

## **Life in the Passion Zone**

**by Michael Fitzsimons, Nigel Beckford and Cassandra Gaisford**

### **Part One**

#### **Why write a book about Kiwi passion?**

A couple of years ago, Nigel and I were on assignment in Central Otago, writing about worthy things like industry training and careers and the changing education landscape. We are directors of a Wellington communications company and we do a lot of communications work in the social policy and education field, including careers. We work regularly with Career Services and have interviewed many experts and practitioners on career planning.

Any way, one night we ended up in an irresistible Queenstown bar with an open fire and a pinot noir in hand, the kind of place where no doubt many great dreams are born and die.

Undaunted we got to dreaming about doing our own project, unfettered by client expectations. We wanted it to be a positive, uplifting experience. We thought how interesting it would be to write a book about passionate New Zealanders, to track down a selection of New Zealand's most passionate people from all walks of life, interview them and learn from them what passion is all about and what effect it has on their lives.

Passion is such an in-vogue word. It's easily trivialised. It's used to sell cars and ice-cream and after shave. The All Blacks are said to be out-passioned as if it could be turned on and off like a tap. But it seemed to us that Hegel was talking about something more than a fad or a fleeting enthusiasm. And so too was Plato when he wrote:

*"We are fired into life with a madness that comes from the Gods and which would have us believe that we could have a great love, perpetuate our own seed and contemplate the divine."*

Plato is making some big claims here. We hoped our book would shed some light on what he was talking about, on what passion really is.

There's another reason why we wanted to write this book. In 1976 Gordon McLauchlan wrote a landmark book, *The Passionless People*, in which he described New Zealanders as a "narrow, puritan, emotionally-crippled people. There is no passion," wrote McLauchlan, "to give us a dream of the good life, a vision of love and beauty, a sense of a variety of lifestyles, of alternative viewpoints and philosophies through which we may fulfill ourselves in different ways."

He wrote of the confused passionless plight of the Kiwi: *“If he feels a passion coming on, he goes and paints a roof, plants some potatoes, joins another organisation, forms a committee of his own and has a drink or pops a pill.”*

So this was another spark that got the project going. The legacy of The Passionless People lives on but surely it could not hold true in this new millennium. Our society has changed dramatically in so many ways. We’re a diverse people, with multi-coloured dreams and viewpoints and philosophies and lifestyles. New Zealand’s creative industries are flourishing. We are embracing the Knowledge Society – flair and passion and originality are success indicators in this emerging new world.

We felt there was a lot at stake in our quest. Passion was a favourite word and topic at last year’s high profile Knowledge Wave conference in Auckland. But there was no NZ literature on the topic to go and study. The most authentic path open to us was to track down the truly passionate and learn from them.

We began with the dictionary. Passion:

Intensity, fervour, fervidness, ardour, zeal, vehemence, mania, fire, emotion, feeling, zest, enthusiasm, eagerness, preoccupation, excitement, animation, fixation, heart’s desire, fascination, craze, obsession

### **How we went about it**

The first task, and it was a very difficult one, was to find these very passionate people, whose lives reflected a disturbing, amazing, surprising depth of passion. We were looking for a lot more than enthusiasm or keen interest.

We advertised in the Sunday papers, and employed researchers to scour the internet, ring up all manner of clubs, groups and organisations, and use all the networks known to man. The response was staggering but not always sane. We wanted all kinds of passions, people who dared to be different and refused to make compromises regarding their passions.

We came up with a very long list and then gradually whittled it down to 40 or so, most of whom made it into the book. The range of people delighted us. It includes:

A buddhist, a hunter, a streptococcol devotee, a magazine cover collector, an anti-nuclear campaigner, a tai chi master, an Elvis fan (obligatory), a sorts nut ( this is New Zealand), a pest controller, a llama lady, a naturist, a fiord fanatic and a crystal healer.

Then we went out, like Moses into the wilderness, and interviewed our subjects one by one in monasteries, factories, pensioner flats and universities, in belly dancing studios, swanky hotels and suburban wastelands. We taped the interviews, transcribed them laboriously word for word until we knew their stories back to front and then we shaped them into the form they appear in the book,

We came to admire our passionate subjects very much and the people they live with even more. We often had our values challenged and our preconceptions dashed. We arrived at many interviews with cosy notions of what to expect, only to have them dispelled an hour later.

As an overall comment, we were surprised by the depth and complexity of their passions. On the passion index they were up there. They were honest.

Mostly these people are unsung New Zealanders. Part of the joy of the project was making this book their moment in the sun.

It has been said of passion that without it, there is only alibis, alibis for things not done, dreams not lived. Our passionate subjects in this book live without alibis.

Some time after our book was published, I interviewed Cassandra for an article in Career Edge and discovered our common interest in passion. We came at the topic from different starting points but it was clear there were many areas of overlap. This led to us working together on a career planning tool that you'll be hearing more about, and of course on this presentation.

### **Six passionate people**

Let's take a closer look at the passions of six of the people in the book.

Julie Insley, Llama Lady

*(passion – source of regeneration, focus for life and work)*

Julie Insley loved horses and was a jockey up to the time when she was racing in Papua New Guinea in 1986. The horse slipped from under her, rolled on top of her and broke her neck. The rest of her life would be lived in a wheelchair.

This seemed a fate worse than death for this outdoorsey person who lived on a lovely farm in Kerikeri. She could no longer be near the horses – they were too dangerous – and her days were bleak and empty. She was suicidal.

Her regeneration came in an unlikely form – llamas. A friend told her about llamas and took her to see them and she fell in love with them. They She found them to be affectionate, tranquil, almost mystical creatures that dazzled and delighted her. They are her fantasy creatures.

She has names for each of them and introduces them personally to any visitors, whizzing around the fields in her motorised wheelchair. The llamas are friends. They are not for farming or eating; maybe she'll allow a little harvesting of fibre.

The effect of this passion for llamas on her life has been utterly transforming. They have given her her life back. She is now secretary of the Australasian llama association, she takes her llamas out to a host of community activities and there are not enough hours in the day for her to do all the things she wants to do.

“With the arrival of the llamas, every aspect of my life changed. I have a life now. Llamas fulfill me. They complete my life.”

For Julie, her passion has brought personal regeneration on a remarkable scale.

### **DJ Lemon - surviving out of the mainstream**

DJ Lemon's passion is to collect rare reggae and American dance music. He loves its harmonies and its strong sense of social justice and conviction. He sees music as a real healing force both in his life and in the world around him.

DJ Lemon owns more than 8,000 records and goes to great lengths to track down rare material, often spending hundreds of dollars to secure a particular song he knows the dance crowd will like. He is known the world over by record shops and producers.

