

# WHAT MAKES A JOB MEANINGFUL?

## WHAT DO YOU DO?

Chances are, you'll be asked this question a lot. When they ask this question, most adults are referring to what kind of work you do, not what kind of video games you play. Adults often spend much of their time at work, sometimes as much as a third of their lives, so having meaningful work is important to how they feel at work and at home.

**MEANINGFUL WORK IS DEFINED BY RESEARCHERS AS "DECENT WORK."**

But what kind of work is that? Decent work means not only making money but having good hours, job security, safety, a short commute, fair pay, and benefits like paid time off and healthcare. These things can add up to a sense of well-being about what you do and who you are (Solberg et al, 2021).

How can you find decent work in your future? Get to know yourself (Masdonati et al, 2022) and explore different pathways that fit you and your values.

What can help you on the path to decent work? Decent education. Research shows the important connection between your experiences in education and your way to decent work (Duffy, R. D., et al 2022). In fact, "As the level of education increases, the probability of attaining decent work also increases" (Masdonati et al, 2022).



Decent education, like college or university, can help you develop not just knowledge but important skills and practices. These include:

- Skills that can be used in a variety of jobs like technology and communication skills (soft skills).
- Flexibility and the ability to adapt to changes around you.
- Initiative (seeking out opportunities for change and sticking with things until meaningful change happens).
- Strong friendships and a community that supports you (social capital).

Developing these important life skills can help you be open to making changes in your work and career if you need to (Douglass et al, 2019).

It is never too early to start exploring your strengths and the interests that can lead you to meaningful work.

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