

Stay Put And Transform Your Job!

By John Sweney

For someone who earns his living by matching great job seekers with great jobs, it would seem counterproductive to suggest that employees should make every effort to keep — even transform — the jobs they already have. If people stay put, one could argue, there is no one to fill the openings for my company and for my clients' companies.

High performers are looking for a new jobs...

I need not worry. According to a recent workplace study by [Leadership IQ](#), 47 percent of the high performers in companies are actively looking for other jobs — they're posting and submitting resumes, and going on interviews. (This should be sobering news for managers, because while it's bad enough that almost half of your high performers are thinking about quitting, what's worse is that the low performers want to stay! Only 18% of low performing employees are actively seeking other jobs.)



It's not the money...

The fellow who conducted the study, Mark Murphy, told the [Newhouse News Service](#) that when someone quits a job, 89 percent of managers assume it was over money, whereas 91 percent of the workers who quit say it was anything but. "There isn't one thing that demotivates employees, because it's going to be different for every single employee," Murphy said.

Murphy makes a good living advising companies on how to keep their best people. To me, that's admirable. There is a lot a manager can do. Go for it!

Now, let me talk to you high-performing employees: Guess who is responsible for your career? Guess who controls whether you are motivated every day? Guess who holds the key to your job satisfaction?

Did you look in the mirror this morning?

Yes, it's you...

Look, everyone is not as fortunate as you and I are. If you are on the mail list for this newsletter, it would be a safe bet that you are educated, healthy, capable, well fed, with a roof over your head, and loved. Your work probably involves a lot of discretion as to how you set your priorities and how you solve problems. And if you make a mistake at work, there is probably very little chance for loss of life. So take a risk!

Transform your job...

So, what do you do if you are a high performer who is de-motivated and looking for another job? In my opinion, if you are ready to quit anyway, you may as well take a shot at transforming the job you have! It may actually be easier than finding a new job, ramping up in a new company, building new relationships with co-workers, and then finding out over time that the new job isn't really much more motivating than the one you left!



You have nothing to lose...

If you make the effort to transform your job and it works, then you win! You are happier, more motivated, and — frankly — probably better to be around for your family and friends. If you make the effort to transform your job and it doesn't work — maybe you even get fired — you are no worse off because (remember) you were willing to quit anyway! And think how much you can learn in the process!

Give it a whirl...



Consider these ideas for transforming your present job:

Keep it positive... You and I understand that you may be de-motivated and ready to quit, but that news is not helpful to your boss or coworkers. Instead keep the conversation positive and focus on things that can make a better situation for everyone.

Speak up... Let your boss know that you are interested in transforming your job so that everyone is better off, including them, the company, and you. Ask them for any input on how THEY would imagine that your job could be transformed; you may be surprised at what they offer!

Make a plan... No one knows your job better than you do. You probably already do planning IN your job; how about planning ABOUT your job? Pretend your job is a little company with its own suppliers, employees and customers. What do you want to see the job become? How do you plan to get from here to there? What resources are needed? What changes are needed? What are the benefits?

You are in control... You may run into roadblocks as you transform your job. But if you have done your homework and if the transformation really benefits everyone, you can make the case to overcome the roadblocks. Just keep asking, take your case higher, and don't give up. After all, the worse that can happen is that you tick off your employer and you lose your job, but (remember) you were willing to quit anyway!

Leverage the momentum... Even though your boss may not recognize you in the way that you expect, be assured that the last thing your boss wants is for their high performers like you to jump ship. There is nothing more disruptive than an empty seat that used to be productive. If you knew you couldn't fail, if you knew the answer would be yes, if you knew that you are secretly valued and cherished, what would you ask for to transform your job?

Let 'em know what floats your boat... Your boss is not clairvoyant. He or she cannot read your mind, no matter how loud the voice in your head is screaming. If you want to learn more skills, ask for it. If you want different responsibilities, ask for it. If you want more recognition, ask for it. If you want to transform your job, say so!

The choice is yours...

Let me put it this way: Unless you are bound by some sort of contract, you actually **CHOSE** to go to work today, right? No one put a gun to your head. So if you chose to spend this day in service to your company and you accept money in return, then you also chose to put in your greatest effort, right?

In the same manner, you can choose to choose to transform your job if that's what it takes to make you motivated and happy.

Or you can chose to quit and go somewhere else.

But I think that at least trying to transform your job will be more fun and actually better for everyone in the long run.

As someone to hires a lot of people, that's better for me, too. In the long run, I would rather hire someone who has a great attitude, is willing to take risks, communicate clearly, drive change, foster a positive work environment and make lemonade out of lemons. Wouldn't you?♦

~ John Sweney is a Silver Fox Advisor

