TED

我们为什么要工作

题目：The way we think about work is broken
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Today I'm going to talk about work. And the question I want to ask and answer is this: "Why do we work?" Why do we drag ourselves out of bed every morning instead of living our lives just filled with bouncing from one TED-like adventure to another?

今天我要谈一谈工作。 我想跟大家一起讨论的问题是：“我们为什么要工作？”为什么我们每天早上 要挣扎着起床（去上班） 而不是享受生活， 让我们的人生充满 一个个像TED大会这样美妙的经历呢？

You may be asking yourselves that very question. Now, I know of course, we have to make a living, but nobody in this room thinks that that's the answer to the question, "Why do we work?" For folks in this room, the work we do is challenging, it's engaging, it's stimulating, it's meaningful. And if we're lucky, it might even be important.

你们也许也有同样的疑问吧。 当然，我理解，我们要维持生计， 但我相信，在座的各位不会认为“维持生计”是问题的答案，“我们为什么要工作？”对于在座的各位，工作是充满挑战的， 它是迷人，刺激，富有意义的。 如果我们幸运的话， 它甚至可能不可或缺。

So, we wouldn't work if we didn't get paid, but that's not why we do what we do. And in general, I think we think that material rewards are a pretty bad reason for doing the work that we do. When we say of somebody that he's "in it for the money," we are not just being descriptive.

因此，如果没有薪水， 我们就不会工作， 但这还不是主要原因。 通常情况下， 我们认为物质奖励并不是 我们工作的好理由。 当我们说某人“做这个只是为了钱”的时候 背后的含义大家懂的。

meaningful
adj.有意义的

descriptive
adj.说明的

Now, I think this is totally obvious, but the very **obviousness** of it raises what is for me an incredibly profound question. Why, if this is so obvious, why is it that for the overwhelming majority of people on the planet, the work they do has none of the characteristics that get us up and out of bed and off to the office every morning?

我想这很显而易见吧，但正因为显而易见，反而带来一个 极其深刻的问题。 为什么，尽管这很明显， 为什么地球上绝大多数的人 都在做一些极其无聊的工作， 无聊到让我们甚至没有动力 从床上爬起来去上班呢？

How is it that we allow the **majority** of people on the planet to do work that is **monotonous**, meaningless and soul-deadening? Why is it that as capitalism developed, it created a mode of production, of goods and services, in which all the **nonmaterial satisfactions** that might come from work were eliminated? Workers who do this kind of work, whether they do it in factories, in call centers, or in fulfillment **warehouses**, do it for pay. There is certainly no other earthly reason to do what they do except for pay.

而我们又为什么会允许大多数人 去做乏味、无意义且让人麻木的工作呢？ 为什么资本主义一直在发展， 它创造出来的生产、商品和服务模式， 反倒将工作带来的精神满足感损失殆尽呢？ 从事这种工作的工人， 不管是在工厂，客服中心， 还是在仓库， 工作就是为了赚钱。 除此之外再无其他理由。

So the question is, "Why?" And here's the answer: the answer is technology. Now, I know, I know -- yeah, yeah, yeah, technology, **automation** screws people, blah blah -- that's not what I mean. I'm not talking about the kind of technology that has enveloped our lives, and that people come to TED to hear about.

那么问题来了，"为什么呢？"我认为答案是这样： 是技术。 哦，我知道了，我明白了—— 是的，没错，技术、自动化毁了人类， 诸如此类陈词滥调—— 我想说的并不是这个。 我所指的技术， 并不是那些已经进入我们生活的， 我们在TED演讲中能听到的技术。

obviousness	n.显而易见
majority	n.多数
monotonous	adj.单调乏味的
nonmaterial satisfactions	精神满足
warehouses	n.仓库
automation	n.自动化

I'm not talking about the technology of things, profound though that is. I'm talking about another technology. I'm talking about the technology of ideas. I call it, "idea technology" -- how clever of me.

我说的并不是实物科技，尽管实物科技也很深奥。我指的是另一种技术。是关于思想的技术。我称之为"思维技术"—— 机智如我。

In addition to creating things, science creates ideas. Science creates ways of understanding. And in the social sciences, the ways of understanding that get created are ways of understanding ourselves. And they have an enormous influence on how we think, what we aspire to, and how we act.

除了创造事物，科学也创造思想。科学创造理解方式。在社会科学中，被创造出来的理解方式 成为了我们了解自身的途径。它们极大的影响了我们的思维方式、我们的追求 和我们的行为方式。

enormous
adj.巨大的

If you think your poverty is God's will, you pray. If you think your poverty is the result of your own inadequacy, you shrink into despair. And if you think your poverty is the result of oppression and domination, then you rise up in revolt. Whether your response to poverty is resignation or revolution, depends on how you understand the sources of your poverty. This is the role that ideas play in shaping us as human beings, and this is why idea technology may be the most profoundly important technology that science gives us.

