

Can a Career Balance Your Life?

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I say yes, but constantly see professionals who do complex knowledge work default to fear-driven, overly cautious approaches when it comes to their career. If you're not rewarded at the office, here are some fresh ways to think about establishing career control, to help you breathe easier and interweave your work and your life.

Accept and Value What You Love

Your 'islands of brilliance' - those areas of mastery and passion that you love to be involved in, are stress busters that replenish you just by the doing.

If you don't understand what you want to do, it's a safe bet nobody will offer it to you. Your interests and strengths may seem impractical to you. Usually, two heads are better than one. There are professionals who can help you to connect your dots and safely implement your best way of working.

Plan to Get Happy

Career peace is yours if you plan. Compare that to putting up with a role or culture or personality conflict on the job. Don't stay where you don't fit or are not appreciated or growing. See Bill Jensen's New Work Manifesto (www.simplerwork.com) if you wonder whether it's right to think this way. Get yourself out of that business unit or leave the company if working there doesn't increase your value. Life is long, we need to work every day, you are not too old to bother about being happy and respected while you earn what you are worth.

When your career choices follow a you-based plan, rather than reacting to what others do or don't do, you'll control 85% of what happens. Conditions that stop others cold (the economy, for instance) become just details. The lows won't confuse you and the highs speed you right on course to your career goals.

Make a master plan that factors in what you care about and what you do with most fascination, energy, talent and joy and where you feel drawn to contribute these. Research how closely you fit the needs there and form ties with informed, helpful people in the industry that interests you.

Stress-busting Career Tips

Here are a few insights formed from 13 years of developing career solutions for clients:

- We all go to work to make something good happen, we're not just in it for the money
- You are working for you, this employer is temporary
- You get to design and implement your most meaningful, profitable career path
- You are indeed replaceable in your company's eyes, though you can be just as valuable or more to a next employer
- Take your vacations and get home at night, because the work never does end and you are better after a break
- Career moves are seldom quickly arranged, count on six-months average

- Your next job is most likely to come through someone who hears about you (rarely a recruiter or an ad), so if you are not yet a competent networker, start learning how
- Every internal and external encounter is a chance to build your word of mouth, so express your specialties and what you contribute.
- Sometimes it is worth leaving so you free up the time to do a proactive career-move campaign
- Your household budget deserves three-months net pay in reserve and a career line for helpful investments (a salary survey, a special course, a good suit)

This is a world of abundance, not scarcity - there are always more than enough money sources for you at any time. Your talents and passions are your surest moneymakers. The challenge for we humans is to remember that and let these deeper and higher gifts out. The what and the how may seem elusive at first, but it is possible to migrate your work life to the way you need it to be!

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