

Don't die with your music in you:

If we asked ourselves honestly, do we really enjoy what we do at work? Perhaps some of you might answer 'mostly' or 'sometimes' or maybe some might say 'no, not at all'! But in truth, shouldn't we all really love what we do, shouldn't we be excited continually, shouldn't we be stretched and above all be happy - because after all we spend most of our lives in some form of employment.

There was an expression I heard a colleague use the other day, which was 'Don't die with your music in you'. In other words, what is the point of spending your days in a role that you may not fully enjoy, or one that does not allow you to contribute fully in the way you would like, denying you your chance to fulfil your true full potential.

Part of understanding this whole area, is getting to the root of what we really have to offer in our current daily jobs, and how we truly bring benefit to the business we work in. I often use an egg analogy here when I am having coaching discussions with individuals about identifying their core essential values- i.e. what they really bring to the table. I might ask them to identify what their proposition is, or what is at the heart of how they bring value to their employer.

Most of what they initially talk about fits in the outer layer or white of the egg, and they often find it hard to drill down into their real essence. Typically they would find it easier to talk about qualitative aspects or features of their behaviour i.e. good at building customer relationships, great strategic skills, strong leadership qualities, category management expertise, or experienced in complex change projects, all by way of example. So what? , I say. How do you really help the business, how could you help any business? What would not happen if you we're not there? This is actually a sobering question to ask yourself, you should try it as a reality check: If you disappeared off the scene, would the business really truly suffer? What would it lack and would it really honestly matter? Try it; you may not like the answers!

Getting to the root of understanding your 'Yolk' is also key for new job interviews, when faced with the question 'what can you do for us?' or 'why should we hire you?.'

There are two mental steps here. Firstly, you need to drill down and develop this core proposition for yourself. When you have started to fill in the yolk with something that is at the heart of what you do for a business and something that clearly brings benefits, you then need to ask yourself if it's what you really want to do long term, and if it's honestly how you want to spend your precious time. If you are in any doubt about the responses, perhaps it's time to think about making changes to your working life.

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(Glenn Steward is a professional business coach and Director of The Trading Edge Co. and author of the Ebook 16 Rules for Jobseekers)