如果你觉得贫穷 是上帝的旨意，那你便会祈祷。如果你觉得贫穷 是因为自己不够好，你便会陷入绝望。如果你觉得贫穷 是压迫和统治造成的，那你就会造反。你对贫穷的反应是认命还是革命，取决于你如何理解贫穷的原因。这就是思想在将我们塑造 成人类过程中所起的作用，这就是为什么思维技术 也许是科学赋予我们的 最重要的技术。

domination
n.控制；统治

profoundly
adv.深深地

And there's something special about idea technology, that makes it different from the technology of things. With things, if the technology sucks, it just vanishes, right? Bad technology disappears. With ideas -- false ideas about human beings will not go away if people believe that they're true. Because if people believe that they're true, they create ways of living and institutions that are consistent with these very false ideas.

institution
n.制度

思维技术有它的特别之处， 这也使其同实物技术有所区别。 如果实物技术很烂， 就会遭到淘汰，对吧？ 糟糕的技术会消失。 而在思想方面—— 关于人类的错误思想并不会消失， 只要人们觉得对，就不会消失。 因为只要有人觉得这些思想是正确的， 那他们就会创造出 相应的生活方式和制度， 来与这些错误思想保持一致。

And that's how the industrial revolution created a factory system in which there was really nothing you could possibly get out of your day's work, except for the pay at the end of the day. Because the father -- one of the fathers of the Industrial Revolution, Adam Smith -- was convinced that human beings were by their very natures lazy, and wouldn't do anything unless you made it worth their while, and the way you made it worth their while was by incentivizing, by giving them rewards. .

工业革命就是这么创造出工厂体制的， 在这体制下，你工作一整天后 除了钱什么也得不到。 因为工业革命之父—— 工业革命之父之一，亚当·史密斯， 他相信人天生就是懒惰的， 如果你不让他们觉得值， 他们宁愿闲着什么也不做， 怎么让他们觉得值呢？ 就是激励他们，给他们报酬。

That was the only reason anyone ever did anything. So we created a factory system consistent with that false view of human nature.

这是任何人做任何事的唯一原因。 于是我们基于对人性的 错误认识建立了工厂体系。

But once that system of production was in place, there was really no other way for people to operate, except in a way that was consistent with Adam Smith's vision. So the work example is merely an example of how false ideas can create a circumstance that ends up making them true.

但这种生产制度一旦建立，人们就别无选择了，只能选择与亚当·史密斯 的观点相符的（工作）方式。错误的理论能创造出（与之相适应的）状况，最终自圆其说，工作只是其中一个例子。

circumstance
n.环境；条件

It is not true that you "just can't get good help anymore." It is true that you "can't get good help anymore" when you give people work to do that is demeaning and soulless. And interestingly enough, Adam Smith -- the same guy who gave us this incredible invention of mass production, and division of labor -- understood this. He said, of people who worked in assembly lines, of men who worked in assembly lines, he says: "He generally becomes as stupid as it is possible for a human being to become." Now, notice the word here is "become." "He generally becomes as stupid as it is possible for a human being to become." Whether he intended it or not, what Adam Smith was telling us there, is that the very shape of the institution within which people work creates people who are fitted to the demands of that institution and deprives people of the opportunity to derive the kinds of satisfactions from their work that we take for granted.

但我不认为 我们"已经走投无路了"。我认为，只有当人们被迫从事缺乏尊严又单调乏味的工作时，才真是"已经走投无路了"。有趣的是，亚当·史密斯—— 正是这个为我们发明了 大规模生产和劳动分工的人 ——理解这一点。他形容那些在生产线上工作的，进行流水作业的人，他说："他能变得要多愚蠢有多愚蠢。"大家注意他用的词是"变"。"他能变得要多愚蠢有多愚蠢。"不管是否是有意的，亚当·史密斯告诉我们的就是，正是这种工作体制 创造出适合这一体制需求的人们，并且让人们没有办法 从工作中获得满足感，而获得满足感本应是理所当然的。

The thing about science -- natural science -- is that we can spin fantastic theories about the cosmos, and have complete confidence that the cosmos is completely indifferent to our theories. It's going to work the same damn way no matter what theories we have about the cosmos. But we do have to worry about the theories we have of human nature, because human nature will be changed by the theories we have that are designed to explain and help us understand human beings.

科学的好处——我是指自然科学—— 在于我们能创造关于宇宙的奇妙理论， 而且还完全不必担心 宇宙会因我们的理论产生变化。 不管我们如何解释宇宙， 它还是会照常运转下去。 但关于人类本性的理论， 我们就要十分谨慎了， 因为那些原本用来揭示人性， 帮助我们理解人性的理论， 是会反过来改变人性的。

The distinguished anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, said, years ago, that human beings are the "unfinished animals." And what he meant by that was that it is only human nature to have a human nature that is very much the product of the society in which people live. That human nature, that is to say our human nature, is much more created than it is discovered. We design human nature by designing the institutions within which people live and work.

distinguished anthropologist
著名的人类学家

著名的人类学家 克利福德·格尔茨多年前说过， 人类是"未塑造好的动物。"他的意思是，只有人性 只有人类的人性 正是人类所生活的社会的产物。 这种人性，也就是说我们的人性， 与其说是被发现的， 不如说是被创造的。 人性是由我们设计的， 我们通过设计人类生活和 工作的机制来设计人性。

And so you people -- pretty much the closest I ever get to being with masters of the universe -- you people should be asking yourself a question, as you go back home to run your organizations. Just what kind of human nature do you want to help design?

所以在座的各位—— 你们差不多是宇宙中我能遇见的 最聪明的一群人—— 当你们回去继续当老板时， 你们应该问自己一个问题。 那就是，你们想要设计出什么样的人性？