

# Why You Should Stop Making Snap Judgements

## ...and what you should do instead

~ By Duncan Haughey

Recently, a colleague described one of our teammates to me as "a waste of space". It struck me that such a snap judgement is quite unfair. And the truth is, the person has only been in the world of work for about nine months.

Thus, they're taking time to adjust from full-time education to full-time work. Some people — understandably — find the transition daunting and take time to get comfortable with the differences between education and work. To give them an instant and negative label is unhelpful, for a few reasons.

It may, for one, cause other people to view them less favourably. It could also create a self-fulfilling prophesy as other people give up on the person, who then becomes isolated.

Bottom line — it's a bad idea to label people in this way. It's far better to encourage them and work together. In the end, perhaps they are not suited to their current role and may find better opportunities elsewhere. However, regardless, the person deserves a fair chance to prove themselves, free of unfair snap judgements.

In *A Thought-Provoking Idea on the Dangers of 'Nouns'*, a short and insightful article, Vishen Lakhiani looks at how people are so much more than the labels we apply to them. The author asks, "So, how are we sabotaging the way we understand people or how we interpret people by putting these labels on them?"

Simply put, these snap judgements fulfil a need in us to categorise and pigeon-hole people in everyday situations. Doing this, as Vishen points out, ultimately makes the world easier to understand.

If we delve deeper, however, we find that people are much more complex than the simple labels we hastily apply to them. Indeed, labels prevent us from truly seeing and understanding people. And that, in turn, can cause us to treat them unfairly.

Let's drop the labels and snap judgements in favour of really understanding people and what drives their behaviour.

