



Passion In Our Workplace.



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What You And Your Leaders Can Do To Support PassionFlow !

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Benefits of Seeing the Glass Half Full

By Jacqueline Throop-Robinson, CEO, PassionWorks! Inc.

Can optimism help you create and sustain passion at work as well as a sense of well-being? Many people think so.

Recently, while flipping through a Best Health magazine, I noticed a longevity list. Dr. Trisha Macnair, a UK-based physician with a specialty in Medicine for the Elderly, compiled research that isolates key factors for living a long, healthy life.

Some did not surprise me but others did:

- "Finding true love" and "Having faith" each add 7 years, on average, to your life. Love enables us to flourish and thrive. Having faith often reduces anxieties and worries.
- At 6 years, is brushing and flossing your teeth. Healthy gums help you fight disease, especially heart disease.
- Exercise adds, on average, 4 years to your life, including easy activities like walking daily.
- A social circle adds 4 years because it helps reduce stress and peers can influence healthier lifestyle choices.
- Eating breakfast adds 1-3 years. So we should listen to our mothers!

However, the above factors do not top her list. The practice that adds on average 9 years is ... drum roll please ... "seeing the glass half full". Yes, it is optimism and being able to see what is good in the world and in your immediate environment.

This is not about a false sense of what is right with the world. It does not mean that people deny the reality of negative, painful experiences. Pain, hurt and suffering are a part of life.

However, optimism means that you can see the potential for good or the positive. Merriam-Webster defines it as: "an inclination to put the most favorable construction upon actions and events or to anticipate the best possible outcome."

The Glass in Reality

In reality, an eight-ounce glass has 4 ounces in it. It is half full and it is half empty.

- We can focus on the fact that 4 ounces are missing, or have already been digested, or we may even think we were ripped off because we expected 8 and only got 4.
- Or, we can focus on the 4 ounces that are present, that will refresh and nourish us, thereby appreciating what is there.

We can put so much of our energy into seeing the negative space; we become blind to the good or the positive. Seeing the glass half-full, on the other hand, means we are generally able to see the good that can come from all situations, even difficult ones. For example, an acquaintance of mine, after losing a family member to violence, founded an association to help other families who've lost loved ones from violent crimes. He chose a positive response to a horrible and painful situation.

Optimism is also about seeing possibilities and seeing how you can still progress in meaningful ways, despite obstacles or trying circumstances. It does not change the reality, but it does speak to trusting yourself to find a path forward that will lead you to a desired outcome.

This focus helps you to shed the burden of the negative and gain a sense of personal power and increased well-being.

The recent season of Dancing with the Stars featured an American war veteran, J.R. Martinez. After a horrible accident involving a land mine, J.R. was left disfigured. During the shows' various episodes he reported on his initial depression and the loss of his will to live, particularly due to his belief that no one would want to share their life with him.

His mother challenged this and wisely told him that the right woman will love you from the inside out. J.R. said something clicked for him in that moment. He connected to possibility.

From there, he found the fortitude to undergo numerous reconstructive surgeries and years of rehab, all the while maintaining a positive outlook. Now he is known as someone who "refuses to be defined by his looks".

What about seeing possibilities at work?

- A project doesn't get approved. Maybe that gives you time to work on something even more meaningful to you?
- A boss gives you negative feedback. Maybe that is an opportunity to show you are not afraid of tackling a challenge and are open to growing in new ways?
- A flu forces you to bed. Maybe this is an opportunity to take time out to think and reflect and re-assess priorities?

Over the years, I have become convinced that your mindset, especially optimism, is crucial to sustaining your PassionFlow: (1) knowing how to see and focus on what is good or meaningful in any situation; and, (2) knowing how to respond to that situation so you can keep moving forward and progressing toward goals that matter to you.

Next time you only can see that 4 ounces that are missing, force yourself to think about the 4 ounces that are, in reality, before you. You may be surprised at what emerges!

