

What's so hard about driving a race car?

Written by Julie Desmond

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There you stand, in Speedway, Indiana, along the sidelines of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, feeling the whoosh of the cars blow your hair back as the Indy 500 whizzes by. Suddenly, someone comes up and shows you a small chain of keys. "Want to try?" he asks.

"Sure!" you say.

As he hands you the keys, you realize he's serious. "Uh, no, thanks. I can't do that."

Why not? You have a driver's license, right? You drive your own vehicle every day, right? So this car goes a little faster. What's the big deal?

The big deal is, it's different. For starters, it is a lot faster. And the other drivers are not your typical Olson Memorial Highway types. And you are not sure you would know how to stop the thing even if you did get it started. Would you even know when you needed a pit stop for maintenance? Probably not. So, nope, not going to happen.

If there was no one else on the speedway, then, maybe. If an experienced driver came along, telling you what to do, then, sure. If someone could promise that nothing really bad would happen – that you wouldn't hurt yourself or anyone else.

If you knew you would not be held responsible for any mistakes that resulted in a career ending crash, then definitely. It looks like fun, driving a race car. But you would have to know how.

Now, change gears for a moment. You are at the company Holiday Party. Someone hands you a really big drink. You say, thanks. But then you think about it, and you say, uh, better not.

Why not? You drink beers with your buddies, right? You have a glass of wine at dinner once in a while, don't you? Didn't we see you doing shots the night before your brother's wedding? So here's a drink at a company function. What's the difference?

Here is your thinking: The difference is, these drinks are probably free; they might find their way to the table faster than if my buddies were buying. And these are not my buddies. These are my

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co-workers and my boss. People who can end my career without really losing much themselves; especially if I do or say something stupid.

If I had someone more experienced keeping an eye on me, then maybe. If that person would intervene, hold off on the drinks, take me to the dance floor, get me a fake drink (club soda with a lime, virgin Margarita), look out for me and help me stop before I get out of control, then sure.

If you could promise me nothing really bad would happen – that I wouldn't hurt myself or anyone else. And if I wouldn't be held responsible for any mistakes that resulted in a career ending crash, then definitely. Pour 'em up. But if not, then I think I'll enjoy this one from the sidelines, and leave the serious drinking to the professionals.

Julie Desmond is IT Recruiting Manager with George Konik Associates, Inc. Opportunities this week for Business Analysts, IT Managers, and Software Engineers. Please send your career planning questions and resume to jdesmond@georgekonik.com.