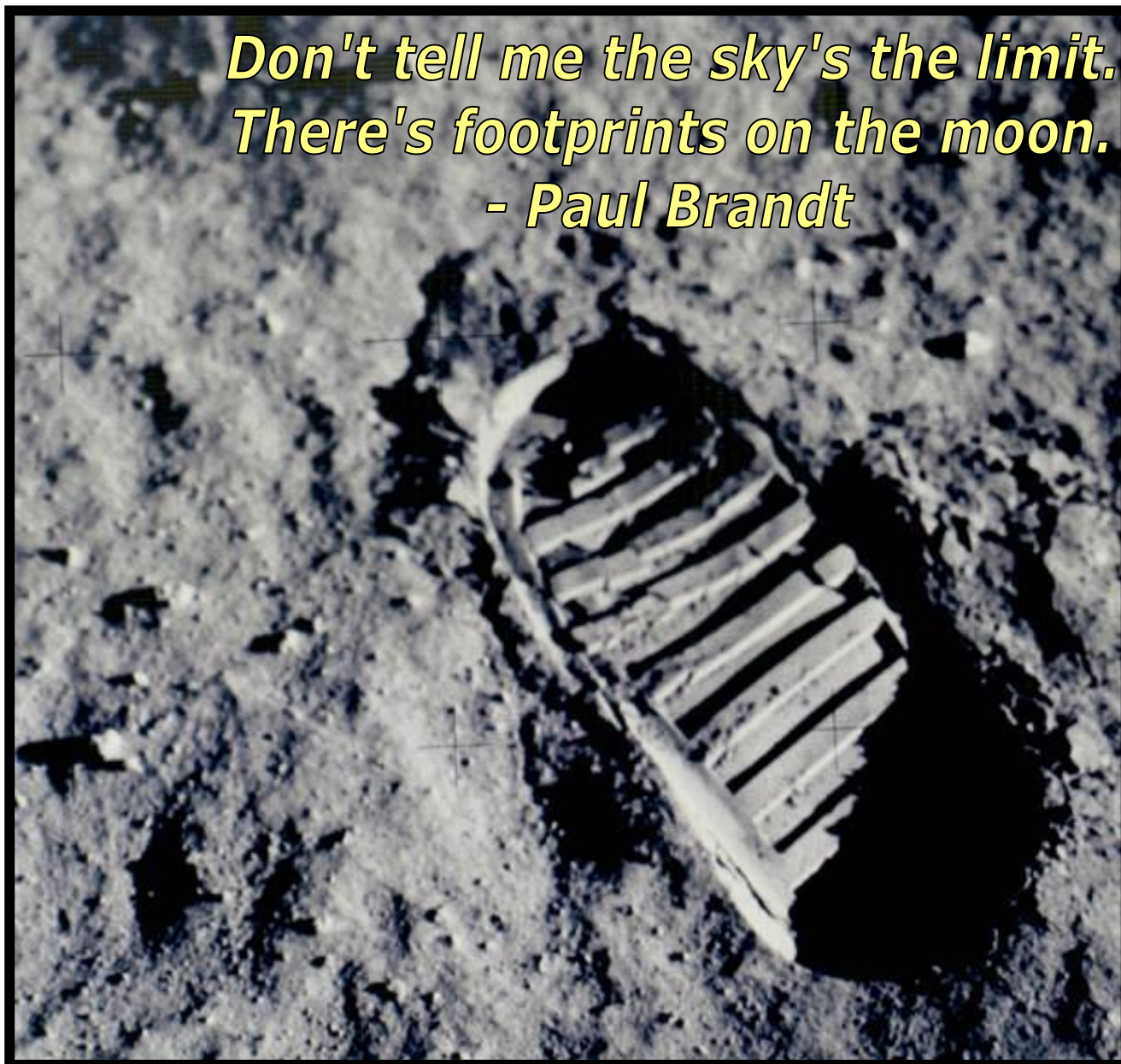


Taking The First Step

*Don't tell me the sky's the limit.
There's footprints on the moon.
- Paul Brandt*



Dialogues from The Job Search Boot Camp Show



Taking The First Step

Career Experts, Angela Loëb and Jay Markunas, discuss today's market, as well as various useful resources and techniques necessary for taking the first step in finding work you love.



JAY In a down economy, many people are just happy to have a job. But, with the job market stabilizing, and in a stable economy, people want more than just a 9 to 5 job. We spend well over 60% of our day doing work related activities – working, commuting, getting ready for work, etc. We should all ENJOY our work. Unfortunately, that's not the case for a lot of people.

I think Lilly Tomlin said it best: *"The trouble with the Rat Race is even if you win, you're still a rat."*

In 2008, 35% of employees said they were unsatisfied in their jobs, and approximately 65% admitted to passively or actively looking for a new job. The numbers are even higher now!

A recent survey said that 55% of employees are unsatisfied in their jobs. In fact, 22% don't expect to be in their current job in a year.

When I looked up the question, "How Many People Hate Their Job?" on WikiAnswer.com, I got back "Only the ones who did not pursue their dreams."



