



Ten Tips for Coping with a Job You Hate

...Even Though God has People There for you to Reach

by Kurt von Schleicher

Having a job you hate is never an easy thing to deal with, but sometimes you just need to grin and bear it until another opportunity comes along. Whether you're currently stuck because you just have to pay the bills or are holding out for the next place of employment—the work you actually desire—here are some things you can do to help you get through the day with a good attitude. The Apostle Paul a tentmaker addressed this area of attitude saying, ***“Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing;[fn1] he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross. Because of this, God raised him up”*** (Phil. 2: 4-9 nlt).¹

First off, if you are not a real Christian, come to Christ today, repent, receive His forgiveness and become born again. Nothing is more important than that! If you are already a Christian, I want to encourage you to surrender all to God, praise Him (even if you don't feel like it) that you even have a job when many only wish they did. And start to trust Him with all the details of your future. The Lord is truly concerned for you, for your career, for those on your jobsite and He is trying to develop Christ-like character in you so you will be an effective witness for Him. The Bible says, ***“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand will save me. The LORD will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever”*** (Ps. 138: 7-8 nkjv). What God expects from each one of us is full cooperation with His Spirit not only at work, but everywhere we go.

Cherished Christian, realize that maintaining the right thoughts, words, motives and attitudes are so important and you alone are responsible before the Lord for your inner meditations. Most Christians fail to realize how incredibly important their inner motivations are, but the attitudes of the

heart really matter to God! What is inside of you and me—what you and I really believe inside and think about will eventually manifest outwardly in our attitudes and decisions. And this in turn can affect your witnessing (fishing) productivity and your career future. I heard my pastor, Charles Swindoll, say this: *“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, the education, the money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes.”*

Realize how vital it is for you to be a consistently good worker with the right attitude and also be a person of your word. See the importance of your (non-spooky, non-religious) prayer ministry at work, as you lovingly target the unbelievers who might not even see that they have a spiritual need yet. Yes, this active workplace prayer-life shouldn't at all mean that you become distracted from doing your best work, or you go around spouting King James type of language in your prayers out loud, in front of the other workers or bosses. This doesn't impress anyone. Please remember to do your prayer and Bible study homework before you go in to work each day as well. Have you felt offended or annoyed at work lately? The Bible says **“Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble”** (Ps. 119:165 nkjv)... **“Nothing shall offend them”** (kjv). God promises genuine success and real prosperity to righteous workers who take the time to meditate upon His law day and night and then are careful to apply what they are reading (see Psalm 1, Joshua 1).²

Remember, every Christian is a fulltime minister even if they are not paid to be a vocational minister. No “calling” is inferior to another calling. You will do well to make sure that you are applying yourself properly with your own

***When Noah sailed the waters blue
He had his troubles same as you;
For forty days he drove the ark
Before he found a place to park.***

calling, rather than mere copying or paying inordinate attention to some other minister's calling. The plan for them is different that the plan for you. Some Christians work in one place for their whole

lifetime which seems to be increasingly rare to find these days, and some Christians are called to work in different places doing different work throughout their lifetime but each one needs to view themselves as a missionary of sorts, wherever they work. Each one needs to work not for themselves, but for the glory of God. Paul was a hardworking tentmaker by

trade and he said, ***“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God”*** (1 Cor. 10:31-32 nkjv). He challenged other Christian workers with these words: ***“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ”*** (Col 3:22-24 kjv). If we work at McDonalds or at the Ritz, we are to serve Christ, not ourselves and we need to do our work wisely without poor judgment or compromise.

Realize that God is totally sovereign and in control of your life. Sure you have a part to play as you yield to the Holy Spirit—you have steps to take that God won't take for you, in fulfilling your calling. The apostle Paul said, ***“Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things”*** (Phil. 4:5-8 nkjv).

Now Here's My Tips:

1. Set weekly practical goals for yourself. Sometimes it is easier to get through the day when you can keep your eye on the prize. Even if you currently feel like you hate your job, God has a plan for your life

*Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.*

*Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one ever has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.*

*There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you, one by
one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.
—Edgar A. Guest*

and He will tenderly lead you into real fulfillment if you will only do things His way. We in the western world want it our way and everything right now, but give Him time to work. Yes, if you aren't yet sure if you are righteous, "saved" a Christian, then come to the Jesus Christ of the Bible in humility and honesty.³ Do this by getting right with God through confession and faith, turning away from all your wrong doings, making Christ both Lord and Master of your career and life. Then allow Him to help you work smarter, set weekly goals to make your company, boss and coworkers more successful in the good things that they are trying to accomplish. Remember Joseph and with time as you go to work on the dreams of others, God will go to work on the dreams He's given you and at the right time, He will help you find that primo opportunity. One week you might work on sending out five resumes during your off hours or go attend one networking event. Setting God-given spiritual and practical goals that are attained through believing prayer is very cool! And taking the proactive steps—the footwork that God directs you in, to change things will give you something to work towards.

2. Do at least one thing each day to help you reach your goals.

You don't need to cross all your goals off your list every day, but you can chip away daily. We each have limited free time independent from doing the things our boss at work wants us to do, but when you get up in the morning, set a daily objective for yourself and make sure you achieve it. This will give you a sense of accomplishment and keep you feeling good about your progress. But remain obedient and more vertically-oriented (God-ward) than horizontally-orientated (man-ward. See Matt 6:33).

