



DREAM-A-LOT

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Passion and Productivity

by Marcia Wieder

When I work with companies, a frequently asked question is, "How can I take this message back to the office?" How can we maintain passion in the face of "reality," filled with challenges, cutbacks and deadlines? Since we live primarily from our clocks and calendars, passion may seem frivolous, but make no mistake. Passion and productivity do go hand and hand. When we are energized, we are compelled to action. Passion is also a great time management tool, because when we are doing what we love, it often gets done faster, with greater ease.

And let's face it, passion sells. Wouldn't you rather do business with people who are excited about their work and your vision? They are caring, willing to go the extra mile, and more fun (especially useful for relationship building).

I've presented my Passion & Productivity workshops to hundreds of companies worldwide. One memorable experience was when a high level executive said, "Marcia, we'll consider your workshop a success, if some of our people leave."

He explained he didn't want anyone working with him that didn't want to. The sad truth is, I've heard a variation on this theme often. In an economy where the euphemism for downsizing is "rightsizing," we are expected to streamline operations. Getting rid of disgruntled or dissatisfied people seems to be one starting place. When you feel unhappy about your work, do you (or your associates) tend to do this? Complain, eagerly await quitting time so you can go home, or quit altogether? These days, we're probably not quitting just because we don't like our jobs. But when there is no passion, it's a safe bet that productivity is not at an all time high. Bottom line...happy people, make happy employees and happy employees produce greater results.

The question becomes how can you re-ignite your passion when you have lost it. Or, how can you bring your passion to work and create an environment that not only invites, but also empowers others to do the same? Here's a process for igniting passion:

1. Think of several times that you were feeling passionate. They do not need to be related, but try to write down specific memories.
2. Find a common thread by taking a broad look. What was it you were passionate about in all those experiences? For example, were you learning or teaching, being of service or making a contribution, problem solving or being creative. Did it have to do with risk taking, adventure or fun? These are some of the most common responses I hear.
3. Once you have a few adjective(s) or a sense of your passion, explore ways to consciously bring your love for learning or adventure to whatever you are doing.
4. Stop complaining about what is missing and take action to design more of what you enjoy into your every day life, at work and at home.
5. Invite your associates to do this exercise. Explore conversations like this with them: Associate to manager: "I'm bored here. I've been doing the same job or task forever. I know I am passionate about learning new things. Where can you use me so I can express my passion and make a greater contribution to this company?" Find a place for them.
6. Create an environment or culture that invites people to take responsibility for his or her own job satisfaction, by bringing their passion to the office. Model this behavior. Would your business be different if your team actually enjoyed what they were doing? This can be contagious and spread like wild fire. It only takes one person to strike the match and light the flame. I invite you to be the one who ignites the passion for your company and of course, for yourself.