

## ***Blue Sky Thinking: 10 Ways to Love Your Job***

If you've just been fired or your company has just been acquired or you've got a big interview next week it is natural to focus on short-term tactics. In these situations I frequently hear the plea "Dr. Paul, what can I do, right now, to land on my feet?" Or " ... to look out for my future?" , " ... to ace that interview?" Responding to our clients' needs, many career experts (this author included) tend to immediately jump on a list of action items that address these immediate needs. While there are times when this kind of career first aid is essential, we often overlook the value of raising our eyes to the horizon when things are not in crisis.

Could you use a little more job satisfaction? Do you miss (and want to rekindle) the excitement and challenge that your job used to offer? Would you like to get as much energy from your work as you give? If so, it's time for a heaping dose of what I call **Blue Sky Thinking**. Here are ten ideas that can expand your focus beyond your daily to do list, that will help you love the job you have today and that will help you on your way to the career you've always wanted.

- 1. Dream a big dream.** Most of us have dreams and jobs too small for our spirits. Let your mind and heart take flight. What would you truly love to do? What work calls to you?
- 2. Don't settle for too little.** Your time at work isn't a dress rehearsal for something better. During your lifetime you'll spend about 100,000 hours - nearly half your adult waking life - at work. Don't waste any of those hours.
- 3. Don't sell yourself short.** Most of us undervalue what we know, and what we have to offer. You're more than your last job or your last assignment.
- 4. Challenge yourself.** A job isn't static and neither are you. Even the most satisfying job won't remain so if it doesn't grown along with you and challenge you to keep growing.
- 5. Keep learning.** What you put in your head nobody can take away from you. No matter how satisfying your current job is, keep filling your toolbox with new skills for the future.
- 6. Chin up.** Things don't always go the way we wish they would. Be patient. Stick to your long-term goals at work without letting sort-term setbacks destroy your confidence.
- 7. Play the hand that's dealt you.** There are ups and downs in every job. It's how we handle those ups and downs that makes that difference.

**8. Make your mark.** *Every* job has room for accomplishment and pride. Even if you don't have a dream job, you can care about quality, responsibility and planning for the future.

**9. Think beyond yourself.** Even in today's fast-paced world, there is room for caring about others, and there is room to work together towards a common goal.

**10. Recharge your batteries.** People who love their jobs aren't necessarily workaholics. Reserve time and emotional energy for all the other important parts of your life.

Circle the items that jumped off the page at you. Discuss them with your best friend, your mentor, or a confidant. Post them above your desk or workstation to keep you focused on your goals. Ready to inject this kind of optimism and enthusiasm into your entire workplace? Print out this article and post it where your team members will see it. The only thing better than loving your job, is to work with others who love their jobs too!

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Author: *Winning Job Interviews* (Career Press, 2009) *Love Your Job! Loving the job you have, finding job you love.* (O'Reilly Media, 1994)

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