

Passion and perseverance: the secret of success

“Passion begins with intrinsically enjoying what you do”

Angela Duckworth

It is easy to become overwhelmed with the jumble of urgent tasks, overloaded email inboxes and non-stop phone calls in our daily lives. That constant feeling of not achieving enough, coupled with the cultural belief that leadership is stressful - that you have to be under constant pressure - is a real time bomb for your wellbeing.

We live in a culture that does not take kindly to us taking time to stop, reflect and take care of ourselves. However, stopping is essential to be able to prioritise, to find our best version of ourselves and create a life according to our needs.

This conflict, between what we need and what we do or what happens, wreaks havoc on our brains. In the throes of dissatisfaction, we cannot choose how we want to react because our biological inheritance is to let fear respond for us, even if this is totally contrary to our interests, as we have seen previously.

So what is the solution? Sometimes this discomfort can be prevented by identifying some of our "personal" tendencies and trying to change our habits. For example, we are often not clear about what we want for ourselves and end up fulfilling other people's expectations; sometimes we simply don't know how to say NO because we are afraid of disappointing or missing out on something. Striving for unnecessary perfection, a lack of planning, excessively long meetings or allowing diversions to interrupt our plans: All of these "leaks" of time and energy mean we are working against our own performance and, what is worse, not caring for ourselves.

It is not surprising then that, in these circumstances, many people feel exhausted and carry this state of dissatisfaction into their leisure time and family relationships.

Less than 40% of people surveyed feel satisfied with their job. So what can we do when changing jobs is not an option? A few years ago, two researchers, Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane Dutton, developed a methodology for "turning

the job you have into the job you want"; something they called **Jobcrafting**.

The aim is to personalise your work, as far as possible, so you exert a greater sense of control. In other words, to shape your work so that it suits you better. To do this, you need to take a step back, get out of the routine and be open to creativity.

The methodology is implemented as follows (if you feel like giving it a try: get some coloured post-its, a large piece of cardboard, a pen and be willing to spend a couple of hours on it):

First, **describe every task you do at work**. Write each one on a post it note; use bigger post-its for tasks that take up more time. Choose blue post-its (or any other colour you prefer) for ones you don't like at all and yellow post-its for ones you love. Reflect on the investment of time spent on each task.

Now **write down your values, strengths** (we have already done some exercises that can help you here) **and passions**: What do you like to do? What gives you energy?

Consider **things you can change**: are there tasks you don't like at all and that you could delegate or swap with a colleague who might be interested in doing them? Do you spend too much time on one task that is not a priority in your job? If so, could you reduce that time by automating or simplifying the task or doing it in some other way? Have you always spent the same amount of time on each task or has it changed since you started working? Are there any new tasks that you could include that you don't do now but that you think would sustain you?

See how you can **connect your values, strengths and passions with the tasks you do and your work in general**. On the same post-it where you have written a task, write down at the bottom how it would connect with a passion, strength or value you have. Not all the tasks have to match. For example, if you love making new relationships and your tasks include meeting customers, you could add the passion of meeting new people. Another example might be: you have to drive to work and you don't like it at all. If one of your passions is music, you can take advantage of your trips to listen to your favourite songs.

Finally, **stick the tasks on the cardboard, grouping them by general roles or purposes**. For example, all tasks with a positive impact on the lives of people looking for jobs.