



Satisfied in the Workplace

Is there such a thing as a perfectly ideal job?

A business man was in route to his job on a warm bright summer's day when a flagger from a road side crew waved him down to reduce his speed. As he slowly passed the flagger, he thought how nice it would be to have an outside job like that: fresh air; not a ton of phone calls, stress, or feeling trapped in an office without windows. At that very moment the flagger thought, "...What I wouldn't do to sit in an air-conditioned office behind a desk and get paid for it."

The point is: there are good jobs, good people to work with, and good benefits, but it is rare to find a perfectly ideal job without moments of dissatisfaction or at least times when we wonder if we should be doing something different.



Although I believe we should "grow where we are planted" and "the grass is rarely greener on the other side," there are some common, valid causes for dissatisfaction in the workplace:

A Few Common Exceptions for Workplace Dissatisfaction

- Lack of integrity from leadership or co-workers: It is very difficult when we disrespect our leadership because of integrity discrepancies.
- Having the wrong personality for the position: No one benefits when an individual is on the wrong workplace bus going in the wrong direction.
- Boredom: One of our basic needs is to know we are leaving an impact on others. Research says this is even a greater motivation for employees than income.
- Unpleasant co-workers: This draining experience can eventually wear us down in spite of our desire to be the best we can be.
- Micromanagement: Staff needs to feel trusted and empowered for them to truly excel.
- Job insecurity: It's hard to settle anywhere when we are not sure if we'll have a job next week.

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What Ultimately Makes a Job Ideal?

Laying the above exceptions aside, the state of one's satisfaction level can frequently be generated from within. What are some areas we have control over?

1. Attitude

We are not victims of our circumstances, no matter what the culture or morale might be. Our attitude is based on choice and a decision. There are moments in a less than ideal situation when we have to accept the environment as it is and make the best of it. We must understand that if we run every time our feathers are ruffled we will run into a similar circumstance at the next job, because people are people wherever we go. If you like your job most of the time and there is nothing you can personally do to change whatever is not working, then an attitude adjustment might be necessary.



2. Perspective

I've always been intrigued that what upsets and stresses one individual at work doesn't bother the person in the cubicle right next to them facing the same situation. Why? Sometimes this has to do with one's emotional health and workplace history, other times it's just a matter of perspective. As I get older I have decided that I don't want to be another statistic of a grumpy old man someday. It takes awareness and desire to choose to have a bright, upbeat perspective that is also in touch with reality. I have met people that

know how to do both. For example instead of thinking what's wrong with where you work, why not start thinking about what's working well?

3. Have Realistic Expectations

As a counselor, I have been telling people for years that "unmet expectations equal disappointment." Sometimes we need to lower the bar of our personal expectations at work so that we have a more realistic viewpoint on the ups and downs. Like it or not, all jobs will have times where there is misunderstanding, differences of opinion, moody people, boring moments, and times when we feel underappreciated, fail at certain tasks, and feel let down by others.

Below I have listed some suggestions on how to better enjoy your job through a few diagnostic ideas.

Steps for Job Satisfaction:

- Admit your dissatisfaction at work to someone you trust.
- Determine if you really belong there.
- Ask for new or updated training.
- Take a sabbatical.
- Take care of yourself.
- Ask for help/be candid with your boss about your situation.
- Lower your bar.
- Learn to say no!
- Develop outside interest.

I have read and experienced that, next to family, one of the greatest joys in life is to find satisfaction in your work!

For more information on this training, go to teamworks-works.com and click on workshop tracks 5, 6, and 10.