

THE WORKHER

A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE YOUNG WORKING WOMAN

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PART 1: HAVING A CAREER OR A JOB

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Part 1: A career vs. a job
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This is the first in a three part series about developing a career tailored to YOU!

Far too often we get a case of envies when we look at the careers of others. More often that not we do this without actually asking ourselves if they are really the lives that we actually *want* and whether we are prepared to put in the work (and inevitable sacrifices) to get there.

So, what sort of career **DO** you want? And what are you prepared to give to achieve it?

A career that you want and are truly proud of might take some time to create. And it might take some planning for. Whilst for some a career appears a truly magical thing that "just happens", for most of us, it needs a bit more thought and planning (and yes, work).

There is a lot of doom and gloom around work these days, as the economic downturn starts to hit and jobs seemingly become more precious. It can be a time of anxiety or even stress for some, either that they are worrying that they might lose their job or that they *have* to stay in a job that they hate for fear of not being able to find another.

But to my mind, this is a time of great opportunity. It is a time to reflect on the career you have versus the career you want. Times of stress and change can create amazing lenses through which to see new opportunities. And the amazing thing about the world that we live in is that we have the power to create what we want (with some hard work and the occasional bit of good luck along the way).

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So assuming that circumstances dictate that you have a choice, do you want a job or a career? For me, the difference is that a job is somewhat transactional. You trade your time for money so that you can enable other aspects of your life. A career is more holistic, more than the sum of a singular job, and more a tale of a series of jobs that looked at in the whole tell a story of your path to somewhere.

Do you want a job? Do you want money so that you can use it to enable other aspects of your life? Do you mind (within reason) what this job is, so long as it fulfils whatever criteria you put on it (ie – location, hours etc.)? This is a relatively simple equation to find out what means the most to you.

Or do you want a career? And is it one that you are currently in or is it something completely different?

If you want a career, firstly take a moment to find your "why". Why is this career important to you? What does it give you? What does it fulfil in you? This is important, because often by looking at the why, we can see that there are lots of other paths to fulfil the same end goal. If we start with "what" we self limit the path we are on.

Once you know your why – you can set about taking a good look at how you can create a path to get what you want. It is also important because it can help you see how a career is only one part of your life and having a career and life to be proud of is about knowing how much of your life you want your career to be about. It also means you can be flexible and pivot when opportunities present.

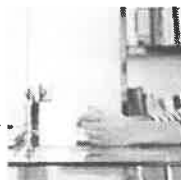
Life is rarely completely linear – there are steps sideways (and backwards) along the way. It is all about finding what suits you.



Tammy Tansley

Tammy Tansley is the author of *Do What You Say You'll Do*, a book for emerging leaders or those reinventing their leadership style. She runs a boutique consultancy that specialises in leadership and creating great cultures, and is co owner of Help Me HR. She is also mum to two mischiefs. <http://www.tammytansley.com.au/>

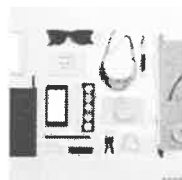
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PART 2: CREATING YOUR CAREER

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After discussing the differences between a career and a job in *Part 1* here are some tips on crafting your career.

Some of this is about you creating opportunities for yourself:

- o Mapping a path that shows what your career *could* look like;
- o Getting work experience or project work or interning with amazing companies or leaders to get exposure to them;
- o Building relationships and connecting with those that can help you get there (remember though that all networking and relationship building is about a two way street, look not just for what you can get, but what you can give back or pay forward);
- o Deciding if you need to do any additional formal study and developing a plan for this;
- o Reading up on an area of passion so you have deep, deep pockets of knowledge and expertise (today with all the free info on line and cheap books on kindle, it has never been easier to learn);
- o Contributing to forums (online and face to face) where you can share what you know and learn from others and build more connections and relationships;
- o Writing posts online, or contributing papers to conferences;
- o Finding a mentor;
- o Finding the right professional association for you and then regularly contributing to that;

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- Finding a coach that can help you map a path and work through the inevitable challenges that present themselves;
- Finding volunteering opportunities on a board or elsewhere that extend your skills, enable you to give back and build relationships and networks;
- Deliberately deciding what brand you want for yourself and your career and then formulating that brand (remembering that all your online activity will contribute to your brand).

Importantly, it is also about taking the opportunities that present themselves. We all get presented with opportunities that can help and expand our careers. What differentiates those that have amazing careers is that they take the opportunities. They don't listen to that self talk that will immediately give you a reason why it is not a good idea to do it (that's fear talking). They take risks, even if those risks don't always pan out. It is about putting the word out there that you are open to new opportunities (these don't always mean a new job). And if you've been one that has turned down opportunities before, then starting afresh and letting people know that your circumstances are such that you are now very open to looking at new opportunities.

