

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

January 2011

This Month's Message:

**A New Career in
2011? 5 Essential
Questions.**

Paths Forward

**· Need Career
Coaching?**

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A New Career in 2011? 5 Essential Questions.

In last October's LifeMap I referenced a study in which American workers reported job satisfaction at a 20 year low. (Wow!! What a response I received. Thank you all for your

· Tired of boring meetings??

Resources

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many comments and anecdotes.) I've recently validated these data with input from employees in my client companies and from attendees at events and conferences where I've been invited to speak. What I've heard is that job insecurity and fear of a pink slip contributes significantly to job dissatisfaction as does being asked to take on more responsibilities with the same or sometimes fewer resources. The picture gets even gloomier for those currently in the bone-tiring and spirit-draining process of job-hunting in a job market with fewer options.

There are continuing signs of a slowly improving employment picture. I sure hope this is a wide spread and sustained trend because many folks feel that some good news in this area is long overdue.

Could these new employment numbers be a light at the end of the tunnel? Are the recessionary clouds really lifting? I'll leave it to your interpretation of the experts' prognostications on that. If, during this recession, you've been able to hang in there with a job you haven't loved I commend you for your endurance and fortitude. I know it hasn't been easy.

If, like me, you have an optimistic view and see things improving why not try to channel some of that positive energy? This could be the right time to focus this energy and start thinking about revitalizing your career or perhaps plan a long-delayed move to a totally different (and hopefully more enjoyable) career. A recent Monster.com survey indicated that almost 50% of job seekers wanted not just to find a job but to change their career. A rising economic tide will lift most boats so it's up to you to make the most of this moment.

It is imperative that you note that I said "*start* thinking" and "*planning* a move" because making a change to your job or career requires thought, planning and strategy. Sure, you'll run into a few cul-de-sacs, detours and dead ends. That's part and parcel of the exploration process and it's also why the time to start working on this is now.

Paths Forward

- **Do You Love It?** Don't start down in the weeds; do some of what I call *Blue Sky Thinking*. Ask the big questions. What is it you *should* be doing? What is your calling?

What is your true vocation?

What career is it that you've always dreamed of?

Is there a better time than now to pursue it?

The great African-American poet Langston Hughes asked "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?" I believe that your dreams are precious - too precious to just let wither away. I believe each of us is worthy of a job that nourishes us as well as pays us if only we will go out and find or create it.

Suggested Resource: [Love Your Job!: Loving the Job You Have...Finding a Job You Love](#) (O'Reilly)

- Can You Do It? It should go without saying that you will only be hired for a job if it is clear to prospective employers that you can successfully perform that job. Regardless if that job is in your current field or a new field it is up to you to show how your proven talents translate into meeting the challenges of that new assignment. A career coach can help you with this but you should start on your own with research and informational interviews to know your target industry inside and out so that you can draw parallels between your experience and their needs.

Suggested Resources: Career coaching. (see below) Also, try on-line job sites, enter your skills into any keyword search windows to identify new areas where they may fit.

- Can You Hang In There? A major career change takes time. It will take more time than finding a job in your current field. You'll need time to do sufficient research, attend conferences and seminars, complete any re-training required, attain any certifications required and, ultimately, make the right connections to get you to the right place at the right time. You may even want to try out a part time job or moonlighting gig in your new field before fully committing yourself to it. Some experts suggest that this process could take up to three years.

Suggested Resources: Make sure your family is squarely behind you for this process. Ultimately it will benefit them too. See if any of your friends or contacts are going through this process and partner with them to keep each other motivated and on track.

- Can You Afford It? It's one thing financially to go from basket weaving to corporate banking. It's quite another to go from corporate banking to basket weaving. It's true that some basket weavers (or potters or woodworkers or novelists or bartenders or artists) make quite a good living. But it is also true that none of them started out at the top

of their new profession's pay scale. Do your pre-work and know what the pay scales are for your new field - from entry-level to proven professional.

Work out on paper how your family can live within those means. Will you need to cut discretionary spending, relocate, downsize, drop to one vehicle, pay for re-training or re-certification? How will you be able to still save for retirement? Each of these real world concerns can be met but they first must be addressed thoughtfully and realistically.

Suggested Resources: For pay scales visit Salary.com and similar web sites. For financial advice try your CPA, financial advisor or banker. Some church and community groups offer financial counseling. Seek out government subsidies, community college programs and programs for older workers (e.g. www.plus50.aacc.nche.edu).

- Can You Find It? Once you know what you should be doing, what you want to be doing, how to translate your transferable skills, have invested the time required to make a major change and know how to live financially in this new arena it is time to get down to the process of effective job hunting in your chosen field. Most people aren't very good job hunters either because they dread the process or because they just don't job hunt often enough to get very good at it. Prospecting, cold calling, dealing with recruiters, networking, using on-line resources including social networking sites, interviewing, developing your references, closing the sale and negotiating the best deal are all discreet, learnable skills. Give yourself a good, fast refresher course before you start the process. It's the best way to lower the stress and strain (and shorten the length of) a job hunt.

Suggested Resource: [Winning Job Interviews](#) 2nd edition (Career Press)

LifeMap is about helping you achieve a job and career you love!

· Need Career Coaching?

The best investment you can make is in your career, your future and yourself.

email drpaul@drpaulpowers.com

· Tired of boring meetings??

Have Dr. Paul speak at your next off-site meeting or

conference. Fast-moving, practical, motivating presentations from an acknowledged leader in the field of career and personal success.

<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/speakingschedule.html>

Resources

· Are you or someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

The best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. Revised Edition [Winning Job Interviews](#) by Dr. Paul Powers.

In this easy-to-follow, step-by-step book, Dr. Paul Powers demystifies job interviewing, explains why the process actually favors the job hunter, and shows how you can dramatically improve your interview skills.

Packed with solid, practical information and laced with both humor and "kick in the pants" motivation, *Winning Job Interviews* is the book you wished you had before your last interview... and is mandatory preparation for your next one!

· Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

Or know someone who is? Order your copy of [Love Your Job!](#) *Loving the Job You Have, Finding A Job You Love* by Dr. Paul.

<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/booksandarticles.html>

Have an issue or question you'd like Dr. Paul to address in a future edition? Send an email to the email address list below.

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Sincerely,

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