the hair and all of this tells us about people. I mean we're reading people anyway. From the moment we see someone we form an opinion and rightly or wrongly what this does is it gives us another tool to better understand the people we work with and to work on our own traits.

JOHNSON: We emailed Naomi some photographs of Trina and Neils. She knew nothing about their background or qualifications and they were amazed by the results. Here's what Naomi had to say about Neils.

TICKLE: A couple of things that really jumped out to me was I noticed that the outer corner of his eyes is lower than the inner corner. So here we have a perfectionist. His eyebrows really also jumped out in that here is someone who has a feeling of balance and harmony, certainly the feel of design, whether it's photography, art. One trait he has that's a little different is it's called judgement variation which is to do again with creativity. Has a more unconventional approach to doing something. Seeing they're unusually different, he's not going to go the way everybody else does. He's going to make his own mark in life.

JOHNSON: So in terms of jobs and how relevant all this is to jobs. You've mentioned a few, design, photography. Are those the main headings?

TICKLE: Design came up, film editor, photography. I also see him working for himself. He's not one to work for other people as much. He's better to set up his own business but he has to remember to charge for what he does, full price.

JOHNSON: That's very specific. All right Neils, let me just try and summarise that. You're a perfectionist and essentially you're very much a creative kind of person. How does that ring true for you?

ZANWA: It does ring true because I haven't been doing anything like that in my job, it's difficult to sort of relate to it right now.

JOHNSON: Naomi, you need to know that Neils is in, what he considers to be not a very creative job at the moment, he works in a print shop and he does essentially the same kind of work day-in, day-out almost year-in, year-out. So you haven't seen that side of yourself?

ZANWA: No I haven't, I haven't but I know it's there. A lot of things you said Naomi are very true, but I just haven't had a chance to really explore any of these things and really use them properly and for you to say that to me is a real boost.

JOHNSON: Trina was also surprised by how accurately Naomi summed up her character just by looking at her face. Her recommended new jobs included life coaching, interior design and fashion. Finally, it was time to travel with Trina to the home of our psychic, Samantha Hamilton in Boston in Lincolnshire. She's been psychic Sam for a variety of newspapers and magazines and she specialised in tarot readings and astrology for more than twenty years. Samantha took us on a tour of her consulting room.

HAMILTON: Whenever I start a reading I use this sounding bowl, oh it's called a singing bowl really. I put my cards in there to give them energy or to cleanse them, but before you arrived here today I went to every corner of the room to cleanse the negative energy that's built up over the days of clients coming in and just really to purify the room, so that I can work with loving, healing energy.

JOHNSON: Within this slightly surreal environment Trina sat down more than a little nervously for her session with Samantha and a set of tarot cards. All Samantha knew in advance about Trina was her time, date and place of birth. A few shuffles of the tarot pack later, Trina is told something she really doesn't want to hear.

HAMILTON: I have this feeling you will go back, you're going to go back definitely and the bulk of your business will be within that company. It's not what you expected to hear, was it?

GINA: No, no it's not actually, it's not what I expected.

HAMILTON: It's what I'm picking up. I can't resist going on these vibrations that I'm picking up with you. It's going to work for you in the way that you want it to work. So if we're talking about the company that you're in now, you're going to change your attitudes towards it and you'll work it the way that you want to work it. It won't manipulate you, you will manipulate it.

JOHNSON: This was a big shock for Trina. She'd been intent on making a clean break from the past and leaving her old company. Neils meanwhile consulted Samantha Hamilton over the telephone. Many of her clients receive their consultations this way. Neils is told he will travel in his work and be involved in a business importing and exporting. But despite a personal desire to work in Sweden, Neils is half Swedish, Samantha says that would be a bad move and

would only result in conflict. Neils must go where the sun shines, she says, ideally Australia. So what did he make of Sam's predictions.

ZANWA: On a scale of 1 to 10, I'd say about 4 because they're long shots what she's actually saying. Some of the names that she came up, threw up, I could relate to all of them but not really specifically and what do you do, do you take her advice or do you carry on with your plans?

LAMB: Mike, it seems to me that Neils did rather put his finger on the question, didn't he? It's all very well getting a range of career advice but what do you do if they all tell you to do different things?

JOHNSON: Well exactly it can be quite bewildering and while there were similar things as we heard there, police and social work for Neils which he was quite pleased about, life coaching for Trina, overall the advice was actually pretty varied and I would say that in terms of the single biggest benefit that both of them got from the experience was not being told for sure their perfect job. It was actually giving them confidence.

LAMB: Yea that struck me too because it really seems to me the reality is that people find the act of deliberately sitting down and talking about their career problems very empowering in itself and it almost doesn't matter who it is.

JOHNSON: Exactly, and as we were saying right at the beginning, for most people that happens very rarely. I think the slightly more academic approach of the career coach, Denise Taylor, gave them the evidence they'd need to back any change they might later make, and Naomi the personologist, she was very supportive as Neils said, it gave him a boost to know he might be capable of things that actually he'd never even thought of and they were really keen, I think both of them, to have something to aspire to and that's exactly what personology seemed to give both of them.

LAMB:           What about the psychic? I have to say the psychic wouldn't be my first choice for career guidance, but they are very widely used, aren't they? A lot of people do feel they've got a lot to offer.

