



## Where Do *THEY* Work?

I was channel surfing recently and came across on an old episode of *Family Feud*. I tuned in just as the winning clan was going into the bonus round in hopes of walking away with \$20,000.

A work-related question was what piqued my interest, and the off-the-cuff comment that followed from one the players struck an even deeper chord. Let me set the scene for you. In turn, two family representatives were asked to choose, on a scale of 1 – 10, how much *purpose* the people interviewed found in their jobs. The first team member chimed in quickly with a “3”, which didn’t earn her many points. When the second person’s turn came, she offered a vehement “1”, which yielded even fewer points. Interestingly, the choice that landed to top spot...was “10”! Hearing this, the second family member’s unedited response was “Where do *THEY* work?”

Most of us must work. However, clearly, not all of us find purpose in our work.

So, I invite you to read on. This edition of **EA Insights** is dedicated to examining a few ways to discover purpose beyond the paycheck. I hope that, even if you’re not there yet, you’re committed to figuring out how to reach a “10” on the purpose meter for yourself.

All the best,

June

June Melvin Mickens  
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## Purpose Beyond the Paycheck

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I’ve got a question for you.

- Do you work because you have to or because you want to?

Don’t answer too quickly. My point is not whether you are in a financial position to submit your resignation tomorrow. (Okay, I know you were

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### Quotes

*“The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning.”*  
~Mitch Albom

*“The climb might be tough and challenging, but the view is worth it. There is a purpose for that pain; you just can’t always see it right away.”*  
~Victoria Arlen

*“The purpose of life is a life of purpose.”*  
~Robert Byrne

*“A job is something you do for money. Your life’s work is done for a bigger purpose... And when you manage to find that work -- that’s when it starts feeling like play.”*  
~Chip Gaines

*“I truly believe that everything that we do and everyone that we meet is put in our path for a purpose. There are no accidents; we’re all teachers -- if we’re willing to pay attention to the lessons we learn, trust our positive instincts and not be afraid to take risks or wait for some miracle to come knocking at our door.”*  
~Marla Gibbs

*“My work is myself. That’s what makes me feel like I have purpose. It makes me happy and inspired and hopeful -- as hard as it may be sometimes.”*  
~Meena Harris

thinking before the end of *today!*) What I really want to know is whether you find the work you do to be drudgery or whether it lifts you up.

If what you do daily is primarily for a paycheck, if it provides little or no joy and produces little or no enthusiasm, then I encourage you to be on the lookout for **purpose**. In other words, what is there, beyond a periodic addition to your bank account, that makes (or could make) this particular job meaningful? If you're struggling to come up with an answer, then engaging in a *recognition* exercise could be a first step for you in connecting the dots.

#### **Recognize the value you add.**

Every job is not going to be Nobel Prize worthy, but do you see the value you add through your work?

It is easy to get so involved in the daily grind that you lose perspective. It is possible to become so overwhelmed with people and deadlines or so smothered by routine that the importance of what you do fades away. However, every job should be meaningful in some way to your organization, to your customers, and/or to your community; that *should* be why the position exists. If purpose seems missing, take some time to step back and try to rediscover the real value your role brings. You've got to see that, and how, you matter...whether or not others do.

#### **Recognize the part this role may play in your long-term career path.**

Looking long-term can be useful in discovering or remembering value.

If today's job isn't where you see yourself forever, do a career-plan reset. Revisit where it is you want to end up. Critically consider the credentials needed for that role. Then, highlight the education, experiences, or exposure that your current placement may provide on your journey toward that future fit. Refocus on what you're gaining today, and see how invaluable it is as a stepping stone to where you want to be tomorrow.

#### **Recognize the way in which the current role is well-suited to you.**

Take time to see, or to seek out, those parts of today's work that really are made for you. During the day, what are the tasks that just make time fly? Are there times when things are clicking and you get to use your skills in a way that plays to both your strengths and your interests? Even in areas that require a bit more intentionality, do you recognize the growth that's happening; do you see that you're building skill muscles...even if it's hard work?

Discovering how your job suits you and/or how it develops you is another valuable bit of introspection. And, if you are able to laser in on these areas, you just may find that the work takes on greater purpose because you're able to see its positive impact on and for you.

With that, return to the question asked earlier. *Your work* – a must do OR a get to do? If you're in the "must-do" camp, isn't it time to turn that situation around? After all, it really is possible to find purpose where you are or to engage in critical analysis and seek out the type of work or setting that will showcase you at your best. Isn't it time for you to thrive and not simply survive? If so, reach out to us at [\*\*Executive Advantage\*\*](#). Let us partner with you on your journey toward purpose. [\*\*Contact us today.\*\*](#)

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*"Work gives you meaning and purpose and life is empty without it."*  
~Stephen Hawking

*"Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself, and know that everything in life has purpose. There are no mistakes, no coincidences, all events are blessings given to us to learn from."*

~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

*"Just because you got money doesn't mean you're gonna be happy, and just 'cuz you can buy everything in the world doesn't mean you're gonna find your purpose."*

~Logic

*"Find out who you are. And do it on purpose."*

~Dolly Parton

*"I believe that if you don't derive a deep sense of purpose from what you do, if you don't come radiantly alive several times a day, if you don't feel deeply grateful at the tremendous good fortune that has been bestowed on you, then you are wasting your life. And life is too short to waste."*

~Srikumar Rao

*"When you waste a moment, you have killed it in a sense, squandering an irreplaceable opportunity. But when you use the moment properly, filling it with purpose and productivity, it lives on forever."*

~Menachem Mendel Schneerson

*When people look for and demand purpose in their work, it impacts businesses, communities, and the economy.*

~Tae Yoo

## **About Executive Advantage**

At [\*\*Executive Advantage\*\*](#), we are committed to providing results-based business and management consulting, leadership development, and coaching support. We partner with business leaders to build healthy, well-functioning organizations, where goals are met and people thrive. We also partner with individuals to create professional (and personal) lives with clearer direction, improved results, and greater balance.

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