It is also about being clear on how much you want to work at creating your career. A career that you are proud of, much like a life that you are proud of, rarely happens without a bit of hard work and thoughtfulness behind it. There will be those who read the list above with horror. They just want to come to work, do their job, take their promotions when and if they come and be done with it. And that's absolutely fine too.



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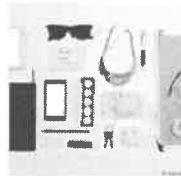
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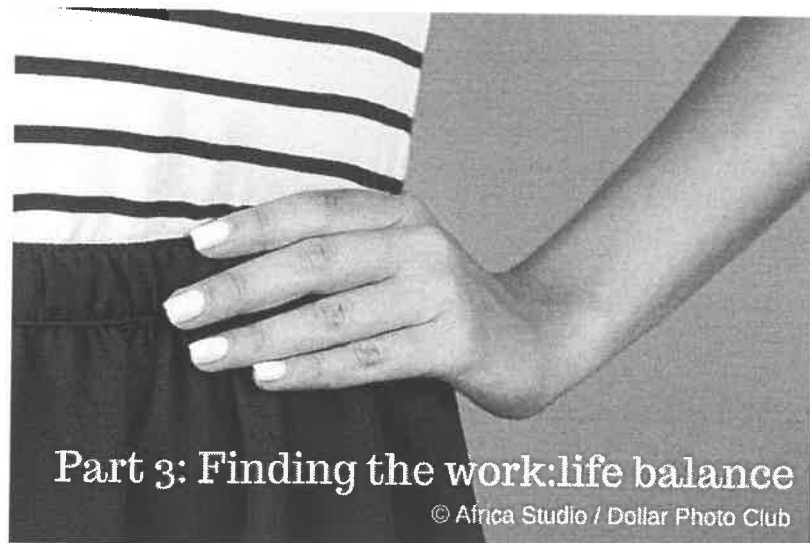
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PART 3: FINDING THE WORK:LIFE BALANCE

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After discussing having a career versus a job, and creating your career, now it's time to talk about finding that desired balance between work and your personal life.

It is one of life's truisms that you get out of what you put in and if you want something, you need to work at making it happen.

Recently we've talked a lot about developing a career (see Part 1 and Part 2 of this series) but what about your personal life?

If you have that nagging feeling that there is more to life than you're getting or giving – it's probably time for a rethink. Circumstances that might look gloomy (losing a job or reduced hours), often provide an opportunity to ask questions around what do we want – where do we want to go – what is our purpose/our why in life? Why do you get out of bed in the morning? What's your passion?

For many of us life just goes on and we don't necessarily take the time to take a stock-take of where we are at. Is it where we want to be? If not, why? Is there anything specific you can put your finger on? Of course, circumstances once again may dictate that what you truly want in your life isn't happening at present. That's hard – there isn't really any other way to sugar coat it. In these instances, unfortunately, it is just about looking for what you can control and making headway with those aspects of your life. And I know, sometimes this is much easier said than done.

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But for those who are just passively existing as opposed to consciously living; taking the time to engage with how you visualise your life looking and whether you are on the path to making it happen, can be a good thing.

A great exercise to help with this is to think about how would you like your eulogy to read (I know it's a cheery thought... Not!). How would you want people to remember you? If you want to be someone who gives back (or pays forward) and is considered to be generous and kind and giving, but at present there is no aspect of your life that allows for that – then can you make changes to start creating those paths? If you want to be known as someone who values family over everything else but you spend every hour working, again what can you do to make changes?

This is your life, and whilst of course not everything is within your control; you need to recognise what you're in control of and take the reins. You

One important thing to remember is that there are phases in life and in careers. There are times where there can be an absolute emphasis on career, and there can be times where things are more holistic. There's no prescribed formula for any of us, and so long as you are living your "why" – it can be a very circuitous route that is still fulfilling or one that it is very driven.

My life now resembles literally nothing like my life seven years ago. Back then I was all career, career, career. Enter two children. Since then, I have pivoted and created a lifestyle that enables me to fulfil my passion of being able to make the workplace better. By having two businesses, time to write, time to be with my children and family, being able to give back and having time for *me* – in short, I have a much more holistic (and satisfying) life for myself. It suits me, and it suits the way that I am prepared to work, the hours I am prepared to work and the income I am prepared to earn at present. It works for me, but for others, it may be a path filled with too much uncertainty. But there will be a path and an equation that works for you and will mean you can create a life you are proud of and a career you want.

Take the time to think about what you really want and why – work out ways to get there and set about trying a few things. Always remember that you'll probably take a few wrong turns (and that's ok). The wonderful thing about the age in which we live is that it's very forgiving of trying out new approaches and opportunities. Mis-takes are rarely the same as failures if we learn from them.



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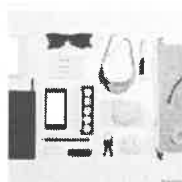
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