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4 Signs You Need To Find A New Job Or Start A New Business

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By Dianna Booher

“They dangled more money in front of me, so I accepted their offer. It was a huge raise.” Janelle, a corporate attorney, looked at me wistfully as she recounted her career journey. “But it didn’t take me long to realize the move was a huge mistake.”

“Oh, yeah?” I probed.

“Actually only about three months into the job.”

“How did you know?”

“I looked at my watch one day.”

Puzzled, I lifted my eyebrows at her for an explanation.

She obliged. “Well, at my old job, the pace was frantic. Our team of attorneys supported the entire organization. Things were always popping. We were moving from one call to the next, to the next. To a high-stakes negotiation. To filing a brief. Back to the boardroom for a discussion. I’d glance at my watch and think, *‘Oh my gosh, it’s already three o’clock!’* . . . Then one day over at the new job, I looked at my watch and thought, *‘Hmmm. It’s only three o’clock.’*



Here are the signs to notice. ICLIPART

“That’s when I became aware of how much I missed the old job, the pace, the excitement.”

Deciding to Find a New Job or Start a Business: When and Why

Are You Bored?

Granted, every day can’t be dancing with the stars or hitting a hole in one. Most jobs have their downsides: coordinating schedules, handling email, or keeping demanding people happy. But when the downsides overpower the pleasant parts of a job, you wake up one morning and realize the scales have tipped. You’re bored. Instead, of hating to shut down and go to bed, you dread to get up and go to work.

Sure, you may enjoy the people around you, the physical environment, or the culture. But you discover the work no longer intrigues you, fulfills you, or gives you joy. You start to ask yourself questions: Is it too late to make a career change? How important is the money compared to my personal fulfillment? Or maybe even how long until retirement?

Do Your Eyes Light Up About Other Projects?

You may resign yourself to staying in a job that’s not your “dream job,” but that “makes sense” for the time being. Until a spouse finds a better job. Until the kids get out of college. Until the economy improves. Until the industry pulls out of the doldrums.

But note where your passion lies. Do you get excited when talking about a favorite hobby? Your body easily reflects the difference between boredom and bustle.

Todd, a family friend, behaved as if he were a split personality. When talking about his current job as project manager for an event-planning company, he spoke in a monotone, used few gestures, and wore a blank expression. But when the topic changed to marathons, his entire persona changed. He grew animated, gestured excitedly as he talked, added voice inflection, straightened his posture,

and laughed heartily. Conversation flowed easily—about his future plans to start his own fitness business “one day.”

Consider what your own body language is saying to you about what you’re feeling.

Are You Aligned with Those Around You?

Does it seem like your goals and perspectives align less often with the organization’s goals and perspectives? They’re into short-term profit-taking, and you think it’s wiser to invest for the long term? They want to hire top talent at a premium salary, who can jump in and go to work from day one to bring in new business. You expect to develop talent internally. They love partnering with outside consultants on most technical projects. You consider inhouse expertise superior.

Whatever the differences, you feel as those you’re perched on two skis with your feet spreading farther and farther apart as you head downhill.

Are You the Last Person Chosen?

Do you remember those pick-up baseball games in the neighborhood? Being the last person chosen when the two team captains pick their players never feels like fun. On the job, the ritual happens like this:

- The “high-potentials” get nominated for special leadership training.
- Certain performers get nominated by their managers for special awards.
- Special teams get selected for advisory groups on key projects.

It’s not that you really want to be chosen because your workload is already overwhelming. But it feels like an offense to be overlooked. Just consider it one more sign that others can see your lack of passion for the job.

Instead of stifling yourself in a job you dislike, take your emotional temperature, align your work with your interests and perspectives, and decide to go for that dream job.

Need more nudging? Four strong signals that you’re ready for a new challenge!

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