



Career as a CALLING

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When I
grow
up I
want to
be a



Source: <http://jebrown.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/when-i-grow-up.jpg>

How do we end up deciding?

Typically, we seek careers

- That match our needs, motives, values, abilities, talents, more specifically,
- That fit into our concepts of
 - Who we are,
 - Who we want to be,
 - What we find rewarding.

In the Work Domain

- This might mean we look at our educational backgrounds, skills, aptitudes, and prior work assignments, and compare them to various
 - Industries
 - Functional areas
 - Job types

In the Non-Work Domain

- This might mean we look at our personal requirements, such as
 - Where we need/want to live,
 - Whether we are able to travel,
 - Who we need to take care of, how often, and in what capacity.

Ok, I know what you're thinking

- I already know how I got here
- College, you studied X, you got a job doing X or maybe even Y and you were satisfied.
 - For a while.
 - So..what happened?
 - Maybe you are bored, underutilized, overworked, underappreciated, downsized, right-sized, underpaid, or just plain unfulfilled.



And Now....You MAY be Asking Yourself

WHO
AM I?

- **Is this who I want to be?**
- **Am I successful?**
- **What is my purpose?**

The Good News Is....

- You are NOT Alone!!
 - Existential questions have existed since the beginning of time
 - Addressed by philosophers, psychologists, political scientists, economists, sociologists and social psychologists and Last but Not Least
 - People who study CAREERS!!

Careers: A Short Primer

- Careers are comprised of objective and subjective elements
- Important subjective element is the concept of Psychological Success
 - Achieved when a person independently sets and exerts effort toward a challenging, personally meaningful goal and then goes on to succeed in attaining that goal
- It's the notion of **MEANINGFULNESS** that we focus on tonight

Careers: Meaningfulness

- Work is subjectively experienced by people in 3 distinct ways: job, career, calling – there is some overlap
 - *Job* – primarily seek the material benefits from work and do not seek or receive many other types of rewards from it, the work is not an end in itself but a means for acquiring the resources needed to enjoy time away from the job, the main goal is to make income.
 - *Career* – deeper personal investment in their work and make their achievements thru monetary gain and advancement, advancement often brings higher social standing, increased personal power within one's occupation and higher self-esteem

Career as a Calling

Adapted from Hall & Chandler (2005) Journal of Organizational Behavior.

- *Calling* is defined and conceptualized in a number of ways.
- *Calling* in general, is work that a person perceives as his/her purpose in life.
 - Focuses on work that contributes to making the world a better place
 - Comes from an internal motivation that focuses on the meaning of one's work
 - Although some people may pursue a calling out of religious beliefs, such a set of beliefs is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for having a calling.

Career as a Calling

Adapted from Hall & Chandler (2005) Journal of Organizational Behavior.

- Scholars describe calling as
 - An orientation of those who work for the fulfillment of doing so and, in addition, believe that their work impacts society in some way
 - ‘The place where your deep gladness . . . and the world’s hunger meet.’
 - A person’s career self-assessment and development which involve a self-reflective quest for personal and professional purpose, as part of the development of the ‘whole person.’

Career as a Calling

- Others suggest that calling consists of three overlapping dimensions:
 - “a transcendent summons, experienced as originating *beyond the self*,”
 - “to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a *sense of purpose or meaningfulness*,”
 - “that holds *other-oriented values* and goals as primary sources of motivation.”
- 6). Dik and Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist* (p.

Career as a Calling

Adapted from Hall & Chandler (2005) Journal of Organizational Behavior.

- A calling can include any career domain (e.g., teaching, accounting, social work, musicians, professional workers, software engineering) as long as individuals determine *a view of meaning that is relevant to themselves*.
- Each person's calling is unique;
- A calling involves preconditions:
 - talent (a calling must fit one's abilities),
 - an openness to discovering one's calling,
 - a love for the work involved,
- A calling provides great energy, enjoyment, and vitality to one's efforts;
- One's calling is not easy to discover—it requires much reflection, dialogue with others, trial activities, and persistence.



