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[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Bishoy Fanous Writing 102 Professor Riveland 9 February 2013 The Meaning of Work When one thinks of meaningful work, generally they think of labor that accomplishes a certain goal. They think of a prestigious job or occupation that has meaning to it. But meaningful work can mean a lot more than just a prestigious job or having meaning to something you do.

Meaningful work can be as simple as feeding the birds in the park on a Saturday morning. It can be helping someone out or looking out for someone in need.

Meaningful work can be defined as enjoyment of the worker, dedication of the worker to the job, and involvement that the worker shows toward his job. When students start to think of jobs, they try to think of something that they would love doing for the rest of their lives. But instead they end up running after well-paying jobs and prestigious jobs. They feel that society would judge them in a way that would put them at the bottom of the job spectrum. So they end up going for a top of the line jobs that give good salaries but at the same time are boring or not meaningful to them.

Therefore, when it comes to jobs you want something you will enjoy doing for the rest of your life. You want something that you will satisfy you in life rather than depress you. According to Epstein in the section Work and its Contents from his book he says, " The most fortunate people of all, though, are those for whom the line between work and play gets rubbed out, for whom work is pleasure and pleasure is in work" (Epstein, 31). In other words, Epstein believes that your job should be close if not the same as your play time or the time you spend doing what pleases you.

This can conclude my point that work that is not enjoyable to the person who is doing it gives it no meaning. It does not matter how prestigious or high paying the job is, if it's not enjoyable, then it will not be meaningful to the person doing it. Also we notice in Epstein's quote the part where he says that the line between work and play is rubbed out (Epstein). Basically what he means by that is when you go on with your life doing your hobbies they should be similar, if not close to, what you do as a job for a living.

If that's not so, then the work you are doing is not meaningful to you. When it comes to meaningful work, dedication should be at the top of list. Dedication to work is more of a life style, like for example a doctor's life style is a lot different from an engineer's life style. A doctor might see something in a medical way while an engineer might see the same thing in a physical or a mechanical way. A doctor sees things in a certain way because he dedicated most of his time and effort to this form of life style and in the end he uses it to go through everyday life.

The same applies to an engineer and every other profession out there. The profession a person chooses is based on the amount of time and dedication they put in to that field. Dedication can be seen through many people in everyday life. We see it in famous football athletes, movie stars, and even teachers. As the prominent philosopher Malcolm Gladwell's talks about The Beatles and Bill Gates as a little kid and how they were dedicated to what they did before they even got paid for it or it was even their job yet.

He mentions how The Beatles when they first started performing it was in a strip club and they would perform for long hours every night together without complaining (Gladwell). Many might disagree and say that dedication

should be put in everything you do even your job. But the truth is that many people do their job and then they go on living a different life from what they do at work. They show no form of dedication to what they do in their job at home or when they go out with friends or family. If they show no form of dedication then how is it meaningful work to them?

It's not, it just another thing they do throughout the day like brushing their teeth or showering just because they have to do it and because it's a daily routine. Many people might say that they are dedicated to their job and they enjoy doing what they do for a living, but that does not necessarily mean that their job is meaningful to them. In order for work to be a hundred percent meaningful to the worker he has to be involved in it. Some might ask how can someone enjoy their job and be dedicated to their job but not be involved? The answer is that think of a football player in the National Football League.

He might be dedicated to going to every practice and he might enjoy playing football for a living, but when it comes to game time he ends up not playing and sitting on the bench most of the season. In order for a job to be meaningful to the worker he has to get involved in some way shape or form. Likewise, the football player being benched for most of the season has to find a way to get better. But while he is getting better, he has to be involved in other things on the bench, like studying different plays in the play book or following different skills or techniques of other players on the team.

This way he will be bumped up to playing more games in the season and end up getting involved in his job. In Thomas Sowell's magazine, Meaningful Work, he talks about acquiring skills, he says that " Those relatively few
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statistics that follow actual flesh-and-blood individuals over time show them moving massively from one income bracket to another over time, starting at the bottom and moving up as they acquire skills and experience" (Sowell, 2).

In making this comment, Sowell urges us to work our way up.

He urges us to get involved in what we do in order for us to get the skills we need and move up in our work field. Further more going back to involvement, Sowell talks about how statistics show that some people start off with no skills or experiences. But over time through involvement in their field of work or study, they gain the skills or experiences they need to move up in their job or their income. This shows that without involvement in what you do for a living you can not have meaningful work or work that gives meaning to what you do.

After reading this people might say that enjoyment, dedication, and involvement are not the only things that make work meaningful. But that living up to yourgoalsis what defines meaningful work. I would answer and say that even though that could be a way to define meaningful work it has to involve one of these three topics because a person's goal will never be to live miserable, but it would be to enjoy life. This can show that my definition of meaningful work is valid because whatever other way a person might want to define meaningful work. They will end up having to satisfy one f these three topics in their definition of meaningful work in order for it to be a valid and acceptable definition. In conclusion, meaningful work can not just be work that you do for a salary or prestigious. But it has to be work that you enjoy doing everyday. It has to be work that you are dedicated to doing even if the job has a risk to it. Last but not least it has to be work that involves you

in some way, not just a job that you go to, to get paid from. If the job you do does not involve one of these three things, then it can not be meaningful to you as a worker.

It would be better off for you to not go through the struggle of getting that job, then getting to that job and noticing that it gave no meaning to your life in the sense of working. Work Cited Epstein, Joseph. " Work and It Contents. " Once More Around the Block. New York: Norton, 1987. Print. Meaningful Work Comes from Passion, Not Genius. Perf. Malcolm Gladwell. Meaningful Work Comes from Passion, Not Genius. Bnet. com, 29 Nov. 2008. Web. 18 Feb. 2013. Sowell, Thomas. " Meaningful Work. " NationalReview. com 29 May 2012: Web.