He came to NZ ten years ago and helped to set up NZ's first DJing collective the Roots Foundation. DJ Lemon's led a colourful life. He grew up in London and was a professional roller skater. He was the first person to rollerskate from John o' Groats to lands End. He did it to raise money for refugees. Early on in his life he applied to join the British Army but was turned down for being too sensitive.

DJ Lemon sees that he is raising people's consciousness about important issues by playing his music to them. He's passed up a lot of opportunities to pursue his music, especially in terms of traditional career path. He works as a barber to supplement his income. He doesn't own a house. He doesn't have a car, but he owns a \$150,000 worth of records.

He's had several relationships, but is yet to find a woman who understands his need to climb into bath every so often to clean his prized record collection. He goes to these lengths because he regards his records as irreplaceable historical documents.

The reward for these sacrifices is playing his music to a packed room with 600 people, and he just has to hold aloft one these rare records and the whole room goes crazy. That's the type of response his passion can generate.

### **Bill Day - Work is totally his passion**

Bill Day is one of New Zealand's most successful entrepreneurs. He runs a specialist marine company in Wellington called Seaworks that makes purpose-built vessels for oil and telecommunications work, and even handles marine-related duties on feature films.

Bill has had a lot of failures in his business life, but he has always bounced back. He believes this because it is not the money that motivates him. Bill finds money far too shallow a goal for any business endeavour. It's not the reason he's in business. He's in business because he has a passion for boats and diving and he loves the thrill of being able to take on an impossible challenge, think up a brilliant solution, take a lot of risks on the way and succeed. Bill's life is one of business lived as a heroic adventure.

His driving philosophy is simple. He never does anything in business unless it gives him the same feeling he had when he was a boy opening his Christmas presents. That's the level of excitement and intensity he is looking for in his working life.

He takes immense risks to achieve this feeling. He borrows enormous sums of money – millions of dollars at a time – from banks to bring his ideas to life. He puts everything on the line. If it doesn't work out, he could wind up in jail.

But Bill believes that business is part of the joy of creation. And like all entrepreneurs Bill likes to live in the future. A good example of this is when he first started out. He won a contract to build a vessel to inspect the power cables in Cook Strait. Everyone said it would cost \$50 million, but Bill thought he could adapt a catamaran for \$5 million. Completing that project meant building a vessel unlike any other in the world.

What kept Bill going was this vision of himself on the bridge of that yet-to-be-built vessel, coming into Wellington harbour with a glass of bourbon in one hand, sunglasses in the other, the Beach Boys blaring out the speaker system. And a year later that's exactly what happened.

Bill believes passion is something a lot of NZers think they should grow out of. But he takes deliberate steps to make sure it is part of his life every day. That's why he loves the rollercoaster ride that is an inevitable part of being an entrepreneur. What you and I might regard as unmitigated stress and terror, Bill sees as fun.

### **Larry Ross, the Anti-Nuclear Warrior**

*(passion-source of motivation, his passion is his life's work)*

Larry Ross is a very articulate American who has long been resident in Christchurch. He thinks big. He has a passion for making the world nuclear-free.

He once had a passion for making New Zealand nuclear-free and is considered to be the father of the New Zealand nuclear-free movement. His passion dominated his life and has done ever since he left America at the height of the cold war when his neighbours were busy building underground shelters ready for a Soviet attack.

He saw it all as madness and sought out the farthest, safest greenest place on the planet – New Zealand. It has been his life's work to fight against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, here and internationally.

When Labour came to power in 1984, the tide turned and many years of seemingly pointless peace activism came to fruition.

Peace activist was not his choice of occupations – he would like to have been an inventor but in” a way I’ve become like a surgeon, dealing with this terrible thing. But someone had to face it, so I face it.”

His passion is not daunted by the odds against him; his focus is on using every available tool to mobilise support for the cause. His family have had to make sacrifices, his life has not been as he would have wished it but he is driven by the utter seriousness of the cause.

The knowledge that we are so close to wiping ourselves out fires his passion. Sacrifices are called for on a daily basis as he seeks to stir up the interest of apathetic editors, community leaders and politicians.

He has a passion because he can see and smell the scorched earth.

### **Brian Clifford the pest controller – Changed careers to pursue his passion**

Brian used to work for the old Department of Social Welfare because he wanted to help people. But he became very disillusioned and frustrated with working in a large bureaucracy. He felt that people were just a number and he was just a square peg in a round hole processing them. Not surprisingly, when the chance of redundancy came up, Brian jumped at it.

They said to Brian, ‘Look if you leave you’ll get so much money’. ‘Fine,’ he said, ‘I’m outta here!’ and he got up to leave. They said ‘Hold on Brian, you’ve got to give it two weeks.’”

So in those two weeks he thought hard about what to do and realised that ever since he was a child he had been interested in bugs. He’d always collected creepy crawlies and caterpillars and his old home had been a haven for mice and fleas and borer.

So Brian became a pest controller or pestie.and swapped the joy of the public service for tracking down dead rats in the roof and doing battle with cockroaches in the kitchens of the nation. And Brian is the most passionate pestie you could ever meet.

You can call him any time day or night and he’ll be there. He loves the thought of being the white knight coming to people’s rescue. He tells this wonderful story of going to a family’s aid on Xmas day because bees had come down the chimney of this family home and made a nest on the Xmas tree. The kids had their faces pressed against the

window looking at the presents they couldn't open. So in went Brian in his red suit just like Santa Claus and gave them the heave ho. And that's what he loves. It doesn't matter if it Xmas day, it's his passion.

Brian loves solving people's problems and outsmarting rats and bees and possums. Sometimes the pests are alive, sometimes they're dead and rotting. Brian doesn't care. His passion is to crawl around in people's attics, tracking them down, his nostrils full of the aroma of decay. He doesn't wear nose pegs or anything like that. He loves sniffing them to track them down.

But Brian is smart enough to realise that after your 15th rat of the morning the thrill of the chase can start to pall. So he has sustained his passion by embarking on an ambitious study programme at American Universities. Brian was no great shakes at school, but he has proved to be A student and is now one of the most highly qualified pesties in New Zealand.

It hasn't all been plain sailing. The pressures of running his own 24/seven business took its toll on his marriage and he and his wife are now separated. But he passed on his passion to his sons who have followed him into the business.

Brian believes he's more of a social worker now than he ever was before working for the Government, and doing more good. His motto is – if it bugs you, I'll kill it.

### **Peter Biggs, Civil War buff and Passionate Leader**

*(passion – source of inspiration, remarkably integrated with his working life)*

Peter Biggs is a very charismatic and visionary character. He's chief executive of Clemenger BBDO, judged best advertising agency in New Zealand in 2002 and is chairman of Creative New Zealand.

He spends a lot of his time stirring up audiences around New Zealand about his vision for an imaginative and creative New Zealand. He believes that we can be the most creative, daring and innovative country on the planet. That's our future if we've got the energy and the passion to strive for it.

