



How to Find Engaging Work You're Great At

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A tale of two executives

I remember hearing a story when I was younger about an aerospace executive who detested his job. He had been doing the same job for years, and he hated it.

This became very evident when you asked him about work. He could be in the middle of talking about any other topic—sports, family, the weather—but once

someone asked him about work, his entire countenance soured; he became distant and guarded, and the conversation suddenly became much less pleasant.

While he probably did his job just fine, there was definitely no love for it any longer.

In contrast, consider an executive I was recently coaching.

He had just been given another team, doubling his scope and responsibility. This new team was in a new functional area for him. His reaction was one of excitement! He recognized that his skills were going to be stretched and his effectiveness challenged. He liked the learning curve ahead of him, especially as he could improve his ability to coach his team, manage his calendar better, and set clear direction for the disparate groups under his responsibility.

These two tales of two very different executives illustrate common scenarios leaders find themselves in.

The two scenarios leaders face

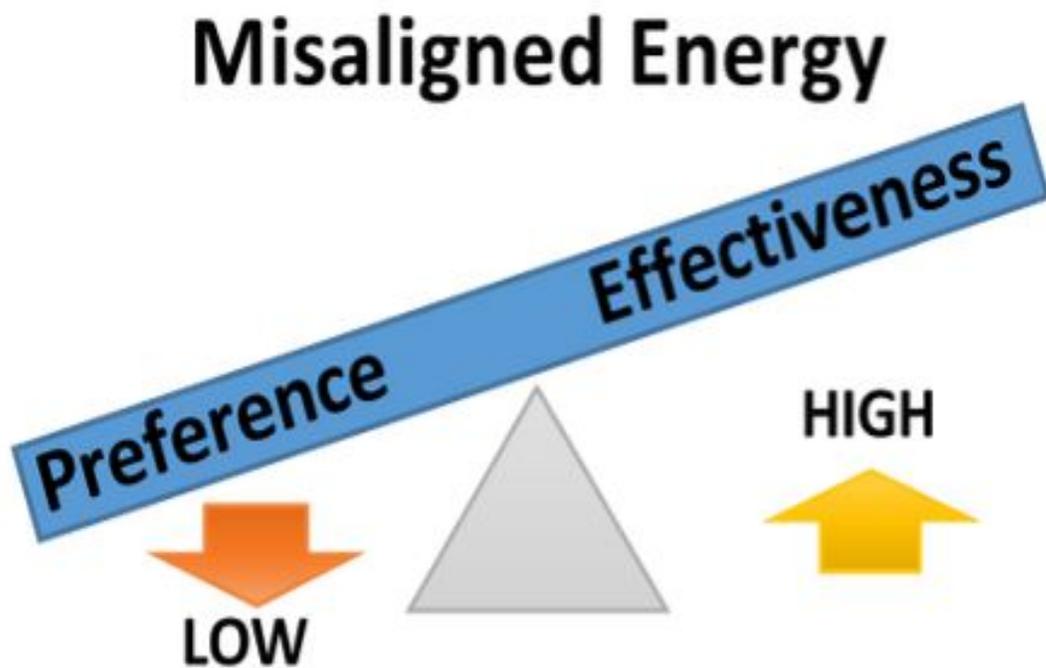
The first scenario is when someone's preference for the job is significantly less their ability to effectively perform their job. They may have the technical competence to do it, but they no longer have the passion or engagement for it.

Misaligned energy

This scenario is called "Misaligned Energy," and leads to people not showing up and offering their best selves in helping their team and the organization.

It can be a very challenging situation because the individual has usually displayed operational excellence in the past, but is now no longer challenged or feeling supported.

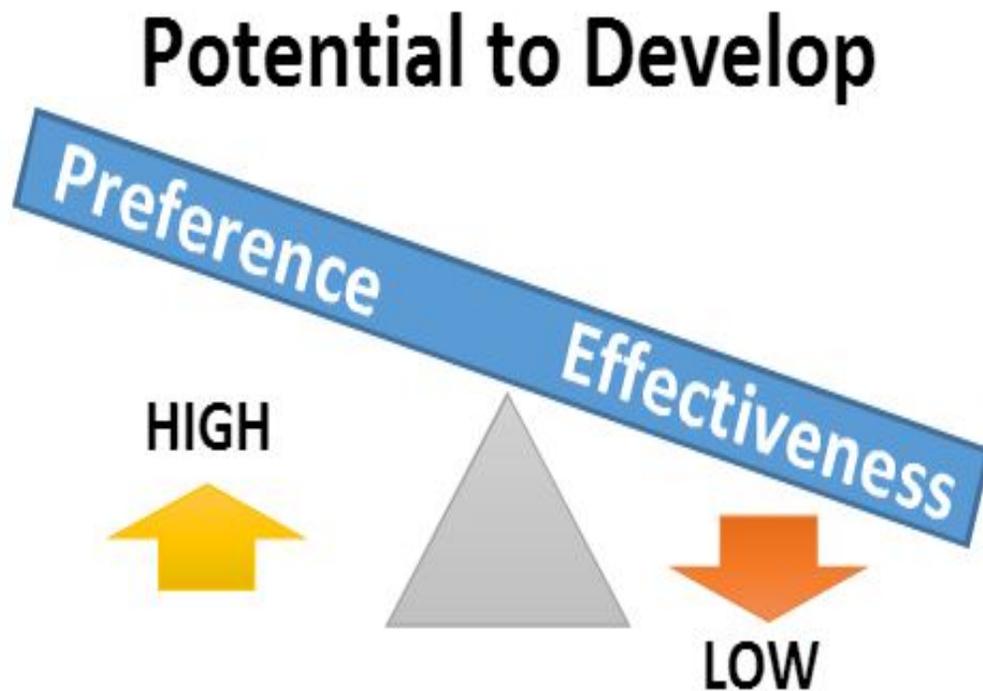
Their energy—where they get their strength—is absent from their job. The solution for this scenario is candid conversation and introspection. The person is not being served well, nor are they serving the organization well. If nothing changes, their disengagement may grow and negatively impact the team.



Potential to Develop

The second scenario occurs when someone's interest in doing the job is greater than their ability to complete it. In other words, they may not have all of the skills to be highly effective, but they sure want to be.

This situation is called "Potential to Develop." The leader's energy is focused on improving and gaining new skills, trying new approaches, and considering new ideas. They are eager and hungry to learn. The solution for this scenario is for targeted development and support. This is the ideal situation for training, mentoring, and on-the-job training.



Regardless of which situation you or one of your leaders might be in, it is important to look at how your effectiveness relates to your preference for doing the job.

Why it matters:

Understanding how those two critical variables align or not will enable you to find the right fit and development to optimize your leadership contributions to your team and organization while being honest with yourself.

How to discover and align your preferences and your effectiveness

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