

Parking Benefits and Falling in Love with Your Job

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

As unfortunate as it is, most working people seem to fall in love with themselves instead of falling in love with their job, clients, customers, and bosses. In this one fact these people have severely crippled themselves. Your entire career will change when you conceive of your career not as benefiting you alone, but as enhancing the lives of your clients, customers, and bosses.

No one hires you because they want you to make a lot of money. No one hires you because they want you to feel important. No one hires you because they are concerned about your welfare more than their own. Instead, you are hired—and will always be hired—based on your ability to solve other people's problems and provide a service. The more you understand this simple concept, the more your career and life will begin to change for the better.

A few years ago, I went to dinner with my wife and an attorney she had placed at a major U.S. law firm. The attorney had graduated from an Ivy League law school a few years ago, and was making something like \$200,000 a year. One Friday night he called my wife and asked to meet with her to discuss his career over dinner. Since I started my career as a legal recruiter, my wife brought me along to the meeting.

We met at a very nice restaurant where the meal was going to take about two hours. I generally enjoy these sorts of meetings because it gives me a chance to offer advice to attorneys and listen to their concerns. Unlike most recruiters, at meetings like this I generally try to talk attorneys into staying at their law firms because often the concerns they have are trivial. This was again the case.

After a few pleasantries and ordering appetizers, my wife asked the attorney how things were going at his current law firm. The economy was very bad at the time and the law firm had been aggressively laying off associates and other staff. Given that this attorney had such stellar credentials, I doubted that he would be laid off—but I waited for the story to develop.

The attorney sighed and stated that things were horrible at the law firm. The work was good and there was plenty of it. He liked the people he was working for very much. However, he said he was a graduate of a top law school and yet, as a cost-saving measure, the firm had recently started having its attorneys park at a cheaper parking garage across the street from the law firm's office. This required an additional two minutes of walking to get to the elevator bay in the law firm's building.

The law firm was still paying for the attorneys' parking. They just were not paying for premium spots in the parking lot inside the building.

"I hear they are only saving \$60 a month making us park there!" the attorney said. "It is outrageous and it is clear to me that this is a law firm that does not respect its attorneys."

The attorney was obviously upset about this. In fact, he seemed to be downright livid. Not paying for premium parking was an insult to his pedigree and him personally. It was clear he was going to have to leave.

Against my better judgment, I decided to challenge him.

"The firm has around 300 people in the office," I said. "That means they are saving \$18,000 a month, or \$216,000 a year. Maybe they are making everyone park there in order to save your job. That's about what you make, right?"

My wife kicked me under the table. It was clear my comments were not going to endear me to this attorney. I decided I had better keep quiet the rest of the dinner—and I did for the most part.

It was difficult keeping quiet, however. The majority of the conversation came back to this stupid parking issue. It seemed the attorney actually might leave his job over this minor inconvenience.

While this story sounds pretty outrageous, I have seen this sort of thing many times. I have seen it with attorneys, of course, and with just about every possible type of employee out there. Most of the people I have discussed these complaints with refer to it as a "sense of entitlement." I agree that is part of the problem; however, I believe the real issue is not a sense of entitlement. It is more serious. It is a lack of connection with the work and the fact that these people are not in love with their work, their clients, or their bosses. Instead, they are in love with their own egos.

When two people are falling in love, they are focused on the other person and his or her strengths. They are focused on what is good about the person, what is special and unique, overlooking any faults. They want to help the other person in any way they can. They might even die for the other person. No matter what, they are always very concerned with how the other person is doing. They will ponder the other person throughout the day and think of ways to strengthen the relationship.

Your relationship with your job and work should be one of love. You should treat your work the way you would a new boyfriend or girlfriend. Then communicate that love in your interviews, in your day-to-day work, and throughout every aspect of your job.

Most people, when they are interviewing, think "What do I have to say to get hired?"

Most people, when they are trying to get a raise, think "What do I have to say to get a raise?"

