

# LifeMap<sup>SM</sup>



"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."

May 2011

## This Month's Message:

### A Season for Starting.

#### Paths Forward

- **Need Career Coaching?**
- **Tired of boring meetings??**

#### Resources

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## A Season for Starting.

At long last Old Man Winter has loosened his grip on most of the world. Open windows bring sunshine into our homes, fresh air into our lungs, and renewed energy into our spirits. How are your New Year's resolutions going? Have you lost some drive, focus or follow through over the last four months? How about the resolution you never got around to making? Could this season of longer days, more energy and renewal be the time to start something new?

It has been said that the most difficult part of any journey is taking the first step. I agree but like many truisms this one gives us little help in applying its wisdom. How can we get started in a fresh direction when our habits bog us down?

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How can we tap new energy when we sometimes squander what we already have? How can we start something new in our lives when there are so many other things still undone? Well, these are but a few of the self-critical questions that can hold us in place. They are traps that we fall prey to that prevent us from making the most of new energy regardless if it comes from a change of seasons, a change of scenery or a change of attitude.

Here are a few ideas to help you overcome these very human, very predictable and very self-defeating thoughts.

### Paths Forward

- **The Stone in Your Shoe.** One key to silencing these self-critical questions is to focus for a bit on what bothers you about your status quo. What do you wish you were doing differently in your career, at home, with your friends, in your community? What do you *know* you should be doing but just can't seem to get started? What makes you *feel* guilty? That dissatisfaction can be a tool you can use to help you achieve change for two reasons. It helps you to perceive clearly what you want to change. Also, starting to address it removes some of the discomfort (instead of focusing on the discomfort change itself can cause). Self-satisfaction will keep you in your present. Removing the stone in your shoe will help you advance into your future.

- **You're human, thus . . .** you're imperfect. Perfectionism is a burdensome trait that often prevents us from starting something new. Most of us have a hard time looking unskilled, like a rookie or rank amateur. If this is you - get over it. You *know* that Michelangelo didn't start his career with the ceiling of Sistine Chapel but our *thoughts* do not provide a sufficient counter-balance to our *feelings* and *fears* of looking inept, untalented or silly. Whatever it is (the change you desire / the activity you want to begin) - start it in private, visualize yourself succeeding at it, get a book or a tutor, or join a support group.

- **The Mañana Trap.** Here's a big one. Procrastination is one of the toughest self-defeating behaviors to overcome because it stops us from even starting in a new direction. Research indicates that 95% of us procrastinate occasionally and that about 25% of us do so chronically. One edition of LifeMap cannot do justice to a topic of this scale and import but if you recognize yourself as a procrastinator do not despair. Piers Steel, Ph.D., one of the world's foremost researchers on the science of motivation and procrastination has written an eye-opening book that you need to read. In [The Procrastination Equation: How to Stop Putting Things Off and Start Getting Stuff Done](#) we learn that procrastination is not a character flaw but has roots in our human evolution and biology. Focusing strongly on the here and now (such as getting tonight's dinner into our cave) versus working toward a vague tomorrow (which may or may not ever come) was a great survival tool in our hunter / gatherer past. But, like some other inherited traits, it causes problems (e.g.

frustration, lack of productivity, even depression) in modern life. Dr. Steel suggests both internal and external techniques to overcome procrastination. One you may be familiar with is to break a long-term, somewhat vague goal into smaller but more clearly defined steps toward a goal or new task. This builds your confidence and creates a cycle of positive reinforcement and success. If you want to learn more techniques like this go get this book - today, not mañana!

**- Your Path Forward.** Every month here I am pushing you, rooting for you, trying to motivate you to improve some aspect of your life. And though I have tons of ideas and suggestions for you, it is your life and you must find your own personal path forward. If you somehow feel stuck in some aspect of your life but are unsure of how to move forward perhaps start by paying more attention to yourself, to your thoughts, to your hopes and dreams. Listen to yourself, envision your best self. Sometimes one new thought, one new start, entering one new door can change one's life entirely.

**LifeMap** is about challenging you (and I hope helping you) to you create more satisfying life.

### · Need Career Coaching?

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

email [drpaul@drpaulpowers.com](mailto: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>**

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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,**

Dr. Paul

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