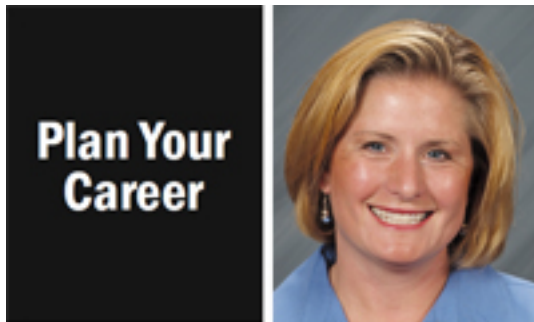


Job routine can bring rewards

Written by Julie Desmond
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By Julie Desmond
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This is going to be the most boring article in the paper today. And worth it.

Dali has been complaining lately. She says she is easily distracted, catching herself gazing out the window, taking longer smoke breaks and fighting back the yawns all afternoon. Dali likes her job – is glad to have it – but some days it's hard to see past the daily grind to know where her hard work will take her.

Most jobs involve some level of routine. Accountants know the routines of month-end; major league pitchers know practice makes perfect. If Dali is feeling a little ennui in her job, it might be that she is reasonably good at it, and the work no longer demands a high level of attention.

The key to keeping your days interesting and yourself awake is to track and measure your activity. How many invoices have you reconciled? How many pitches have you thrown? How many pizzas have you delivered today?

I'm a big fan of scoreboards. For Dali, we created a scoreboard that tracked her daily numbers, just as they are right now. Then we imagined the upside of expanding on the routine she has already created for herself. Think: better, smarter, faster. Can she discipline herself to reach hourly goals which become daily achievements? If the routine is good and the scoreboard is good, achieving more is simply a matter of staying where she is, having the discipline to do one more round before she takes that break, or adding one more activity before she even thinks about the spring weather outside.

Boredom can be a reward. It allows you to step up your activity level and challenge yourself to become more engaged in your work. The routine is intact, but now your attention is focused and your aim is to stretch yourself, to reach bigger goals and to attain the rewards that are waiting for you.

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