

Are You In The Wrong Job? Ask Yourself These 7 Key Questions:

By Michael Spremulli

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Have you ever stopped to ask yourself if you are in the wrong job? Too many times people go to school, get a job in their chosen field and end up spending the bulk of their adult working life feeling miserable. Here are seven questions to get you thinking about how well-matched you are to your current job.

Do you look forward to Monday morning?

I know that this may sound crazy, but hear me out. Of course every job has times when you wish you could be somewhere else. There is no such thing as the perfect job. Realize, however, that people who find their job fulfilling and rewarding look forward to beginning their workweek. This is not because they are crazy, it's because they become energized when working in an environment that is a good match for them.

Do you find it easy to get along with coworkers?

Whenever you get a team of people working together there is bound to be some type of conflict from time to time. The question then becomes, how often do you find yourself "locking horns" with your co-workers? If you find yourself fighting with team members on a regular basis, it may mean that you are working in an emotionally toxic environment, or your coworkers are not communicating effectively with you, or you are not effectively communicating with your coworkers, or a combination of all of these.

Have you noticed that you are taking more personal and sick days than when you first started work?

Are you burning up your sick and annual leave faster than you can accrue it? Think back to when you first started at your current job. How often did you take sick and annual leave compared to now? If you have noticed an increase, ask yourself why. You might be tempted to say that you are taking more time off now because you earn more or because of your seniority -- these are not valid reasons. I'm sure you know someone at your company who has been there for less time than you and has built up hundreds of hours of leave time. A potential "red flag" is when you have an extremely limited amount of release time on the books.

Are you performing tasks that you enjoy and come naturally to you?

Are you a "people person" but your job has you locked in a cubicle analyzing stacks of data? Do you like to meticulously plan your work day, but find that you are constantly having to cast your plans into the wind and manage continual crises? These are just two examples of many potential situations where you might be in an environment that is a poor match for the way that you prefer to behave.

Do you hate your boss with a burning passion?

Sure, everyone reading this will occasionally have disagreements with their bosses. This is different than actively hating your boss. If you constantly have mean and vicious thoughts about your boss, you will have a tremendous challenge being productive and feeling satisfied in your job.

Does the mission of the company fit your personal values?

It is awfully difficult for you to be committed to your work when it conflicts with your personal values. For example: do you support protecting the environment, but the company you work for is a major polluter? You may despise firearms, but your company makes parts that are used in the manufacturing of handguns. A constant conflict of values can be difficult, if not impossible, to tolerate for long periods of time.

Do you feel valued as an employee?

EVERYONE needs to feel valued as an employee. Unfortunately, companies and managers often lose sight of this. Ask yourself when the last time was that you were complimented for a job well done. Does your boss or management appreciate your loyalty and dedication? If you do not feel valued, chances are that you will become de-motivated and adopt a "do the minimum to get by" attitude.

These questions are intended to be a catalyst for you. If you do not like your answers to these questions, ask yourself one more -- what can YOU do to improve your situation at work? Remember, if your work life is not what you want it to be, you are the only one who can take the action necessary to make it better.

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