3. Give yourself "alone-with-God-time" before you leave for work.

It's not just about pounding your devotional duties or reading and voicing prayers each day, take time to listen to the Lord. Going into a job you hate will be worse if you get to the office feeling rushed, stressed and frazzled. Set aside some moments of solitude each morning to talk to God and hear from God (as you read and meditate upon passages in the Bible). Develop a

positive morning devotional time. Treat yourself to a latte, get up early enough to meet with the Lord and then read the paper, or just set your alarm to play upbeat, contemporary, Christian music when you wake up. Improving your mornings with your best Friend can do wonders for your afternoons. He really does love you and won't leave you in a lurch.

"Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is a factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude."

—William James

4. Create a diversion for yourself in the office. Does being in your office make you yearn for the outdoors? Are the incessant ringing phones driving you batty? Has it been hard to maintain a positive, good attitude? Pray a silent prayer and then do something to brighten your mood while you're at work. Take in a tropical picture of an island and use it as your screensaver. I keep one on my desktop. Buy yourself a "clean joke of the day" desk calendar. Plug headphones into your computer or bring your I Pod to work. Rock out a bit with the band DC Talk. Go out for lunch.

5. Use your time to develop your skills. Hating your job doesn't mean you can't learn new skills. Use your time to make yourself a better candidate down the road. If your company offers training courses, take advantage of them. Use downtime to learn something new on your computer. Pick up a good management development book and read it at lunch. Turn this job into an opportunity for self improvement for the glory of God. He has an important mission for you to accomplish through His power, but first you need to get prepared. Join a solid Bible teaching church; take some college classes in your spare time. Quit wasting time watching so much banal entertainment on TV.

6. Blow off some steam vertically with proper respect. Most people have an activity that helps them unwind and get rid of tension. I say, earn your PHD—pray hard daily, telling God exactly how you feel. Listen, He can handle it. He cares about how you feel. Just don't let how you feel determine your course of action. Remember to keep your priorities in order. Jesus has first called you to Himself and then to wisely fish for people even at work. Go for a run after work, go swimming on your lunch hour, or take a nice long prayer-walk with your wife. My wife and I usually take turns praying and fellowshiping on walks like these. We simply talk about ways to grow spiritually and mentally. Call out the names of your coworkers and customers to God. Put this time on your schedule so you will have something to look forward to every day, or every other day.

7. Take an appropriate break. To make up for your office misery (or annoyance), find little ways of treating yourself that are not self-centered. I'm not promoting PMA theology as a way of life, but find some ways to get your mind back on the good things that will cheer you up. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.⁴ Buy an edifying book to read from CBD.⁵ Treat yourself to some good sorbet or low fat ice cream. Rent a cool but clean movie. Go buy a classy new interview suit if you need one and can afford it. Plan your next vacation near a beautiful beach and a healthy Bible teaching mega-church and visit

both. That would motivate anyone. Find out what really builds you up and then do your part to build, no matter what craziness is going on in the world around you.⁶

8. Maintain your performance. It is important to continue to do your work as unto the Lord rather than unto people. God is watching you. If you have given your life to Jesus, you are His servant working to build up His Kingdom. So do your work well – with excellence, regardless of your current situation. Set personal performance goals. Then explain the accomplishments He helps you to attain in your future interviews without foolishly bragging on yourself. If it is with a secular company, you certainly want to be careful how you talk about spiritual matters. They might think you've entered a higher dimension of weird. Most interviewers do not want to hear anything about the Jesus Christ who lovingly died on a splintery cross for your sins ...as our substitute punishment and our substitute perfection ...and then physically rose again from the dead. Timing is way important.

9. Keep your bridges in tact. It really is a small world, and you never know when you will run into coworkers from your past. My policy is: Leave as few burned bridges behind you as possible. Don't

Five reasons problems on the horizontal level are inevitable; first, we live in a world of growing complexity, iniquity and diversity; second, without love we interact with flawed sinners and saints; third, we have the wrong attitudes, priorities and focus; forth, we cannot control all the situations and circumstances we face; and fifth, we haven't taken the time to get the broken vertical Relationship fixed and this affects all the other ones!

burn any bridges at your current company because you are feeling unhappy. Maintain your contacts and keep your relationships on a positive note. No matter what, let people know that you genuinely care

about their welfare. You might just need a reference or a good word from one of your colleagues in the future or better yet, you might have the privilege of leading one of them into a personal friendship with the God who made them.

10. Realize that this too shall pass. Things change. Right now, it might seem like you will be stuck in this job/career forever. Keep your chin up, find something to thank God for and remind yourself that He is in charge of your future destiny. Search internal postings for new positions. Start your search for a new job externally. Just do a little

each day if that's all you can do, but never ditch your first love – Jesus Christ. Why live for a mere career or for self?

God knows the plans He has for you, so you can trust Him.

¹ God has a plan for you and your work and His plan is much better than your plan for yourself. You will only know fulfillment in the area of employment if you become a born again Christian and maintain a good attitude. This verse is addressing Christians. It is really not my goal to use Bible verses to pressure you, condemn you or to try and reform you into a better person if you are not a true Christian. Unfortunately, many moral employees committed to PMA go to hell every day.

² James said, ***“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves”*** (Jam. 1:21-22 nkjv).

³ Lots of people throw around these terms not knowing what they really mean saying: *“I’m a Christian and all, but I’m not one of those ‘saved born agains.’”* The truth is that no one can be a real Christian unless they are born again ...unless Jesus has saved them from an unregenerate state of being (See John 3:3 in the Bible).

⁴ See Philippians 4:8 in the NLT version, Christians.

⁵ I don’t endorse all of the books or Bible software programs at CBD, but many are worth the investment and are not expensive (www.christianbook.com Ph 978) 977-5000).

⁶ Make sure that what you are building with agrees with the Bible or it probably won’t be building you up at all. There is no spiritual growth apart from the Word of God.