
The Examined Life -- Is Your Work a Good Fit? -- Edition 17, November, 2005

A free, electronic newsletter brought to you by:

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Is your work a good fit?

Is your work a good fit for you? Most of us spend more time working than anything else, but based on a survey of 1500 people by the Rockport Institute, 40% of Americans are at least somewhat unhappy with their jobs. Including those who are neutral, 70% go to work without much enthusiasm or passion.

Are you excited to go to work? If not, perhaps it's time for a change. How did you choose what you do for a living? Did you choose it? Did you fall into your current work? Did someone else choose for you? Or did you love your work in the past but find it unfulfilling now?

I regularly host virtual book discussions using *The Pathfinder: How to Choose or Change Your Career for a Lifetime of Satisfaction and Success* by Nicholas Lore. The book has an interesting exercise called the Lifeline — draw a big line that represents your life and mark the events that have already occurred, decade by decade. Then, using pencil, continue into your future, indicating milestones and events yet to come.

What many participants get from this exercise is a surprising sense of just how long their life is likely to be. Changing to work we enjoy is compelling when we realize we still have many years of working life ahead. Average life expectancy in the US is now in the mid-70s with wide variations based on family history and healthy habits. According to MSN Money's Life Expectancy Calculator, I can expect to live to age 94!
http://moneycentral.msn.com/investor/calcs/n_expect/main.asp

The US Department of Labor estimates that we have three to six careers during our working lives and the next generation will have six to ten. Many of us work in jobs that didn't exist when we were youngsters answering the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Technology allows people to work together from

different locations. More people are choosing self-employment or starting a small business.

If the work you do is not a good fit, create a plan to do something about it. Learn about yourself, your strengths, passions, preferences and challenges. Check out resources at www.exnerassociates.com such as **Ten Signs of Career Burnout**, the **Career Booklist**, and **Websites for Career Transition and Development**. Making a big transition isn't easy so get support for your plan, either through friends and family who believe in you, a career coach or a group of people working on similar goals. Don't be surprised if your family doesn't support your decision in the beginning; change is scary.

But the best things in life demand change—or you wouldn't be walking, eating solid food, or trained in any kind of job. Remember the words of Karen Clark, "Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely."

Good Fit Questions

Ask yourself the following questions to get a sense of how good a fit your work is for you.

1. Are you excited to get to your work most days?
2. Does your work offer you the right mix of learning, growth and contribution?
3. Do you enjoy the people you work for and with?
4. Do you have the right mix of solo work and work with others?
5. Does your work environment promote your best work?
6. Do you get the support that you need?
7. Are you meeting your financial needs? Will you be able to do so in the future?
8. Does your work make good use of your skills, knowledge and abilities?
9. Does your work boost your self-esteem and confidence?
10. Are you able to connect to the meaning and purpose of the work you do?

Personal Update

The boxes are unpacked and we even have most of the pictures hung. I did go out and buy a plastic sugaro jack-o-lantern and we had an abundance of trick-or-treaters. What fun!

The weather is gorgeous here right now. I almost hate to leave to go to the International Coaches Federation Conference next week. But I'm giving in to the lure of spending time with other coaches and learning new things to bring back to my clients.

Coming Events

Book Discussion Group: *The Inner Game of Work: Focus, Learning, Pleasure, and Mobility in the Workplace*

Dates: Wednesdays November 16, 30, December 7 and 14

Time: 5-6 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5pm Pacific, 7-8 pm Eastern

Group Size: 8-10 people

Fee: \$75 (Book available from amazon.com for @ \$10)

I read my first Inner Game book (innergame.com) years ago because it was frequently recommended to musicians. One of its tenets is that Performance = Potential - Interference. The more we can get rid of the interference put up by our negative self-talk, or by trying too hard to do things right, the more we can allow our potential to shine through.

Read this book and discuss it with a small group to learn ways to:

- Examine your definition of work and your motivations in the workplace — and change the way you work forever
- Overcome fear of failure, change-resistance, boredom, and stagnation
- Change a rote performance into a rewarding one
- Get out of the way of your own growth and development

Call 602-298-1129 or go to <http://exnerassociates.com/events.htm> to print a fax registration form.

The Pathfinder: How to Choose or Change Your Career for a Lifetime of Satisfaction and Success Book Discussion

Dates: Mondays 11/21, 28, 12/5 & 12

Time: 5-6 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5 pm PT, 7-8 pm ET

Group Size: 8-10 people

Fee: \$75 (Book available from amazon.com for @\$10)

Back by popular demand, ***The Pathfinder***, by Nicholas Lore, has three sections:

- Living the Life You Love
- How to Get There from Here
- Designing your Future Career

In our introductory call we will discuss goals and some reading shortcuts and strategies. Then, we will read one section between each call. On the calls we will have a one-hour group discussion (via phone conference) about that section. Not only will this group get you reading, but you will also be encouraged to do as many of the exercises in the book as possible!

