

Vision Activity 4: A Question of Money

Many of our hopes and dreams often centre around money – getting it, having it and keeping hold of it.

But studies in motivation undertaken in the work place show that money doesn't necessarily improve performance, or make people happier at work. Experiments have been conducted in the US and India and they both come to the same conclusion: when a task is dull and repetitive, money is a reasonable motivator to improve. But when a task is complex – like most are in the world of modern work – more money doesn't mean better outcomes.

So what does? Well, it turns out there are other things that lead to a well-lived working life. Pay is just one element; others might be freedom, the power to take decisions, creativity, a sense of purpose, belonging, optimism and team-work.

So which ones might matter to you?

In this thought experiment, we're going to imagine you've got a job pays you very well. You can buy everything you need and you have no money worries.

So given that, what would be important to you in this job? Of the thirty possibilities we've suggested here either (i) choose your top 3 or top 5 (ii) put a top 10 in order of preference or (iii) put all 30 in order of importance to you.

- 1. to face unfamiliar situations and improvise solutions in the moment,***
- 2. to organise your own day on your own terms,***
- 3. to be making a difference in people's health, wellbeing or happiness,***
- 4. to be creative, producing new and original content,***
- 5. to have status, power and expertise,***
- 6. to solve problems for others, improving their lives,***
- 7. to have a safe role, a job for life with no threat of ever being made redundant,***
- 8. to wake early to an alarm clock and be up and active before everyone else,***
- 9. to wake up every day excited for the day's work ahead,***
- 10. to be finished at 5:00pm and not think about work until the next morning,***
- 11. to be travelling from place to place,***
- 12. to work in the same place each day, with the same commute and same workspace,***
- 13. to develop new skills through practice and feedback,***
- 14. to share your enthusiasm for something you're passionate about,***
- 15. to have time to laugh and joke; to not take work seriously,***
- 16. to lead others (making decisions about who does what),***
- 17. to have someone else make all the decisions and tell you what to do,***
- 18. to use your hands to practically build, maintain or fix something,***
- 19. to be operating in a high-stakes, high-pressure environment,***

- 20. to lead a low-stakes, stress-free life doing something unimportant,**
- 21. to be in a busy, bustling atmosphere with music, activity, conversation,**
- 22. to have predictable working hours with a set start and finish time,**
- 23. to have a list of predictable tasks – every day roughly the same,**
- 24. to stay late into the night, still focused long after others have gone home,**
- 25. to be active, moving, physical... to be away from a desk,**
- 26. to have a space of your own, and projects you complete entirely by yourself,**
- 27. to be helping to change people's opinions, attitudes and behaviours,**
- 28. to dress however you want,**
- 29. to respond to crises and emergencies as and when they come up,**
- 30. to have every day different.**

Now take a moment to see if there are any we missed off our list that are important to you.

So where might money fit?

Now you've got a list of preferences, we'd like you to consider exactly where money might fit in. using the space below, see if you can add some of the characteristics from the table above to the two columns:

I would be happy with lower pay as long as the job had....	As long as I had really decent pay I would put up with...	Regardless of the pay I could never put up with...

Rather than designing a work-lives that pay well, but we're desperate to get out of, we should perhaps be trying to design work-lives that energise and excite us.

What themes about work seem to be emerging for you?