



FIVE WORKPLACE MYTHS THAT NEED TO DIE

BY GEOFF SCALES

I used to have a nasty habit of quitting really good jobs. The first great job I quit was in advertising, managing a beer account: I was 23 and worked on Kokanee ads all day long. My client would ship flats of Creston's finest to the house whenever we had a party. Dream job. I worked with brilliant, creative people and we had fun. To my social network, it appeared that I had made it.

But I was uninspired. It was a dream job – just not my dream job. When I left advertising, my family and friends thought I was nuts. They said things like: "It's a great job"; "just apply yourself, it will get better"; "lots of people would love to be in your position." And my favourite of all: "no one likes their job, it's why we call it work."

There was a darker message too: *if you don't like it, suck it up. Grow up. Most people are miserable at work, don't expect anything different.*

I quit. I traveled. I re-entered advertising briefly, only to quit again. I was lost. I knew something was missing, but I didn't know what.

I was told by some people to find a job I love, and I would never have to "work" again. To my ears, this was fantasy and sounded way too fluffy. I knew that the world didn't work like that. I believed that real men in the real world worked in finance, or engineering or sales. They did what they had to do, not what they *wanted to do*, cause that's what a real man does. I was kind of an idiot.

I lacked vision, purpose and direction. So I did what many young people do in similar circumstances: I went back to school.

I took an MBA and it led to a big job with a prestigious investment bank in London, England. I sat on the Fixed Income trading floor and sold bonds. The work was intellectually stimulating, financially rewarding, and physically challenging. Twelve hours a day of traders yelling, phones ringing, and clients buying: it was a remarkable rhythm and energy. I appeared to have made it.

But that familiar feeling crept in. Despite the excitement and prestige, I felt lost. The money was great but something was missing. The work didn't feed my soul. So I quit another dream job. And was lost. Again.

I was adrift for a year before I met someone who became my mentor and coach. He helped me see that the hardest, toughest work was lying underneath what I had dismissed as fluff. I needed to reflect on who I really was, what I really cared about, and what I was naturally good at, then had to put it all together to find a career I love. I learned the best lesson of my life: when we do work that fulfills us, the rest will take care of itself.

When I found work I loved, I made an interesting observation: there are lots of people out there who also love what they do. When someone has found their personal dream job you can tell. They are happy. They smile more. They laugh more. They are (usually) really, really good at what they do. And they are in high demand regardless of their industry.

Five Workplace Myths that Need to Die

So here are the Five workplace myths that we need to let go of. Better yet, we need to take them out into the backyard, douse them in gasoline, and let these suckers burn.

Myth 1: No one loves their job. Only told by people who hate their jobs, and can't see a different option. They want you to join them in their misery. Don't get sucked in.

Myth 2: It's called work for a reason. It's not play. The idea that "work" is meant to be tedious and dull is one of the most cruel myths. The most successful, innovative people will tell you they play at work every day.

Myth 3: People only work to get paid. Have you ever noticed how many successful, wealthy people are still working when they could have retired 10 or 20 years earlier? It's because they love their work. For many, this passion is what brought them success in the first place.

Myth 4: It's naïve to seek out work you love. We are fearful of vulnerability, and will go to extreme lengths to avoid it. Avoiding that vulnerability is what drives this myth. Is it easy to seek out work you love? No. Will it make you vulnerable? Yes. And is the outcome worth the risk? Damn right it is.

Myth 5: You can learn to love any job. There is lots of evidence suggesting we can consciously choose our mental state. Yes, it may be possible to be happy in any situation. But what if there is more to work than that? What if, with a little self-reflection and exploration, you can find another level of happiness at work? Isn't that worth it?

Make yourself vulnerable. Reject these five myths that keep you in unfulfilling work. Take risks, experiment and grow. Trust me: when you bring your values and your passions - the naked truth of who you are and what you care about - to what you do every day for work, the rewards are immeasurable.



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