

Taking Time For Appreciation



Mark Swartz

Dear Mark: I hate my job. Seriously. My boss is a grump. My colleagues are duds. The work I do bores me. My commute is killing me. And most of all, I'm being paid far less than I'm worth. What do you think I should do?

-- Name Withheld By Request, Quebec

Dear Dissatisfied (and boy, is that ever an understatement!),

You wouldn't believe how many e-mails just like yours that I get throughout the year. People who are fed up with their work. Angry at their bungling manager. Contemptuous of their lazy or uppity subordinates. Jealous of what everyone else seems to have, though they themselves are far more deserving.

Before I respond to the inquiry you've made, allow me to provide a bit of a buffering preface: being in a job you're not happy with can take a genuine toll. It can bring your spirits down and leave you feeling frustrated. Or bruise your ego and make your ulcer rage. No doubt we all deserve satisfying, rewarding employment.

In fact, we all deserve employment. Period.

So for those of you who are job seeking at present, this can seem like a terribly lonely and difficult time. I hope you will keep in mind that the new year approaches and the job market will be back in full swing within a few short weeks. Also, don't stop trying over the next few days. I was once hired for a full-time job that had a starting date at exactly this timeframe.

And for those readers who have jobs but who are discontented: since it is that part of the year to consider the positives rather than harp on the negatives, I'd like to suggest a brief, renewing period of appreciation for all the *good* things your current job offers. After all, even awful employment provides a paycheque of some sort and puts at least a few of your skills to use.

So what are some of the more common things to be thankful for during this festive season in terms of the work you already have?

- The chance to interact with other people and exchange ideas, work in teams, or else simply have a conversation with another human being
- The opportunity to take advantage of your employer's resources for upgrading your skills, experience and knowledge
- An increased sense of self-worth that can come with being gainfully employed
- The possibility of rising through the ranks, making more money, supervising at higher and higher levels, and of learning all sorts of useful stuff along the way
- A place to go outside of your home and feel like you're part of the larger world, even if (like

me) much of what you do is home-based.

And if nothing else, then

- Paid holiday days to get away from the grind
- The option of looking for work while still employed and earning an income

In summary, if you are looking for employment right now without having a job already, may the season sustain you and bring you much luck in the near future. For all my readers, right now I'd simply like to wish you a wonderful holiday period and some time for gratitude no matter where you can find it.