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# POSSIBILITIES

unleash your imagination

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### Sweeping streets for happiness.

An article that appeared recently in the Globe & Mail reported a study done in the U.S. about job satisfaction. The "best overall" job, according to this survey, is "Financial Planner." I certainly feel fortunate to be in the "best job" and all, and yet I am strangely saddened by thoughts of all those individuals (apparently a great number of them) who are doing something else and wishing they were me.

The short article went on to say that Financial Planner received top marks due to "making lots of money and getting plenty of time off." I could say plenty about those aspects of this job, but let me rather note that job "satisfaction" doesn't really appear to be the issue. (The best jobs are apparently those that provide us with the most time and money to **escape** from the job.)

Unfortunately our society promotes the idea that a job is nothing more than a means to an end. We measure our jobs in dollars and cents, and time. Our focus is on taking what the job takes from us - our time, and what we can take from the job - money. Is this the best way to measure such a significant part of our lives? What if we look at our jobs from the point of view of giving? Let's assume for the moment, that the fundamental

building block of our society, greed, is in fact not our core motivator. What if our secret desire is really to give, to contribute, to make a difference?

Think of someone who seems to operate from this point of view. It may be the obvious "givers" like the pastor at your church, a benevolent doctor, a school teacher, but could it also be a store clerk who smiles, truly helps you out, and leaves you feeling wonderful? Could it be the caretaker who always has a joke and never complains about the endless job of keeping your world clean? Could it be the office worker who tirelessly and endlessly does more than a fair share of the work, all the while cheerfully supporting the goals of the team and boosting morale in an invisible and yet miraculous way? Of course it can.

One of the most fundamental flaws in our perpetual desire to rank and compete, is that it assumes that there must be one universal "best". Sure, we can rank the fastest sprinter, the highest jumper, and the lowest scoring golfer, but I just don't think we can rank things like the best time of year, the most scenic place on earth, the best poem, the best song, or the best job. These, and countless other aspects of the human experience are best not compared. What I love, won't necessarily be what you love, and vice-versa. That's more than okay, it's necessary.

All of us doing the "best" job won't mean we will all be doing the **same** job.

I do love my work as a financial planner, but it's not because it's the best job in the world, it's simply the best job for **me**. The key to job satisfaction is simple. Do what you love, and love what you do. More importantly, while I am certain that it is quite rewarding to have a big income and lots of time off, (or so I hear), the greatest rewards in life are intrinsic. And those rewards come from embracing your work, whatever that work may be, not trying to escape it. Surprisingly few realize that embracing your work is also the source of a big income.

In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "If a man is called to be a streetsweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, 'Here lived a great streetsweeper who did his job well.'

And here lived a **happy** man who on the survey question "what is the best overall job" penciled in "streetsweeper". We should **all** be so happy, and so rich.

Bill Bell

## “Mortgage Insurance” consider carefully before you sign...

Did you know...that your bank mortgage life insurance could actually become a barrier to switching or refinancing your mortgage even when the change means considerable savings to you? Let me explain how.

Jane and Bob, (names have been changed), enthusiastically approached me in early spring to explore how Manulife One, a new and innovative way to reduce debt and interest costs, could improve their current financial plan. Upon completion of a detailed review it was quite evident that this product was perfect for them. We could not only cut the life of their mortgage in half but also save them thousands of dollars. One of the most enjoyable moments for me as a financial planner is when I see the sparkle in my clients eyes as they realize their dreams (like being debt free and retiring financially well off) are not out of reach. The sparkle was there as Jane and Bob began to complete the documents to switch their mortgage.

During our discussions, I asked Jane and Bob if they had mortgage life insurance and if so, should we look at an alternative product to ensure they remain protected in case either of them dies during the life of the debt? It was at this moment that the sparkle in their eyes began to fade, replaced by the “I knew this was too good to be true” facial expression.

A few years ago Bob was seriously ill with cancer. I am quite pleased to say that his health has improved considerably since, but unfortunately the insurance companies still consider him too much of a risk for life insurance. With very little other coverage, Jane and Bob

felt they could not afford to give up the protection in place on their current mortgage, and so the mortgage has since remained with the bank. We have not given up and continue to explore other avenues, however this story offers a valuable lesson for everyone.

Did you know... with bank mortgage life insurance you have to re-apply whenever you refinance or switch? With Jane and Bob's situation they could not even entertain refinancing, let alone switching, due to his health.

Did you know... that each time you re-apply for bank mortgage insurance your costs increase? Insurance premiums are in part based on your health and your age. Any time you make a change with your mortgage be it refinancing or switching you are a little bit older and therefore your insurance premiums are higher.

Did you know... with bank mortgage life insurance you are paying more for less as your mortgage is paid down? Your premium remains the same whether your mortgage is \$200,000 or you've paid it down to \$20,000. You pay the same amount for 1/10th the coverage!

Protect yourself today and avoid limiting your options in the future. Explore the advantages, flexibility and savings an individual policy allows as compared to the limits a bank mortgage life insurance imposes. Jane and Bob certainly wished they had.

**Victoria Inkster**

## Bell Financial Charity Golf Classic 2000



The inaugural Bell Financial Charity Golf Classic went off in spectacular style on August 22, 2000 at Glenway Golf & Country Club. We enjoyed a day of perfect weather, superb company, and awesome (well mostly) golf. Through the help of our clients and corporate business partners, we are proud to announce that the tournament raised \$7,000 for Blue Hills Child and Family Services, a local charity providing much needed family services throughout York Region.

