

So Good They Can't Ignore You

the passion hypothesis (figure out what you are passionate about and find a job that matches this passion) is flawed

- you can't judge things in the abstract, you have to try them out with small experiments
- you can't figure out in advance what you will love
- 'compelling careers often have complex origins that reject the single idea that all you have to do is follow your passion'
- 2. Passion takes time
 - wrzsewski - strongest predictor of seeing work as a calling is number of years spent in the job.
 - Ira Glass - 'The Key thing is to force yourself through the work, force the skills to come, that's the hardest part'
 - things happen in stages, it takes time to get good.
- 1 career passions are rare
 - especially for things that lead to a successful career
- 3. passion is a side effect of mastery
 - 3 needs to feel motivated at work - SDT
 - Autonomy
 - once you have valuable skills then interesting opportunities appear.
 - Competence
 - when competence becomes mastery it leads to increased autonomy
 - Mastery - comes from hard work and deliberate practice
 - Relatedness
- follow your passion only became a thing in the 1970's with 'What colour is your parachute'
- leads to a myth - that somewhere there is a magic right job that you are meant to do
 - people don't find this certainty and change jobs and careers as a result of this search for certainty
- leads to rumination on 'what do I really love'. There is no clear answer. Trying to find the answer, drives you crazy
- the passion hypothesis leads to frustration - entry level roles aren't often going to have the challenge and autonomy to be fulfilling, so then you think - I don't love this, it mustn't be right

becoming a craftsman

- deliberate practice is the key strategy for acquiring career capital
 - serious study - do something difficult designed to stretch specific abilities and get immediate, honest feedback
 - 10,000hr but not just hours - instant feedback
 - keep a tally of the hours per months of deliberate practice
 - so if you do deliberate practice you will blow past your peers
 - take on projects beyond your comfort zone
 - obsessively seek feedback on everything
 - see stats as feedback - how many clients referrals etc
 - become more intentional about how you use time
 - track how you use time
 - move from producing something as quickly as you can to an artisan stance - focus on getting better and better
 - 'if you just show up and work hard, you'll soon hit a performance plateau beyond which you will fail to get better' pg 85
- have an obsession with improving
 - winner take all - rock star - lots of people competing and few spots
 - 1. is this a winner take all market or an auction?
 - 2. identify your capital type
 - 3. define good
 - 4. Stretch and destroy
 - 5. Be patient

have a mission

- build you career on a clear and compelling mission
 - will lead to joy in your work
 - as long as you have the capacity to have an impact
 - creates fame which then creates more opportunities
- you have to have career capital before you can choose a mission and have an impact on it
 - big ideas are almost always discovered in the adjacent possible
 - get to the cutting edge of a field and then combine the ideas at the edge, into a new shape
 - the only place where missions become visible is at the cutting edge of the field
 - need to be dedicated to brainstorming
 - you can't see where you can have an impact until you have career capital
- the answer to the question - what should I do with my life? What am I trying to achieve?
 - explore the concrete possibilities surrounding a new idea
 - make little bets
 - try out something bold that 'holds the promise of making life more interesting'
- don't feel you have to start with a big idea and then plan out the project
 - have a broad mission
 - develop career capital
 - refine your purpose
 - be tentative
 - try different, small, low risk experiments and notice the outcome
 - learn from each little bet and adjust course
 - look for the avenues likely to lead to outstanding results

three level pyramid

- Top level
 - rough guidelines for type of work you are interested in doing
 - need career capital to work this one out and to be offered the projects to move it forwards
- bottom level
 - background research
 - keeping up with the cutting edge of your field
 - make a summary of what you learn
 - regularly brainstorm
- middle level
 - exploratory projects - little bets
 - small enough to be completed in less than a month
 - genuinely creates new value
 - master a new skill/produce new results
 - only 2 or 3 at a time
 - set and keep deadlines
 - produces something concrete that you can use to gather feedback
 - then use that feedback to develop the next project

adopt a craftsman mindset

- focus on what value you are producing through your work
 - if you're not focusing on become so good they can't ignore you, you're going to be left behind'
 - focus on what you can offer the work rather than what the world can offer you
 - stop worrying about whether your job is just right, work hard at getting really damn good. 'No one owes you a great career - you need to earn it and the process won't be easy' pg 39
 - the tape doesn't lie - focus join the quality of what you produce
 - 'here's what I respect, creating something meaningful and then presenting it to the world' Jordan Tice
 - deliberate practice over years - '[eventually] you are so experienced, there a confidence that comes out, I think it's something the audience smells' Steven Martin
- approach your work like a true performer
 - adopt the craftsmen mindset first and then passion follows
 - Ira Glass - 'the key thing is to force yourself through the work, force the skills to come; that's the hardest part'

missions require marketing

- remarkability
 - an idea that inspires people to remark on it
 - seth Godin - you are either remarkable or invisible
- get comfortable with hard
 - blogging, FB, Twitter
 - a 'venue' that supports this remarking
 - community who are interested in this

the power of career capital

- traits that define great work
 - creativity
 - control
 - impact
 - most important quality if you want to be happy, successful and experience you work as meaningful
 - what you do and how you do it
- 'the traits that make a great job great are rare and valuable, and therefore, if you want a great job, you need to build up rare and valuable skills - career capital'
- freelancers have more creativity, control and impact but only if they have rare and valuable skills.
- changing careers and starting from scratch is rarely a good idea, instead grow your skills so you can use that to get what you want
- you think the job does something useless or bad in the world
- you have to work with people you really dislike
- there aren't opportunities to be noticed for being good
- you have to be offering genuine value
- it is really hard to convince people to give you money
- red flag that career capital won't help you get autonomy etc
- certain jobs are better suited to applying career capital theory

don't become a freelancer or make bold requests until you have career capital

- 'control over what you do and how you do it is one of the most powerful traits you can acquire when creating work you love'
- 'you have to get good before you can expect good work'
- 'it is dangerous to pursue more control before you have career capital to offer in exchange'
 - it isn't sustainable
 - people won't pay you for it
 - this sort of blind courage leads to failure and unhappiness
- working right is more important than finding the right work
- once you have rare and valuable skills your employer will try to get control of you - they want you available all the time etc. They want you to keep doing the same work.
- you will need to fight this - which you can only do if you really have career capital
- only go after more control if you have evidence that people want to pay for what you have to offer
- 'do what people are willing to pay for'
 - seek evidence for this
 - customers who'll pay you
 - investors who will loan you money to start up
 - employers who will employ you

Be so good they can't ignore you

5 habits of an artisan

1. is this a winner take all market or an auction?
2. identify your capital type
3. define good
4. Stretch and destroy
5. Be patient

- deliberate practice is rarely enjoyable and almost always uncomfortable
- set goals to overcome resistance
 - time - I will focus hard on this for X mins
 - capture the results of the hard focus in a useful form
- one factor tends to determine whether you succeed on not
- many routes to success
- can leverage the career capital you already have
- winner take all - rock star - lots of people competing and few spots
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