



By KIMBERLY ALYN, Ph.D.

Love What You Do

When You Have Passion, You Inspire People

There is something incredibly inspiring about watching people doing something they love. When you show people that you love what you do and have a passion for it, you fire people up to want to be more, reach more and achieve more. Unfortunately, a lot of managers and leaders in the fire service are burned out in their jobs and it shows at all levels in the organization.

How was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. able to lead the largest non-violent revolution in American history for the rights of African Americans? What allowed Joan of Arc to lead the French Army to several critical victories during the Hundred Year's War? How did Winston Churchill overcome a speech impediment to become one of the world's greatest orators and political figures? How did Mahatma Gandhi, a man with no title, no wealth and no desire for fame, bring freedom to millions of people? How was Mother Teresa able to launch the Missionaries of Charity and grow it to over 600 missions in 120 countries with thousands of volunteers when she had no money herself? What made it possible for Mary Kay Ash to launch a business with only a \$5,000 investment and turn it into a \$2 billion-a-year company with nearly 2 million cosmetics consultants worldwide, earn-

ing her the honor and title of "Leading Female Entrepreneur in American History"? What empowered Nelson Mandela to spend 27 years in prison for standing up for what he believed in and then serve as the first South African president in a newly formed democratic environment?

All of these people and countless others who have inspired millions of people around the globe share a common thread: passion and a love for the job. When you have passion and a love for what you are doing, or passion for the mission, vision, and core values, you inspire people. Passion fires people up. Passion drives people to press on when others give up. Passion shows people that you care deeply about something and that draws people in.

What is rewarding about what you do that makes it all worth it? When you focus on these aspects of what you do, you will find it much easier to endure the more difficult aspects of your job. When you continue to focus on the negative, that is all you eventually see. People would generally be amazed at how their attitudes and dispositions would change if they only focused on the positive aspects of their jobs. The fire service is currently one of the most highly esteemed professions and there are countless people across the globe lining up, hoping to get into this industry. Do those of

you already in the fire service appreciate what you have, even in the midst of the difficult aspects of your job? One of the ways you can encourage people to focus on the positive aspects of the job is to do this yourself. Type up on a piece of paper a title that says "Things I love about my job" and then make a long, bulleted list. Print it out, enlarge it, frame it and hang it near the area you spend the most time. This will remind you of all the things that make your job worth it. It will remind others to consider the things they love about their jobs. It will inspire people to be more positive.

"Don't aim for success if you want it; just do what you love and believe in, and success will come naturally."

— David Frost

As you are reading this, you might be thinking I don't have a list of things I love about my job. Then my advice to you is this: it may be time to consider a new career. A constant negative state of mind that is created from being in a job you absolutely hate is detrimental to your health and well-being. It also hurts your followers. It hurts the public you serve. It hurts the fire service in general. It might just be time to move on to something else.

For the rest of you who have to put up with day-to-day irritations on the job, try to refrain from taking a brush of disdain and painting over your entire career. Everyone has elements in their jobs that they hate, but we put up with those things to get to do what we love. If you want to make the fire service a better place and increase morale, the quickest and surest way to accomplish those two things is to show people that you love what you do!



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