But when he's not out there being a visionary, he's pursuing his lifelong passion for all things to do with the American Civil War. He's been to the various battlefields numerous times, walked the fateful ground of Pickett's charge, taken the same route into Gettysburg as Robert E. Lee and he dreams of one day being a Civil War guide.

He's a voracious reader of civil war books, and for the last 20 years or so has always had one on the go. He has an extensive civil war library and has read many biographies of many of the war's leading characters.

He views the Civil War as a theatre for heroic behaviour, a place for wise judgments and bold endeavour. He draws personal and professional inspiration from the lives and courage of people such as Ulysses S Grant, John Bell Hood and Robert E. Lee. And he often refers to tactics and strategies used in the war in his daily business life.

His philosophy of life and his own style of organisational leadership is very significantly shaped by his passion for the American Civil War and its generals:

“I listen to Robert E. Lee and I listen to John Bell Hood. I listen to James ‘old Pete’ Greenstreet and I listen to Ulysses S Grant. And they tell me to ‘Attack! Take risks! Get there fastest with the mostest.’”

He has learned to ‘be dogged, be determined, take risks. If you’re behind, you’ve got to take long chances.’”

All this, and much more he has integrated into his life in New Zealand in 2002. In his public role now he brings messages about action and boldness to what he sees as a very risk-averse country.

The Findings - What did we learn?

The first thing we learnt was that Gordon McLauchlin’s thesis no longer holds true. The ordinary Kiwi can be as passionate as anyone anywhere.

But just like any culture we have evolved our own particular New Zealand brand of passion. It is a little quieter and more reserved than some other cultures, but it is no less valid. If you bumped into many of the people in our book their depth of passion wouldn’t be immediately obvious. But these were very passionate people indeed. Nzers are simply more private about their passions.

The myth of the passionless Kiwi persists because over the years we have come to confuse mere flamboyance and exhibitionism with passion. They aren’t the same thing at all. You don’t have to be doing a Samba in the street in your G String to be considered passionate. Most Kiwis aren’t like that but that doesn’t mean we’re not a passionate people.

We also discovered that Kiwis are as passionate about ideas as they are about collecting things or sport.

Unexpectedly, our book turned out to be a book about some of the most disturbing and fundamental concerns of our age – the threat of nuclear extinction, the disappointment that sex can bring, the rapid disappearance of our natural flora and fauna, our mindless addiction to materialism in the name of the good life.

Passion is often referred to as if it were a feel-good substance you could spray on. But what we learnt was that genuine passion always involves some measure of sacrifice. It



could be time, or money, or relationships, but there will always be a cost. Passionate people are willing to pay this cost because the compensation is that they live their life with a depth of intensity that makes them truly alive. Despite all the hardships, the people in our book wouldn't or couldn't live their lives in any other way. Passion is much more than a fleeting fad or enthusiasm. Passionate people are in it for the long haul, come what may.

A final observation is that contrary to popular wisdom, the balanced life may not be all it's cracked up to be.

It's the great call of our times isn't it? People are always telling us to get more balance in our lives, but in fact the key to a long and happy life may be just the opposite. Maybe it's time to start getting carried away a lot more.

### **KPMG Case Study**

Since we began our book, passion has become a hot topic and not just a frivolous one. It's been taken up as a HR tool by the corporate world too.

Shortly after we published our book we were contacted by one of NZ's biggest financial and legal consultancy companies KPMG. The managing director was walking down the street and saw our book in shop window. They were about to adopt passion as their key corporate value and brand.

Why were they doing this? Because feedback from clients indicated that people were tired of dealing with just a suit. They expected the person who walked through their door to be far more than a bean-counter in a grey suit. They wanted someone who had a passion for work and for life. Who could bring something extra to the challenges they were facing.

KPMG are now actively encouraging their staff to pursue some aspect of passion in their lives and to bring this energy and enthusiasm to their work. Time will tell if this works, but early indications are that staff have responded well to the idea. They want to be more than just suits.

Shortly, after addressing one gathering of KPMG staff, we asked them to volunteer their own passions. One woman volunteered her family's passion for collecting animal skulls, another spoke of her passion for the squash court, another related her passion for climbing. It became obvious to us that people do have these passions in their lives, that they keep well hidden because they don't see their relevance to their working lives. Without active encouragement, it seems to us that many Kiwi passions are going to remain buried forever.

To their credit, KPMG is trying to change that. They're not doing this out of some misplaced sense of philanthropy. They're doing it because they see that passion is going to be very good for business and the bottom line. It's what the client wants.

For many years quality has been a catchcry and a focus of change in many New Zealand businesses and organisations. It seems to us that clients have come to expect quality will be a given and are now looking for something far more demanding and fundamental – a sense of passion, human connection, energy, ideas and engagement that can transcend the mundane and routine aspects of working life and make any transaction more satisfying.

This trend is not restricted to employers looking for ways to differentiate and improve their brand and products.

### **Sunny Hansen – Work Worth Doing**

An awareness of the power of passion also has the potential to completely change the way people choose jobs and careers.

A while ago, we had the good fortune to interview Sunny Hansen a career planning expert from the University of Minnesota. After 30 years in the field, Sunny had completely changed her thinking about career planning and work. The scientific and empirical model of matching people's skills and qualifications to particular jobs was rational and logical but incredibly limiting. It meant firms only got certain types of people and people only did certain types of jobs.

Sunny has come up with an alternative model based around people's real needs. It is a far more challenging and holistic way of looking at work that begins with the most fundamental question of all – in terms of my values, priorities and passions is this job worth doing? How many of our own jobs would pass that test?

Sunny's approach is striking a real chord in corporate America because it is taking that larger view of the world and encouraging people to fit their work into their broader passions and vision of life. Organisations gain employees who are passionate and staff don't feel trapped in roles that are completely alien to their values.

When we talk about our knowledge-based society of the future, perhaps one of the most fundamental starting points needs to be the self-knowledge that each person requires to find the career paths that are right for them.

### **A last word: Living and working in the passion zone**

There is a simple but telling conclusion to be drawn from our experience in writing this book. Being passionate is part of being human. It enriches our lives. It therefore makes a lot of sense to try and live and work in the passion zone as much as possible.

Applying what we have learned to the world of careers: Proactively managing your career in the light of your enthusiasms and passions is the key to developing career resilience. For employers the lesson is that if you help employees develop new skills and realise their passions, you'll have a more passionate, flexible workforce.

If employers don't do this, what have they got? How productive are people who don't know what skills they've got or are disconnected from their interests or passions?

The challenge then becomes to discover one's own sense of purpose and meaning – which is of course more than a question of skills. It has to be with fundamental beliefs about self and the future.

