



How to Find a Career that FITS

ACCORDING TO *FORBES.COM*, SOME SURVEYS HAVE

found that 87 percent of Americans don't like their jobs.¹ This probably isn't surprising to you. Whether you're at a party or out to dinner, more often than not, it's one big gripe-fest, focused around the most loathed aspects of your jobs and "who has it the worst at work."

Work is a big part of life, so it comes up naturally in conversation. I find we often complain about our jobs instead of singing our boss's praises or something along those lines—right? There's something about commiserating over the daily toil and all the hardships we endure that connects us and makes us feel like we are all in the same boat.

But what if we connected over how much we enjoyed our jobs instead? What would that be like?

As a certified career coach, that is my mission—to change the way people feel about work; from seeing it as just a paycheck to having it be a fulfilling, rewarding endeavor that is an extension of their purpose and passion. That's what this article is about—Finding a Career that FITS.

So let's get started, to help you begin this process of finding a career you are passionate about...

Step #1 Open Your Mind

First, take a deep breath. (That's right, I'm serious!) Right now, take in a long, deep breath to take some pressure off this process. I know what happens when I am tense and tight—nothing flows. When you're tight, your thoughts tend to be restrictive, limited, and self-defeating. So release some of this tension if you have it, and commit to allowing the process to flow. Breathe deeply and easily. Permit your mind to consider new possibilities.

Because our jobs are vitally important to us, we tend to take them so seriously that we can end up becoming totally stressed out. Remember—there are unlimited options out there, and income can be achieved in so many creative and fulfilling ways!

So breathe, and realize that you can do and be anything. As you feel yourself letting go of that nervous, negative energy, allow your mind to open up to new alternatives. Acknowledge your career situation; how did you get where you are today? Is it possible to recreate that process and go in an entirely new direction for yourself, your life? Of course it is. You did it before. You can do it again!

Step #2 Trust Yourself

Once you're aligned with the possibilities, trust that you will figure this out and believe in yourself. You can find a career you truly enjoy. I've helped many people do it and I've done it myself. I have faith that you can do the same!

What are some ways you can remind yourself to believe and trust in your own abilities? Remember that people are relying on you this very minute. You have earned trust at your place of employment. The very job that *you* perform each day helps one company bring in thousands, maybe millions or billions. That is no small feat, by any means!

Give yourself credit for what you currently do that people rely on you for. Do you pay a mortgage each month? Has the state entrusted you with a driver's license? If other people have faith in you, isn't it time you trusted yourself? Who better than you knows what *you* excel at, and what type of career you're ideally suited for? Have faith in the choices you make. *You* can do it, *your way*!

Step #3 Move Gradually

Realize this is a process. Because you're probably relying on your current job to support yourself, you can make the move gradually if you need to. Because you're learning, the course of your path may change along the way. You'll figure it out.

The process of reinventing yourself can take some time. Career transition involves careful planning, and outlining of steps and procedures. Set goals that are realistic yet also a stretch, so you can step out of your comfort zone and set yourself up for success. Take time to consider the most important questions:

- What do you enjoy most about the work you do now?
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What areas would you prefer to steer clear of in the future?
- Who are the key people and resources you'll need to help make your dream career manifest itself?
- What about finances—will you be borrowing money, or dipping into your savings as a way to get the plan off the ground?

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- How can you manage your expenses to successfully make the transition without hurting your bank account?

If you're starting to feel overwhelmed, not to worry. There are qualified professionals who can help you "get to know yourself all over again," make the best choices, and prevent you from making any hasty moves in your career that you may regret later. As someone who has helped countless individuals discover the profession that's a perfect fit for them, I can help you make a positive career change, one step at a time.

Step #4 Take Action

Because this is a process that usually takes time, I encourage you to start now. Take action while you are feeling more stable, and not reckless or impulsive. If you already are really unhappy and on the verge of desperation, that's okay too, but there are things you can do right now to help yourself feel better and remain on steady ground with respect to your career. If you're reading this article, you're taking the first step...so pat yourself on the back!

One of the things I see people do is take a job that meets some of their needs, but not all of them. You need to consider all of the components to a satisfying career; from practical components such as salary, location, hours, and benefits to less tangible components such as would it be fulfilling and rewarding? Would you actually enjoy what you're doing and be good at it? Would it be something you're interested in? If you're serious about making a career change, you'll need to create a transition plan and set intermediate goals for steps you need to take along the way. In another upcoming article on this subject, I will address this further. For now, know that you need to create a plan, and mentally prepare yourself. Here are four preliminary actions you can take immediately:

1. Commit yourself. How committed are you to finding a career that fits, on a scale from 1-10? If it's not at a 10, what do you need to do to move it up the scale?

2. Learn to overcome obstacles. Obstacle 1: Not knowing what to look for in a job (so you take one that is "good enough" that you don't truly enjoy). Obstacle 2: Your own disempowering beliefs. Are you ready to move past/blow through these obstacles? I have faith that you can do it!

3. Get support. I'm being totally honest when I say that it really helps to have the support of a group or a career counselor to remind you to stay positive and focused.

4. Claim your life. There never is a perfect time to do this and you can always come up with excuses or reasons not to. The key is to minimize the risks by getting the support you need.

I was able to very successfully make my career transition in large part because of my own coach. She helped me create my plan, remain positive, move forward, identify what I wanted to do, and overcome obstacles. You can do this, too. I encourage you to take a stand for your life and what you want!

Isn't it time you found a career that fits? CM

Endnote

1. Scott Reeves, "Loving the Job You Hate." (December 1, 2005). Accessed at *Forbes.com*, www.forbes.com/careers/2005/11/30/career-work-employment-cx_sr_1201bizbasics.html on October 2, 2006.

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HALLIE CRAWFORD, M.A., CPCC (Certified Professional Co-active Coach) has her own coaching practice, Authentically Speaking, and is also an affiliate with the Center for Balanced Living. For tips, tools, and expert advice on finding a career you're passionate about, visit her Web site at www.halliecrawford.com. Send comments about this article to cm@ncmahq.org.