Participants of previous Pathfinder groups said:

"I have been holding myself back from changing careers for many years and this book has shown me that making commitments to myself - in all areas of my life - is critical to achieving my dream job." TD, Delaware

"This class helped to propel me forward into decision-making - not only for my life work, but many other aspects of my life." FC, New York

"The book Pathfinder by Nicholas Lore includes all the tools for discovering and creating a career you will love. The trick is putting in the time and effort necessary to take full advantage of them. The book discussion group led by Debra Exner provided me with a fun, highly motivating way to make sure I did just that. The regularly

scheduled conference calls made the difference between just reading the book and really applying it in my life. If you are resigned about the difference that a book can actually make in your life, give this discussion group a try. It really works!" KD, Delaware

"This was an absolutely wonderful session! The book was fabulous! It was great to be able to discuss in a group and hear other perspectives. And Debbie was a wonderful facilitator - with a great ability to motivate, listen, and respect everyone!" KM, Maryland

"Thank you for your direction and encouragement. Pathfinders helped me confirm my thoughts about whom I wanted to work with and what I wanted to do." BB, Delaware

Ask...How to Get What You Want and Need at Work Book Discussion

Dates: Mondays 11/28, 12/5, 12 & 19

Time: 7-8 pm AZ Time/MT, 6-7 pm PT, 9-10 pm ET

Group Size: 8-10 people

Fee: \$75 (Book available from amazon.com for @ \$10)

The book, Ask...How to Get What You Want and Need at Work, by Priscilla Claman, has four sections:

- Think Before You Ask
- The Answers and What They Mean
- Ask ALL the Right People
- If You Are Asked

We'll read one section prior to each call (including the first call). Each week we will have a one-hour group discussion (via phone conference) about that section. You'll be encouraged to consider how you can apply the information to your own situation.

Free Teleclass: Make 2006 Your Best Year Yet!

Dates: Wednesdays 1/4 and 1/11

Time: 5-6 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5 pm PT, 7-8 pm ET

Join me for this free two-session teleclass and discover the keys to setting and achieving the goals you really want in 2006. You will:

- Identify the goals you really want (and are most likely to achieve!)
- Create your own personalized 3-Step Success Strategy
- Get into action and create huge momentum to keep on going
- Learn 4 easy ways to overcome any obstacle that arises
- And much more!

NEW! Group Coaching based on *Now What? 90 Days to a New Life Direction*

Dates: Mondays January 9, 23, 30, February 6, 13, 27, March 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2006 plus 2 individual coaching calls

Time: 5-6:30 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5:30 pm PT, 7-8:30 pm ET

Introductory Rate: \$200/month for 3 months, book and workbook included

Maximum: 8 participants

This program can help you get clear about what's next in your life, especially if you are:

- Re-entering the work world or seeking more satisfying work
- Considering your options after a major life transition
- Looking for fulfillment and meaning
- Wanting to discover what's next for you

The work between calls involves reading a chapter or two from the Now What book and completing exercises designed to uncover limiting beliefs, wisdom from your past and direction for your future. The individual coaching calls will help you to personalize the information and create your action plan.

Print and take the Now What Quiz at exnerassociates.com to see which sections of this book/program can help you.

Check the website for more events.

[Click on this link to register via a faxed form or call 602-298-1129.](#)

Many of my clients come to me because they want to increase their satisfaction with their work – they want to transition to a different career, their job has ended and they need to find new work, they want to start their own business, they want their current business to stop running their entire lives or they may be in a life transition that has them thinking about what's next (i.e., the kids have grown, they want to partially retire, etc).

If you are ready to make changes in your business and personal life or know someone who is, I'm looking for you. I work primarily with people in career transition and with self-directed individuals and business owners who want to maximize their effectiveness and satisfaction at work while maintaining a healthy life/work balance. Curious? Email me at DEXner@ExnerAssociates.com or call 602-298-1129 to schedule a complimentary 45-minute coaching session.

If you are enjoying this newsletter, please forward it to your friends and colleagues! Or direct them to the subscription form and past issues at exnerassociates.com

Thanks,

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The secret of creating anything new in your life consists of creating new commitments and then holding the tiller to your new course until it becomes established as a behavior.

-- Nicholas Lore