

Career Savvy: Keeping and Transforming Your Job

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At a certain point on your life you realize that you aren't the person figuring out the JCL anymore or the person writing the oh-so-elegant code for an automated code generator, but you are somehow in a never-ending conference call marking time while the project management team goes through an interminable checklist with way too many acronyms.

Denise's book has a transformative method to solve that boredom. You can keep and transform your career in place by knowing yourself and your career better and/or you can also transform completely out of your current career into a new career. Both require thinking hard about where you want to go, what makes you happy, how to manage upwards by understanding what your manager needs from you and how to feed your management team by understanding what's in it for them, among many other facets of the transformation thought process.

Within her book are sprinkled many small case studies. You may see yourself in them.....

- The person who worked nights and weekends and assumed that people were noticing;
- The person who had great technical skills but didn't provide value to the corporation;
- The person who didn't want to point out their accomplishments as they may be seen as bragging;
- The person who was chosen to get coffee although they were leading the meeting.

These case studies work well as you can see the behaviors that need remediation and the steps taken to remediate those behaviors.

There are also various lists of solutions throughout the book. There is a list on how to manage stress, another on assessing your risk and exposure for a layoff, and many more! These lists are great to think about...they engender a lot of thought about your position and your ability to change.

Note that given Denise's technical background, she provides a lot of advice to the person with great technical skills that wants to move sideways or upwards in the corporation. (Look for the section where a "geek flag" is flying!)

Denise's book is unlike other career books as there are very concrete items that you can use right away. For example, the section "Invest in Yourself" that

contains the idea of paying yourself forward in your career. I immediately implemented a self-learning program to utilize commute time consisting of podcasts, reading materials, and lectures.

In addition, I also started doing the weekly status reports. This had an interesting effect. The act of having to fill out the status reports keeps my major two goals over the next two years on course. I can see, through my every other week status, when I'm making progress on those goals and when I could have done better.

The Managing Stress section was useful as well. I finally gave myself permission to go to the gym and justified it by thinking that a stressed out person is not going to make her goals at work. I stopped feeling guilty about it!

This book would be great as a gift as well for the upcoming holiday season. The section on "Managing your Brand with Technology." Many employers do (as well as many other people) is google, facebook, and youtube current and prospective employees. Enough said.

The end game here is to find the intersection between what you love to do and a job that allows you to do that. Denise talks about the internal and external struggles of transformation and how to get to that perfect spot in your life. While we may not reach nirvana tomorrow, the journey, with Denise's help, is a lot clearer and a lot more fun.