

'In the Zone – Part 1'

I have some questions for you.....

- How's your job going?
- What do your staff think of you as a leader?
- How would you rate yourself?
- How many 10 out of 10 moments do you get (when you feel fantastic & have a real sense of achievement)?
- How many of these 'magic moments' do your team get?

If you're struggling to answer these questions, then maybe it's because you're a little too comfortable with the status quo and are operating from within your comfort zone.

Your comfort zone is the place where you feel safe, secure, and comfortable. It's the way you habitually work, the daily routines you have, the way you deal with people on a regular basis.

But is it a little too comfortable?

If you can't remember your last 'magic moment' at work, then yes it is!

What do I mean by the zone?

Professional sports players talk about entering the zone, when they can tune out everything but the game they're involved in.

Tennis players talk about seeing the ball much bigger than it is, seeing it really early, and effortlessly reaching the ball and producing winning shots. They are only aware of their own experience and are totally immersed 'in the moment.'

How many of us as leaders or managers have experienced that feeling of being totally 'in the moment' and fully 'aware'?

How often do we experience 'magic moments', those 10 out of 10 moments when everything is perfect, when we're performing exceptionally with minimal effort, and feeling fully 'alive'?

So, what does it take to get you there?

It takes stretching yourself; trying out things that are new, different, or uncomfortable!

How many magic moments have you had where you've been doing everyday work that you're comfortable with? I'd hazard a guess that it'd be none! That's because when we're doing what we're used to, even if it is working well, we are rarely fully engaged in the present, 'in the moment', or tapping into our hidden potential. We may feel a sense of achievement, but how high would we rate it on a scale of 1 to 10?

Stretch Zone

So, what can you do if you feel that you're not reaching your full potential? If you feel that your comfort zone is hindering your growth and not allowing you to blossom?

Well, you stretch it of course!

You go into stretch zone where you expand the boundaries of your comfort zone for as long as it takes to get you to the point where they eventually become comfortable again.

Think back to your 10 out of 10 moments - times when you felt a great sense of achievement, fulfilment, or pure joy. I'd like to bet that you were stretching at those points - that the reason you got such a buzz was because it felt challenging or because you weren't sure you could pull it off, or what the result might be.

When you changed schools, left home, started your first job, got married; when you changed jobs, got promoted or started your own business - these are all times when you were in stretch zone.

So are you continuing to stretch, grow, and blossom, or are you sitting a little too comfortably?

In my next article we'll explore what to avoid when stretching yourself, and the actions you can take to get "in the zone."

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About The Author:

Julie Johnson, formerly a manager and development specialist, created The Leadership Coaching Company to help managers solve one of their biggest business problems: how to get the most from themselves and their staff. She is now a leadership success specialist and has attracted a loyal following who praise her down to earth yet inspiring approach.

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