

5 ways to find meaning and purpose in your work

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Work doesn't have to be boring or stressful. You can find meaning and purpose in your work by following these five insights from Imperial Business School experts

Finding meaning and purpose in your work is not only beneficial for your well-being, but also for your performance, creativity and innovation. Here are some insights from Imperial Business School experts on how to achieve this goal.

1. Make the most of your time in the office

Whether hybrid working is new to you or something you've been doing for years, it can be a challenge to feel like you're getting the most out of the home/office split, and not just spending parts of your week in different places. Dr Omar Merlo, Associate Dean (External Relations), explains how time in the office can be used to strengthen your business's customer focus, while avoiding the pitfalls of remote communication.

2. Learn from Japanese philosophy

But don't you feel like you should be getting something out of your work too? Customer-centricity is great, but it can't be your sole source of joy and satisfaction.

If you recognise that feeling, you might want to learn about ikigai, a Japanese philosophy that can help you achieve personal and professional fulfilment. Frank Brueck, Leadership Lab Lead at Imperial Business School's [Leonardo Centre on Business for Society](#), explains how to apply it to your own career and organisation, so you can connect your passion and skills with market needs.

3. Learn from sport

For all that sporting metaphors can be a business cliché, sport can genuinely offer some lessons on how to find meaning and purpose in your work. In this article, Dr Jan-Michael Ross, Associate Professor of Strategy, shows how to use sports data effectively and rigorously to develop and test new management theories. He also highlights the opportunities and challenges of using sport as a research context, and the potential benefits for academics and practitioners alike.

4. Develop general skills

Innovation is a key driver of economic growth, but it also involves significant risks and uncertainties. According to Dr Cláudia Custódio, Associate Professor of Finance, CEOs with more general and transferable skills are likelier to invest in innovation and take advantage of new opportunities, as they have more outside options and are less scared of failure. She has also looked at the implications of this for the labour market for executives and the design of CEO contracts.

5. Recognise when you're most creative

Creativity is an asset for any organisation, but it can be hard to foster and manage. In this article, Professor Paola Criscuolo and Dr Anne ter Wal explain the phenomenon of bootlegging, or underground innovation, where employees work on their own ideas without official approval or support. They argue that bootlegging can be a source of radical innovation, as it allows employees to pursue novel and risky ideas without fear of criticism or reprisal.

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