

“Why don’t I Want to go to Work on Mondays?”



I have watched with interest over the years the “Vision Statements” that companies of all sizes make only to find that in the majority of cases they have been relegated to a drawer or have just been quietly forgotten about. The one that I felt meant most to me was:

“That all of our management and staff would want to come to work every Monday”

Think about it. This would mean that all stakeholders - customers, suppliers, shareholders, the bank and the Staff - were being looked after as well being committed to the well being of the organisation. What a lovely thought. But why is it rarely the case particularly for the staff? The reasons are many and varied, but here are some thoughts.

Given the constant changes and increasing pressure that we all face today, it is likely that at some point during the course of our careers we have felt that ‘all was not as it should be’. Maybe an anticipated promotion or an expected job change did not happen and the keenly felt disappointment led to that feeling of ‘going nowhere’. Sometimes a one-off event like these may not be the catalyst. Instead there may have been a gradual build up of tension; a feeling of uneasiness or lack of fulfilment, possibly related to a lack of challenge or direction.

Whatever the reason if Monday morning is not looked forward to ask yourself:

- Am I dissatisfied with my career, even though others may think I am a “success”?
- Do I feel that I cannot control or influence my career progress?
- Is the idea of doing something different, even outside my present company attractive?
- Am I unsure about my future with my present company?

If you have answered ‘Yes’ to one or more of these questions then maybe you should think about your career from a different perspective. More and more people now consider their career as something integral to their lives, not something distinct or separate, so that what they do in work is both consistent with, and supported by, what they do outside work. Their career reflects and reinforces important goals, needs and values that extend far beyond the workplace, reaching into all corners of their lives. These people are not immune to problems, challenges, and setbacks in their working lives but they do not have a job, they have a career.

But why are so many of us unhappy with our careers? One factor that has probably contributed more than any other to feelings of indecision and insecurity is the systematic “flattening” of traditional hierarchical companies. As a result the traditional career ‘ladder’ has been shortened, rungs have been removed, and the width at the top has been squeezed. To progress requires greater leaps in skill and experience, and much more time. We have to expect to remain in the same job longer, so dealing with the thinking ‘this is only temporary, I’ll be promoted soon’, is no longer a viable option.

Along with flattened structures we are also seeing the end of cradle-to-grave employment, but the memory lingers on. Companies continue to reinforce cradle-to-grave thinking through the benefits they provide; pension plans, health insurance, life assurance, club memberships, relocation cover etc. These serve to create the impression that they will ‘guarantee’ our future but to be honest they can no longer promise career security or advancement. You just have to look at the present down turn in business confidence to see evidence of this.

So if you want to try and get rid of some of those Monday blues then, I suggest that it will help if you get in control of your career which after all, is far too important to leave to someone else.