Typical Manager Pitfalls that Block Passion

By Mary Lou Archibald
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We may think people leave a job to make more money elsewhere, or because they need a change. Exit interviews tell a different story.

The number one reason people leave is due to their relationship with their manager.

As individual contributors, we can choose to reframe and refocus to find and sustain passion in our workplace.

And as managers, we can drive engagement and passion in our workplace; or block it.

A leader's words and actions matter. They have impact. More than you might think. Leaders can even be destructive, making lives miserable and forcing good employees out the door.

So what can a manager do to foster passion at work? Below are three client stories of typical pitfalls many managers make:

Have a clear vision and make it happen

I knew a manager who loved to talk about their vision. But the vision kept changing and there was very little action.

This leader was stuck in the dreaming phase and quite content to be there as long as he could find another dreamer to be his sounding board.

The rest of the team spent all their time rushing around trying to get their work done without their leader. Eventually they got tired of rushing and one-by-one left for greener pastures.

Suddenly productivity became an issue and the leader was replaced, but at what cost? A leader's vision is nothing but lofty ideas if they do not lead the charge for action and progress.

Give candid feedback to resolve performance problems

Do you have chronic complainers on your team? If so, they may be griping because their boss lacks the skills or courage to give candid feedback.

The complaints are often legitimate and point to underperformers on the team who are "getting away with it". Those griping want the issues addressed but their boss avoids giving unpleasant feedback.

So the problems compound and perpetuate. The underperformers stick around because they have no reason to leave or change.

And the productive, but unhappy employees, may stop caring and start coasting, or leave. Either way the company loses because a leader is not able or willing to give timely feedback to resolve performance issues.

Let the team do their job

While facilitating leadership discussions, the most consistent complaint I hear is that people are being micromanaged and they don't like it.

Often the micromanager has no idea their leadership style is problematic. They believe obsessing is the only way to make sure their team is doing their job correctly.

What the micromanager doesn't see is that obsessing and trying to control their team will eventually lead to burn out for them and frustration for their team.

For example, during a training session when his team started coming up with ideas to fix an internal issue, their manager became visibly upset. He abruptly ended the discussion by saying he already had solutions so they did not have to spend time on this.

Eyes rolled in reaction to this attempt to control their ideas and input. In fact, a few of the team members later confided they were considering leaving the team.

Their boss was a decent guy but they felt he did not trust them or value their strengths. He was a high achiever and as a result was seen as a valuable leader, but most of his team was ready to jump ship.

If a leader allows the team to do their job, while giving the right amount of support, they will have a happy and productive team. And, they will also be able to take a much needed rest from obsessing to sustain their own passion.

We all have the ability to refocus, reenergize and find passion at work.

Leaders can also choose to support a culture that drives and sustains passion for themselves and their team. The above lessons learned are a great start!

When we work together, we can create healthy, productive relationships. As with all relationships, communication is essential. Start by sharing your drivers and blockers of passion at work with one another and look for ways to support each other's PassionFlow! Together, we can bring a sense of well-being and fulfillment to the workplace.

Passion Quotes :

"The optimist sees the rose and not its thorns; the pessimist stares at the thorns, oblivious of the rose."
- Kahllil Gibran

"For myself I am an optimist - it does not seem to be much use being anything else."
- Sir Winston Churchill

"The average pencil is seven inches long, with just a half-inch eraser - in case you thought optimism was dead."
- Robert Brault

"Optimist: someone who figures that taking a step backward after taking a step forward is not a disaster, it's a cha-cha."
- Robert Brault

"A leader has the vision and conviction that a dream can be achieved. He inspires the power and energy to get it done."
- Ralph Lauren

"You can deal with something today and have it resolved or ignore it and let it get worse."
- PassionWorks! Team

"What you permit, you promote."
- Chief Actuarial Officer, Bermuda

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- VP of Information Systems, Bermuda

Leader Reflections :

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Words of Wisdom from Our Clients :

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