



Sue Morem: Finding your passion can be hard work

Sue Morem

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QI am a 20-year-old student. All my friends have passions for their fields or careers, but I don't know what I might enjoy doing. I feel lost; I just can't find my passion. How do I find it?

Looking for passion

Sue says: You are young; although you envy your friends, there are far more people your age who feel as you do. Take some of the pressure off of yourself; while you are a student, your job is to learn and explore. You are making more progress than you think; each time you identify something you know you don't want, you've moved closer to finding what you do want.

If you haven't already, talk with your counselor and seek the services of the student career center. Read, take personality profiles, volunteer, try new things, take a break from school if necessary and talk with a variety of people. This will help you identify your interests and strengths.

Be patient. It might take a while to find your niche, so enjoy each experience along the way. You might just find your passion when and where you least expect it.

QI am an independent consultant. I've been working with a client who is a business owner, and I've decided that I do not want to work for him any longer. I am not sure how to go about resigning. Am I obligated to give him an explanation for why I am quitting?

Laura

Sue says: I am not sure how to answer your question. Technically, the answer is no -- you don't have to offer an explanation for your departure. However, if you are asking because you are not sure what your client might expect and what is appropriate under the circumstances, then my answer would be yes, you should provide an explanation. It is expected and also is the right thing to do, especially if you hope to preserve your reputation and leave on a high note, which I highly recommend.

In addition, the client probably will want to know why, and, while you don't have to give detailed reasons, you should be able to provide a reasonable explanation.

There are a number of valid reasons for making such a change, and as an independent consultant, it is your prerogative. People often decide to change goals or devote more time to other interests -- these are

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legitimate and common reasons for change.

However, if you have particular issues with this client, you need to decide whether you want to address them before you leave. It's important to be honest; however, the more specific you are, the greater the chance this client will take your departure personally.

As an independent consultant, I am sure you realize the importance of good relationships and the value of a strong network. There is no point in destroying your relationship with this person or leaving on a sour note.

Although it might be easier to announce your departure in an e-mail or memo, you are better off speaking directly with your client. E-mail is unreliable; you might never know whether it arrived or whether it was read. Too often letters and e-mail can be misconstrued and impersonal. It is best to deliver the news personally, and then to follow up with a written document.

Sue Morem is a Twin Cities consultant on career and workplace issues. If you have questions or opinions for her, you can send mail to P.O. Box 41115, Plymouth MN 55441, send e-mail to sue@suemorem.com or visit her Web page at <http://www.suemorem.com>. She can't make individual replies to all respondents.

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