7 Salient Characteristics of Callings

Dobrow, S. R. (2004). *Academy of Management Conference Best Paper Proceedings*.

1. Passion – a deep enjoyment and satisfaction from engaging in your work;
2. Identity – the degree to which you identify with your work/profession;
3. Need to do it/urgency – a felt sense of destiny about engage in a particular type of work;
4. Engulfs consciousness – work domain is continually present in your mind

7 Salient Characteristics of Callings

Dobrow, S. R. (2004). *Academy of Management Conference Best Paper Proceedings*.

5. Longevity – a sense of always knowing you would engage in this type of work;
6. Sense of meaning – this is all relative (e.g., a Doc might just want the \$ whereas a garbage collector may view his work as making the world more beautiful);
7. Self-esteem – how you feel about your abilities in the work domain.

Individual Outcomes of Calling Orientations

Wrzesniewski (2002) *Journal of Management Inquiry*.

- Have stronger and more rewarding relationships with their work, which are associated with spending more time in the work domain and gaining more enjoyment and satisfaction from it.
- Would continue to work even if they stopped being paid and genuinely feel their work makes the world a better place.
- Put more time in at work (paid or unpaid).
- Higher life satisfaction than those with job or career orientations.
- Derive more satisfaction from work domain than leisure domain; in contrast, those with jobs and careers rank leisure satisfaction higher than work satisfaction.

Incorporating Calling into Career Development/Decision-Making

Adapted from Dik & Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist*.

- Assess the relevance of a ‘*transcendent summons*.’
 - Not everyone has one – you either do or you don’t – but you might find it by asking yourself questions such as:
 - When evaluating career options what factors are most important to me?
 - How will I know when I’ve found the career that is right for me?
 - Are my career decisions at all related to my spiritual beliefs? (e.g., higher purpose).

Incorporating Calling into Career Development/Decision-Making

Adapted from Dik & Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist*.

- Assess your current work *meaning* by asking yourself questions such as:
 - How meaningful do I find my work activities?
 - What would make my job more meaningful?
 - What are the things about the work that I do that I value the most?
 - What are the things about the place that I work that I value the most?

Incorporating Calling into Career Development/Decision-Making

Adapted from Dik & Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist*.

- Assess your current life *meaning* by asking yourself:
 - What ultimately is most important to me in life?
 - What is my overall life purpose?
 - Where do I turn for answers to question of meaning and purpose in life?
 - Employ the [Meaning in Life Questionnaire](#).

Incorporating Calling into Career Development/Decision-Making

Adapted from Dik & Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist*.

- Connect meaning in work to *meaning in life* and engage in meaning-making behaviors.
 - Examine the answers you listed with respect to your current work meaning and current life meaning to identify gaps.
 - Identify your signature strengths at work (e.g. the top 5 tasks/behaviors that you perform really well) and decide to use one of your strengths at least one time a day which may enhance happiness.
 - List the top 5 characteristics you would really like in a job and determine whether they are currently being satisfied. Consider satisficing (reset expectations) which may lead to greater satisfaction.

Incorporating Calling into Career Development/Decision-Making

Adapted from Dik & Duffy (2009) *Counseling Psychologist*.

- Identify the *prosocial* or ‘*other-oriented*’ values inherent in your work. You may really need to think broadly if you are not currently employed in a ‘helping’ profession.
 - What value do others derive from the outcomes of your work?
 - How do the outcomes of your work contribute to the well-being of others?
 - How do the outcomes of your work contribute to the well-being of others?

General Principles for Career Development and Decision-Making

- *Actively* engage in career exploration behaviors by honestly assessing yourself with respect to various occupational environments.
- *Network* with individuals whose careers interest you.
- *Retool/reframe/refurbish* your skill set by engaging in education and training that will enhance your ‘whole self’.
- Be *honest* about what you want out of life and if you aren’t getting it Make the necessary changes to live fully.

Thank You



Thank You

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