

# “Relight your fire & your passion for the workplace”



Even if you were one of the most disinterested folk as far as the 2008 Olympics were concerned, there must have been some aspects of them that fascinated you. For me one of the most significant things was the passion displayed by the winners, and the sheer joy at seeing their efforts being rewarded when they stood on the podium receiving their medals, irrespective of the colour.

What very few of us of course fully appreciate are the years of training and self-sacrifice that they all endured. The relentless days of practice, dieting and routine that they voluntarily went through just to take part and hopefully win. What passion! What courage! And what joy for those who achieved their dreams!

I am trying to think, as I write this article, if I can recall anyone who, in my life time demonstrated such passion for their jobs and you know, there aren't that many including myself, who come to mind. Sure there have been those who won awards, were promoted, made significant amounts of money and received recognition. But passion seems to be in scarce supply in the work arena.

I certainly don't feel that I am fully qualified to deal with this in any detail, but I would like to make some comments and suggestions - even though there will be many articles linking the Olympics with work related topics.

You see I believe that it is easy for some of us to be content/secure in your jobs, particularly when things are going well. The job gives us enough challenges without too much pressure at one extreme or too much boredom at the other. We have sufficient income to enjoy most of life's pleasures, and while most would like more cash we can't really complain if we were to measure our effort against our pay. For us contentment has smothered the passion we once had.

Or maybe you are one of those folk who feel discontent/insecure in your job and to be passionate about anything is difficult if not nigh on impossible. For you the job is not what you want, and the pay certainly is not allowing you to enjoy the pleasures you would like. The pressure/stress you feel under is not worth it, and the only things that motivate you are the thoughts of going home, enjoying those pastimes, future holidays or other non-work related dreams. For you discontentment has smothered the passion you once had.

But what makes you lose your passion? I suggest 3 things constantly feed this:

1. **Greed:** Dwelling on things you don't have so that you don't enjoy the things you have. So try to be more satisfied but set goals for yourself.
2. **Fear:** Running from things that are not chasing you and so robbing you of inner peace and stability, and tormenting you with the "what if's".
3. **Seeking fulfilment in the wrong places:** Spending years in vain searching for security and then the rest of your life looking for significance. What a waste of time & talent.

Those who are motivated by the dreams of the 2012 Olympics fully realise that they will need to approach their training with a passion, and those with the greatest passion will surely be more likely to succeed. Why? Because passion will:

- **Energise them:** Passionate people with limited ability will out perform passive people with ability because they act with boundless enthusiasm.
- **Overcome fear:** Passionate people will take risks, go that extra mile, do what it takes to achieve their goals (no matter how often they fail) and not stop until they succeed.

- **Drive them:** Passionate people will persevere until they find what they are looking for and won't be deterred by those who pour scorn on their efforts.

The key to success whether it be an athlete preparing for the Olympics or you seeking that purposeful job is to find out who you really are (i.e. your strengths and weaknesses) and what you would really like to do (i.e. you're your ambitions or calling). As someone has said, without these: "You will be like the octopus on roller-skates – lots of movement but no real direction".

So, linking passion to the concept of a flame, which of the following best describes you:

1. **A person with a low flame:** It's difficult to achieve anything when you don't have much to desire to do so. So find something you like to do so much that you'll gladly do it for nothing, and if you learn to do it well, someday people will gladly pay you for it.
2. **A person with no flame:** Do you say you are burned out when if you are totally honest you never really were ever on fire? As someone has said: "Death isn't the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us (i.e. passion) when we are still alive".
3. **A person with flame:** If this describes you then you will refuse to allow anyone, or anything to stand in your way. Your passion will be matched with your priorities and you will not be spending time doing things, which demand neither passion nor talent.

So why not learn from the Olympics and accept that if you want to achieve something from life you will need to change? You will need to align your passion with your priorities. This will not eliminate your problems or remove obstacles but it will empower you to face them with greater energy and enthusiasm.

The truth is that in today's working environment you will have to fan the flame – assuming there is one. Not only this but you will need to do it regularly otherwise it will tend to go out. You will need to feed it and protect it. But not every one will help you do that. So you may need to distinguish between two sorts of people:

- **Fire lighters:** These are groups of people who will inspire you, encourage you, and will go out of their way to help you. They see you not as you are, but as but as you could be, and in doing so fuel your faith and ignite your passion.
- **Fire Extinguishers:** These are groups of people who throw cold water on what you are trying to achieve. They will focus on what's wrong rather than on what's right, will find the cloud that comes with every silver lining and will try to put out the fire of your passion.

So look out for Fire Lighters and spend time with them and you will find that as you fan the flames the flames will energise you and carry you to your destination.