

## ***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 mission; it is a worthwhile and gratifying activity—not merely a means to earn money (*a job*). A *calling* is also not necessarily seen as a way to pursue career advancement through promotion (*a rung on a ladder leading to increasingly better options*). Those who view their work as a *calling* feel more satisfied, fulfilled, and socially useful.

Can you recall being *in a zoned-out flow state* while playing a video game or text messaging? To be *zoned-out* means to be totally absorbed in some activity to such an extent that you have little or no awareness of other external stimuli. One example of this mental condition involved two airline pilots. These pilots were concentrating so much on their laptop computers (*they were in a zoned-out flow state*) that they did not pay attention to the instructions from the air traffic controllers (*the Earth-to-pilot messages from their control tower*) and flew 150 miles past the runway. As a result, they were dismissed from their positions (*lost their jobs*).

. . . *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.

#### *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 (*top performers*) 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—they do not try to be good at everything (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*).

### *Setting Specific, Challenging Goals*

Better *to have one's nose to the grindstone than one's eye on the ultimate prize* (Houser-Marko & Sheldon, 2008). The expression "*to have one's nose to the grindstone*" means to work really hard on a task. When working on a project, one may experience both productive and relatively easy periods as well as problems and obstacles (*a task's ups and downs*). To maintain motivation, it is better to exert oneself (*to have one's nose to the grindstone*) and to strive to achieve measurable objectives and immediate (*short-term*) goals than it is to focus on distant goals (*to have an eye on the ultimate prize*). When people state explicit goals, along with *subgoals* and *implementation plans*, they are more likely to succeed.

### *Choosing an Appropriate Leadership Style*

*Effective leaders* of laboratory groups, work teams, and large corporations tend to be *self-confident*. They have "*charisma*," . . . Competent managers who lead groups of people in a capable and productive manner (*effective leaders*) typically exhibit characteristics such as personal magnetism, allure, and charm in their approach to leadership (*they have "charisma"*). They also display an ability to rely on their own capacities (*they are self-confident*). These traits enable them to combine goal-based vision, clear communication, and optimism in a way that inspires others to follow. This type of *transformational leadership* motivates others to want to belong to the group and to feel a strong commitment to its goals.