Four Secrets to Liking Your Work
(You May Not Need to Quit to Get the Job You Want)
Edward G. Muzio, Deborah J. Fisher, PhD, Erv Thomas, PE – FT Press, February 2008

"Monday Morning Dread" is not just a morale problem, *it's a performance problem!* Disillusioned workers disengage; disengaged workers don't perform. Dissatisfaction is so prevalent today that to enhance results we must start by reestablishing engagement.

Leaders, listen up!
This book is not just about you, but everyone you work with.

HR, listen up! This book will help with on-boarding AND with retention.

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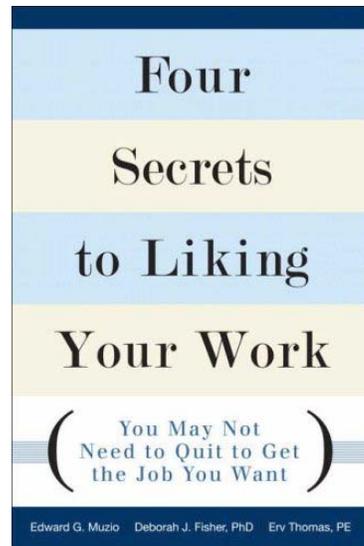
www.LikeWorkAgain.com

Effective group work is a critical component of any high-performing organization, and any group of people attempting to partner or collaborate is essentially a human system. Within that system, both individual and group interactions are necessary to produce outcomes, achieve results, and add value. Ideally the group work should produce value greater than the individuals acting alone, but in reality the opposite is often the case.

Disengagement, disillusionment, and overtly disruptive actions eliminate any hope of high performance from many such damaged human systems. The result is a vicious cycle in which team members, frustrated at the group's inability to produce results, grow to dread their work. They too disengage, thereby further reducing the team's ability to perform. Lost performance becomes both cause and effect.

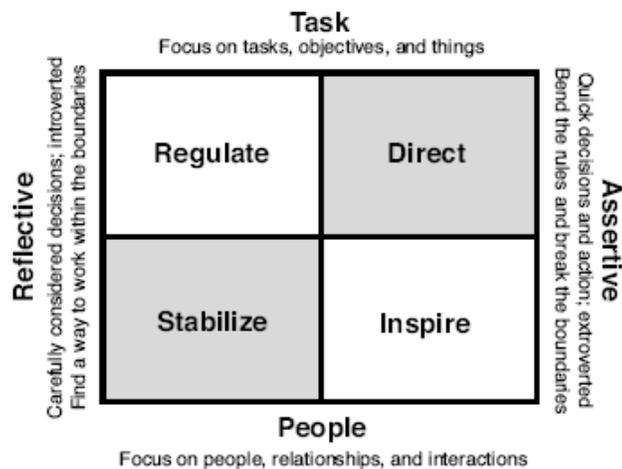# Enhancing performance starts by reestablishing enjoyment!

Secret 1: Behavior (HOW)

<u>Problems</u>
- Reasons for your workplace dissatisfaction include
    - Specific actions of the people working with you
    - Conflict within human interactions on the job
    - The way in which you are required to act to perform the job
    - The way in which a supervisor or colleague acts in front of you
- Phrases you may use to describe the problem
    - Describing others: bossy, flaky, lazy, fussy, slow, pressure-oriented
    - Describing the work: I *have to* do things this way

Task
Focus on tasks, objectives, and things

Reflective — Carefully considered decisions; introverted. Find a way to work within the boundaries

Assertive — Quick decisions and action; extroverted. Bend the rules and break the boundaries

| Regulate | Direct |
| Stabilize | Inspire |

People
Focus on people, relationships, and interactions

<u>Solutions</u>
- Using the behavioral model pictured
    - Identify your own location, needs, and tendencies
    - Identify the troublesome behaviors of those around you
    - Identify the behaviors "required" by your job
- For those around you
    - What are the commonalities between others' behavior and yours? What are the differences?
    - What types of behavior are most troublesome or off-putting to you? Which of those are at play in this situation?
    - What adjustments in your own approach does the model suggest?
- For your role or job
    - How do you know what your position requires? How might you be mistaken?
    - How might your position's output requirements be fulfilled by someone using each of the different behaviors in the model?
    - What are the commonalities between your preferred behavior and the behavior required by your position? What are the differences?
    - What drives your desire for success?
    - How might you "reframe" the behavioral requirements of your job?

Secret 2: Motivation (WHY)

Problems
- Reasons for your workplace dissatisfaction include
  - A vague, nonspecific dislike for the people working with you
  - A general sense of uncomfortable human interactions on the job
  - The sense that the work you are doing is not important or valuable to you
  - A feeling of "mismatch" in terms of basic values or world view
- Phrases you may use to describe the problem
  - Describing others: I don't get them; I don't like them but don't know why
  - Describing the work: I don't really care; I'd rather be doing something else

|	Invisible Seen best by me	Visible Seen by everyone
Task →	**Truth** Do I have the "right" answer?	**Results** What outcome does the task produce?
People →	**Power** Do I wield the most influence or control?	**Assistance** Who is supported or helped?
Process →	**Form** How do I experience the process?	**Structure** How is everyone required to proceed?

