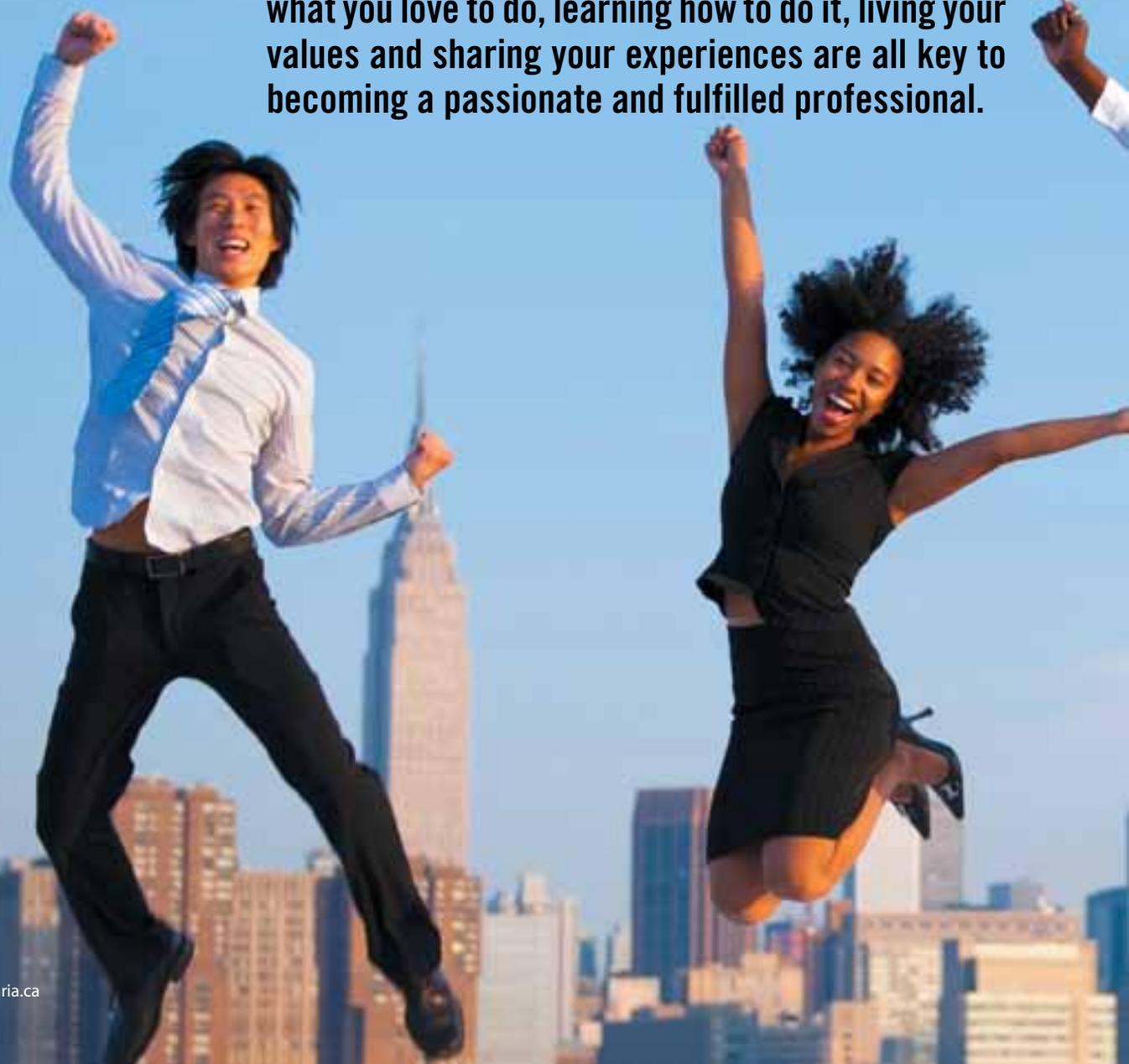


The Passionate Professional

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Knowing the right work for you takes knowing who you are and being clear about what is important to you at that particular moment in time. Identifying what you love to do, learning how to do it, living your values and sharing your experiences are all key to becoming a passionate and fulfilled professional.



“The greatest wisdom is in simplicity. Love, respect, tolerance, sharing, gratitude, forgiveness. It’s not complex or elaborate. The real knowledge is free. It’s encoded in your DNA. All you need is within you. Great teachers have said that from the beginning. Find your heart, and you will find your way.”

—Carlos Barrios, *Mayan elder and Ajq’ij of the Eagle Clan*

Find your heart, and you will find your way...it sounds so simple doesn’t it? How does one go about finding their heart or discovering their passion? What does being passionate really mean? What does it mean to be a passionate professional?

One of the many definitions of passion from merriam-webster.com is “intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction.” Passion is the difference between getting the job done and being exquisite at what you

do. It is the difference between having to, and wanting to. Passion is your motivation – it is your reason for being, giving, sharing, or doing. Passion is more than a feeling or conviction – it is what gets you excited and it is what keeps you engaged.