Right at the centre of any discussion about career development is the simple but often overlooked requirement to : Know Your Own Heart and follow your loves with great courage.

## **Part Two**

### **Let's get passionate ... About work!**

*Many professionals have such a passion for their career that they never miss a day off work, are resilient and flexible, optimistic, happy and productive. Their enthusiasm for work even overflows into their family and personal lives. For others, work drains every ounce of their creativity, energy, and life force. "Monday-itus is common", as is stress dis-satisfaction and turnover.*

*If your employees are relying on bottomless cups of coffee, V's and other stimulants just to keep them engaged, chances are they're suffering from an absence of passion! About 80 % of people who seek career coaching are currently dissatisfied with their work. Many are showing signs of depression, anxiety and stress. For a long time we've been conditioned to think that work is the road to salvation, it's not supposed to be something you enjoy. As one employee recently said: "you go to work, you grit your teeth, and your bare it." Yet increasing numbers of people are questioning this view.*

### **Employees who leave their heart at home are bad for the bottom line**

The Protestant work ethic may have suited times past but in the era of the knowledge economy employees who leave their heart at home are bad for the bottom line. Smart organisations know that the road to better productivity and market performance is to engage both the hearts and minds of their employees. Harnessing the source of individual motivation is key. People who are motivated are happy, successful and well. Facilitate the pursuit of their passion and the rewards will follow.

Many employees do not know what it is that they want to do or what makes them happy. Many of them believe that that they are not passionate about anything and that passion is just for the “lucky few” This is not true, passion is for everyone some people “may just need help taking it out of the drawer.” We often move so quickly that we never really stop to ask ourselves if we really want to do what we are doing.

### **CASE STUDY**

Chris was dissatisfied with his job and self-referred for career coaching. He had no idea what he enjoyed or even what he was good at. He reported feeling lost, dissatisfied and frustrated. He was also showing symptoms of high level of stress. He was living to work and found it hard to say “no” to the constant pressures and expectations of others. “I feel as though I am being crushed”. Career coaching helped to remind Chris of the things, people and circumstances that most energised him. He gained greater awareness of his criteria for job satisfaction, his strengths and the “blind spots” which were preventing him from taking remedial action. As a result of discovering his passion criteria, Chris took immediate steps to address the lack of work-life balance. This included planning holiday leave to fulfil his long-held desire to travel to the USA and attend a Warplanes conference, and delegating more work so that he no longer worked weekends. This allowed him more time to focus on his other passion – restoring American Cars. Chris, was employed as an administrative clerk and had been doing the role for over 15 years. The lack of growth and the under-utilisation of his skills, combined with a lack of interest in his work area contributed to his feelings of frustration and boredom, which led to increased occupation stress. Career coaching helped him to identify some internal career paths that would facilitate the use of skills he was more passionate about such as research into future fuels and sustainable forms of energy. As a result, Chris is much clearer about what energises him, his skills and criteria for job satisfaction, and he feels happier and more balanced. He has learnt to be more assertive and to communicate his needs to others. His organisation has benefited because Chris is much more energetic, and productive while at work.

Helping individuals’ discover their passion criteria:

#### **Rekindling passion**

Help individuals and teams discover their own passions by helping them to develop greater awareness of their passion criteria.

Here are 5 questions and strategies that may help your employees (and you!) discover and rekindle their passion in the workplace.

##### *1. Which part of your present job do you like the most?*

If they are not passionate about their job in its totality, get them to break up their workday and start to become aware of the parts of their work that they do like.

Encourage them to start a passion diary - making a list of exactly what it is that they do, and making conscious written evaluations of each favourite task.

#### **Case Study**

Joan worked as an office manager in a busy office, her role was varied and she was finding it increasingly frustrating. When asked to break up her day into the parts that were most satisfying she realised that she gained the most enjoyment from talking to clients and helping them resolve their enquiries. As a result she identified a way to do the things she enjoyed least on the days when customer enquiries were slowest. In this way she was not prevented from doing those parts she enjoyed most and her satisfaction increased.

2. Which part of your present work is the easiest for you? Why is it so easy?

The adage “Work should be endured not enjoyed.” is still prevalent in many people's minds. However, your people may find that what was easiest for them either now or in the past could be the critical clue for chasing their passion, for identifying it, and for giving them permission to pursue it.

People have a tendency to assume that just because something is easy for them, that it is easy per se! Others may find the same tasks difficult – largely because their heart is not in it or they do not have the same strengths and skills.

3. What is the most frustrating or annoying part of your present or past work? Why?

Whilst we can have many minor upsets, it is the major upsets that will give us the best clues to our spirit. Ask your employees to list the aspects that they find most frustrating in either their current role or previous roles. Then ask them to explore: “why?” Keeping asking the why question until they have got to the core, or essence of the annoyance. This increased awareness by the individual may be the only catalyst they need to begin a re-evaluation process within their organisation, and to initiate some changes at work.

### **Case Study**

Robert, a senior lawyer, was annoyed at the lack of recognition for contributions other than meeting revenue targets. Asking "why" several times helped him discover his key drivers were making a difference and being appreciated. Robert realised that the times he felt most appreciated was when he worked as a volunteer for Youth Social Services. Consequently he identified an opportunity to assist in his firm's induction process and his role has been tailored to include mentoring new legal graduates. Now not only does he get to do more of what he loves doing – helping people, but his commitment, enthusiasm and contribution to work have increased dramatically.

#### **4. What do others notice?**

The insights of others can be invaluable in gaining greater awareness and a less subjective view of those aspects of our lives that we are most passionate about. Sometimes the suggestions and acknowledgements of others, can create, or reveal, either a passion to pursue a particular career path or an idea how they could change their current role to make it more satisfying.

#### **Case Study**

Mary was considering an internal promotion within the HR department, but was experiencing some self-doubt. The comments of a friend who said “your eyes light up when you talk to people. You have a real gift for encouraging people.” Helped confirm both her passion for helping people and her ability in this area.

#### **5. Identify potential passion barriers**

Your employees may benefit from asking themselves the following question: “What is stopping you from doing more of what you enjoy?”

Often people's need for acceptance and approval from others may be a barrier to following their passions. Fear of failure or other impediments may also create obstacles. One of the keys to working on ways to remove these barriers is to help them become more consciously aware of the power of self-limiting thoughts and beliefs.

Amongst the most common passion barriers are people who have low self-esteem, and lack confidence and belief in their ability to make positive changes and have their needs met. Just as in love where we are told that to love another we must first love and accept ourselves unconditionally - to be passionate about work we must first be passionate about ourselves and in our capacity to make a difference.

Feedback and appreciation within the workplace is an essential ingredient that when absent will cause passion – and hence productivity, morale and job satisfaction - to deflate.

