The power of passion

A Tweet from one of our followers

@DanSchawbel
Be the real you because everyone else is taken and replicas don’t sell for as much
#PwCPBW
Carpe Diem: Top 10 Ways to Incorporate Passion into Your Career

What differentiates the mundane careers from the meaningful ones? Passion is the “x” factor. Here are 10 tips on how to find and express your personal passions every day:

1. Be (authentically) enthusiastic
Authentic passion is attractive and demonstrates traits like commitment, well-roundedness and enthusiasm. While networking or interviewing for a job, don’t be afraid to express that you have deep passions and big goals, but always stay true to your personality and values. (If you’re shy, there’s no need to pretend you’re a comedian!)

2. Say yes more often
Be an explorer at work as well. Many people discover their calling through the moves they make at work. Be open to new experiences—assignments, projects, trips, games, trainings, networking events and more. Say yes to new things—passionately.

3. Find your bliss
The first step to incorporating passion into your work is determining what you’re passionate about. What activities, causes or topics are you most committed to? What could you talk about for hours? What makes you lose track of time? If you’re not entirely sure, dedicate yourself to finding out. Remember back to activities you loved as a kid or take some assessment tests. Everyone has passions; find yours.

4. Get rid of the “shoulds” and “shouldn’ts”
If you think it’s “bad” or “unprofessional” to show your passion at work, you may be dealing with some predetermined fears that aren’t necessarily true. The reality is that passion is a career asset, even in conservative fields like accounting, finance and law. If you’re not convinced, read biographies of successful people and talk to professionals you admire—you’ll likely find passion everywhere you look.

5. Be proactive
People who incorporate passion into their careers don’t just “fall into” this situation. They very deliberately incorporate their interests into their jobs. If you love to write, volunteer to pen more reports or contribute to their organization’s intranet. If you enjoy being social, offer to attend every conference you can. If you love photography, bring your camera to events and snap away. Here’s where the magic happens: the more your manager and colleagues see you in your element, the more likely they are to find additional ways for you to shine.

6. Hang out with passionate people
Look around your life for other people who share your passions—or any passion. Find the other artists, runners, gamers, hockey fans, stargazers, etc. Just as you network with other professionals in your industry, network with other professionals in your interest areas. The best professional connections are often forged outside the office (lunch, anyone?).

7. Hang out with passionate people—online
For every possible interest there are a zillion LinkedIn groups, Facebook fan pages, online communities, listservs, Google and Yahoo groups and more. Especially if you’re short on time or resources, look to these web-based passionfests for ideas, discussions, event listings, networking contacts and more.

8. Give back passionately
No matter what your day job, one of the best ways to incorporate passion into your life is to volunteer your time and talent. If you love animals, volunteer to work at a nature center, zoo or animal rescue center. If you love science, donate your time to a hospital or science museum. Many employers will give you time off for community service and may even introduce you to new projects that uncover a hidden passion.

9. Support others
Another great way to find meaning in your work is through the relationships you forge with colleagues, clients and others. Be passionate about helping and supporting other people. Share job leads, event invitations, networking contacts, advice and moral support. “Paying it forward” makes you feel good and it’s bound to come back to you in wonderful ways.

10. Be curious
Read a magazine on a topic you know nothing about. Go to StumbleUpon.com and wander aimlessly through websites you might never otherwise find. Take a different route home from work. Talk to the one person in class today who seems the most different from you. New passions can arise in surprising places.
**Why is passion important?**
Passion is powerful, attractive and exciting. It’s an “x” factor that differentiates an okay career from an extraordinary one. Let your passion, enthusiasm and uniqueness shine through!

If you're not entirely sure what your passions are, it’s worthwhile do some exploring. It doesn't matter if your passions are small or huge; what matters is finding the activities, people, causes or places that inspire you deeply and bring out the very best in you.

**Take time to discover your unique passions and find ways to incorporate them in your life and work. Here are four exercises to help.**

**1. Get back in the sandbox.**
Think back to the activities you loved as a child. Did you love building things? Making friends? Dancing in the backyard? Collecting bugs? How could you incorporate some of these childhood pleasures in your professional life today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities I loved as a child</th>
<th>How I could include this in my life today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Playing with my dog</td>
<td>Volunteer at the animal shelter once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Telling stories</td>
<td>Sign up for a local Toastmasters speaking group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. Keep a passion list**
Buy a little notebook or keep a running document on your computer with a long list of things that make you happy or fulfilled. Try not to censor yourself at all; just write. As your list grows, you'll begin to see patterns of what kinds of things attract you. Then you can begin to look for these themes (e.g., creativity, logic, the environment, Asia) in your work and personal pursuits and to brainstorm ways to incorporate them more into your life.

**Here are some prompts to get you started:**

Whom do you most admire?

Where would you most like to travel? What are the best places you've visited?
What section(s) of the bookstore or newspaper most appeal to you?

What classes have you most enjoyed?

What causes or nonprofit organizations do you consider most important?

3. Create a vision board
Magazines, websites and newspapers are overflowing with stories and images of people, items, places and experiences that might spark your passion. Over the next few weeks, clip stories that motivate you and save them in a passion folder that you can look through for inspiration. If you’re a visual person, you can put your favorite images together and create a “vision board”—a poster board on which you paste a collage of images that inspire you. The idea is that, when you surround yourself with images of what you want, you will be more likely to find those people, places, experiences and things in real life.

For more tips and examples of inspiring vision boards, check out the “How to Make a Vision Board” article on www.eHow.com.

4. Put your passion to work
You might be thinking, “All of this sounds great, but what does it have to do with finding a job and building my career?” It may surprise you to learn that some of the most successful people are the most passionate. They find ways not only to be passionate about their jobs, but also to incorporate their personal passions into their day-to-day careers. Here are some examples:

— Passionate golfers take clients out on the golf course and talk business on the links.

— People who are passionate about diversity issues volunteer to serve on nonprofit boards and to mentor less experienced people.

— Photography lovers bring their cameras to events and publish their photos on the company’s intranet or in newsletters.

— Professionals who love socializing attend lots of networking events and always have plans for lunch with a friend or colleague.

— Creative or imaginative people express themselves by being innovative all the time. They are constantly trying new approaches to old problems and finding clever solutions for everyday tasks.
**How can you put more passion in your work?**

Management consultant Regina Barr proposes asking yourself these five questions:

1. What is your passion inviting you to do?

2. What would your life be like if you were able to incorporate some aspect of your passion into your life every day, beginning right now? Would you participate in different organizations? Volunteer? Try a new class or hobby?

3. How would adding more passion to your life benefit you? How would it benefit your school or the organizations you're involved with?

4. What obstacles are standing in your way?

5. What is one small step you could take to move you forward and begin adding more passion or authenticity to your life today?

Now, go forth and live with more passion!

**Additional Resources**

— [www.pwc.tv](http://www.pwc.tv) – don’t miss the rest of our Personal Brand Week Worksheets and Top 10 Lists
— *Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming the Life You Were Meant to Live* by Martha Beck
— *I Could Do Anything If I Only Knew What It Was: How to Discover What You Really Want and How to Get It* by Barbara Sher
— *Zen and the Art of Making a Living: A Practical Guide to Creative Career Design* by Laurence G. Boldt