

April 2010

## **The Pros and Cons of Creating Work That Works For You**

First, let me clarify that "work that works for you" means it supports your needs and goals. It includes *what* you're doing, how you're doing it, and *where* you're doing it. For some, it means creating work that deeply inspires them, where their skills and knowledge are used in ways that fulfill their purpose. Their work is their calling.

For others, their highest priority may be something else, like family, so creating work that works for them means it provides a stable, livable income, reasonable hours so they can be home, and where the work itself doesn't drain them but rather supports them in their purpose.

What does "work that works for you" mean to you? What would it look like if your work works for you? If you have a minute, [email me](#). (Tip: When you can identify what you want and write it down, your brain makes new neural pathways so you can achieve it.)

### Cons

First, let's look at the reasons NOT to create work that works for you.

1. You don't really know if you can achieve what you want, so you can avoid being disappointed or failing if you stay with what you know (even if you're not satisfied now).
2. You'll have to make some changes, and we all know that's not easy or comfortable.
3. You may not know how to create what you want. (If you did, you'd already be there, right?!) Fear of the unknown and making mistakes keeps many people in their comfort zone, even if they'd rather be doing something else.
4. You may disappoint someone, or people will think you're crazy.

What other reasons can you think of *not* to create work that works for you?

When you consider these challenges, it seems smart and safe to stay where you are.

### Pros

Now, here are the pros for creating work that works for you:

1. You'll be healthier. Forcing yourself to work in ways that aren't a good fit for you (e.g. hectic pace, high stress level, long hours, type of work, culture mismatch, work environment) drains you physically and mentally, like trying to walk 5 miles in the wrong size shoe. Forget "No pain, no gain." When the shoe fits, you can go farther and enjoy it, which translates into better health.
2. You'll be more productive. Because your work supports your needs and goals, you can focus your attention on accomplishing what's important.
3. You'll have more fun and look forward to going to work. (I hope that's obvious!)
4. You'll be more successful overall. True success isn't limited on how much money you make or your title. It's much broader and includes the positive impact you have on others, your contributions to make the world a better place, and how much you enjoy your life.
5. You'll develop the power and freedom to be who you are and do more of what you really want because you'll know yourself better and what you need to be your best self in the world.

What other reasons can you think of?

### What can you do?

If work is working for you, GREAT! Keep it up. You're an inspiration for others. However, if you're not happy at work, overwhelmed, not performing well, and/or suffering physical or mental health issues, these are your clues to pay attention. The issue may be *what* you're doing, *how* you're doing it, and/or *where* you're doing it.

Sometimes, people think the answer is to quit and go somewhere else, but they discover they can make changes right where they are to transform their situation.

Sometimes they're staying in a job that no longer serves them or the organization because they are unsure about what to do next or how to get there. Sometimes, the issue is not directly work-related but is impacting their performance and/or health.

When the pros outweigh the cons, it's time to take action. Before you act, answer these questions:

- *"If I could create work that works for me, what would that look like?"*
- *"What am I afraid of?"* (Just naming fears helps reduce their grip on you.)
- *"How will I know it's time for me to take a step?"* (I've included a poem that begins "and the day came" to help you recognize when it's time.)

If you want support in taking that step, sign up for the next series of sessions, set up an individual session, or form your own group.

When you create work that works for you, we all benefit.

Live well,

Christine  
MBA, Doctor of Naturopathy

and the day came  
when the effort it took to be good was  
harder than the practice of being real.

and the day came  
when trying to be better was dissolved  
by realizing i am good enough.

and the day came  
when holding on took more work than  
letting go.

and the day came  
when musing over what was drifted  
behind what is and what i can be.

and the day came  
when my perceived flaws were seen as  
my gifts and my teachers.

and the day came when treading water  
i became tired and let myself  
ride the wave.

and the day came  
when trying to be perfect  
constrained the blossoming  
of who i really am.

and the day came  
when my crossed arms of fear were  
opened by the spread of my wings  
and i flew.

(One of my clients sent me this poem  
when she flew. If you know the author,  
please email me)