



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
Key
Be grateful and
Perform a balancing act

SPECIAL REPORT: March 2009

"BLEEP" THE ECONOMY!

Ok, Media, we get it! The economy is bad, yeah, real bad. Right, it hasn't been this bad since my Grandma was in diapers. Oh, yes, and its getting worse! So, what do you want us to do, crawl into fetal position and give up? Let's remember one important thing: The economy ALWAYS recovers. This downturn will too. Except for the folks who are jumping off a bridge (I encourage you to sleep on it,) we are going to make it through. There are four simple things we can do to help us get to the other side stronger for the trip.

1. **Make peace with what you *can* and *can not* control.** We have no influence on government bailouts, corporate bankruptcy, the housing market, layoffs, or the stock market. You can lose sleep for months at a time and it's not going to change a thing. But that doesn't stop us from worrying about it and getting upset. The problem is we spend all that energy draining ourselves of the strength we need to navigate these treacherous waters. If you were whitewater rafting and got caught in some turbulent rapids, threw up your arms and started yelling "*Oh, no, this is terrible, we're going to sink!*" You probably would flip because you'd be using energy you need to paddle out of it. Stop worrying and start paddling.

First, write *every* worry you have regarding how the economy is and may be affecting you on separate pieces of paper until you have a pile of papers. Now, divide them up into two piles,

- "*I have influence over this*"
- "*I have no influence over this.*"

Take each piece of paper from the second pile and scrunch it up real tight and throw it in the "bleep"-it-bucket (any trash can will do.) Didn't that feel good? You can repeat this as many times as you need.

Finally, take the notes from the first pile and make a list of things you can begin doing or stop doing for each item you do have influence over. Start and stop those things.

2. **Fall in love with performing your work well.** I heard the eye rolling. I'm serious. The Thrivers I studied all had this in common. They enjoyed the experience of doing their job well. Let me tell you, it wasn't because they had exciting jobs. One

woman I interviewed is a nurse recruiter and she said, "It wouldn't matter what I do, I just like the feeling of doing a good job."

There is a hidden joy in discovering the sheer pleasure of finding ways to improve the quality of your work. Say, you are a customer service representative, try paying more attention to your tone of voice, do you sound like a robot? Are there more sophisticated questions you could be asking to surface the underlying issues? Any job can be done better, cheaper, faster, or be more fun. Take your job on a second honeymoon. When you first took this job, what excited you most about it?

The key to this is that you do it for one purpose: because it is more satisfying to **you** to perform well. Obviously, there may be added benefits, but see above. . .you don't have direct influence over that. So, enjoy for your own sake!

3. **Do Something!**

- *If you've been laid off*, do something every day to make a contact, look into courses to strengthen your skill set, do research, send out thank you notes to people who have given you information, make up some new business cards, you know what to do, just keep doing it and don't let up. Don't worry if it's the right thing or the best thing to do, just do something!
- *If you are still working* and not sure how long its going to last, polish up your resume, reconnect with people in your industry, and get on some social networks like Facebook or MySpace.

Consider opening a line of credit, since it's easier to do when you are working. You can have it as a precaution. While you have health benefits, ask your doctor to prescribe extra prescriptions and get them filled. Go to the doctor and get all your checkups and any tests you may need.

All of us can be more frugal. We can start asking what we really need and what we can go without. Examine every purchase with an eye for whether or not we need it, can get away with a less expensive version, have coupons or a deal we can take advantage of. Become the "Negotiator." Call credit card companies, your oil company, the mortgage company, and tell them you are considering another vendor and want to discuss rates, payment schedule, and any programs to restructure payment they may have to lessen the burden.

4. **For the love of God, lighten up!** Trust you will have what you need when you need it. The mind is wired to anticipate potential danger, but it can lock us into fretful thinking. In my work as a training facilitator, I see so many people dragging their work life around like a soaking wet down-filled blanket! They complain and wear these long faces. Instead, be quick to enjoy a laugh with a colleague, approach your day with a playful attitude, and don't let "professionalism" rob you of being your real self.

A CFO I interviewed is a base player for the "Grateful Dads." He's an itunes addict. He delivered the financial report at the stock holder's meeting to the tune of "Do You Like Pina Coladas?" Another client I was working with makes a point to wear fun, colorful ties everyday. *"There's enough black and beige around this place,"* he says.

Attitudes are highly contagious, negative and positive. How can you bring warm humor and color to your work life?

This economy has a life of its own, and you can too. You may not be able to control all of the events that do have a real impact on your financial situation, but you always have control over how you react and the attitude you bring to it. So, let's say it together real loud. . . "BLEEP" THE ECONOMY!

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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.