

A Special Character-Wise Report

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Loyalty vs Mobility



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Executive Summary

My father worked in the same company for 33 years before he retired. In today's context, such a scenario is rare because, the workforce is now generally more mobile. Yet, does "mobility" mean that employees today need no longer be loyal? Is loyalty still in fashion?

In this special *Character-Wise Report*, you will discover four checkpoints to guide you in walking the tightrope of loyalty and mobility. Loyalty is still a tried and tested trait which many organizations look for (be honest, if you were the boss, wouldn't you desire a loyal employee?) but does that mean we stay on for the sake of staying on? When does it become right for someone to "move on" for the sake of being progressive and capitalizing on opportunities for growth?

Beyond this article, the topic of loyalty and authority is covered extensively in a two-day workshop for leaders and executives called *Character-Wise Leadership*. Check it out at: <http://www.goodmonday.com/leadership.html>

Checkpoint #1: RESOLVE PEOPLE CONFLICT

Often, employees leave not because of the company's products but because of the company's *people*. If the reason for mobility is due to people conflict, then you need to ask yourself a really hard question: ***What guarantee is there that such a conflict will not surface in my next job?***

Tip for Balanced Success: No matter where you go – one thing is for certain – there will always be people to work with! There is no exemption from "rubbing shoulders" and "sharpening iron" when it comes to being successful in the workplace. Each work environment affords you with the opportunity to build relationships which you can leverage on for later situations. For example, I had to work hard as a product engineer and learn how to manage the conflicts there first before I was ready for my product marketing job. In other words, when I move on to another responsibility, I must have already experienced a significant level of success as a person who is able to resolve conflicts.

Capable leaders are those who have learnt how to deal with difficult people. In this world, there are two types of leaders – those who know how to resolve difficult people situations and those who themselves are difficult. *Choose the right attitude.*

Checkpoint #2: REINFORCE MY LONG-TERM VISION

Changing jobs is not an ad hoc activity that is dependent on my mood for the month! Before one can deal with the daily demands and challenges of the job, there is a need to take a step back and yourself the next hard question: ***What is my long-term career vision?***

Tip for Balanced Success: Every responsibility you are engaged in ought to be a stepping stone towards a consistent career vision. Although my father started off as a clerk, he retired as a branch manager. Each promotion gave him the opportunity to demonstrate a *consistent attitude* towards a long-term vision of providing rock-solid administrative support to the company sales team. Do not look at your work life as a series of jobs, rather reorder your perspective to look at your work life as a *series of related responsibilities*.

Never change jobs because you are aiming to escape given responsibilities.

- Am I a person of responsibility or someone who gives excuses?
- Am I a person of accountability or someone who is too proud to answer to authority?
- Am I a person of excellence or someone who does just enough to get by?
- Am I a person of purpose or someone who is just busy?

Checkpoint #3: REINVEST IN MY STRENGTH

Here's my definition of work stress:

Stress is the outcome of doing what others expect from a position of weakness.

You may be doing what is right but it may be what is weak. Most people are stuck in the wrong job because they do not spend enough time to *discover their fit of strength*.

There are generally five areas of skill strength that one can have:

1. Organizational Strength – operational, administrative and planning skills.
2. Creative Strength – expressive, media creation and artistic skills.
3. Influencing Strength – communication, negotiation and leadership skills.
4. Research Strength – analyzing, understanding, interpreting and writing skills.
5. Execution Strength – hands-on activities, project delivery and task-orientation.

Tip for Balanced Success: Begin to take responsibility for yourself because no one knows you better than yourself. Do not make the mistake of trying to be someone else – you have a special set of skills that no one else can deliver. Hence, it is to your advantage to discover your area of strength as early on as possible so that you do not end up following the stressful expectations of others. It is difficult to say “No” to others if you do not have a stronger “Yes” within.

Checkpoint #4: RECONNECT WITH WISE COUNSEL

The wise way to authentic success is to seek out those who have gone before and learn from their counsel. The shortest path to success can be taken by avoiding the mistakes of those who have travelled ahead of you.

Do not be wise in your own eyes. Have the humility to listen to those who are more experienced.

Tip for Balanced Success: When presented with the opportunity for mobility, there are many factors to consider other than just monetary rewards. Success is not a one-size-fit-all type of proposition. Seek out wise counsel from those who are in your industry and grant them permission to ask you the hard questions. Avoid those who tell you what you want to hear! To me, good advice is what you don't like to hear but you know it is true (and it is good for you – in the long run). We usually have character blindspots which require third-party validation.

Life is too short for you to venture alone. It is an “add-venture” i.e. be on the lookout to *add* a team of wise friends who cares more for your character than your career. Think about it.

For a 2-day training which focuses on how you can craft out your life purpose, check out:

<http://www.goodmonday.com/leadership.html>