

**BARBARA B. REINHOLD ASSOCIATES**Workplace solutions for
individuals and organizations[ABOUT BARBARA](#)[ARTICLES](#)[COUNSELING/COACHING](#)[PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE](#)[CONTACT US](#)[More..](#)

WORKING WELL NEWSLETTER

.....
[Visit my Website](#) // **EXECUTIVE COACHING: Talent management Help for Organization.**

September 2006

BACK TO WHAT?

For most of us, it's been some time since we started back to school just after Labor Day, wearing new outfits and some mixture of fear and expectation. Nonetheless, that tinge of restlessness and yearning for something a little new seems to be hard-wired into us as a vestige of those good (or for some, not-so-good) old days. But does the fact that we're "grown up" mean we shouldn't be thinking about an adult version of a new lunchbox or notebook even now? Absolutely not! Have a look at this month's Are You Still Getting to Do What You Want to Do? quiz, the Career Tip and Suggested Resources to see if there's something relevant here for you, your clients, your bosses or your employees. And remember, "The hardest fight...is to live in a world where every single day someone is trying to make you someone you do not want to be." (e.e.cummings)

This issue's assessment tool:

ARE YOU STILL GETTING TO DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO— IN THE WAY YOU WANT TO DO IT?

For decades, psychologists, career experts and management gurus have been proposing schemas for "diagnosing" which skills, values and interests might fit best with various careers. Ed Schein of MIT gave us the "career anchors" concept to figure out what mattered most to us in our work. Then John Holland had us analyze whether we were drawn to social, enterprising, artistic, realistic, investigative or conventional tasks. And more recently,

Timothy Butler and James Waldroop of the Harvard Business School Career Center have suggested eight different “deeply-imbedded life interests” that people long past career-choosing age might be bringing to work with them. The premise underlying all of these approaches is that when the job dovetails with what we’re naturally drawn to at any point in a working life (and those passions do change and shift with time), then everybody benefits—the employee, the boss, and the organization.

Listed below are ten selected “activities or experiences” that many other career researchers and I have identified as especially motivating for people. There are no right or wrong or better ones—the only questions are these: **(a)** which ones do think you have? **(b)** how much are you getting to use or experience them in the way you’re currently doing your job?

Circle the number on each line that describes your wishes and the actuality—and see where the fit is good and not so good. On the first line, estimate how much you really still enjoy each of the ten motivators below (1= not much/ 10= a great deal), and on the second line estimate how much this is required or expected of you as your job is currently constructed. If some of the items aren’t relevant for you, just skip them. At the end of the quiz are five blank lines for you to add you own items, in either the “want” or “have to do” categories.

Coaching/ counseling/ mentoring others

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 4 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Quantitative analysis

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Competitiveness/ risk-taking

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Taking charge/ making decisions

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Creativity

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Influencing, persuading through words

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Technology applications

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Conceptual/ intellectual excellence

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Relationship-building

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Autonomy

Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Your other items:

 Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

 Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

 Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

 Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

 Amount I need/ want 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Amount I get/ do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

So what does it mean? The degree of alignment between what you want to use and what's actually happening for you is what matters here, of course. Here are the steps to identifying and understanding the impact of what you've uncovered:

- Analyze the alignment and misalignment in various areas. In how many are the numbers more than two apart?
- Which of these items could make a real difference for you in satisfaction or challenge?
- What could you add to change the misalignments?
- What could you drop?
- With whom could you speak to address each of these possibilities?

Nobody is going to walk up and offer to help make your work fit you better. Quite the contrary. But most employers are smart enough to know that it's

getting harder and harder to keep really good people, and so they might be more willing than you think to discuss with you some ways to shift or restructure the work you're doing for them. And if they're not, then there are lots of other employers out there, provided you're talented, willing to work hard and possessed of enough chutzpah to market yourself effectively.

CAREER TIP:

What to do if you'd like to bring your wants and realities of your current job into closer alignment without taking big risks right now?

You could, of course, quit your job tomorrow and start looking immediately for one that might fit you better. Here is a strategy for the due diligence that could definitely make your task easier:

Identify the change(s) that could have the most impact on your degree of work satisfaction currently

If possible, quietly line up the colleagues with whom you could make some shifts in duties to get what you want—and meet their needs at the same time. It might even be good to share the Are You Getting What You Want? tool with them to see if you can get a small movement going.

For each change you decide you want to suggest, you must be prepared to demonstrate the benefit and return on investment of time or effort for the decision-maker you're approaching. How will each change make things better for the organization and your boss, even if it's only about having a less grumpy team?

Consider this a long-term project: If the first parry doesn't work, be sure to ask for feedback about the parts that were not to your boss's (or colleagues') liking, and fine-tune the plan for another approach at a later time.

Finally, have your antennae out for two things. First, whether you are perceived by your boss as talented and needed enough to make exceptions for; if you aren't, don't waste your time now, but plan ahead for how to change the ways you're perceived at work. Second, when no is really no. I've had lots of referrals of people who asked again and again for what they thought "they deserved" (without the due diligence and benefit/ ROI analysis), were turned down again and again, and finally ended up with one of those little pink slips. So, have courage, but be a good listener in determining whether to press forward or not! The best predictor of whether you'll get the flexibility and/or changes you request is the degree to which you're valued by the organization. That might not seem fair, but it's real.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE TIPS ABOVE:

Two Strategies for (1) improving your boss's opinions about your worth to the organization and/or (2) negotiating for what you want:

- Peggy Klaus, *Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*. (Warner Books, 2003.) Also visit Peggy's web site (www.klausact.com) and have a look at her "Take-12" questions for becoming more aware of what you have to brag about.
- Irma Tyler-Wood, Grande Lum, Anthony Wanis-St. John, *Expand the Pie: How to Create More Value in Any Negotiation* (Castle Pacific, 2002).

Thanks for reading—and be sure to send this on to a friend or colleague, or return the e-mail addresses of people you'd like to be reading it in the future. If you have questions or issues you'd like covered in future issues, you can e-mail Barbara at breinhold@charter.net.