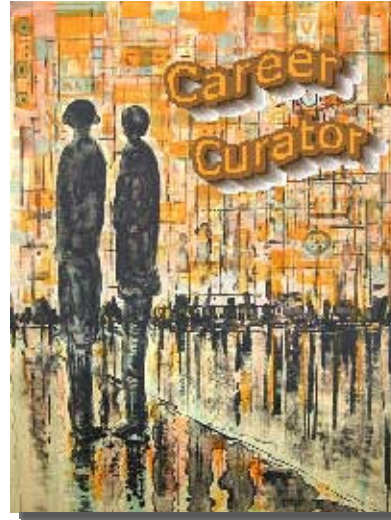




Paul Carpino



I Don't Like (this part of) My Job

IF THERE EVER was a movie that “tells it like it is” about the world of work, it would be the cult hit, “Office Space.” Joanna, played by Jennifer Aniston sums it all up speaking to her ex-boyfriend Peter Gibbons (Ron Livingston); “Peter, most people don't like their jobs. But you go out there and find something that makes you happy.”

The truth is, no job or career is perfect and most of us consider one or more aspects of our jobs/career undesirable. Some surveys have found that 87% of Americans don't like their jobs. If we choose, we can minimize the “down sides” of a job or career. This month I'll take you through a process if you are searching for a job or dealing with current job anxiety.

Look Into the Future

During our job search, we owe it to ourselves to thoroughly research both the positives and negatives of the job and the employer. In our “go-go, give-me, give-me” culture, we tend to focus on the benefits, perks and compensation and ignore the negative, downside or challenges of the job or employer. Here are some ways to “see the light” before the dark days ahead.

- Network with people doing the job in other cities and ask them how it is or was for them in dealing with the challenges of the job.
- Read the job posting again and again and then read between the lines. “Flexible schedule,” mostly likely means that you'll be working nights and weekends. “Compensation based on performance,” usually means it pays only straight commission.

“...we owe it to ourselves to thoroughly research both the positives and negatives of the job and the employer...”

- Ask someone that works for the company or organization about the downsides to working for the employer or in the specific job, if they are privy to that information.
- If possible, experience the employer as a customer or client while probing, through their employees what you choose to learn.
- Do a general “Google-type” search about employer and learn about their problems, challenges, staff turnover and financial health.
- Prepare a relevant, job-focused list of interview questions pertinent to a phone screen or in-person interview. Get professional advice as to which questions would impress the employer and which would derail the interview, causing elimination from the candidate pool.

What Do the Experts Say?

Here is some top professional advice taken from the contributors to “Now, Launch Your Career” regarding what they don’t like or enjoy about their jobs/careers.

“There are very few things I dislike about my career. In reality I can only think of one thing that wears on me at times. I do not spend as much time with my family as I would prefer.”—Jeremy Shepherd, President, PearlParadise.com

“Work is work and play is play so the work, the job, the career is still just that...hard work. Relentless, long hours, long flights, lots of meetings, lots of communication (conversations, letters, emails, phone calls) so the only thing that would be better than my job would be to retire.”—Robert B. McKnight, Chairman, President and CEO, Quiksilver

“The hours can be long and inconvenient. Depending on what you are shooting, you are usually the first one there and the last to leave. The hours are almost never “9–5 weekdays.” Many videographers are freelancers, that is they don’t have full-time jobs. They work on specific shoots sometimes for many different companies and individuals. The full-time jobs are mostly with TV stations and the TV stations usually do not pay well, and TV stations can be a very competitive environment.”—Dan Traugott, Videographer, Repetrope Productions, Inc.

“I never like firing people, even if the business reasons are entirely justified.”—Seth Goldman, Co-founder and CEO, Honest Tea

“What I don’t like is the stress,”—Manolo Blahnik, International Designer

“Not enough hours in the day! I love what I do!”—Cordia Harrington, CEO, The Bun Companies

“Since we have shows going on everywhere in the world, we have always one show going on somewhere. As a consequence, you never know when a crisis can occur somewhere and therefore, you have no control on your agenda.”—Daniel Lamarre, President and CEO, Cirque du Soleil

Navigating the Now

Now, we can explore some strategies to best manage the downside of a current job. Organizations are in constant change, but most employees long for things to stay the same or return to “the good old days.” Neither of these wishes will ever happen. We must empower

ourselves to formulate a plan to navigate the landmines of the negative aspects of our job or career. This is a proactive personal process, not one for your spouse, friends or supervisor.

- Focus on your strengths, not your weaknesses. Do more, of what you do best.
- Make time to relax, unwind and decompress. Have some fun!
- Take good care of yourself: eat right, exercise and get ample rest.
- Spend time growing your spiritual life. This helps balance life.
- Develop a succession plan. If you don't know where you want to go, who does?
- Communicate effectively with your boss, supervisor or manager. Share your successes and challenges.
- Contribute to the team and be nice to everyone, even those that do not like you.
- Ask your supervisor and team for feedback. We all need to know how we are doing.
- Don't procrastinate. Do the most challenging work first.
- Leverage the team. Delegate when appropriate.

In closing, don't let your job be just a way to pay your bills. It can be a source of rewards, joy, happiness, creativity, personal growth, financial stability and peace of mind, if you choose it so.

"I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance. Never settle for the path of least resistance."— *I Hope You Dance*, Lee Ann Womack

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