We have times, much like many of you, we’re sure, that we question what we are really passionate about and if we have indeed found our passion. You may question what you are passionate about from time to time but there are other times when you will be absolutely certain. There are many things we enjoy doing so much that we would rather do them than anything else. Are those our passions? Is it possible to have more than one passion, or to be passionate about more than one thing? What we have come to know about ourselves, and about others as well, is that a job title, an occupational category, or a profession rarely equates to a person’s passion.

Passion is often rooted in a value and that value is the foundation for loving whatever it is you do. What is so important to you that your life would be empty without it? What must you incorporate into everything you do for it to feel right? Living and working with passion is about being true to who you are and doing what is right for you.

A Job You Love

You’ve no doubt heard the saying, “Do what you love and the money will follow.” Has that been true for you? When you are doing something that you are passionate about does the money really matter? Of course, we all need to earn a living but is it possible to be just as happy earning less and being more aligned with our work than earning more and being less aligned? While purpose and passion do not always



neatly equate to a specific job title, occupation or profession they do provide us with the motivation to explore, experience and engage in the world around us and help us connect to meaningful work. People often find themselves in a career crisis when their values do not align with their work. They describe themselves as confused, uncertain, and anxious about their future. They seek answers to questions such as what job is the best job for me; what can I do with my particular education; and how can I transfer my skills into a new occupation or a different

job? These questions are certainly important questions from a practical perspective they rarely get to the source of the confusion, uncertainty or anxiousness. Imagine having a job that more often than not does not feel like work! What would that look like? Confucius said it best: "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Use the questions above as guide to start thinking about your life and work purpose. Envision all the different ways you can live your passion every day – at work, at home, and at play.

Knowing the right work for you takes knowing who you are and being clear about what is important to you at that particular moment in time. When you can identify what it is that is truly important to you, you can start to align your values with work that brings you joy. When your values are not aligned with your work you are not the vision of a passionate professional. A quote by Mark Sanborn sums this up perfectly, "a true professional is not defined by the job he or she does, but how he or she does the job." Knowledge, skills and abilities are important but passion is what gets you active, keeps you engaged, and propels you forward. Mark Sanborn talks about passion as "a daily exercise in self-leadership." Consciously choosing to be passionate is not only personally inspiring and motivating but inspiring and motivating for those around you. When was the last time you engaged in a self-reflection activity and asked yourself the following questions?

- What fires you up, propels you to action, or captivates your interest?
- Where are you your most imaginative and creative?
- How do you prefer to express your ideas?
- When are you your finest and best?
- On what can you expend endless energy?
- Who do you delight in spending time with?

The Passionate HR Professional

Take a few moments to reflect on the very important work you do as an HR professional. Why did you initially choose to work as an HR professional? What keeps you energized and excited about the work you do? How would you like things to be different in the future? People who are passionate about their work think, feel, and act differently than those who are not. What does a passionate professional look like? What does a passionate professional sound like? Can you identify the passionate professionals in your workplace? You might recognize some of these passionate activities and attitudes of the passionate professionals you know, and of yourself. passionate professionals:

- recognize and utilize their unique skills, abilities and contributions
- are dedicated to their work and to being the best that they can be
- welcome and embrace change



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About The Passionate Professional: If your level of energy, excitement, and enthusiasm for your profession isn't where it was early in your career or if you just need a refreshing boost of energy The Passionate Professional is the HRIA Conference session for you. Reassessing of your professional and personal career journey will recharge and reenergize you to become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know! You will revisit the values and the passions that led you to become a passionate professional while challenging and propelling you forward with new intentions for the very important work that you do. It is all about recharging and reenergizing your career.

- are accountable for themselves, their actions, and their reactions
- are positive and solution focused
- demonstrate excellence in everything they do
- provide leadership and engage others to be passionate professionals as well
- make positive choices and project a positive attitude towards work and learning
- share their knowledge, skills and abilities with others
- are energized to make a positive difference every day
- take care of themselves so that they may give their best every day

What other activities and attitudes can you add to this list? Do you have specific examples that demonstrate your passion? Being a passionate professional is not something that you turn on when you get to work and off when you go home. It is a way of being and a way of doing. If you want to be more passionate and if you want to engage others to be more passionate these six quick tips will get you in the passionate professional mindset:

- Feel joy and express excitement – do more of what you enjoy and less of what you don't. Share your experiences with others and find ways to make your work and workplace more fulfilling.
- Try new things – your passion will grow as you expand your experiences. Learning is a great way to grow your passion.
- Be attentive to your environment – what peaks and holds your attention? What

drains your energy? Where do you like spending time? An environmental analysis will allow you to develop a strategy for being more engaged with your work.

- Ask questions – lots and lots of questions. Curiosity will expand your perspective and provide you with opportunities to learn about something that you might be passionate about.
- Forgive yourself – don't be too hard on yourself when things don't go the way you expected or hoped. Give yourself permission to make mistakes and to learn from those mistakes.
- Share your gifts and talents – why not teach others about what you enjoy. Sharing your gifts and talents in a work setting can be a great way to develop team capacity.

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."

—Henry David Thoreau ○

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