



# Why following your passion is bad career advice

It's been one of those days, where your work as a EA just doesn't seem to work anymore. It may be because your boss is getting increasingly difficult to work with. Perhaps your colleagues are driving you nuts, or you're just bored and ready for something else.



## THE EXPERTS

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**When you reach** this point, you'll often get the well intentioned, but not so useful advice from friends to find a career you are passionate about.

However, chasing a passion can lead you to make short term decisions that don't serve you over the long term.

## Let's get real

All jobs have their good points and bad points. Their highs and their lows. Days that are awesome, and days where nothing goes according to plan. No job, no matter how glamorous it may appear on the surface, is full of roses and champagne every day.

When finding your passion becomes the over-arching goal it can lead to decisions that don't help you in the long run, as you flit from dream to dream, passion to passion. You become short-term focused, rather than thinking about long-term outcomes and objectives.

## Think long term

Sometimes the hardest jobs – the ones you are least passionate about – are the ones that turn out to be pivotal in your career progression.

So before ditching the EA job you don't like to chase the passion bubble, think about the benefits the current role and career path is offering you both short, medium and long term. Next, look at those benefits in the broader context of your career, and life.

This doesn't mean you completely ignore what you are passionate about and throw away your dreams, but it does mean you make decisions with realism attached.

## Consider:

- What are the benefits of staying in your current EA or Chief of Staff position?
- Is this role a stepping stone to a role in a different industry or sector?

## Get curious

For some people being told to follow your passion can create stress – particularly if you find it hard to work out what you are passionate about. If that's you, rather than search for your passion, seek out what makes you curious. When you are curious you are open to new ideas, and happy to explore new ventures.

## Consider:

- What aspects of your current role do you find most interesting or the most challenging?
- Which aspects of your current role do you like least?
- What external interests can you pursue that will help make your current role more fulfilling?

## Find your why

It is when you are curious and reflective that you are in a better position to discover what drives and motivates you. This is your 'why'. The why you do what you do. Your purpose.

It is far more useful to consider your career decisions in this context. When you put your 'why' at the centre of your decision making you are considering your career choices as part of your whole life, including family, health and lifestyle.

There's no magic formula to find your 'why'. It is an iterative process, that involves a bit of soul searching and paying attention to what matters to you and motivates you. For some people 'their why' involves study, experimentation and trying new things. For other people it involves helping others, taking risks or venturing into the unknown, or having a happy, healthy and loving family.

No one person's purpose is better than another's. It is about finding out what really matters in life to you. How do you do this?

The best place to begin of course, is just to start. Start reflecting, pondering and experimenting. ☘

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