***Passionate people produce!***

Helping your employees find, develop and rekindle their passion for work is win-win! This increased awareness by the individual may be the only catalyst they need to begin a re-evaluation process within their organisation, and to initiate some changes at work. This in turn can help take the guesswork out of the psychology of human motivation and together you can identify ways to facilitate not only their growth and development but the growth of the organisation through increased productivity and reduced costs.

Encourage your employees to bring both their heads and their hearts to work, as the Philosopher, G.W.F.Hegel wisely said:

"Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion."

A strong emotion that provides unlimited energy and allows people to achieve extraordinary results.

By valuing passion you are recognising the human nature of an organisation. Organisations don't have to be soulless landscapes, crammed full of "grey suits" who long for the weekend to recolour their world. In recent years there has been an increasing focus on the need for businesses to focus on those things that most directly impact people and not numbers. The terms vision, mission, and culture collectively acknowledge the need for emotion in organisations.

People need motivation

People need Inspiration

People need something to believe in.

People need to feel a sense of "fit", of "belonging, and a sense of purpose.

When organisations address these issues, they begin to put on a human face.

## **Benefits to your organisations**

Many customers are frustrated and employees stifled by organisations that don't care about them or their needs. Passion is not a privilege of the fortunate few; it's a right and a competitive advantage that all organisations can leverage. Passion is what sets organisations and individuals apart. When tapped into it provides a source of unlimited energy and enthusiasm that allows people to achieve great things.

When employees are excited about organisation and passionate about what they do, the benefits are tremendous. They are happier, more productive, more creative, and eager to come to work each day. Because they are invested emotionally they are also loyal. Their relationship goes beyond the transactional (work performed for pay check received.) they are committed on a deeper level to the organisation and its success.

When organisations are operating passionately they stand out from the “norm”. Their passion is their core source of competitive advantage. IT cannot be faked or copied. Passion is authentic. Many organisations possess the same technology, resources, equipment and expertise in their employees, but it is the organisation that runs on passion that prevails. The passion-driven organisation inspires its employee, invigorates its customers, and reaps the benefits of their shared enthusiasm in its success. Not only does the passion-driven organisation win the battle with its competitors, it often achieves its victory with less perceived effort than those lacking the same emotion.

### Passion is a cure:

When people aren't passionate about their work or doing something in their lives that they feel passionate about, mediocrity, apathy and dissatisfaction are common place. Passion is an energising force which when constructively channelled can prevent and cure:

- √ Stress
- √ Overwork
- √ Lack of work/life balance
- √ Lack of goals
- √ Career plateau/role dissatisfaction
- √ Depression
- √ Lack of commitment
- √ Absentessism
- √ Low productivity

### Passion Employees to:

- √ Build resilience – people are able to adapt and deal with setbacks and upsets more easily (change in perspective and attitude)
- √ Define who they are and what they can become
- √ Make self directed changes in behaviour i.e. Chris “I learnt to delegate and I haven't worked overtime for 3 months. I feel much happier”
- √ Take responsibility for their careers
- √ Tap a hidden energy reserve
- √ Become self fulfilled
- √ Better balance work and life demands
- √ Manage stress

### Passion Organisations to:

- √ Retain, develop and inspire their talent
- √ Design meaningful rewards
- √ Enhance succession planning – knowing the direction of motivation is critical



- √ Uncover and feed to diverse sources of motivation
- √ Energise their work force
- √ Communicate organisational excellence to all stakeholders
- √ Build competitive advantage and help create points of difference/niches

**Other words for passion...let's normalise it!**

- √ Zest
- √ I get a buzz...
- √ I get energised by...
- √ XYZ excites me....
- √ I love....

**You can recognise it not by name but by what it does!**

- √ Energy!
- √ Vitality!
- √ Enthusiasm!
- √ Fun!
- √ Commitment
- √ Focus
- √ Productivity

“PASSION IS A LOT LIKE “LOVE.” IT IS DIFFICULT, PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DEFINE IN PRECISE TERMS. BUT EASY TO SEE AND FEEL.”

-Charles Kovess, Author

## Six ways to introduce passion in to your organisation

### 1. Make a plan “begin with the end in mind”

Passion is a natural, spontaneous force that can lead to incredible results. An organisation cannot simply hone in on passion and run with it. It needs to consider where it wants that passion to lead it and how passion will take it there. It needs to remember that while passion has the power to distinguish; it also has the power to destroy. Passion is a powerful force that needs channelling if its benefits are to be realised.

For example, Apple computers attained great success in its early days, fuelled by the charismatic and passionate, Steve Jobs, the company proclaimed a devotion to creating insanely great computers. For a few years it pumped out technologically superior products that were innovative, stylish and easy to use. Customers displayed an almost religious devotion to these products and were willing to pay a premium for them. Potential employees stormed the corporate offices in California, eager to be part of the magic.

IF you were to walk the halls in those early days you would have felt the passion. Yet in the end it was the passion that began to undermine the organisation and threaten its success – the leaders to Apple were never able to control the passion that coursed through its corporate veins. While a love of technology was at the core of everything that Apple did, the way that it was manifested took on different and opposing forms. Everyone was excited about the products: engineers were passionate about designing them, marketers were eager to package them and promote them, the sales people were excited about selling them, and the accountants were passionate about profitability. But somewhere in the mix, the entire group lost sight of WHY and HOW they were to accomplish these things. The different business units operated in silos and were often disparaging of each other. There was no articulated clear and consistent strategy for channelling all this underlying passion, leadership allowed the various groups to develop their own underlying interpretations, often at each others expense. Each unit viewed themselves as the keepers of the flame and resentments and jealousies soon built. Rather than sharing a passion for advancing the company’s overall contribution to the world of computers, Apple’s staff retreated into warring camps. They often felt constrained in their roles, with fewer and fewer great products coming off the lines. The company began to lose its technological edge and employees lost their passion, as did many of their customers. Ultimately, the organisation had no LONG\_TERM strategy for sustaining the passion that defined it. This lack of focus led to confusing decision making, uncertainty in planning, and a series of costly tactical errors. In the midst of this decline Apple even ousted its founder, Steve Jobs, in the process.

Steve Jobs has now rejoined the Apple ranks as chief executive. With the hugely successful launch of its iMac series and a series of profitable improvements to its

trademark operating system, Apple has experienced a rebirth. In comparison with its competitors such as Hewlett Packard, it now looks like the company it once was, possessing a guiding passion for superior design and technology and a commitment to delivering to its customers

### The Organisational Passion Plan: “A blue print for approaching passion-based change”

Feeling: the first two steps require the organisation to get in touch with the heart of the organisation. This may seem strange, especially when we live in a world that seems to value logic, and rationality. Yet, as with our bodies, the heart is the central organ through which our life force flows. Passion is not something that someone thinks about – it is something that someone feels with every fibre of their being – including their mind. To seize the benefits of passion, the organisation must be engaged in activities that inspire it. It cannot simply accept its current direction and expect to graft passion on; it must feel first, and then determine where those feelings will lead.