Solutions
- Using the motivational model pictured
  - Identify the factors most important to you
  - Identify the driving factors of those around you
  - Identify the factors most rewarded within your job
- For those around you
  - What are the commonalities between others' motivation and yours? What are the differences? What is the result?
  - What factors are least motivational or valuable to you? Which of those are at play in this situation?
  - How might you understand the other factors in the context of your own motivation?
  - What adjustments in your own approach does the model suggest?
- For your role or job
  - How do you know what your position rewards? How might you be mistaken?
  - In what ways does your job today match the factors most important to you? Which of your roles are best aligned?
  - What would another person with your motivational profile enjoy about your job?
  - How might you "reframe" the least-aligned portions of your job?

Secret 3: Task Balance (WHAT)

Problems
- Reasons for your workplace dissatisfaction include
    - A disdain for one or more specific tasks that you must complete
    - Boredom or lack of focus within certain parts of the job
    - The desire to delegate or hand off large chunks of the work
    - Inability or lack of desire to produce results, especially on certain types of tasks
- Phrases you may use to describe the problem
    - Describing others: S/he likes that stuff more than I do; S/he's better at _
    - Describing the work: I'm bored; I'm antsy; I lack focus; I hate doing _
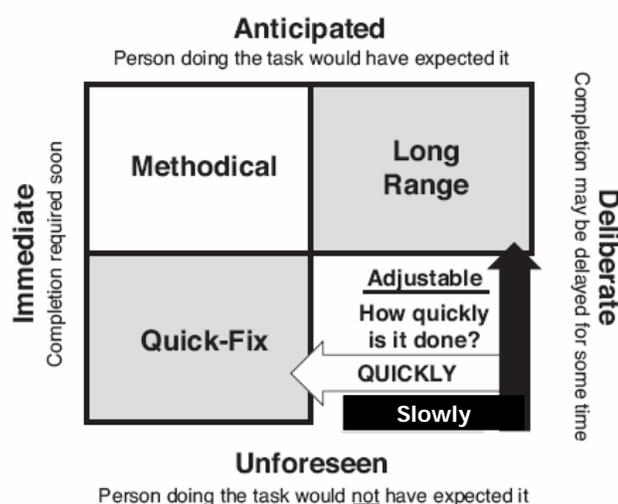
Solutions
- Using the task type model pictured
    - Identify the types of task most enjoyed
    - Identify the types of task least enjoyed
    - Characterize as much of the daily work as possible relative to this model
- For your role or job
    - Could you convert tasks to different types without sacrificing output? How?
    - Could you perform your tasks in a different order in order to insert more of your preferred task types in-between those you don't prefer?
    - When have you enjoyed tasks of your least favorite type? Why?
    - Would the key elements of each task type help you become more effective as a contributor or manager?
        - Long Range: Goals, Planning, Resources
        - Methodical: System, Schedule, Habit
        - Quick-Fix: Problem, Reason, Solution
- For those around you
    - Is it possible to make a win/win trade for different tasks with someone else?
    - Could you leverage someone else's dislike of a task type you like, or vice-versa?

Secret 4: Skills (HOW WELL)

Problems
- Reasons for your workplace dissatisfaction include
    - An inability to achieve success in certain areas; (e.g. "get my point across")
    - An inability to articulate your greatest challenges in terms of learnable skills
    - A tendency to place blame on other people for lack of results
    - A history of difficulty with the same issues
- Phrases you may use to describe the problem
    - Describing others: I can't get them to _; I can't seem to communicate with _
    - Describing the work: I don't know how to _; I shouldn't be expected to _

My Hard Skills	Abstract Knowledge	Concrete Implementation
Related to A TOPIC	How it works conceptually	How to do something practical

My Soft Skills	Abstract Knowledge	Concrete Implementation
Related to TASK	Understanding Problems	Planning for Results
Related to PEOPLE	Human Awareness and Attitude	Interaction and Relationship
Related to PROCESS	Intuition and Awareness	Organization and Focus

Solutions
- Using the hard/soft skill model pictured
    - Identify the types of skills most likely to help
    - Identify "what success would look like" if those skills were improved
    - Discuss possible methods of improving those skills
- When have you exhibited those skills successfully in the past?
    - What was the situation? What did you do? How could that experience help here?
- When have you exhibited those skills unsuccessfully in the past
    - What was the situation? What did you do? What did you learn that would apply in this case?
- What resources are available to you that would help improve in the most important skill areas? Consider:
    - Mentors or teachers
    - Books or reference materials
    - Classes or formal training
    - OJT or simulated job training
    - Environments outside of work that would provide the opportunity to learn and practice them
    - What would be the best first step in improving these skills?