



"Ask the Leadership Consultant" *

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Question:

"I feel like my life and career are going nowhere. Everyday I am feeling frustrated and trapped in my present job. I used to be enthusiastic about work but now I dread going to work. Do you have any advice that can help me?"

Answer: What you are feeling is actually very common. There are millions of workers who feel exactly the same way you do. Some individuals feel like a *ship without a rudder* and sense that they are going in circles, and getting nowhere. This may indicate a lack of established goals or a conflict with your values. Here are some things to consider.

1. First, get a complete physical exam. Many physical and emotional illnesses can cause these kinds of feelings. Mention to your health care provider your frustrations both at home and at work. Make sure that this *malaise* is not being caused by an illness. If it is, most can successfully be treated.
2. One thing is for sure! To change this situation you are going to need to change *something* about your life. A humorous definition of the word "insane" is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting something *different* to happen. You must either change your attitude, your environment or your future. We can't change the past, and we may have limited control of the present. However, the decisions we make today will determine what we become tomorrow.

I don't know what *exactly* is going on in your life, but it is affecting *both* your personal life and the workplace. You need to begin by having an honest talk with yourself. What is the *root cause* of your frustration? Odds are it is the *same* issue that is causing frustrations at both home and at work. Until you candidly discover and acknowledge what the root cause is, you will not take action to resolve it. There is something going on in your life that is *causing* discouragement and frustration. Do you know what it is? If not, perhaps talking to a loved one can point you in the *right* direction. You may have friends or loved ones who have observed a problem you have had for many years. They have been afraid to bring it up to you, but have been hoping and waiting for you to ask.

Step 1 - Can you change your attitude? You can if you want to... because happiness is a choice. Everyday we *choose* to be happy or unhappy. Virtually everyone faces the same problems and setbacks in life. How we choose to *react* to those setbacks is what sets apart happiness from frustration. If you cannot change your attitude or are unwilling, you may want to consider changing your environment.

Step 2 - Can you change your environment? The answer is yes. The principle of "cause and effect" is in force here. If you are having difficulties at home it will carry over into the workplace. The reverse is also true. If there are serious problems in your personal life, they need to be addressed! Don't feel alone or too proud to ask for help. There are professionals who can help you with marriage, family,

finance, abuse or other problems. A long neglected *personal* problem may very well be the root cause of how you are feeling about yourself and your present job.

You may also be able to change your work environment. If you believe you have a future with your present employer you can ask to transfer to another job or department. This change can provide some temporary excitement and new opportunities. But unless you get to the root cause of your frustrations, it will not last for long. If you believe it is time to change employers, a new job will also provide some temporary enthusiasm. But remember, if you continue to have a serious personal problem, it will *follow* you wherever you go.

*Step 3 - Can you change your future? You absolutely can... by changing how you think and react to situations in your daily life. If you believe you need to change your career, today is the time to begin! Take some college classes, listen to audio tapes or CD's, and begin to network with people in your next career. The key is to make some changes in a *different* and positive direction. Even small changes will make you feel better about yourself right now. Doing new things will give you hope. Have you created a personal mission statement? If not, [this weLEAD article](#) will help you get started.*

You may have noted a constant *theme* in my suggestions. It is the importance of change! To be happy and fulfilled is going to require you to accept, embrace and create change in your own life. You are going to need to take a long and candid look at your present situation. Then the *hard* part will begin. You are going to need to resolve that certain changes are absolutely *necessary* for you to achieve greater satisfaction. You can choose to have the *same* tomorrow or a *different* tomorrow. It really is your choice. By the way, not choosing is also a choice! Yes, not choosing is a choice to change nothing and the status quo will continue. So make a choice right now to change your life for the better. Tomorrow is in your hands.

If you have a challenging question you would like our consultant to discuss, please email your question [here](#). We will be happy to keep your question anonymously.

*** The advice and counsel offered by the consultant is based on the limited information provided by the questioner. No two situations are exactly the same, and the consultant makes every effort to provide helpful and educational counsel based on the information supplied.**

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