JOHNSON:       Yes they are but not always in the world of work. I think both Neils and Trina were quite taken aback to be told, hey don't do something that actually they were really quite seriously considering and the big question now is will they take psychic Sam's advice. I mean I've got a sneaking suspicion that they'll ignore it, they're not great believers in fate I think and I think they're going to press ahead anyway, but we'll just have to wait and see how it goes.

LAMB:           Well, we're going to be keeping an eye on them and when they've had a chance to work out what they're going to do on the work front, we thought what we'd do is get them back on the programme to tell us all about it. But thanks Mike, it was interesting stuff.

LAMB:           Now if you've been thinking of running away to the circus, you may have missed your chance. The 35 travelling circuses that pitch their tents in parks and commons around the country are worried that new regulations could bring an end to life under the big top for good. The problem is the new Licensing Act which comes into force next year. That will require circuses to apply for an entertainment permit for every stop on their tours. They say it could cost them as much as £20,000 a year. Zillah Watson went to Dorking to find out more and she caught up with Zippo Circus where a group of local school children were being introduced to the magic of the circus.

MAN:            Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, welcome to Zippo Circus. How about a big round of applause and a really really loud cheer.

AUDIENCE:     "Crowd cheer".

BURTON: I'm Martin Burton. I'm the director of Zippo Circus and the founder. I was Zippo the clown, I still am from time to time but right now I spend more of my time fighting government legislation than entertaining people in the circus ring.

WATSON: What are your particular concerns about the Licensing Act?

BURTON: The Bill was designed probably for theatres and it works very well for the theatres. The government completely forgot about circuses. The problem for us is that theatres don't move and will only have to apply once a year. We move every week and every time we move we will be forced, as the Act stands, to apply for a new license. So for Zippo we move 30, 35 times a year, we're going to have to apply for 30, 35 licenses a year. The administrative burden will be horrendous. The financial burden will be horrendous, but most of all the time span for getting a license six to eight weeks will mean that we lose the flexibility that the circus is so proud of where we can duck and dive and dodge around.

WATSON: So how is this going to affect jobs and circus skills, what are the things you fear most there?

BURTON: Zippo Circus employs 70 people. I firmly believe that if the Act is not changed by the middle of 2005 there will be no tenting circuses left in Britain.

LAMB: That was Martin Burton talking to Zillah Watson. Dave McNeil is with me now. He's director of press and publicity at Arts Council England which supports circuses and indeed funds new training for circus skills. Dave, do you agree with what Martin Burton was saying there, that there will be no circuses left by the end of next year if this legislation comes in as planned?

MCNEIL: We do actually, I think we share many of the concerns of the circus industry. Martin is very passionate about the circus. I mean he may have been slightly over stating the case to say that all circuses will be bust by the middle of next year. But this Act could devastate the circus industry, a particularly bad summer, for example, with circuses not being able to change sites at short notice could mean that the majority, other than maybe the handful of the largest and best funded circuses would close. So it is very very serious. It's strange because the government, we can't really understand why the government hasn't listened so far.

LAMB: The strange thing was that the circuses were told they weren't going to be covered by the Licensing Act in the first place, weren't they?

MCNEIL: Yea, I mean Martin's right to say that the circuses were forgotten about. At the beginning of the process when the government consulted, it's clear the government didn't think that circuses should be included, knowing the difficulties of finding a licensing regime that sort of fitted for this itinerant nature of tented circus.

LAMB: So why have they changed their minds?

MCNEIL: Well the whole purpose of the Act was to tidy up and sweep up all sorts of anomalous bits of licensing legislation and in sweeping up all the funny little quirky loopholes from one piece of legislation or another, they've actually managed to sweep up circuses as well.

LAMB: How many people are going to be affected by this, how many people work in the business?

MCNEIL: Well it's not a huge industry. There's no more than a couple of thousand people employed directly or indirectly through circuses and really only maybe 30 or so circuses in the country. But they go back a good few hundred

years, it's a very traditional art form and also it's a developing art. The circus is slaying changing the face of circus and just as it's modernising we could see its demise.

LAMB: Is there any chance that the legislation could be amended?

MCNEIL: Well we're sort of at the final stages now. The Act itself is an enabling Act and it's principally enacted through secondary legislation. Now that secondary legislation hasn't gone through parliament yet and we do have a narrow window of opportunity and we're talking to the government and so is the circus industry and so is Martin to try and get the government to do something to either exempt circus or make this new regime much more bearable for them.

LAMB: The Department for Culture Media and Sport argues that actually the situation won't be anything like as bad as you describe because local authorities will just license circus sites and charge circuses a rent and the new rules won't turn into anything like as big a problem as you think.

MCNEIL: We think the government are being very optimistic about that. It may be that some places, local authorities, will license a piece of park land or a common, but it creates a line of legal liability. So as a license holder for the entertainment, they have to be insured and have liability for making sure everything's fine.

LAMB: So the easiest thing for them would be not to do it.

MCNEIL: It costs them money.

LAMB: Dave McNeil of the Arts Council England thank you very much indeed. That's it for this week. If you'd like to find out more about anything you've heard on the programme, call the BBC Action Line. Here's the number.

It's 0800 044 044, that's 0800 044 044. You can find our website at [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4) if you follow the links to "Nice Work". Next week we're going to be looking at the shortcomings of pay audits. They were supposed to narrow the pay gap between men and women. Their critics claim they are doing nothing of the kind. We'll also be taking a look at corporate volunteering. "Nice Work" will be back at the same time next week, join me then.