

What kind of career animal are you?

We all want different things from our work ... for some it's a simple necessity to pay the bills, for others our job helps define who we are. Our career motivations influence what we expect from our work. When businesses respond to an economic downturn, the resultant changes can cause an emotional reaction (see last month's article) and can reduce our career satisfaction. Experienced career coach Michelle Lucas from greenfields here in Newbury, identifies 5 different perspectives on a career each characterised by an animal. Take the quiz at: <http://www.coachu4success.co.uk/resources/QuizYourself.htm> to find out which animal you are and below you will find some clues on how you might maintain your satisfaction when changes at work affect you.

Peacocks need to be recognised as important by their organisation. So in tougher times when company cars and snazzy conferences abroad are scaled back, these people will feel less valued by their organisation. To cope, take a wider view and remember that these cut backs are happening across the board – and whilst it might feel personal it really isn't!

Dogs need a sense of belonging and security. Impending redundancies and cuts are likely to be particularly unsettling for them. Take a look at the statistics though ... it is only the minority of employees who are made redundant. If your performance is good, try not to worry too much, indeed your future may even be protected as a result of the cost reductions.

Kestrels are free spirits who like to have control over what they do. They are likely to struggle when they are not involved in decisions. A simple coping mechanism is to find a way of getting their views listened to, e.g. joining an employee representative body. However, if the worst happens Kestrels are most likely to turn the opportunity to their advantage and set up business on their own.

Bears seek to achieve a sense of balance between work and home. The challenge is therefore not to bring anxiety over changes at work, back into the home. Having time to offload is important and having plenty of leisure activities can help distract them whilst keeping clear boundaries between work and home. If a manager expects too much, it can help to organise a one-to-one meeting to remind them of what flexibility you are able to offer them.

Cats are driven by their curiosity, and have a low boredom threshold. If they are in the inner circle and are involved in organisational changes then the current upheaval in the economy can prove an interesting time for them. However if they're not and the business has little appetite to explore new things then frustration is inevitable. The solution usually lies in their ability to channel their curiosity into thinking of ways to help the company from the inside e.g. cost savings or process improvements.

Whatever animal you are, recognising what drives and frustrates you is important if you are to make sense of changes. Try talking things through with someone who has a different career motivation to you – their view of the world will give you a completely different perspective.

If you would like some help to gain perspective on your career motivation why not organise a free consultation contact Michelle direct on Michelle@greenfieldsconsultancy.co.uk