



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
Perform a balancing act

SPECIAL REPORT: JANUARY 2009

Start the Year Off With a New Exciting Job. . . YOURS!

Are you feeling more stuck than ever in a job you dread? With the economy tanking, layoffs, and the overall business climate stinking, any thoughts you ever had of an escape are long gone. You better just hunker down with the job you have and be thankful because what choice do you have? You're stuck.

Well, not so fast. It may be time to give your job a makeover. In just a few weeks you will look forward to going to work, get more gratification and improve how you are perceived. You may be sitting on some hidden joys in the job you are in. Here are five ways to uncover some excitement in your current situation.

1. Listen to Yourself. Your job is largely what you think it is. Pay attention to how you think and talk about your job and see if there are some adjustments that would immediately bring some relief to the dread. In the next day or so, jot down the thoughts you have about your job and words or phrases you find yourself using about your job. For example, *"Ugh, another day dealing with all those idiot customers," "I'm so over this job, I'm bored out of my mind," "My stupid manager just makes it impossible to do my job the way I think it should be done."*

Stop using these phrases, every time you think them or say them, stop mid-sentence if you have to, just stop. You don't necessarily have to replace them just yet, but stop. It will be a relief to you and, believe me, to those around you who have to listen to you moan and groan about your job all time. I know a few people who have been miserable in their jobs, complaining about their bosses etc, went out and got "new exciting jobs" and in just a matter of months resorted to the same complaints. Complaining about work can easily become a habit hard to break.

2. Appreciate what you do have. What are three things you would miss most about the job you have? Find a way to demonstrate your appreciation for those three things each day. Maybe you would miss the paycheck to pay your bills. When you sit down to write out your checks for the rent, mortgage or credit card bills, say out loud, *"Boy, if it wasn't for my job, this wouldn't be possible."*

Maybe you would miss a few of the people you work with. Invite them to join you for lunch or buy them a cup of coffee from their favorite coffee shop.

3. **Define what a "new exciting job" is to you.** Ask yourself (forget about your current situation for a minute) what is an "exciting new job" to you? Write a list of the top five qualities you would look for in an exciting job for you.

Say, it's a job that:

- challenges you to grow and learn
- gives you a chance to express yourself
- makes more money
- gives you opportunities to meet interesting people and go to interesting places
- you experience using your strengths and talents

Start with the low hanging fruit. First, come up with three things you would say about your new and exciting job to your friends and family. Start saying them. I don't care if they are true or that you believe them, just find a way to start describing your current job to others as something that you are interested and engaged in.

Second, look at your definition of a new and exciting job and look for ways to bring those qualities to your current situation. If you would love a job that challenges you to grow and learn, then challenge yourself. Do the supervisors want the customer service representatives to deliver excellent customer service but insist on low minute per call standards? Why don't you write a list of tips that you have discovered to be able to deliver great customer service and keep the average time per call to the standards the supervisors are asking for. Volunteer to lead a lunch'n learn and share your tips as well as gather tips others have discovered. Be the solution.

Would you like to meet new interesting people? Once a month invite someone from a different department, management level, a vendor or a customer to join you for lunch. A colleague of mine does this and he always gets something out of it, "even if it's just a new link for great recipes," he says. It takes courage to put yourself out and ask someone to join you for lunch or to take a walk with you. But, it takes courage to have a job that is exciting whether it's a new job or not.

4. **Create a new vista.** Much of what makes us feel bored and demoralized about our jobs is the same 'ol same 'ol. Every choreographer and composer knows people need change to be engaged. What changes can you bring to your daily routine? Take a new route to work, walk through a different neighborhood to get from the bus stop to your office, drive by a reservoir, by a river, or pond instead of the most direct way.

Redecorate your workspace. Bring in some new personal pictures, change your screen savor, hang a poster near your computer, pick up a chair cushion, or a lamp to soften the lighting. Surround yourself with images that energize and inspire you. One client of mine laughed, "*The pictures I have on my desk are so old, my husband has hair in them.*"

Once a week dress differently than you usually do. Straighten your hair or curl it, wear a fun colorful tie, a vest, dress up, put some special effort into your looks. I have noticed people often

let themselves go under the monotony of day in and day out. Another client makes a point to wear colorful ties everyday, "*There's enough beige and black around here,*" he says.

Mix up your daily routine. Stop for coffee at a new coffee shop. Bring in some yummy leftovers from dinner last night for lunch today. If it's a nice day, take a walk and bring your lunch to a brook near the office, or a park and have a picnic.

5. **Be a constant learner.** Pick something about your industry, your company, your company's competition, and research it more deeply. The internet puts so much information at our fingertips. Take a few minutes each day to find out what is new in the market of your industry, do some benchmarking, check out what competitors are doing by going to their websites or googling them. What new technological features are on the horizon? How is the government addressing some of the issues your company is involved in?

This is not for the purpose of "getting ahead." By learning for the sheer pleasure of it, you deepen and expand your perspective of the role you and your company are playing in a bigger field and that makes your job more interesting to you! It also opens up ways of thinking and avenues you may consider examining more closely as time goes on.

Having a new exciting job is a responsibility. Often times we look at others with cool jobs, but we don't stop to see what those individuals have done and continue to do to sustain their own self motivation. Every job becomes a job eventually. To have a job that is engaging takes courage and self discipline to feed oneself with attitudes, beliefs and practices that keep the juices flowing. The Thrivers I have studied are all self motivators who take it upon themselves to stay energized and interested in their work.

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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.