## Step1: Start from the heart

*We cannot go on simply making one rational decision after another. The reality is that people’s emotions-their spirit, how they feel about things – need to be considered as part of the reality – the change process”*

*- Hakim, Author*

Making the leap from a reason based organisation to a passion driven one can seem daunting. Leaders and managers must overcome the traditional biases against emotion in business (other than fierce competitiveness) and the emotional intensity of passion as a source of success. They must begin to view the heart not as a source of weakness but as a reserve of hidden strength. Passion gives people courage, resilience and tenacity – long after the head has given something up as “undoable” or “too heart” - desire, anger, belief urge us on in spite of resistance or lack of energy.

Those reluctant or sceptical about entering uncharted emotional waters will be encouraged by the examples shown by Mike and Nigel of organisations and individuals who have distinguished themselves in their respective areas by proudly wearing their hearts on their sleeves. Rather than conceal their excitement, they have openly expressed it and found ways to capitalise on it – whether this is Vodafone’s passion for technology and having fun, or Barnardo’s deeply held belief that children have the right to a healthy, happy start in life which is filled with love not fear. Workplace Support is unashamedly

passionate about their belief that people should be treated respectfully and fairly by their organisations and places of work. Whilst wearing our Christian symbol, the fish, on our sleeves, may have lost us contracts due largely to ignorance and a fear that we will bible bash, we have also won significantly large accounts- purely on the basis of our values. Passion cannot be faked.

Starting from the heart is gaining wider acceptance and is no longer purely the domain of those in the counselling profession. I recently sat next to the chief operating manager of Carter Holt Harvey on the plane and learnt about their Australian drive to build Emotional Intelligence into their organisation. He spoke opening about both the challenges but also the huge benefits that “wearing ones heart on ones sleeve” was having both operationally, culturally and competitively.

## Step 2: Discover Core Passions

To benefit from passion’s power, the organisation and those within it must first identify where their passions lie. Many organisations have grown out of touch with the passions on which they were founded. Some have experienced changes of heart and focus in intervening years. Some have never, ever given a thought to passion at all.

Identifying where their passion lies may involve identifying passions that already exist but have not been articulated, or defining new passions to be developed. For example, a financial services company was founded because of one man’s “passion for helping people use their money wisely.” Helping people by using his skill and knowledge of investments gave this man and those who worked for his company meaning and purpose in their lives. The pursuit of profit was not the motivating force – it was the result of their passion not the initiator. I often wondered how much more success a previous recruitment firm I worked for if their reason for being was founded on a passion for helping people finding meaningful work rather than a passion for making money.

### The discovery Process

As part of the discovery process, organisations:

1. Must examine the forces that motivate them, both individually and collectively
2. Evaluate the organisation’s current competencies and strengths
3. Evaluate the organisation’s potential for organisational growth
4. Consider the feelings of employees and customers surrounding the business and look for connections between those emotions and company performance

For example, one NZ organisation, as a result of change and poor market performance employees talked of feelings of hopelessness, anger, and resentment and admitted that they felt the organisation collectively was “depressed”. This came as no surprise; you could feel these emotions as you walked through its corridors. At the end of the change workshop we introduced the Passion Pack, immediately this brought a change of focus, and the energy in the room changed immediately. When asked “what place, if any, does passion have in an organisation, they said, “there should be a place for it; it just isn’t here at the moment” People talked of wanting to feel fun, excitement and feelings of being motivated. They wanted these feelings to overflow into the behaviours. Passion may be a value, but placing it on a wall and writing it into a mission statement doesn’t make it so.

Some good discovery questions:

- What collectively, and individually, motivates you?
- What captures your interest and attention?
- What comes easily to you?
- What pushes your buttons?
- What do you believe in?
- What do you value?

Using this information, leaders can work together to create a “Passion Profile” of the organisation. This profile will highlight potential core passions, or the ideas and activities that could be the focus of the organisation’s efforts. This profile is not meant to be an exercise in certainty, but rather a starting point for further enquiry. Once potential passions have been identified, the organisation can find ways to explore them further and investigate the possibilities that they offer.

For managers in organisations whose leaders have not identified core passions, discovering personal passions and identifying what excites them about their organisation becomes particularly important. Even though they cannot unilaterally change the direction of the entire organisation, they can help to bring about change from the bottom up through their example and enthusiasm. We have all experienced how easily one dis-passionate person can infect a group with their cynicism, apathy, and negativity. The same can be said of one passionate person’s impact on the group with their energy, excitement and enthusiasm

Thinking:

**F**ew people have ever seriously wished to be exclusively rational. The good life which most desire is a life warmed by passions  
Joseph Wood Krutch ~

Once the sources of passion of have been identified, reason is needed to determine how these passions can best serve the organisation. The next two steps – clarifying purpose and defining actions-ensure that an organisation begins to focus on passion, it will do so in a way that is both effective and meaningful. The first step begins by clarifying purpose.

### Step 3: Clarify Purpose...”begin with the end in mind”

“My passions were all gathered together like fingers that made a fist. Drive is considered aggression today; I knew it then as purpose.”

~ Bette Davis ~

“I have always believed in keeping your eye on the goal while enjoying life. That’s why it is important to do what we feel passionate about and driven to do.”

~Alison Roe, Marathon runner and NZ Sportsperson of the year in 1981~

Your reason and your passion are the rudder and sails of your seafaring soul. If either your sails or your rudder were broken, you can but toss and drift, or else be held at a standstill in mid-seas. For reason, ruling alone, is a force confining; and passion, unattended, is a flame that burns to its own destruction.

~Kahil Gibran, Author and Philosopher~

When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds. Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greeter person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.

~Patanjali, Philosopher ~

Whether the business is in its infancy or an aging relic in need of revitalisation, it must define its reasons for existing – the direction it will take and the ends it will serve. If purpose is in alignment with the core passions of the organisation, it will provide a viable means of pursuing and sustaining them. . Defining purpose is crucial

in giving an organisation its life, direction and forward momentum. Communicating the organisations purpose regularly, ideally daily, will also help keep your organisation, energized, motivated and on-track. (Eg Vodafone – all communications illustrate its purpose)

Many organisations have a purpose by default. Something has defined their current activities – market needs, leadership desires, or consultants advise rather than a burning desire or sense of meaning and purpose. For such organisations the questions “why do we exist?” is difficult to articulate. Often, however, their purpose does not reflect any underlying passion, which leads to a lack of focus, motivation and poor performance. Sometimes even those businesses that were founded originally on passion can become stale. Pockets of passion may be found within an organisation, but can be undermined, as employers and customers alike lose pride in the organisation. Whilst profits may still be increasing so to may turnover, dissatisfaction and instability.

