

# Argumentative essay on quest for career and vocation: tuesdays with morrie

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A large percentage of the American working people, even a majority of them, most likely fell into their jobs as a result of chance and circumstance, rather than as a result of actually pursuing their true vocation. The culture of today is ill-preparing young individuals for life after school. Many young individuals are graduating with unprecedented degrees and the world they enter is nothing like they are led to believe, where a degree would guarantee employment. Many of them spends years and years rambling from one job to another and one clique to another, looking for a role, and even after finding a job, most of them remain unsatisfied. This is one of the themes that Mitch Albom touches upon in his memoir, *Tuesdays with Morrie*. The whole problem is that people look for jobs instead of vocations that can deliver so much more, and this is what Mitch learns after meeting his old professor, Morrie Schwartz.

After graduating, Mitch is like any American graduate today. As he writes that, “[t]he years after graduation hardened [him] into someone [] ready to offer the world his talent. The world, [he] discovered, was not all that interested” (Albom 14). After graduating, many students feel as if they are capable of vanquishing the world. However, the truth is that there is already abundant great talent that can be found in this world. Just having a degree does not make them stand out from plenty of other degree holders. They have to start at the bottom like the rest and work their way up by putting in the grunt work. Like Mitch, this tends to harden people and inhibits their spirit or work ethic. Upon graduating from college, Mitch feels and learns the same thing. This is why he loses touch at first. He enters this world to pursue a meaningful career but ends up losing touch with the rest of the world.

When Mitch was in the Brandeis University, he took almost every sociology course that his favorite professor, Morrie Schwartz, was teaching. Sixteen years later after he has graduated, Mitch feels disappointment and frustration with the life that he chose to live sixteen years ago. Mitch tried to pursue his dream of becoming musician but failed and he finally gives up after the death of his uncle due to pancreatic cancer. Instead, after earning a master's degree in journalism, Mitch decides to work as a journalist for a Detroit newspaper because of the pay. Mitch is married but they have no children because he devotes all of his time to work. Despite the success and wealth, Mitch feels unsatisfied. Thus, in these sixteen years, Mitch not only loses touch with most of the people from his college days, but also loses touch with the man he had been back in those days, and everything he believed.

Above is an example of the fate that awaits many people who look for a well-paid job over a vocation and believe that the only way to use time to its full potential is to pursue financial success. However, Mitch's life least, at least initially, it is arguable that pursuing a vocation is the right thing to do. A vocation too is ultimately a career or a job, but the difference is that when you fall into it, you feel that you were meant to be in it, and you will enjoy it. Your vocation is the occupation that you are perfectly suited for. If you manage to find and pursue your vocation, it will utilize your naturally occurring strengths and skills, and will satisfy you. After Mitch meets Morrie, he learns that although he has found his vocation (journalism), but his purpose of fulfilling it (financial success) is not right, and this is a mistake that many of us make.

“ So many people walk around with a meaningless life. They seem half-asleep, even when they’re busy doing things they think are important. This is because they’re chasing the wrong things” (Albom 42). This is one of the life lessons that Mitch learns after spending every Tuesday with Morrie that not only seems applicable to life itself but also the careers many of us pursue. The reason many of us are unsatisfied with our careers, our jobs and our lives in general is because they lack meaning. According to Morrie, to get meaning into our life we must devote ourselves to the community around us and to creating something that is meaningful and purposeful. This is what we need to do when it comes to the vocation we pursue as well. We need to find a vocation where we may devote ourselves to the community around us, a vocation that gives us meaning and purpose.

It is arguable if it is even possible to find a meaningful and purposeful vocation in this down economy? It is also arguable if it is worthwhile to pursue a vocation if it pays less? It is true that everyone needs money lead a comfortable life. The problem with the people today, as Morrie tells Mitch, is that they “ start making money a god. It is all part of this culture” (Albom). Sure, we all need money, an improvement in well-being can also be compared to the financial improvements in life and this is what a meaningful, purposeful and satisfying vocation gives you. As Morrie says, “ Money is not a substitute for tenderness” (Albom), and it should also not be a substitute for your well-being. Pursuing the right vocation can boost your self esteem, lower your anxiety, and ensure your overall mental wellness, something that, like Mitch, many of us lack.

Before meeting his professor after sixteen years, Mitch was a jaded man, but

his encounters with Morrie and the lessons he learns change him for the better. After Morrie's death when he finds an old final paper he wrote during his college days, Morrie realizes that he had found his vocation all along (journalism), but his belief that pursuing financial success is the only thing that is the only thing worth spending time on preventing him from finding any meaning and purpose not only in his job but even in his life. Mitch wishes that he could have talked sense into himself when he was still in college, which suggests that students in college are in the ideal position to begin evaluating their circumstances and making a plan about looking for the perfect vocation and pursuing that vocation as a career. This is the only way they can avoid making the mistake that Mitch made and avoid ending up in dissatisfying job and life.

## References

Albom, M. (2002). Tuesdays with morrie: An old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson. New York: Broadway Books.