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# Care and Maintenance of the Successful Career: How Experienced Law Librarians Make Their Work Rewarding

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are half the reason that I continue to toil away in the private law firm environment.

¶15 The second requisite to job fulfillment concerns the work itself. In order to stay happy over the long term of a professional career, you must identify at least one task, activity, responsibility, etc. that you love—one that drives you and keeps you passionate about the work—and incorporate that activity into your job. If what you most love to do isn't an element of your job description, find a way to add it. At the very least, find a way to make time for the activity in your regular work schedule. As a direct result of my work at Morrison & Foerster, I've been able to engage in what I really love to do, which is research and professional writing.<sup>1</sup> I've initiated many research endeavors and other pet projects over the years,<sup>2</sup> and the firm has indulged me in all of them without complaint. Similarly, find an employer that will support your passion—whatever it may be—and stick with that one. There lies the path to job satisfaction and longevity.

¶16 If your situation is similar to mine and you've been blessed with great bosses and professional freedom, do what you can to provide the same environment for your staff. You have it within your power to be a great boss, too, and to enrich the professional lives of those employees who report directly to you. Be the reason that someone loves his job; doing so will make you feel doubly good about yours.

### **Two Tramps in Mud Time\***

*Sharon Hamby O'Connor\*\**

¶11 In college I was introduced to “Two Tramps in Mud Time,” a poem by Robert Frost that includes lines that became my favorites:

But yield who will to their separation,  
My object in living is to unite  
My avocation and my vocation  
As my two eyes make one in sight.<sup>1</sup>

¶12 I have been lucky that my work in libraries, particularly in the Boston College Law Library, has allowed me to live this lesson. My work has not been a four-letter word, it's been a three-letter word—fun. Working with great people has been the primary reason for this, but three other developments in the past ten years have added spice and kept boredom at bay.

1. I suppose that in a utopian world I would have been a university professor instead of a law firm librarian, assuming I could figure out how to do that without actually having to teach classes.

2. *Editor's Note:* For a recent example, see Lee R. Nemchek, *Records Retention in the Private Legal Environment: Annotated Bibliography and Program Implementation Tools*, 93 LAW LIBR. J. 7, 2001 LAW LIBR. J. 1.

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1. ROBERT FROST, *Two Tramps in Mud Time*, in A POCKET BOOK OF ROBERT FROST'S POEMS 114 (1960).

¶13 The first in time was the opportunity to design and build a new law library. For eighteen months we labored over a plan for renovating our old library only to discover that renovation is more expensive than new construction. We were told that, instead, we could start from scratch and build anew. That experience was all-consuming for at least two years—fun, scary, hectic, and ultimately rewarding. The new library has lifted everyone’s spirits and, with its technological readiness, allows us to offer a more sophisticated array of programs and services than we were ever able to offer before.

¶14 This new “wired” library points toward the second major event that has forced me to remain on my toes. The law library was already into the electronic age with its own systems and operations when we took over responsibility for providing technology support to the entire Boston College Law School community, faculty, staff, and students. In addition to library operations, we are now responsible for policy development, planning, asset management, network administration, frontline support, training, database development, and Web support, as well as the operation of the computer lab and the introduction of technology into the classroom. It is no stretch to say that every day there are concepts to be learned, decisions to be made, and problems to be resolved—many about developments that I feel as though I barely understand!

¶15 The reorganization of the law library staff has also made the past few years interesting. We all realized that the demands on our time from our user community were changing dramatically and that we were not organized in the most efficient way to respond. With the facilitation of a consultant and the participation of all twenty-two members of the library staff, we came up with an entirely new organizational structure. This redefining of positions has had many positive benefits: more varied and interesting jobs for the library’s entry level staff; many more opportunities for teaching and faculty support for the reference librarians; and, as mentioned above, the ability to take on computing support for the law school as a whole. The commitment and enthusiasm that I see every day from all staff members make for an active workplace, with new ideas emerging from all quarters.

¶16 So—after twenty-one years—it is still a joy to come to work. I think Robert Frost would approve.

### **For Love of the Game\***

*Alvin M. Podboy Jr.\*\**

¶1 I have been working in law libraries for thirty-two years. That is a long time; for people in the military or federal government it can be a career. When invited to contribute to this collection, I thought back to the original program at the 2000

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