Managers must also clarify the meaning and purpose they finding performing their jobs. While individual employees cannot simply decide the purpose of the organisation, they can identify the rationale for their own work. A single employee with a passion for customer service can re-energise an organisation by driving customer service improvements from within based on personal accomplishment and resulting influence.

How is your purpose communicated...beliefs, assumptions and behaviours? IF you value something you reward it, recognise it and affirm it.

“We communicate with passion and passions sells” - Anita Roddick, the body shop.

Some tangible ways of communicating passion include: Integrating passion into strategic planning workshops, stress busting workshops, career development discussions etc.

## Step 4: Define Actions

**W**e must act out passion before we can feel it.

~ Jean-Paul Sartre ~

Defining what fuels the organisation (passion) and where it will go (purpose), the next step is to create a plan for getting there. Simply defining passion and purpose is not enough – you cannot hope that passion, once unleashed, will catapult the organisation to greatness. It certainly can, but it probably won't without careful attention to the ways and times it will be used.

An action plan has 3 basic ingredients – the long-term plan, the short-term plan, and the contingency plan. Collectively these elements plot potential courses for passion-

based change. They target specific actions for introducing, developing and strengthening passion in the organisation, and prescribe the scope, intensity, and pace of change to be pursued. It is important that this plan is not set in stone, but that it is viewed as a dynamic document able to flex and adjust to changed circumstances. Often the increased motivation and ability passion provides creates unseen opportunities, which should not be ruled out simply because they were not anticipated in the planning stage.

Managers can create their own action plans for change within their individual positions or departments. Often plans that work for one person or one group become the model for the entire organisation.

For, example the long-term goal may be to develop passion as a core value that is communicated both internally and externally. By visualising this preferred future, short-term goals or stepping stone actions that will lead to this goal achievement can be identified. For example, changing the induction and recruitment process, looking at branding, engaging a PR company to make suggestions, running workshops on passion and worklife balance, implementing strategy workshops for senior management, redefining the organisational values, placing posters, regular communications etc.,

Planning for action and actually bringing it about are of course two different things. Whereas the previous stages- feeling and thinking-required hypothetical courage, acting requires the organisation to actually put its money where its mouth is. This requires commitment, enthusiasm, and persistence – In other words it requires keeping an eye on the goals and the benefits that will flow from injecting more passion into the organisation. This is where the winners part from the mediocre – the mediocre always find excuses not to change until it's too late or they are faced with a crisis.

## Step 5: Perform with Passion

“**W**ithout passion, man is a mere latent force and possibility, like the flint which awaits the shock of the iron before it can give forth its spark.”

~-Henri-Frederic Amiel, Philosopher~

“**I**n these days of the talent wars, the best way to keep your stars is to know them better than they know themselves and then use that information to customise the career of their dreams.”



~Timothy Butler and James Waldroop, Harvard Business Review~

It is critical that as plans are deployed the organisation be truly aligned in its efforts. A rowing team filled with individuals who are passionate about rowing, is next to no good, if they are rowing in different directions, or motivated by self-interest versus the common good. Likewise an organisation who recruits for passion will never realise the employee's full potential if they are not given the environment and resources, climate to do their job well.

The leaders must not only introduce change, they must also exemplify it. They must work to create an environment in which core passions will thrive and in which employees of the organisation can perform passionately. This may take an intimate understanding of what makes your people tick. In today knowledge-based economy we are not herding sheep but herding cats – each and every one of our employees have unique and diverse needs that they seek to have satisfied. Some may thrive on feedback and reassurance they are doing a great job, others may thrive best if given a long rope and plenty of freedom and autonomy to decide best how to do their task. When we operate through our own worldview we can mistakenly assume that everyone has the same requirements. Some people may be more sensitive to their environment than others – sometimes a lick of paint can do wonders. I recall the negative impact cost saving measures had on my work orientation and commitment to my organisation - a seemingly little thing like taking away my office plant had a hugely detrimental impact on my passion for the organisation. They said they were passionate about creating organisations, which valued people, and then without any consultation took away the one small thing that I valued. Other employees have similar stories. For example, an employee who had previously enjoyed a high degree of flexibility suddenly found herself being micro managed. This had a devastating and detrimental impact on her morale and productivity.

Leaders can do many things to facilitate smooth and effective change:

1. The first and most important is to clearly and constantly communicate the organisations core passions (beliefs, values, things that push their buttons, what energise them or what they love etc) and their plans for integrating it into the business.
2. They can make improvements to the physical surroundings to allow associates to express their passion and maximise their performance i.e. some people may prefer open plan, others their own office. Some may

prefer to work independently, others as part or a group

3. They can also refine policies and practices to promote passion-based productivity rather than hinder it. For example, having more flexible remuneration policies such as extended leave for those with families, or allowing people to work from home, getting rid of unproductive meetings, and implementing reflective practices. For example, one organisation discovered that one of their employees had a passion for the American Civil War. Rather than give him their employees the “standard” dinner for two as part of the end of year bonus, they bought him a subscription to a civil war magazine. Another staff member with a passion for painting was given a gift voucher for art supplies. These “rewards” were individually tailored to the individual and more meaningful to them personally. In both cases, as a result, these employees reported feeling more valued and cared for by their organisation and morale and productivity increased. Meaningless rewards have next to no motivating effect.

Employees seeking to make change at the individual level can also take steps to create a passion-inspiring environment for themselves. Within the bounds of their authority they can:

1. Adapt their workspaces – bring in flowers, listen to music, hot-desk, work from home
2. Change habits – increase passion enabling habits such as self-talk, staying away from negative people, seeking an organisational mentor, investing in career development, attending course that re-energise and revitalise or increase their skills in areas they find challenging i.e. assertiveness, giving/receiving feedback
3. Increasing activities to elicit personal passion and build it into their lives, energising those around them in the process. For example Chris was a self confessed workaholic. He admitted that he was feeling increasingly angry and frustrated by work, “I feel as though I am being crushed.” Working through a career development programme designed to help him discover his passions helped Chris recall the activities and things that gave him energy and a sense of excitement. As a result he was able to make self-directed changes in behaviour such as learning to delegate and to say “no”. Because of his desire to pursue his hobbies and passion for world war planes, and American cars he no longer works overtime and through the weekend. He feels happier and less stressed as a result.

As the organisation begins to change and improve, it will truly begin to perform with passion. Leaders will learn to make passion-informed decisions and to “let-go” while employees use their freedom to build on core passions and make further improvements. The organisations will become self-motivated and increasingly capable. The engines of success will begin to work from within, with little need for outside guidance or inspiration.