Thank You to everyone who contributed in any way to this worthy cause. We look forward to repeating the fun and excitement next year, with a challenge to come back and beat your score. Tiger Woods, eat your heart out!

## Deferred Profit Sharing Plans

If you are an employer looking for an innovative and effective way to have your employees participate in the growth and success of your company, you may wish to consider the advantages of a Deferred Profit Sharing Plan (DPSP).

One method of course to reward employees is simply the annual bonus. But often the combined effects of taxation and holiday expenses means that little or none of that bonus ends up providing any meaningful long-term benefit. A DPSP is designed with the long-term in mind.

Contributions to a DPSP are tax deductible to the employer and don't attract payroll taxes (meaning you can give more for less!) The contributions can be based on a pre-defined profit formula and if the company does not achieve this profit, contributions do not have to be made that year. You can choose a "vesting" period for the deposits (up to 2 years) to allow contributions, made on behalf of employees who have left the company during this period, to be

returned to the company or distributed to the long-service employees. The "vested" funds are completely portable to the employee upon termination of employment or retirement.

A DPSP can provide a flexible way to help your employees build that all-important nest egg that will provide them with the freedom and security that comes with financial independence. Adding a Group RRSP to the mix would allow employees to make their own retirement contributions to their plan and benefit from the company's group buying power in the form of lower fees and greater investment flexibility.

Sharing in the growth of the company they work for is a great way to keep employees motivated and happy. It's truly a win-win.

**Laurie Sobie**

## Great Minds, Great Thoughts:

"One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve."

**Albert Schweitzer**

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls, and looks like work."

**Thomas A. Edison**

"No man can live happily who regards himself alone, who turns everything to his own advantage. Thou must live for another if thou wishest to live for thyself."

**Marcus Annaeus Seneca**

## In Memory of a Friend

Dear Philip:

I never had the chance to say goodbye, so I would like to do so now.

Although we had business dealings, you were never my "client"; that veneer was stripped away within minutes of our first meeting to reveal a kind, considerate and compassionate man who invited me, without reservation, into his world. I soon learned of your great loves: your family, your cottage in Temagami and racquet sports (a passion we shared). You were intensely interested in my

life and my career, and dispensed advice in a fatherly way; I never was able to express how much that meant to me. When my wife met you and Lorraine at the ROM in April, she was captivated by your charm and easy manner. I know we all were.

*Philip Greey passed away on August 11th, 2000 at the age of sixty-five. He will be missed most by his wife, Lorraine and his children, Alison and Meredith.*

**David.**

## The Real Estate Agent's Glossary of Terms ("Stunning" Edition)

On a particularly crisp, cool morning in September, I awoke with the realization that life in the Frank household was about to change. You see, my wife Elizabeth and I had decided the night before that, after ten happy but slightly cramped years in our home, we were going house hunting. Initially, I greeted the task laid out before me with a great deal of enthusiasm. The upsides to moving to a larger home were plentiful: more space, more rooms, more yard (I think the idea of "more" dominated my thoughts at this stage). The downsides seemed trivial by comparison: packing and transporting boxes and furniture a few blocks was merely a minor inconvenience to be delegated to someone with a big truck and an abundance of muscles.

We had enlisted the services of a local real estate agent in Thornhill to help us scout for our dream home that sat nestled on some tree-lined street, just waiting to be rescued from its current occupants. She suggested that it might be most efficient to initially scan listings of homes for sale in the area over the Internet. We could then narrow the field down to a few gems and set up appointments to view them. It sounded simple and straightforward enough so I agreed, and later that day I was e-mailed the first batch of properties to peruse.

It was at this point that the whole process came grinding to a halt. The language used to describe the various properties was virtually incomprehensible, a sort of code used to convey home features between real estate agents in-the-know. In dismay, I immediately contacted my agent. Thankfully, she seemed to understand my problem and within an hour had dropped off a book that would help me translate the AgentSpeak before me into clear, concise English.

The book was heavily thumbed and entitled "The Real Estate Agent's Glossary of Terms ('Stunning' Edition)". A quick flip through the first section offered a glimpse into a linguistic world unknown in most corners of the English-speaking world. A brief list of terms and expressions is offered here, complete with interpretation:

**Doll House:** Property too small for human inhabitants

**Distress Sale:** Agent in danger of not meeting monthly sales quota

**Charming:** Reference to agent

**Won't Last!:** Property in state of utter disrepair

**Must Be Seen!:** Reminder to actually *show* property to prospective purchasers

**And Much, Much More!:** There's nothing, nothing more

**Model Home:** Fridge, pantry empty; mirrors throughout

**Partially-Finished Basement:** Beware of scaffolding, supports and trusses

**Totally Loaded!:** Reference to vendor; call first to hide empties

**Family Room Walk Out:** Do NOT show family room

**It's a Ten!:** Out of twenty

**Act Now!:** Only an Oscar-winning performance will sell this home

**Too Much To Mention!:** Listing agent charged by the word for feature sheet

**Location, Location, Location:** Reminder to provide address of listing to prospective purchasers

**Motivated Vendor!:** Recently returned from Las Vegas junket

**Broadloom Where Laid:** Balance of carpeting rolled in garage

**Forced Air Gas:** Avoid Tuesday evening appointments; vendor's Hot Mama chilli a weekly favourite

**Gingerbread House:** Check for crumbling foundation

Well, I felt like Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* when she finally "got it". I ploughed through the listings, settled on the perfect home, made an offer... which was summarily rejected.

At the time of this writing, I'm still surfing the listings, waiting for a home to "speak to me". When one finally does, at least now I'll know what it's saying.

David Frank.



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