

FOCUS ON VOCABULARY AND LANGUAGE

The answer, however, may give us only *a fleeting snapshot* of that person at a particular time and place. It is fairly common in social situations to ask a person you meet, “What do you do?” But knowing what a person does for a living (her *job* or *occupation*) may give an incomplete picture (*a fleeting snapshot*) of a person. In general, a person’s job does not define who that person really is.

Work and Life Satisfaction

The third group views their work as a *calling*. A *calling* is work that is perceived as a vocation or avocation; it is a worthwhile and gratifying activity—not merely a means to earn money (a job). A *calling* is also not seen as a way to pursue career advancement through promotion, for example (*a rung on a ladder leading to increasingly better positions*). Those who view their work as a *calling* feel more satisfied, fulfilled, and socially useful.

. . . *wrapped up in a project* . . . This means to be totally absorbed in a task and to experience a focused state of engagement with little awareness of self or time (*flow*). **Flow** has been observed in many people from many countries, in young people (those in their *teen years*) and in older individuals (those in their *golden years*), all from a variety of backgrounds.

They *beeped* people at random intervals . . . To learn more about the concept of *flow*, researchers used pagers to randomly signal (*beep*) participants, who were then asked to report what they were doing and how they were feeling. Participants who were engaged in purposeful activities reported more positive emotions and *flow* than those who were idle and doing nothing much (*while passive*).

Close-Up: Finding Your Own Flow

Top performers are “*rarely well rounded*” (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001, p. 26). A *well-rounded* person has few or no areas of weakness and tends to be good at most things. Successful and fulfilled people do not give much time to trying to improve flaws or failings (to *correcting their weaknesses*). Instead, they attempt to enhance and refine (*sharpen*) their existing skills or natural abilities (thus, they are “*rarely well rounded*”).

Motivating Achievement

Grit

By their early twenties, top violinists have *fiddled away* 10,000 hours of their life practicing. Figuratively speaking, to *fiddle away* means to waste or while away time. But literally, as in the case of those who play the violin (*fiddle*), it means to spend many hours practicing on the instrument. Daily disciplined practice and working hard to achieve goals leads to high levels of accomplishment. These high achievers (*superstars*) use whatever talent and creativity they have (*a teaspoon of inspiration*) together with much disciplined effort (*a gallon of perspiration*) to reach great levels of accomplishment. This enthusiastic and fervent devotion and commitment (*passionate dedication*) to an ambitious long-term goal is called *grit*.

Leadership

Harnessing Strengths

Leaders who excel spend more time developing and *drawing out* talents that already exist. Successful leaders focus more on revealing and encouraging (*drawing out*) natural abilities and aptitudes in others than on trying to develop or create talents in those who do not possess them. Focusing on people's weaknesses and trying to fix their problems is counterproductive (*it can be a waste of time*).

Choosing an Appropriate Leadership Style

Effective leaders of laboratory groups, work teams, and large corporations tend to be *self-confidant*. They have "charisma," . . . Competent managers who lead groups of people in an effective and productive manner typically exhibit an ability to rely on their own capacities (they are *self-confidant*). They have the ability to project their vision of what needs to be done, communicate clearly and simply, and inspire others to follow them (*they have "charisma"*). This type of *transformational leadership* motivates others to want to belong to the group and to feel a strong commitment to its goal.

Harley-Davidson management and employees worked together to drive their company *from rags to riches*. Because this motorcycle company was in financial trouble (it was *struggling*), in 1987 it began to change its traditional management style in favor of one that included all employees in the company's decision making process. This was a successful move for both management and workers (a *win-win solution*) and the company went from near bankruptcy to being very profitable (it went *from rags to riches*).