



Be clear how your job serves you  
Find the right fit  
Set your thermostat  
Do  
Make  
Create a Lily pad



Have a toad-le blast!  
Chill once in a while  
Handle the office jerks  
Be grateful and  
Perform a balancing act

## SPECIAL REPORT: February 2009

### This Valentine's Day Rekindle Your Love ... for Your Job!

February can be the longest shortest month of the year. The distractions of the holidays are long forgotten, the fatigue of shoveling and shivering is starting to take hold, and people are getting downright crabby. One of my past lives was as a dorm director for a girl's college dorm. Every February the line out side my door went down the hall with requests for roommate changes. People have cabin fever and are sick of looking at each other. On top of that, the winter doldrums of just being sick and tired of the same 'ol same 'ol wear us down. And the media's mantra of a "down economy" doesn't help. That's why it's the perfect month for Valentine's Day. A day to rekindle the spark with flowers, candy and special candlelight dinners. Well, why not rekindle a little love for your job? It's surprisingly how similar it is to rekindling a spark with a spouse or lover.

**ONE:** The basis of any good relationship is *APPRECIATION*. So, take a few moments and jot down all the things about your job you are grateful for or really enjoy, like:

- Your job pays your bills, that's a good thing.
- You enjoy some of the people you work with, they make you laugh.
- Your job gives you an opportunity to meet all different kinds of people.
- You can use and showcase your talents.
- It's close to home.
- You have flexible hours.

Try to come up as many things as you can, nothing is too small.

**TWO:** Appreciation only goes so far by itself. *SHOW HOW YOU FEEL*.

- Maybe its time to spruce up your workspace; bring in some fresh flowers, a lamp or a seat cushion.

- Ask someone who you really like, but don't get to see so much anymore out to lunch.
- Send a handwritten note thanking someone for supporting you.
- Speak positively about your job at work and at home.
- Go beyond your job description and chip in for the sake of the group.
- Pack a sense of humor; crack a joke once in awhile.
- Write an article for the newsletter that will lift other's spirits.

Overall, choose to be part of the momentum of your work environment. All too often, folks get caught up one degree at a time into the negativity, the complaining, and the hopelessness. The problem with that is not only is negativity highly contagious, but it diminishes your ability to experience your job as rewarding, which leads to number three.

**THREE: LET GO OF OLD GRUDGES.** I hear it all the time, management is caught up in futile reports while the customer suffers, they double workload with no recognition, staff doesn't perform no matter how much coaching they get, colleagues eclipse credit at important client meetings, clients keep demanding and don't want to pay for the changes in scope, it goes on and on. I have worked in many Fortune 500 companies and I can tell you, it's the same where ever you go. At some point the time comes to **let it go**, take the stairway to freedom!

- a.) Surrender the fight that it should be different. You're never going to win it. It isn't different. . .it is.
- b.) Don't take it personally. This is hard to do, but the workplace is a very intense, complex place and is no place for the over sensitive.
- c.) Seek to better understand the context of every decision, conflict, and indignation. Have a mustard seed of curiosity to discover how this came about, what prompted this situation.
- d.) Be prepared to resolve it in a way in which everyone benefits and understands each other better. And be prepared to head it off at the pass next time.

Every company has its downers. Do you really want to be that person? I often wonder did those nay sayers graduate from college and throw their cap in the air yelling, "*I want to be the downer of my company!!*" I doubt it, but it can happen to any one of us one degree at a time and before we know it, we're the one others try to avoid. It takes intent to be the positive voice.

**Four:** Finally, *LIGHTEN UP!* I was delivering a leadership training and one manager said what he was going to begin to do differently was, “smile more often.” With the demands, expectations, and challenges each day, it’s easy to become more and more serious one degree at a time. Our mothers warned us, “*Don’t make that face or you’ll stay that way.*” Well, she was right, before you know it, you can have a permanent scowl. Be aware to make genuine eye contact, and smile.

Just like with a marriage or any long term relationship, it takes work for it to be joyful and rewarding. When I say work, I mean doing things that don’t always come natural, thinking in a way that requires intent and cultivating attitudes that bring energy and joy to the relationship. If your job is providing a good living for you, it deserves your attention. There is no perfect job, but if you take the initiative to be a part of what makes your job work, there are many unexpected rewards. I spoke to a colleague I worked with several years ago and when I asked him how he’s doing at work, he answered, “*I’m happy as a pig in mud.*” You can be too, it is up to you.

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## **About Sharon:**

Sharon Hoyle Weber began her career as a modern dancer and choreographer. Seeing how little money followed when she was doing what she loved, she started working with Forum Corporation, a training and management firm. She was initially a project manager, but soon became certified as a corporate training facilitator.



For fourteen years, she has been traveling around the country teaching skills that help people work most effectively together. Through her relationship with Forum and Results by Design, she has worked for many Fortune 1500 companies such as Deloitte, Liberty Mutual, Bank of America, and Hasbro Toys. Her experience with such a variety of organizations has taught her that the real self is at risk in the workplace.

She describes her own experience as if “my real self was dripping out of me every day.” Once her colleague described it as the “Boiled Frog Syndrome,” she could immediately relate to feeling boiled.

After meeting thousands of employees and interviewing thirty Thrivers, people who make a good living and maintain a sense of authenticity at work, she discovered the Twelve Secrets of Thrivers that contribute to reviving and sustaining the real self in the workplace.

Ms. Weber lives in Cohasset, Massachusetts with her husband, Steve.