

# "I Need To Be More Motivated in 2008...Right?"

THERE EXISTS A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR industry focused on improving our motivation. Motivation to lose weight, to be physically fit, to do a better job, to have a better life and so on.

Whenever I hear someone discuss the topic of "motivation" I am reminded of my time in the military and a Drill Sergeant who was fond of repeating the phrase, "YOU MUST BE MOTIVATED TO MAKE IT THROUGH TRAINING!" My first thought was always, "Duh, of course, why else would I regularly run 10 miles in 100-degree heat and gladly devour triple-portions of creamed-chipped-beef (gag) at every other meal?"

My point is: *"Motivation is a myth; we only need motivation for things that we are not interested in."*

This statement, which was coined by a fellow career coach in Canada (Ken Keis), is profoundly true for people stuck in careers or jobs they hate. Not only do people wonder how they can continue to motivate themselves to get through one difficult workweek after another, they are constantly seeking advice on how to motivate their employees, colleagues or even their children.

So what is the key? Without intending to be overly simplistic and while recognizing the need for motivation in some areas, the answer is passion. Being passionate about what we do with our lives provides purpose, joy and a sense of fulfillment. Passion beats talent every time. Passion combined with talent (whether the talent is natural or developed) is a recipe for excellence. If being passionate about one's job is too much of a stretch, we can at least strive to be happier – which can help provide balance in our lives. To be happy at work, some people may need to pursue a totally new career while others may only need a new job, a different work environment, or perhaps just a different boss.

So how do you know if you need a career overhaul or merely

need a change of scenery? The questions below are part of a "Career Reconnaissance" exercise that I use in my coaching practice. Give them a try; write down your answers and review with someone you trust to be an objective but supportive sounding board.

- 1 Poll 5 people close to you and ask them these questions:
  - a What do you see as my 3-5 greatest strengths?
  - b What adjectives would you use to describe me?
  - c What do you see that comes naturally to me?
  - d In what type of work do you see me making the greatest contribution?
- 2 What kind of work would you do if you had no fear - a 100% guarantee of success?
- 3 If you had the ability to live 3 distinctly different lives, what kind of work would you do in each of these lives? (Permission granted to dream big here.)
- 4 What is your preferred work environment(s)?
- 5 What would you need to change to be satisfied in your current position?
- 6 Write your retirement announcement! Imagine that you're at the close of your professional career and the local paper is doing a short piece on your career highlights. Describe what you're most proud of.

Here's wishing you a successful and happy 2008 and the beginning of the rest of your life! ~ Parley E. Acker

Parley Acker is a Career Coach and President of *Career-Won*, a firm based in Coppell, TX. For more information or advice, please visit our website at [www.careerwon.com](http://www.careerwon.com) or call us at 214-295-8395.

