

6 steps to following your passion

Do you find yourself looking for more fulfilment from your work? Many of us are – and in doing so, we're likely to come across the advice, 'follow your passion'. But what does this actually mean?

Some people seem to know their passion right from the get go, but don't worry if that's not you, or if your passion isn't career related.

'Following your passion' can come down to figuring out what you enjoy or love doing, then finding ways to bring this into your working life. That might look like:

- Taking a leap into a new role or industry you really care about
- Finding ways to adjust your current role to do more activities or tasks you enjoy
- Working out how you could take on a side project you find satisfying.

Whether it's through a bigger change or a small one, finding what you're passionate about and pursuing it can make your working life more fulfilling. Here are six key steps to guide you:

Step 1: Self-evaluation

To start, it's worth taking some time to think and to assess where you're at in your working life. What do you enjoy most about your current job, or previous roles? Write a list of the things you do at work and outside of work that make you happy or that you find satisfaction in.

They could be small everyday tasks and activities or more irregular responsibilities that you wish were a bigger part of your job. Perhaps you enjoy being creative, helping people or working with numbers. Maybe you like being outdoors. Whatever you can think of – jot it down.

Now take a look at your list. Do you see any trends or patterns? It could be that the things you enjoy doing point to a particular role or industry that you would thrive in.

There could be one thing that once you see it written, you'll realise it's what you want to focus on. Or perhaps there are one or two activities that you just want a little more of in your job.

Step 2: Explore the possibilities

Now that you've gotten a clearer picture of the things you enjoy, it's time to focus on how to bring these into your career.

Try to think open-mindedly about ways you could do this. For example, if you're working as an accountant at a corporate firm and wrote that your passion is helping others, you might want to try working or volunteering at a not-for-profit organisation where your skills are needed. It doesn't mean you have to become a social worker or community organiser; taking your accounting skills to an organisation with a social focus might also be a good option.

Or perhaps if you've written that you enjoy being creative and feel you aren't doing it in your current job. It could be worth seeing if your role and responsibilities can be adjusted to include ways you can use your creativity, or whether you could start up a side project as a creative outlet.

Step 3: Bounce your ideas off friends and family

Next, it's a good idea to check in with those closest to you about your plans.

If you are making a bigger move, it's important to involve family in your decision – not only because they're likely to be impacted in some way, but because they can provide advice and support. Likewise, your friends may raise points you hadn't considered or even offer a valuable contact that could help you get your foot in the door to the job or industry you're interested in.

Even if you're making some smaller changes to your working life, the backing of your friends or family can be a big help.

Step 4: Write your plan

Now you can picture your ideal role or the changes you want to make, it's time to put pen to paper and come up with a plan.

If you're thinking of a career change or aiming for a new role, note down what you have to consider before you make it happen. How much money will you need to support the transition? If study is involved, what courses are available and how can you apply? From here, you'll be able to start mapping out your journey. [Using this career planner](#) to guide you, think about what you need to do, how you're going to do it and when.

If instead you want to make changes to your current role, how do you plan to do this? Or, if you want to volunteer or work on a side hustle, do you need to cut back hours at your current job? Work out what you'll need to discuss with your boss or manager and how you might say it, then make a time to speak with them one-on-one.

Step 5: Trial it

You've done the thinking and strategy – now it's time to put your plan to the test.

If you're trying something totally new, it's a good idea to give it a trial run. That could take the shape of an internship, volunteer role or casual job – there are plenty of options out there that don't require long-term commitment. Ask your friends and family and search online for opportunities

If you're aiming for new responsibilities, tasks or projects you're passionate about, a trial run of these could also be useful – for your own benefit, as well as to demonstrate to your employer that it can work well for them.

Step 6: Do it

Now you've got this far in working towards what you're passionate about, it's time to actually live it.

If you're entering a new role or industry, don't rush – it can take time to make the right change for you. If you're getting involved in new projects, responsibilities or ways of working, a focus at this stage could be to stick with them. And remember, lean on your friends or family for support, and celebrate your achievements.

Whether it's through a big change or small steps, bringing the things you enjoy into your working life can be your route to finding more fulfilment and following your passion.