ANGELA That's a pretty profound answer to what seems to be a simple question, Jay. Naturally, I think it's a worthy goal to get paid for living your dreams. I definitely believe in it and know it is possible. However, I do want to challenge the notion that you have to make a living out of pursuing your dreams right off the bat. I want to challenge people to move forward in finding ways to express their passion even when they don't have all the answers to what a career entailing their passion could look like yet.

One of my clients and I talked about this very thing recently. She loves being with dogs all day, but living her dream to be a dog groomer won't make her the money she wants and needs to maintain the life style she enjoys. We agreed that perhaps if she had a strong enough conviction to do what she loves, she might figure out a way to own a business as a dog groomer or a chain of dog groomer stores, and then maybe she'd rise to the level of income she desires. But that's

all perhaps, maybe and might. The point is this... she needs to answer the big question: "Is it enough for me to simply embrace *and enjoy* my current job or career while I volunteer to help out at the dog shelter every Saturday, or do I want more?"

Many people hate their jobs because they haven't figured out a way to incorporate what they love into their lives. They don't feel whole because they spend so much of their time doing work that doesn't fulfill them. People forget that they can pursue their dreams in other ways. It's great if you can make a living doing what you love, but if you choose not to or can't quite do it yet, try to find other ways to incorporate doing what you love into your life immediately.

JAY Yes, but let's step back a little. Many come to a point in life where they say: "I don't know what I want to do." There's a great book by Julie Jensen called I Don't Know What I Want, But I Know It's Not This. She claims that the first step is identifying one's passions.

ANGELA Yes, I agree. We need to get clear first, and there are a lot of great books about this out there. One that readily comes to mind is Dick Richards' Is Your Genius At Work? which provides great exercises to help identify passions. However, Richards takes it one more step beyond simply identifying your passions. He thinks, and I agree, that it's important to recognize your unique genius and use it to detect your purpose on the planet. What are you here to do? Of course, this is at the heart of the work you and I do with people, Jay. It's about getting clarity, getting focused, making strategies and moving forward.

JAY Exactly! Okay, so, as you know, I'm a big believer in using career assessments to get clear. What do you think of assessments, and which ones have you recommended or used?

ANGELA The ones that I know best are DISC, eCareerFit, Personalisys and Myers Briggs Type Indicator. I think these are excellent tools to help reinforce what you probably already know about yourself. When you're young, before your talents haven't been tested or exercised out there in the world, you might be clueless, so taking an assessment will help. After you've been out there in the workplace for

awhile, you have a better chance of knowing what it is that you like and dislike – what you’re good at and what you’re not good at. But, even then, you might still need some directional help. That’s where assessments can come in handy.

JAY One I like very much is called the DISC - Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientious (or Conforming). I’ve worked with clients who just needed to take the assessment to get them in the career they love. I worked with one person who was an IT guy, and he later became an insurance guy. He took the DISC, and it showed nursing as a potential career. He put a plan together, and made the leap to nursing. I see him every once in awhile, and he is happier than I’ve ever seen him before. He now loves his career. He’s happy. His wife is happy, and his life is wonderful.

Another one I recommend is from Now Discover Your Strengths or now called “Strengths finder 2.0” – it tells the strengths that you should leverage. For example, I am high in Ideation – Generating, Developing, and Communicating ideas.

I always recommend clients take two different assessments so they can see a better cross-section of options, as well as notice patterns or root connections that come up.

ANGELA Great advice! I also caution people to think about assessments as one of the many kinds of tools in the process of career assessing & shifting. Assessments don’t *decide* what you should do... they give you clues, and they tell you *how* you will do whatever you choose. They help you see your natural tendencies. The assessment trap you can be tempted to fall into – and I especially find this to be the case with students – is that you see you have an aptitude for engineering, so you become an engineer, and 15 years later you’re deciding that you really never liked being an engineer. And now what next? You can take another assessment, which will very likely tell you that you should be an engineer, but what else? Your *passion* about what you want to do is critical and needs to come into play somewhere. So, going through a couple of assessment to learn about your traits are great to use *in addition to* the other methods. What about ways to find the work you love without having assessments, Jay?

JAY Here's one thing I recommend. Play the \$3 million game. It's very simple, and it

goes like this: If you had \$3 million in the bank, but to access it you had to have a 40-hour per week job. What would that job be?

So, what am I getting at here? If MONEY weren't an object, what would you do that puts a smile on your face?

ANGELA I love that question. I once had a career coach walk me through a similar exercise. First, she said to list the things I would do when I win the lottery. Then she had me change that phrase “when I win the lottery” to “my dreams are.” It was very powerful because there I was... looking at a list of some mighty cool stuff. “Champagne wishes and caviar dreams!” What if I could achieve those things? What would it take? It opened all sorts of doors in my mind.

JAY Another low-fidelity way to determine your "purpose" is to determine your personal values.

For example, do you prefer Independence and Autonomy where you do things on your own time in your own way? Do you prefer Power where you control the situation around? Do you prefer Wealth?

