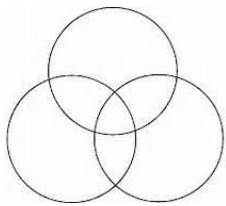


Finding Your Vocare Intersection

Great work lives at the intersection of three "circles" in your life. Some of my clients think of this intersection as their calling in life--their place of maximum contribution, satisfaction and happiness. The English word "vocation" has grown a little coolly practical, but through the centuries, the Latin verb that inspired it, "vocare," carried the essential meaning of being called to a purpose, to a craft or to a master.

For most of us it's a dynamic target that matures with us. I think we sculpt it as we grow. Whether you're a farmer or a fisher, an entrepreneur or engineer or a people manager, your Vocare Intersection is a personal dynamic. As you keep learning, growing and re-centering and sculpting, your work becomes the thing for which people gladly and gratefully thank you and compensate you.

I like to encourage my clients to explore their Vocare Intersection whenever a little restlessness starts to creep in. Try this: Draw three-circle Venn Diagram.



Each circle represents a core incentive in your life. Then take a few minutes--or a few days—to pay attention to your life:

Circle #1: "Proficiency"

The top circle represents the work that you know you know you do well—and want to do even better. This is the stuff you love figuring out and exploring. Think through the abilities, assets, education, experience, personal traits and gifts that belong to you. Some will inspire you more than others. Pay attention to stories you love to tell about how you've gotten to know what you know. How'd you do that? These questions might help:

- *What stories and events come to mind?*
- *Where have you risked?*
- *What are you proud of?*

(Note: Pay attention to when you followed a hunch or took a risk, when it wasn't always "safety first")

Circle #2: "Purpose"

The lower-left circle represents what you feel strongly about, or why you work so hard. Maybe your attention turns to where you've always had a sense of special satisfaction or contribution in your work or because of your work. You provide an income and an example that matters. You do the work and you don't cheat. If you have a sense of spirituality about your time on the planet, maybe that comes to your attention.

- *What are the compliments that mean the most to you?*
- *Who do they come from?*

(Notice what goes on in your chest as you reflect on this one)

Circle #3: “Payoffs”

The final circle speaks to what spells freedom to you: A number probably comes to mind. Write it down. But also ask yourself, “Once the money is ok, how else do I like to be compensated?” It’s probably about being able to have choices and autonomy and the ability to explore and produce: Maybe you like a strong team with an affirming leader, or being your own boss, or traveling a lot, or not, or being acknowledged publicly for your craftsmanship, or making innovation practical, or being trusted with a flexible work schedule. Write down some very clear specifics.

- *What spells freedom and autonomy to you?*
- *What’s your “number” for the coming twelve months? If you’re plans are to be an entrepreneurial coach, how much of your number would you like to see come to you from that work?*

(Notice both your work and non-work answers)

As you answer these questions, you may want to bring in a few consultants—people who know you well and are committed to your growth, personally and professionally. Try asking them to talk with you about the following questions:

- *Where do you see me getting most focused and enthusiastic?*
- *What do you see as my main skills and areas of expertise?*
- *What do you think the world would gladly pay me to do more of?*
- *Or simply ask them to talk to you about a time when they saw you at your best.*

The idea, of course, is for you to become increasingly clear about where the circles get most vivid and complementary.

The area of greatest overlap will help you to evaluate your restlessness and your potential next steps, your obstacles and your opportunities.