Instead of thinking this way, you should instead be saying, "What benefit do I have to show I can create? How can I give more value?"

This is a completely different way of thinking about your job and interviewing, and it is the sort of thinking that can change your life. When you think this way, you are creating a mission for your career. A mission brings purpose and meaning to your work. It is no longer just a job. It is far more important than that. And it can revolutionize the success you find in your career. This is what it means to fall in love with your career.

I want you to get more raises, get more job offers, get more prominence, make more money, and have a more fulfilling life.

You will never have any of this until you fall in love with your job, your clients, your customers, and bosses. You need to love what you do and who you do it for.

See yourself as someone who creates value and contributes to the betterment of your company, your clients, your customers, and your bosses. Realize your importance in everything you do and be a cheerleader for your job.

I watch true-life detective investigative shows on television all the time—shows like *Cold Case Files*, *Forensic Files*, and *The Investigators*. One of the most amazing things about these shows is that the families of the murder suspects are always in court supporting the person and then trying to get them out of jail. In the substantial majority of these shows the family is right there with the murderer all through the trial, and even after the conviction, the family still supports the person.

Most people instinctively support those they love—even irrespective of logic. It may not make a lot of sense, but it is true. You should apply this to your job: fall in love with your job and what you do with a profound level of blind faith. This will pay massive rewards.

One of the more inspiring stories to me is that of a recruiter I once hired who came directly from a law firm. During the interview, the recruiter asked tons of difficult questions before agreeing to take the job. Later, the recruiter told me that she had asked so many difficult questions because she was deciding whether or not this was something she wanted to do for the rest of her life.

When the recruiter started with our company, she said to me, "You are obviously very successful at this. I am just going to do whatever you tell me to do in this job and see what happens."

The recruiter ended up being incredibly successful at the job and still is. The recruiter fell in love with the work and did not get distracted. Most people get distracted. They start something and decide they do not like it and try another type of job. Many people move through jobs their entire careers—just like many people move through a series of relationships with superficial connections most of their lives. If you are going to succeed at love, at work, at anything—you need to fall in love with it and commit.

If you have a purpose, then you can move forward without any hesitation. You will get a level of impact and depth that most people never achieve.

Almost no company, boss, customer, or client wants to be average. When people realize that you are in love with your work, that you have depth and are not content with giving them an average performance, getting them an average result, and providing an average amount of service, everything will begin to change for you.

Your employers and potential employers need to realize that you do not want them to be average. You want to take them farther and give them greater benefits and yield. As soon as people realize this you will get more job offers, earn more raises, and experience great improvement in your career.

If you are obsessed with finding ways you can bring the people you work for more benefit and empathize with them, question and look for ways you can bring them this value, you will go farther than you ever believed you could.

Falling in love with your job and finding out what people want is very simple on the surface—but it can be very difficult to truly understand. When I counsel job seekers and others, the advice I give often makes them a little bit angry. I tell them, do not worry about yourself. Do not worry about parking benefits. Do not worry about anything but being a champion for what would be in the best interest of your company, profession, clients, and customers.

Take yourself out of the equation and focus, instead, on the work you do. Find out how you can provide greater benefit. Your purpose is to give your clients, customers, and others a greater outcome in their lives. You need to transform yourself and the way you are doing things. Subordinate what you want for yourself and, instead, bring your focus to others. Make this your mission.

A good proportion of people out there are not happy with what they are doing. They do not feel fulfilled in their jobs and instead they focus on trivial things. They lack passion and purpose. They do not feel a connection or love with their work. You can only get this—and so much more—when you fall in love with what you are doing and put the needs of others first.

THE LESSON

You must find a job about which you are passionate, perform it with dedication, and make sure this dedication is visible to those around you. When you devote yourself to a job that you love, you open the doors for greater happiness and fulfillment in your career and life. Employers and colleagues notice those who demonstrate passion for their jobs; they naturally gravitate towards these types of people, and avoid those who take a more perfunctory approach to their work.

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