## Step 6: Spread excitement!

“When employees are passionate about their work everybody thrives”  
The snowball effect of passion...

Once passion is present in the organisation, it becomes contagious. All the stakeholders sense it and respond to it. This is a natural process – enthusiasm begets enthusiasm. The passionate shine like beacons in a world where most face frustration and dissatisfaction. As the organisation begins to act with passion, it will gain notice.

The 2003 TMP survey revealed that over 43% of employees were dissatisfied by their work, and other surveys have revealed that only 10% of people are visibly pursuing their passions. Many people believe that passion is only for the lucky few. Many organisations and individuals that consider themselves successful but know deep down that there is something more they are lacking. They are often secretly aware that are failing to reach their potential. By actively spreading its passion the passion-driven organisation can inspire and help these groups and fuel its own progress in the process.

The challenge is to find ways to spread passion to achieve maximum and lasting affect. This involves concerted efforts to communicate and develop it both internally and externally. By actively promoting and managing passion in all three groups, the organisation will benefit in ways leaders and managers may never have imagined. IT will win support, inspire loyalty, and gain invaluable energy as associates from each group share in the excitement passion creates.

Inspiring employees

“You can teach people *how* to accomplish great things, it is much harder to teach them to *want* to accomplish great things.”

1. Passionate organisations hire people first and foremost based on their passion and only second based on their skills. The reason is simple: when employees are passionate about their work, the organisation thrives. With escalating competitive pressures and the ease with which competitors can duplicate products, processes and technology, never has there been a time when the organisations that employ them need their vitality, creativity and energy more.
2. Passionate organisations clearly communicate core passions in recruiting efforts and include passion-based criteria in the interview process. They always communicate their values and passions during the induction process.
3. Passionate organisations create and tailor flexible rewards which recognise that people have unique needs they seek to be satisfied by work. You can't clone people and your human resources really are the key to your competitive advantage. They are also your most unpredictable resource. So many organisations expect them to run on the smell of a dollar note.
4. Passionate organisations don't just recruit passion their nurture passion. Recruiting for passion is the easy part, sustaining it is where the work really begins. This could include helping them more fully understand and experience the organisation's core passions and finding ways to incorporate their individual passions into work. For example, an employee with a passion for creativity may want to help contribute to a rebranding exercise rather than outsourcing the work totally to external consultants. Similarly a hotel chain with a passion for customer service, ensures that its new reservationists are invited to stay at one of their resorts so they can understand and experience what they are selling to customers. "It would be a false expectation to think people could stay passionate about something and then not let them experience it themselves....We just think it's really important that people stay connected to who we are and what we do so they can communicate that passion to our guests."
5. The challenge hold true for existing employees who have lost their passion or have never shared the core passions of the organisation. Though some individuals may not belong, others just need guidance and encouragement in discovering and developing passion on a personal level. By helping individuals build greater awareness of their passion criteria those individuals who do not fit are more likely to seek opportunities to fulfil their passions elsewhere. For those who simply needed reminding of their passions all parties win: the organisation will benefit from their renewed

enthusiasm and commitment and the individual will have gained a greater sense of meaning and purpose from their role.

- 6.
7. The bottom line is that if organisations want employees to be passionate about their work, they must be passionate about helping them. This is where the winners part from the losers. Many organisations invest more money in fighting fires than in encouraging and developing their people. We all know that the training and development budget is often the first to go when pressures are on, yet curiously money can be found for stress audits, personal grievance costs and recruitment costs. Passionate organisations are proactive not reactive. They view using money for employee development as an investment not a cost.
8. Passionate organisations consist of people who not only know and share their own unique passion drivers but also coach and mentor other organisational members to discover and experience their passions. This may involve sitting down with employees and helping them to explore their passion, and to build greater awareness of the forces that move them and the things that excite them personally. This may also involve helping them to target ways their career development could align with their passions.
9. Passionate organisations walk the talk! Passionate organisations treat their employees as well as their customers. Many organisations do not practise what they preach and this inconsistency dulls the flames of passion. For example, a HR consultancy markets to its clients the value of investing in people, yet does not invest in its own staff, claiming it does not have the financial resources. It also has a huge turnover rate. The exterior image conveyed to clients is one of professional and expertise, yet internally employees work in a call centre environment and they can not even get their own recruiting efforts right.
10. Passionate organisations tailor positions to people not people to positions. Though traditionally organisations have sought to match employees to jobs based on their skills, rarely have they done this based on their passions. This is such a waste of human potential and capability. Investing in your greatest asset requires a willingness to sculpt roles to meet their needs. The results are win-win, and well worth the time and money involved. In this way the organisation fills its ranks with passionate, capable associates who make maximum contributions to its success. For example, Mary was an energetic and committed employable who always made a valuable contribution to the organisation. During her performance review she shared her passion for new ideas which she was actively pursuing in her private life. She admitted that she felt her career had plateaued and not longer had any spark, and she could not see an opportunity to draw on her passion for new green fields roles. Because

they did not want to lose her, together they came up with a plan which would allow Mary to pursue her entrepreneurial passion. This involved giving her greater flexibility over her work day, and reducing her core hours from 5 days to 3. Not only did she bring more of her core passion to her role but the success she gained in her private ventures also brought beneficial publicity and business to the organisation.

11. Passionate organisations give their employees freedom. Passion needs space – it is not something you cage or seek to confine. Passion does not relish too many chains, structures and bureaucracy. The passion-driven organisation views their employees as associates – integral parts of the greater whole. It values their contributions and respects their opinions. This requires freedom to act in accordance with core passions not policies. There is no “canned formula” for passion – it can’t be regulated. As long as the members share the core purpose of the organisation, all efforts will be concentrated on achieving that end. Passionate organisations trust their employees to arrive at the end goal. Lack of trust and freedom is a major barrier to passion.

## Some other tools and strategies to help you build more passion into your workplaces:

### Passion Seminars and Workshops:

Want to inject more passion and energy into your organisation. Contact is about our inspiring and entertaining passion seminars and workshops. These uniquely tailored workshops will help to reenergize and refocus your organisations. Some of our most popular workshops include:

- Stress Busting and building passion
- Strategic planning
- Team building and enhancing passion

### Career Coaching

Help individuals build greater awareness of their passion determinants and career paths by offering personal career coaching tailored to meet their unique needs and passion drivers. One-to-one or group coaching available.

### The Passion Pack

The Passion Pack is an inspirational anytime, self-development resource designed to help people to identify and live their passions both within work settings and their wider lives. It consists of 40 inspirational cards which present 40 “bite size” strategies and tips for injecting more passion into work and life. Suitable for use with individuals and groups to facilitate greater awareness of passion determinants.

### Contact us:

For further information on any of the above approaches please contact:

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