2020/07/29 - Work Satisfaction

I don't know about you guys, but I spend a good portion of my day doing paid work. As much as I have a dream to do whatever I want, the reality is that I have to make money so I can feed my family. Therefore, work satisfaction becomes very important. If you're spending 8 to 10 hour days doing work and you feel unmotivated it becomes a weight hard to bare. I keep thinking and analysing what exactly would makes me enjoy work? To be honest with myself, it is doing what I want when I want, or as close to that as possible. Obviously, I can't just not do what the company needs me to do, but at least I'd like to feel like I have my say in how things get done.

Today, I had this weird argument with my manager, who just happens to be my age. He just got into the position of managing the Lustre team a couple months back, because the previous manager went to google.

Just to give some context. We have a hardware lab which we use to test our software. We can, supposedly, reserve machines in there and then use them for testing our changes. The lab is horribly managed. So I took it upon myself to tell my manager that the lab needs to be managed better. He asks, if I'd like to manage some of the machines there. Again some context, my manager has a dry and weird sense of humour. I ask him, are you joking? He responds: No I'm asking. So I tell him, I don't mind. I can help out if needed. Then somehow the conversation changes into how I should concentrate on my tasks and not bother with other work. I'm like, how the hell did the conversation go down that road. I didn't start by saying I want to manage some of the machines in the lab. I was just telling him it's hard reserving machines, and since you're the manager, it's your job to handle this issue.

From there, I go into this rant:

First of all, let me ask. Do you see some negligence in my work?
Second, I think it's a mis-statement to think I'm the customer's first point of contact. Take a look at the customer ticket, before you say that.
Third, I think i have said this several times, my career goal is not to be an [Software module name] engineer for the rest of my life (which seems to be what my manager and my manager's manager are okay with. And I don't know what more to do to clarify to them that it's not my career goal)
Fourth, I think I have displayed that I can help out in different areas without letting my work slide. I derive my job satisfaction by being involved in different areas.

Here is the problem. The whole discussion started by me requesting him to look at the lab reservation system and make it better. I'm not interested in getting involved in that. He asks, if I'd be interested in managing some portion of the lab. I tell him, ok sure, why not. He backtracks and says, well that's not my job. No shit Sherlock. I never said it was my job. I was just trying to be a good team player and help where it's needed.

Then from there he somehow starts implying that I'm a big customer's first point of contact, which is absolutely false. I did a lot of work on a project for this customer and the particular ticket I'm referring to in my rant was opened and assigned to someone else, but the architect asked me to help that person test his changes, because I've done it before.

It's a messed up conversation.

Going back to the work satisfaction point. I don't mind my job. I have a good measure of control over what I do. And it appears like the best thing to do is not to talk to any of the managers and just do the job that needs to be done. I think they are good people, but bad managers.