

## Increase Your Job Satisfaction & Career Happiness

If you had to rate your job satisfaction level on a scale of 1 to 10, (with 10 being highest), what number would you choose? If you are like many people, it might be a 5 or less. In a recent survey, the Conference Board reported that less than half of Americans are happy in their jobs.

In a workplace typified by long hours, stress, fear, and incompetent bosses, it's not surprising that many people would rather have root canal than drag themselves through another day at work. Additionally, career experts estimate that as many as 80% of us might be working at jobs where our skills are not used to their best advantage. That's the bad news. The good news is that you have the power to influence a significant portion of your job satisfaction. Your behavior and attitude can go a long way towards reducing unhappiness and increasing your career success. Here are three tips to help you get started:

### 1. Be Grateful

Make a list of the attributes of your job for which you are grateful. These might include:

- Salary, benefits and other perks - think about how these provide economic rewards and perhaps allow you to pursue pleasurable activities outside of work.
- A strong network of supportive co-workers - one of the things I'm grateful for is that I am part of a department with outstanding professionals who truly work as a team. Something as seemingly simple as this is not to be underestimated.
- Using your strengths - perhaps your job allows you to perform tasks that you find inherently enjoyable and that you do well.

These are just a few examples. Once you start writing, you'll undoubtedly come up with several more. You might be surprised how an attitude of gratitude can give you a new perspective.

### 2. Set Goals

This is a particularly powerful one. You'll sure feel great when you achieve your goals, but just the act of setting and working towards some tangible goal can increase your happiness. It will also give you a greater sense of control. You will probably need to collaborate with your manager to set some mutually agreed upon targets. Don't wait for your manager to come to you - be proactive and approach her first. You may need to negotiate some points. Whatever you agree on, make sure your goals are measurable in some objective way, that they are realistic and that they are aligned with your organization's mission.

**Low job satisfaction is rampant in today's workplace, and many people feel like they are powerless to make their situation better. Here are three practical, simple things you can do to get more satisfaction out of your work and career.**

### 3. Understand the Impact of Your Work

There is a famous story about a custodian at the NASA Space Center who didn't see his job as merely sweeping the floors - he proudly declared that he played a role in putting a man on the moon. He understood NASA's mission and how he contributed. We all need to feel that our efforts are part of something bigger than ourselves, that they have meaning and purpose. Find out how the work you produce contributes to the larger goals of your department and organization. You may need to do some homework - do you know how your organization makes money? Are you familiar with its financials? Who are its customers? Your manager should be able to help. If he balks, be diplomatically persistent. Tell him that if you can get the bigger picture, it will help you to become a more productive worker - what manager could say no to that? You may not be putting a man on the moon, but you are contributing and helping people in some way. Make sure you know how.



In today's workplace, with all its challenges, it is easy to fall into the trap of feeling helpless. Resist it - there are always choices to make. By taking positive, intentional actions, you can increase your level of satisfaction - both inside and outside of work.

© Bill Martin: 2008

---

Bill Martin is an Executive and Career Coach with a passion for helping clients achieve career prosperity and for helping businesses achieve increased productivity, efficiency and profitability. Bill has over 20 years of experience in financial services with one of the world's most successful firms. His background includes line of business experience as well as all aspects of Training, Coaching and Organizational Development. He may be reached at WFM501@yahoo.com

Reproduced with permission: Bill Martin.