

“I'm Not Happy & I Want Out!”

At work, make the grass greener on *your* side of the fence.

By Christine Gust

Here's the most common question I get from new clients as we begin working together to create more satisfaction at work:

I'm thinking about changing careers, or at least jobs, to something that is less stressful and more satisfying and enjoyable. Based on my skills and interests of . . . , What would you suggest? Where should I start?

You're not alone. Regardless of their profession or employer, many people are so stressed, sick, frustrated, bored, and/or dissatisfied with their work that leaving their job seems to be the only way out of a challenging situation. It's tempting, especially when another job seems to offer all the things you're not experiencing now. But, before you turn in your resignation, I want you to consider:

Is the grass always greener on the other side of the fence?

What if, instead, you could make the grass greener on *your* side?

First, I want to tell you that the dissatisfaction you feel is your ally. It's a clue that something is calling for your attention. You can ignore it by working harder; numb it with comfort foods, excessive alcohol, or other unhealthy behaviors; or escape it by changing jobs. While these choices may temporarily suppress *your* dissatisfaction, they don't get to the source of the discontent. If you've ever found yourself in a new job facing the same issues once again, you know what I mean.

Often there's a quicker, easier, and simpler way to get to the root of your frustration. The opportunity can be right in your own front yard.

Try this. Ask yourself, “*What do I want that's “over there” (in another job or career) that I don't have here?*” Make a list. Make sure the items you're including are genuinely



a priority to you.

As an example, while managing Human Resources in a large company, I dreamed of becoming a massage therapist because I wanted:

- a quiet, welcoming office
- a job where I wouldn't be sitting at my desk all day
- to contribute to the well-being of others

...just to name a few.

Now look at your list. Ask yourself, “*What can I start doing now to have more of what I want right where I am?*”

For example, I realized:

- I could create a quiet, welcoming office simply by changing the look of my office and closing my door when I worked on projects.
- I could stand up while talking on the phone and take walking breaks more frequently.
- I could contribute to the well-being of my present co-workers and employees by creating a fun, collaborative atmosphere and offering healthy food choices for lunch meetings as a start.

With these simple changes, I began creating the environment and meaning I was searching for without having to leave my job. It was simpler, quicker, and easier! After repeating this process a few times, ultimately I created the job that I wanted. And I kept all my benefits while avoiding the stress that accompanies new endeavors.

Where can you start? Pick one or two items from your list. What changes can you make *today* or *this week*. Make them. See how that changes your experience right where you are. Now does the grass look any greener on your side of the fence?

Many people switch jobs, only to find out later that the grass isn't all that greener on the other side. Practice how you want to work in your current job. You may be surprised at what you can do. Then, if you decide to switch jobs or careers, you can make a clear decision knowing you've done everything you can where you are. And you'll already have healthy habits so you can thrive in your new endeavor. **AL**



Christine Gust has worked with entrepreneurs, employees, and senior managers. With more than 17 years experience, an MBA, and a Doctor of Naturopathy, she combines sound business practices and common sense principles of healthy living to teach you how to excel and enjoy work-- without sacrificing yourself. Visit www.christinegust.com.