

Members Quarterly

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President's Message

Don't Curb Your Enthusiasm

Maintain your strongest trait



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When it comes to hiring a new employee, I believe that experience means a great deal. Having someone on board who can take on an assignment without a lot of training is a great asset to any organization. Educational qualifications can also mean that an employee has both a range of acquired skills and the capacity for growth. That makes me smile. But honestly, nothing can really beat enthusiasm as the trait I admire most in a new hire. After I hire them, I advise them not to curb their enthusiasm.

I'm not referring to the fake, contrived or artificially pumped-up enthusiasm, the kind you see at a high school basketball rally. That's not real enthusiasm or even energy when you see it in the workplace it's more like hot air. I am talking about that drive that's inside us that not only gets us out of bed in the morning but keeps us going all day.

That type of enthusiasm is innate but it also must be nurtured. You can see raw enthusiasm in children or new recruits. They start off with a joy of the game or their work and if they are coached and mentored, they maintain that enthusiasm all of their lives. If we all start off with enthusiasm, how do we keep it as that joy fades from other people's faces or the daily grind just begins to wear us down?

In my view there are three ways to maintain enthusiasm, especially at work. The first way is to pick something as your career that you actually like and that you are passionate about. Don't choose a career for the money, prestige or the benefits package. Choose a job that you really care about and you have a shot at staying enthusiastic for a long time.

Secondly, put up barriers (real or artificial) between you and the nattering nabobs of negativity (as Spiro Agnew once called the media) which exist among your family, friends and coworkers. If you were a passionate bird watcher, you wouldn't spend a lot of time with people who put you down because of your love of birds or call you dumb because you enjoy watching them. So why do we put up with the critics and naysayers at work?

Thirdly, find your own enthusiasm energy sources that you can plug into whenever you feel your passion is waning. Some of these people are at work and others are in your community. There are always some of them online, 24 hours a day. You need people as passionate as you to maintain your enthusiasm. You can always repay them by doing the same in return.

Don't ever curb your enthusiasm and don't let anyone else curb it either.