

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."

April 18, 2006

This Week's Message:

Should You Quit Your Job?

Paths Forward

Resources

Have Dr. Paul speak at your next meeting or conference.

Greetings!

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Should You Quit Your Job?

An email came in this week from Leo H. in NY (thanks, Leo) who said he hasn't been enjoying his job for about 6 months and that for the last month or so he's been thinking of quitting. I won't share the colorful language Leo used to describe his "bad days" at work but I will tell you that he

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said they outnumber his good days by a 2 to 1 ratio. He then asked, "How bad do things have to be before I should quit?"

I hope it's obvious that I don't want anybody to be miserable at work. But I told Leo that there is a range of things to consider before hitting the quit button. First of all I asked Leo to think about the things that helped him enjoy his job from the time he originally accepted the position until about 6 months ago. I then asked him to assess what had changed (either in the job or within himself). Next I asked him to determine if he could adapt both his skill set and his attitude to how the job had changed or if he could adapt the job to how he had changed. Even if there was no way he could adapt himself to the job or adapt the job to himself it still wasn't time to quit. It was time to start job hunting (while doing his job to the best of his ability), while preparing to resign in a professional and dignified manner.

Are there some conditions under which you should immediately quit? Sure, they include: unsafe working conditions, a job that is making you physically or emotionally ill, a job that is somehow harming your family, or when you have enough ready cash to pay your living expenses during an extended job search. Under almost any other condition I advise you to find an option other than an immediate resignation.

- **Intolerable working conditions.**

These include harassment of one sort or another, being directed to do illegal or unethical activities or dealing with a crazy boss or an abusive peer. Before quitting out of hand try referring the matter to an internal resource such as your manager, your manager's manager, human resources, in-house counsel, an ombudsman, your union representative, or an employee assistance program. If one person can't help, try another.

- **Your job stresses you out.**

Ask yourself why? Is it the working conditions, is it that the job itself is too demanding, is it a lack of resources, is it your relationship with your boss or your colleagues, is it the commute? Almost any of these causes can be dealt with but you have to narrow down the reason and not just complain vaguely about stress.

- **Your job bores you.**

Again, ask yourself why? Have you outgrown it, have you acquired new skills that aren't being utilized, have you learned new techniques that enable you to complete your job faster than the time allotted, have you simply been doing the same job for too long, is there nothing new to learn at your job, have you become lazy?

- **You're out of the loop.**

You're not being informed of or invited to meetings of which you should be a part. Your boss has taken away some key responsibilities. You have requested new responsibilities and have not received them. You have not been assigned to choice projects or high performance teams.

Paths Forward

Quitting a job is a major life decision. Each of the following suggestions will be a topic for its own future LifeMap. But, for right now, see if any of the following ideas provides you with an option other than immediately quitting your job with no backup plan.

- **Improve your performance.**

Review your old performance evaluations. What suggestions (if any) were made about how you could do a better job? What seminars, workshops or courses were suggested to help you grow in your job? What skills have been suggested for you to acquire? Sometimes just focusing your effort in a new direction can increase your job satisfaction.

- **Develop your job.**

Pitch in to help out colleagues who are over-worked. Volunteer to assist other departments or teams who are facing a rush project. This increases your value to the organization and makes you a valued and requested team member. It also gives you additional visibility – in a positive light.

- **Get to know your boss.**

Note: this is not "sucking up" to your boss. Don't wait for your annual review to talk to your boss about your job, about how you are doing and how he or she thinks it could be done faster, easier, or better. You might be surprised by

what creative ideas or shortcuts he or she comes up with. What do you really know about this person other than his or her role in the company? Have you ever really just had a conversation about family, hobbies, life? You might have more in common than you realize.

- **Improve your interpersonal relations skills.**

Getting along with people who are different from you is a critical skill in any field and at all levels. If this has been an issue for you then take action now. Dale Carnegie courses, interpersonal communications workshops, organizational development seminars, personal coaching or individual counseling are all ways you can improve this essential life and career skill.

- **Get a raise and / or get a promotion.**

I know, I know. "Easier said than done." But every week in most organizations there is somebody getting a raise or getting a promotion. Why not you? One of our next LifeMaps will deal with this topic but in the meantime keep a sharp eye out for who is getting raises (the truth leaks out eventually) and who is getting promoted (much easier to see.) There is much you can learn from who your organization rewards.

- **Get ready to job hunt.**

If you have tried everything I've suggested to make a go of it with your current employer and it's still not working maybe it's time to move on. But not so fast. Now is not the time to quit in defeat. It is now time to prepare your job hunting tools, to polish your job hunting skills and to adjust your job hunting attitude to help you find a place where you can succeed and shine.

LifeMap is about you taking responsibility for your own success and developing the skills to make it happen regardless of external circumstances.

If you found this issue of LifeMap of value please forward it to 3 people who you think will enjoy it or you may send us their email address for a free subscription.

Resources

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

Or know someone who is? To order your copy of "Love Your Job! Loving the Job You Have, Finding a Job You Love" by Dr Paul Powers, click the link below.

Someone you know job hunting or thinking about it yourself?

To order the best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. "Winning Job Interviews: Reduce Interview Anxiety, Outprepare the Other Candidates, Land the Job You Love" by Dr. Paul Powers, click the link below.

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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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