Make a list of 10 personal values, and then rank them in order of 1 - 10. Use that as a good guide when looking for a job you love. If the job meets the top values, then it's worth exploring further.

Some other examples that come to mind are: Excellence, Fairness, Faith, Service, Friendship, Challenge, Lifestyle – being holistic and unifying in all parts of life such as career, family, health and other interests.

ANGELA Here are some others that I like because they just happen to be some of mine! Integrity, Compassion, Family, Harmony. You can Google “personal values” and come up with hundreds of options.

A great book addressing this is [7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) by Stephen Covey. Covey talks about uncovering your personal values and steps you though how to define your mission and purpose. He focuses mostly on career and work, but he also makes sure to bring in the other pieces of your life as well. Excellent stuff!

JAY Good point! Another twist on making the values list is to rank your top 10. To really challenge yourself ask yourself this... if that #1 value isn't met, but the other 9 are, is that a value you are willing to give on? Many times you'll find that your #1 value is non-negotiable.

One other thing you might want to consider in finding clues to your passions is this ... what hobbies or activities do you like most? What career do your closest friends work in? What have people told you that you should be?

Take that with a grain of salt sometimes. My mom said I should be a lawyer because I argued so much! LOL!

ANGELA How about volunteering? What types of volunteer activities do you enjoy? That could be anything from designing your church's website to working with disabled children or the elderly. How could you leverage that into a career? If you don't volunteer, think about this... if you don't find satisfaction in your job but you aren't willing to make the leap into something you love yet, ask yourself how you can volunteer to do something you enjoy. I met a woman a few years ago who had volunteered for a child advocacy non-profit program while working as a professional architect. She was shy but had such a great passion for working with the kids that she eventually overcame her shyness and made the leap to work for that program full time. Now she is their executive director and has a very rewarding job she loves.

JAY Also consider what you normally get praised for... at work, home, church, socially. Build on the things that you do well. You may not even realize you are as good as you are until someone praises you.

I was always concerned about speaking in front of people. I didn't like my voice, I didn't like how I looked, I was afraid I might say a curse word! - No really! When I was younger, I would refuse to lead the prayers because I might accidentally spit out a curse word! BUT, what happened was that I got in front of people and started speaking. In fact, now the bigger the crowd, the better. I now have a goal to speak in front of 15,000 people!

ANGELA You will, my friend – I just know it! Let me add that you should also put things on the list that you are NOT doing professionally but would like to be doing.

Have you even considered how those things can earn you an income?

JAY Yes, and I'm glad you brought up MONEY. I caution people to make money the LAST question they ask themselves.

Dan Miller, another author – besides you, Angela – that I admire, tells a story of a man who loved reading old history books. He could never figure out a way to make money reading history books. With limited thinking he couldn't. Once he opened up to possibilities and took out the "money filter," he was able to find a way. He now reads history books in a recording studio for audiobooks! Had he stuck to the limited thinking, he would have never been able to do that!

ANGELA You know this reminds me of one more area that I would like to address... and that is FEAR.

JAY Yes, fear has been huge because of the way our work model has changed in today's market and, really, over the last 20 years. We know that job security is no longer a given.

But life can – and should – be SWEET. Life is just too short to be in a career you hate. When I meet people who seem to be stuck in fear I like to remind them of that old saying "Whether you think you can or you can't, you're right!"

ANGELA That's right on the mark! I think it was Henry Ford who said that – he would certainly know! My outlook is based on many years of experience and the observation that people can do almost anything they want if... a) they want it passionately enough, and if... b) they have the right tools and/or strategies. Yes, you do have to consider whether or not the market will accept you in the new role, but in the end, *you* will have to determine if you can and want to make the shift or not.

JAY Yes, but it takes a FIRST STEP to move forward – to make the shift. You can think, reflect and analyze all you want, but you have to actually take that first step in order to find the work you love.

ANGELA Absolutely! Take action. Get creative and do something different. They say that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again while expecting to get different results. If fear is making you do the same thing over and over again because you're afraid of change, well guess what? It's insane to be stuck in fear! Remember what they taught us in physics class? The universe is always in constant motion anyway, so you might as well decide that you're moving *with* it. Wake up, participate consciously, and you'll soon see that your fear is lessening because you'll see just how much choice you have over your situation.

JAY So, true. It's about acknowledging your power to choose and then taking action. I've been through the career change process. And I know you have too, Angela. We personally know how important it is and what it takes to visualize the "right career" and start making baby steps.

It's challenging work to find the work you love, but oh how sweet it is to live a life like the one Confucius refers to in my favorite quote, "Find the work you love, and you'll never work a day in your life!"

About Angela Loëb & Jay Markunas:

Angela Loëb is a Published Author, Speaker, and Career Consultant (more at <http://insyncresources.com>).

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Together, they inform, inspire and engage audiences with their unique approach of balancing the positive and the practical.

For articles and online courses, go to www.GreatOccupations.com. For recordings of the Job Search Boot Camp Show (2009-2011), go to <http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=325350361>.

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