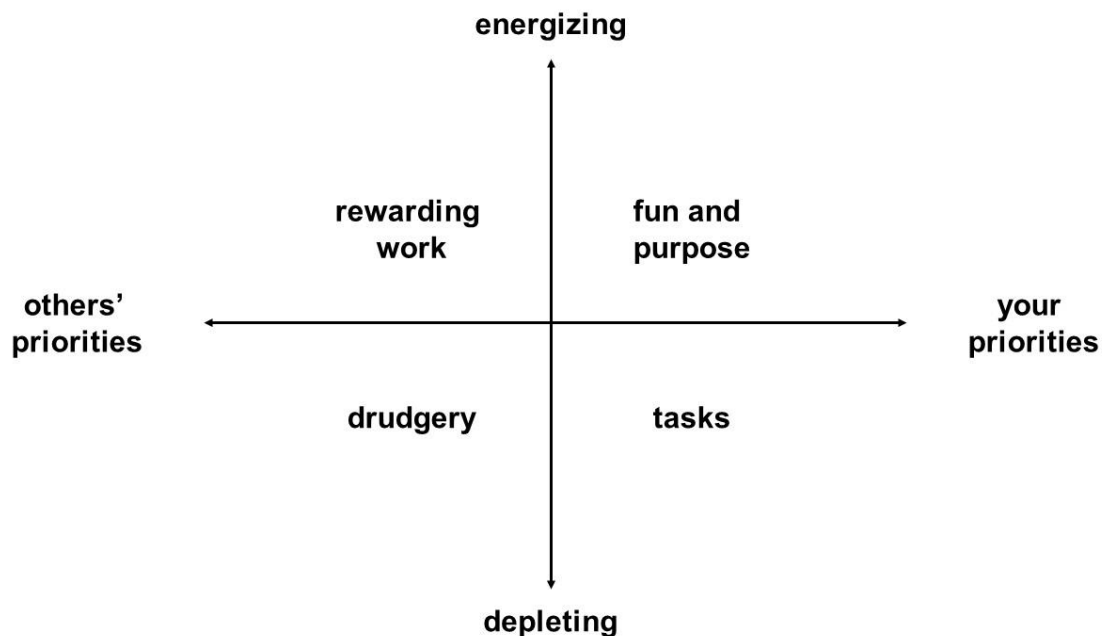


JST & Dr Eve Poole Leadership Development Series:

Work Life Balance

Work–life balance?! As a partner at Deloitte once told me, ‘it’s in that order’. We know, because if someone asks how we are, we say ‘Busy!’ in a slightly manic way, as though it’s the right answer. There are lots of great tools out there for auditing your life choices and how you use your time. The best I have found is Lauren Bacon’s Balance Matrix, that juxtaposes energy and agenda. She distinguishes between things that drain you and are on someone else’s agenda (drudgery) and things that energize you and are on your agenda (fun and purpose). You still have to earn a living, though, but hopefully much of your work, while it is not directly in service of your own agenda, is nonetheless energizing (rewarding work). Brace yourself, though, for ‘tasks’ which further your own agenda but feel tedious – at least your ‘fun and purpose’ activity fuels you for them.



How can you use this matrix in practice? First, try to map your diary on to it. How well are you already managing to balance your time? I would guess that the fun and purpose box is a bit squeezed out by the other three. So how can you grow this bit of your world? Well, tasks have to be done, but can you outsource them at all? Drudgery, too. Could you delegate any of these activities? And can you transform even the rewarding work into fun and purpose by getting clearer about how serving your organization’s agenda also serves yours? In all 3 of these quadrants, there is an opportunity to transform activities into purposeful opportunities for learning. Can you use a boring meeting as an apprentice piece to practise your listening skills? Can you cheer your commute, the school run, or your housework, with carefully chosen audio books and TED talks? And how can you find more opportunities to smuggle fun and purpose into your day job? Keep a track of this with post-it notes. How many of your activities have you managed to sneak into your energizing/my agenda box this month?

Please email us if you have any questions: alumni@johnsmithtrust.org