

## **THE POWER OF CHOICE by David Finney**

Was there a time when you once said 'one day I am going to .....

' and then didn't get round to do whatever it was you said you were going to? Maybe that that day has now come; when we set ourselves goals we face an interesting dilemma: do we make the goal small that it can be easily achieved or do we make it so large that it feels too big to conquer? When facing a career crossroads, there are numerous things to consider. In selecting and defining our goals we should observe the 7 Wonders of Achievement:

- 1) Everything starts with a conversation and so the quality of that conversation determines everything
- 2) The path to the goal can be just as much fun as achieving the goal itself (if not more so)
- 3) The journey can be divided into landmarks (achievable chunks) which can help to reduce the size of the end goal and also help us navigate
- 4) The goal should be at a rough mid-point between 'stretch' and 'panic' - so that we feel challenged but not overwhelmed
- 5) The goal should be SMART (specific; measureable; achievable; relevant; time-bound)
- 6) The goal should be aligned to personal values and attuned to emotional needs
- 7) The greatest power a human being has is the Power of Choice and that we should never forget that there is nothing that we ever 'have' to do.

That first conversation might be with a boss, a prospective employer, a friend or a loved one. Sometimes the most important conversation we have is the one we have with ourselves. How do you communicate with yourself? Do you treat yourself fairly? Do you tell yourself the truth? Do you encourage yourself? Do you give yourself enough positive feedback?

Think about your current job. There are 4 cornerstones to job satisfaction:

COMMUNITY –	to feel that I am part of an interacting group
WORTH –	to feel that I am heard, appreciated and valued
INSPIRATION –	to feel I am challenged and motivated into action
GROWTH –	to feel that I am continually learning and developing

Mark each cornerstone out of 10 in terms of your current job satisfaction. What are the ratings telling you about where you need to go? Maybe there is more that you can get from your current role without moving on at all. Now imagine you are looking at a choice of career paths; going forward what is going to be most important to you in your next job. When someone reaches the height of excellence in a particular area, the logical and sequential step is often to move into management; but is it always the right choice?

Managerial roles come with much reward and sometimes with equal amounts of stress. They also have a habit of moving someone too far away from what they really loved about their previous role. And so it's a question of balance and how that can be best achieved. A good exercise is to conduct some 'appreciative inquiry' whereby you take a mental walk across all of the jobs you have ever held and think of only what was good about them for a few minutes. What aspects of your career do you need to keep and which do you need to reintroduce? Or would you like to create a completely new career path. You have the power of choice, doesn't it feel great?

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