



Secrets of job satisfaction

It's a win-win when your life's in balance!

Just say "no" to office gossip

e-Thoughts — *What do you want to be when you grow up?*



Most people spend 30 percent or more of their time at work.¹ So it stands to reason that feeling fulfilled at work can make a big impact on your overall satisfaction in life. **More...**

It's hard to balance work and personal life. Try some of the ideas in this article to gain greater control over your life. **More...**

There's nothing wrong with a little bit of chit-chat to break up the work day. But problems can arise when the talking turns to gossip. **More...**

If you ever think the world isn't changing, try asking some kids what they want to become. Just like me, you may learn a lot! **More...**

¹www.ask.com

Getting help

Confidential support, information and resource referrals are available for a variety of concerns — both work and personal. Call for assistance for you, your household members or your adult children under age 26, whether they live at home or not. Call or visit us online today!

Secrets of job satisfaction

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Most people spend 30 percent or more of their time at work.¹ So it stands to reason that feeling fulfilled at work can make a big impact on your overall satisfaction in life.

What does satisfaction look like to you?

To start, think about what makes you feel happy and fulfilled.

- A personal sense of accomplishment?
- Recognition from others?
- Working as part of a team?
- Making friends at work?
- Having opportunities to get ahead?

Satisfaction is unique to each person. You're taking a big step toward achieving workplace satisfaction when you identify your own factors.

Use your power to make work more satisfying

Once you have ideas about what makes you feel good, take action. You have the power to make your worklife happier and more fulfilling. Here are some basic tips for harnessing and directing that power:

- **The power of a “can do” attitude.** A good attitude is a very strong force. Pessimistic people see barriers; optimistic people see opportunities. When you see a problem, try to approach it as a challenge instead of an obstacle. Ask: How can we get past this? How can we turn this around?

Coworkers and managers like to work with others who think and solve rather than just complain. An attitude of curiosity and willingness to pitch in can earn you recognition and perhaps advancement.

- **The power of professionalism.** We're all responsible for acting appropriately in the workplace. Work is not the place for disruption, emotional outbursts or losing control of your feelings. If you get worked up over something, take a break. Then try to use tact and diplomacy. You'll be more likely to earn cooperation and respect from coworkers and supervisors if you keep a cool head.
- **The power of respecting others.** Treat your coworkers just as you'd like them to treat you. When you're disrespectful or negative, you become an “energy drain” to yourself and those around you. On the other hand, your good will toward your job and coworkers — and yourself — can contribute to an overall upbeat vibe at work.
- **The power of renewal.** Parents encourage kids to be “well rounded” because children need to get satisfaction from many different areas of their lives. The same is true for adults. You can't get all your needs met from any one source. Healthy, well-rounded adults have friends and interests they pursue and enjoy outside their working hours.

¹www.ask.com

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Do you struggle to meet the demands of work and family while also trying to squeeze in time for your own needs? The resulting stress impacts everyone...

- **You — the employee** — try to juggle everything. Often, you just can't do it all. You might feel your life is out of control sometimes. And you may feel angry, frustrated and guilty.
- **Your spouse or partner** may wish you could spend more time together. Relationships are key to overall happiness, yet they can suffer because of worklife imbalance.
- **Children** sense parents' irritability through household tensions. Sometimes they may even think they're at fault! Kids can feel hurt, confused or begin to act out in response to stresses they sense but don't understand.
- **Elderly family members or friends** may feel forgotten in the whirl of your busy life. As a result, they can feel lonely and resentful.
- **Employers** are affected by their employees' stress, too. When workers are stressed, production and efficiency decrease. That means more pressure on managers and supervisors.

Take control to regain balance

It's hard to balance work and personal life. Try some of the ideas below to gain greater control over your life:

1. Get organized.

- Get a head start on each day by making lunches and laying out clothes the night before.
- Simplify evenings with dinners that are healthy and easy. (Three cheers for those 15-minute recipes!)

- Make a list of your daily tasks. Number them in order of importance and tackle the ones that matter most. Let the others wait until you can get around to them.

2. Plan family time.

- Exercise together. It's an inexpensive way to have fun and get a good workout too. Hit tennis balls, shoot hoops or take walks. Activities like these provide fun for all.
- Give your children individual attention too. Address worries your kids might have. Reassure them that they're loved and everything's okay.
- Include your elderly parents, grandparents and other loved ones in your plans when you can. See if you can find good times to call, drop by or invite them over.

3. Set up dates.

- Relationships can suffer when one or both people are too busy. So plan weekly date times when nothing gets in the way of being together — even if you just watch TV, grab a bite or talk.

4. Make some time for yourself everyday — even if it's just 20 minutes.

- Carve out time to do something that makes you feel good. It's easier to meet family and job responsibilities when you feel taken care of too!

The bottom line: Recognize that, as a working adult, you have a lot on your plate. The solution is not to push yourself beyond realistic expectations. Rather, it's to be honest and reasonable with yourself and others. When you calm down and feel more in control, those around you will too.

Just say “no” to office gossip

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There’s nothing wrong with a little bit of chit-chat to break up the work day. But problems can arise when the talking turns to gossip.

What’s gossip? It’s talk that’s harmful, damaging or embarrassing to someone.¹ It can lead to conflict or negativity. Most of all, if it’s something you’d say behind someone’s back but not to his or her face, it’s gossip.

Does gossip really hurt anyone?

Absolutely! Gossip anywhere — but especially in the office — detracts from team trust and morale. It can create cliques, suspicion and uneasy relationships. Simply put: It creates divisions instead of bonds. On the job, an environment that feeds on gossip compromises the respect that’s needed to work together and be productive.

How can you help?

Avoid office gossip by taking these steps:

- **Maintain your privacy.** Don’t share highly personal matters at work unless you’re willing to have everyone at work know your private life.
- **Keep busy.** People who gossip want attention. If you’re busy, they can’t gossip with you.

- **Stay away from gossips.** You know who they are. Try to avoid them. Just hanging around with gossips may give others the impression that you’re a gossip too.
- **Don’t even listen.** Gossip requires speakers and listeners. If you don’t want to be part of gossip, walk away when the gossiping starts.
- **Switch the tone or topic.** If lunch or coffee break chat turns to gossip, try to shift the conversation by saying something positive about the person who’s the target. Or, gather your confidence and say you don’t want to gossip about someone else.
- **Talk to your manager.** When people spend time gossiping, they’re wasting time and hurting the workplace. Have a confidential talk with your manager if you think gossip is a factor at your job.

¹www.ehow.com

e-Thoughts - What do you want to be when you grow up?

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Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

Do you have kids, grandkids or spend time around your friends' kids? Have you ever asked them what they want to be when they grow up?

I have clear memories of grownups asking me that question when I was little. The answer in my day was usually "nurse," "teacher" or "mommy" for little girls. The boys' version was typically "cowboy," "fireman" or "policeman."

These days, the answers tend to be quite different. Even little children are exposed to so much TV, internet and other media that they have very new ideas of the possibilities.

Their visions include plans to become superheroes, rock stars, actors, spies, models, police officers or detectives, doctors or vets. In addition, when I ask a small child this question, there is often little or no difference between girls' and boys' aspirations.

If you ever think the world isn't changing, try asking some kids what they want to become. Just like me, you may learn a lot!

Quality time – *Workplace fulfillment*

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