

Work Questionnaire

Johannah Rodgers

Work signifies many different things. For some of us, work is our lives and our selves. For others, it is "work," i.e., something one has to do in order to make a living. It is not supposed to be pleasant. In the past, the distinctions between work as self and work as livelihood used to be demarcated by the types of work one did: "blue collar" and manual laborers worked for money and "white collar" and credentialed professionals worked to live in more than the sense of just making enough money. In the U.S. in the twenty first century (and probably long before then), there are fewer clear cut distinctions between what people do for work and their reasons for doing it. Money is generally one of the primary reasons that people work, but there are many other reasons as well.

This questionnaire is intended to help you think about your current job, what you like about it, what you dislike about it, why you are still there, and what might improve your experience of it. It is not a questionnaire about money and spending. While clearly related to the "work" issue, those issues are not the focus. Instead, this questionnaire asks that you think more about your time and how you wish to spend and manage it than about the money attached to certain forms of labor.

1. How do you think about the universe of work? I.e., is it a profession, a means of supporting yourself, a means of being of service, etc?

2. What do you like about your current job?

3. What do you dislike about your current job?

3.1 Of the things listed in #3, which ones may be subject to change? Which ones are "non-negotiable"?

4. On average, how many hours are you physically (or by Zoom, etc.) at work every week?

5. On average, how many hours are you physically (#4) and mentally (hours you spend thinking about work even when you are not actually there) at work every week?

5.1 In an "ideal world," how many hours a week would you dedicate to your remunerative work? How many hours a week do you work on average now?

6. Based on your annual salary, what are you earning per hour based on your physical work?

7. Based on your annual salary, what are you earning per hour based on your physical + mental work?

8. Do you feel you are fairly and adequately compensated? Why or why not?
9. How often do you think about leaving your job?
10. What are some specific incidents/encounters/individuals/phenomena that trigger these thoughts?
11. How much of your identity is tied up with your current position?
12. Do you think that is a positive or a negative? Why?
13. Have you ever had a job that you really enjoyed? Please describe what you were doing daily for that job and why it was a pleasant experience.
14. Describe an ideal work day with as much specificity as possible, i.e., specific hours dedicated to specific tasks.
15. When you imagine an ideal work day do you spend most of it alone or with other people or some combination of the two?
16. Compare your ideal work day with your actual work day in your current position. Do you see the two as highly distant or somewhat close to one another?
17. Is there anything you could do in your current position to make your actual work day more like your ideal work day?
18. Do you like and respect the people you work with? Why or why not?
20. How important is it to you to work with people you like and respect?
21. Do you feel there is room for professional advancement at your current position? Why or why not?

22. What are your greatest fears when you think about leaving your current position?

23. Do you believe there is a better position out there for you in your current position? Why or why not?

24. If yes, describe the better position and what appeals to you about it.

25. Do you know someone who has a work position that you think might be a good fit for you? What is it? What appeals to you about it? How real/idealized is your understanding of the position? Have you talked to the person about their day to day work life?