

10 Reasons Why Dream Jobs Do Not Exist

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Dream jobs as a concept is an unhelpful myth. It would be nice if we found a job that ticked all the boxes – salary, location, opportunity for career advancement, flexibility, great culture, fulfilling work. Reality is, almost all jobs have aspects that we don't enjoy, and dreams change. There is such a thing as career fit, that is, a career or job that is right for you, but 'dream job' implies your job is perfect in every way and that just is not reality.

Here are **10 reasons why dream jobs do not exist**:

1. Narrow thinking - Just like there are no perfect people there are no perfect jobs. There will always be aspects of a job we don't enjoy and when we search for a job that is perfect, we miss or undervalue really good opportunities that are a good fit for us.

2. Fantastical thinking – dream jobs are just that, dreams. There are too many factors beyond your control, for example a bad boss can easily turn your dream job into your nightmare.

3. Perfectionism – the dream job concept implies there is only one job out there for you - in fact, there are many jobs and work environments out there that you might enjoy. It puts too much pressure on you to find the 'dream' job and implies you'll be unsatisfied until you do.

4. Hobby focused – dream job thinking is often grounded in doing your hobby for your living but sadly most of us can't make a living from our hobbies. Worse, many people have found combining their hobby with their job has led to them no longer enjoying their hobby.

5. Leaving it up to fate or to other people and forgetting you are the architect or author of your career. It's your attitude that counts most and what actions you take to turn your job into a dream job. Often you have the power to make or break a situation.

6. Dreams change - people forget this. At 10 I might have wanted to be a forensic police officer but now a career counsellor is my ideal career. If anyone has ever been lucky enough to land an ideal job will know how heartbreaking it can be when the job or career is not all that it is cracked up to be. Just ask the physiotherapy student I helped last week who was disillusioned when they found out that the job did not always involve dealing with elite athletes but included massaging the feet of old people!

7. Too focused on the dream job, not the dream life. I know plenty of people who have what others might view as a 'dream' job but are divorced or have no relationships with their kids for example.

8. You are setting yourself up for disappointment - if you are always waiting for the dream job to materialise it's like the saying 'the grass is always greener'. You might miss what is under your very nose. You'll never be happy if you continue to believe this. Instead, you'll be tired, frustrated, and bitter.

9. Too future focused – dreams typically represent what we want our future to be and dream job thinking might mean you are not living in the present, what do you need to do now to maintain your employability and job satisfaction?

10. There might be other issues to consider – It might not be the career or job that is the problem, people who say things like 'if I was just doing ___, then I'll be happy' is dangerous thinking fraught with challenges. People who think like this are putting a lot of power into a job. Even if you get the 'dream' job you still might get anxious, have low confidence, be in an abusive relationship or be at risk of having your job outsourced or automated by technology.

It can be hard to let go of the dream job concept. However, the quicker you do, the more grounded in reality and living in the present you will be. This gives you more chance of being in a job that is a good fit for you that you enjoy. Let go of the dream!

About the author

Kerina Alter is the founder, director and principle career coach of Altered Career, a career coaching, career management and job search advisory consultancy. She is an experienced and qualified career advisor and corporate trainer. Her passion lies in supporting and guiding you every step to your career path, so you can grow your future with optimism and confidence.