



Powered by Purpose

Your career can be about more than just earning a paycheck. Here's how to find meaning at work.

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While competitive salaries and company perks used to reign supreme in the workplace, today's employees are after something different: a sense of purpose. Recent research from Cornerstone

OnDemand found that many Americans are willing to make life-altering job decisions and considerable sacrifices in order to find a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in their careers — no financial incentive or status bump needed.

But what does it mean to find purpose from your job, and how do you know what that means for you? We talked to psychologist and workplace consultant Michael Klein, Psy.D., principal of MK Insights, to get the answers.

- Q** : Why is a sense of purpose something more employees want these days?
- A** : Lifelong employment at the same organization has become far less common. With the realization that most companies are no longer taking care of employees “from cradle to grave,” much of the younger workforce has shifted to placing more value on enjoyment at work. It would seem that the pursuit of meaning and purpose at work has become much more important.
- Q** : What if you're not sure where your purpose lies? How do you identify it?
- A** : I believe strongly in the value of psychological self-assessment tools for this very purpose. Two tests I use regularly are the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) and the Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory (MVPI). To have these tests be useful, however, it is important to partner with a career counselor or professional development coach to help make sense of all the data and apply the results to your life.
- Q** : What holds people back from making their careers more meaningful to them?
- A** : A few common roadblocks that I have found are fear of the unknown as well as the comfort that comes from knowing what to expect in their current role.



Q : If you'd just like to make some tweaks to your current job, how can you approach your supervisor about changing your role?

A : Once you are able to clearly articulate your goals and interests, many managers appreciate the opportunity to do something about it, especially when they value that employee and don't want to lose them.

Q : How do you find employers that align with your values?

A : I recommend that job seekers always use any network they already have, whether it be friends, family, colleagues or others. Tell them what you're looking for and what is important to you. Glassdoor.com is also a great resource for reading anonymous reviews from actual employees at many companies.

Q : Is a career with purpose a worthy goal?

A : People who find purpose or meaning in their job tend to enjoy their work more, they're better at it and it doesn't feel like work. Life is simply more pleasurable when you find work that you're connected to and an organization that shares your values. 

