

Job Judo

Go With The Energy

By Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans



Bored with your job? Why not consider job judo? The essence of judo is to use the momentum of the other person to increase your own energy and effectiveness. Build on the energy that comes from doing what you love, and you'll find there's a good chance that you can enhance and energize your work. And, if you like *most* aspects of the work (the people, your boss, the tasks you perform), it's definitely worth a try. Job judo helps you to find a way to get the growth, challenge, or renewal you seek without leaving your current job.

Pay attention to your energy level. Be aware of when it wanes and when it surges. Think about what causes the difference.

Jill had zero interest in another round of construction project scheduling and budgeting. But then she saw a demonstration of a sophisticated computer program that schedules and budgets for you if you just plug in numbers. Intrigued, she shared her excitement with her boss and explained that it would free her up for more important tasks. He agreed to send her to training. Now she spends half her time trouble-shooting on-site, instead of working with the numbers. It's far more interesting—she's excited again.

You might be surprised at the enrichment opportunities you can find, right in your own backyard. Here's another example:

Jack thrives on variety—in life and at work. If he's been doing the same thing in the same way for six months, he's ready for a change. Instead of leaving the organization this time, he decided to talk with his boss about ways to spice up his work. His boss has supported him with job rotation with others on the team who were also interested. Now they can all serve as backup for each other any time that it's needed.

Think about what energizes you. Then find a place to invest that energy. Here are some examples:

If you're energized by:

Go with the energy by finding:

INDEPENDENCE	Projects/tasks you can manage with little supervision
FEEDBACK	Peers, internal customers or a boss willing to give you the straight story about something specific.
CHALLENGE	A chance to do something that will really stretch you (speaking to senior leaders, chairing a task force, doing work in a new area).



CUSTOMER CONTACT	Ways to interface more with internal or external customers. Take them to lunch, troubleshoot with them, attend their conferences
TEAMWORK	A group that is solving a work problem or form a team. Consider a sports team as well.
LEARNING	Someone who will teach you something new. Consider a class outside of work, surf the Internet, read a book.
VARIETY	A way to vary your work schedule, place of work, the tasks you perform day to day. Even reconsider the route you take to work.
LEADERSHIP	Someone who needs and wants mentoring or coaching. Consider opportunities inside or outside work.
DECISION-MAKING	A way to have input about work processes before they are cast in stone. Volunteer to be on a decision-making committee. Join a community organization—take your pick.

When you think you have to move to another position or another organization to feel energized about your work, think again. In today's work environment there is almost always something new to learn, another approach to try, or a way to rekindle enthusiasm. Don't wait for someone to hand you an exciting project or something new to learn. Try job judo. Find what most energizes you, decide how to build on it, then negotiate to do that more in your current job.

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