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There are many factors involved when determining job satisfaction, some have more effect, some less (most will have a marginal effect). But there are three factors that stand out above all others. You have all three - you are ecstatic, you have none - you're miserable. I call them the three pillars of job satisfaction and they are: * money - how much you earn * people - who you work with * type of work - the type of work you're doing, i. e.

whether or not it is interesting to you. Money This is your salary, bonuses, package etc. It includes how much you earn and all the perks and bonuses that are involved. This is mostly determined by how much you think you're worth rather than industry averages or some other kind of metric.

If you are earning less than what you think you should be, you're not satisfied. If you earn more, or just enough, you're happy. Since your sense of how much you're worth can easily change based on your perception of the world (you read a survey about those same industry averages and realize you're getting jibbed), your level of satisfaction with this pillar can alter drastically almost overnight. People This is all about the kinds of people you work with. Are you friends with everyone at work, do you like spending time with your work mates socially as well as professionally? If you do then you'll be satisfied with this one.

You don't have to be friends with everyone at your company, but you do have to like everyone that you closely work with. When you only marginally like the people you work with (i. e. you don't mind them but wouldn't hang out with them), this pillar will hover on the verge of satisfaction. When you love the people you work with then you're on a constant buzz when you

come to work and “ your cup runneth over” (so to speak :)) when it comes to this pillar. Disliking even one of the people you work with closely, can significantly decrease your level of satisfaction here. The upside with this one is, the more people you really like, the more resilient you are to not getting along with someone (i.

e. if you’re good mates with everyone, you don’t really mind one idiot). As a consequence this pillar is not as susceptible to sudden major shifts like the Money one is. Type Of Work This is all about the kind of work you do.

It will differ from industry to industry, but in software development it is all about the kind of technologies you’re using, what kind of stuff you’re learning while doing your work and the kind of impact your work has on the rest of the world. If you work with outdated technology on irrelevant projects and learn nothing new while doing it you will not be happy when it comes to this pillar. If however you get to learn a lot from your work and you think that what you’re doing is significant in some way (i.

. there is some bragging power in the work you’re doing, like working for a project with name recognition or working for a good cause) you’ll be happy. The work you do will usually not change significantly in a short period of time, so if you’re happy to start with you’ll usually be happy for a while. However, as you learn all you can from the work that you do level of satisfaction may decrease. It will also decrease slowly as the novelty of the work wears off and it becomes routine. Note that if you do consulting work you may go from wildly happy to wildly unhappy about this one almost overnight by switching projects/clients.

How You Feel When you feel good about all the three pillars at your current place of employment you feel like this: " I am working with awesome people, doing some really cool stuff and getting paid a craploads to boot. Could this sh*t get any better? " - you're very happy When you're happy with two of the pillars only, you feel like this: " I am working with awesome people, doing some really cool stuff, I just wish this sh*t paid a little better. - you're satisfied. or " I am working with awesome people, the work IS boring and irrelevant, but at least I am getting paid a craploads.

" - you're satisfied " I am working with a bunch of idiots, I AM doing some really cool stuff, I just wish this sh*t paid a little better. you're reasonably satisfied (not too bad but could be better). When you're not satisfied with any of the pillars you feel like this: " I am working with a bunch of idiots, the work is boring and irrelevant and I am getting paid next to nothing. This crap is for the birds, I gotta get the hell out! " - you're very unhappy.