

Passion for your job? If not, it's attainable

August 21 2015



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People who have not found their perfect fit in a career can take heart:
There is more than one way to attain passion for work.

Contrary to popular wisdom, a love-at first-sight experience is not necessary when evaluating a potential job, according to a new University of Michigan study.

"The good news is that we can choose to change our beliefs or strategies to cultivate passion gradually or seek compatibility from the outset, and be just as effective in the long run at achieving this coveted experience,"

said Patricia Chen, a doctoral psychology student and study's lead author.

The dominant mentality in America is the belief that passion is attained through finding a fit with the right line of work, or "following one's passion." An alternative mindset is that passion can be cultivated over time as one gains competence in a line of work.

Researchers examined people's expectations, choices and outcomes associated with each of these two mindsets - termed as the "fit theory" and "develop theory."

They found that both mentalities are similarly effective at achieving vocational well-being. What differs is how they motivate people to get to this outcome, Chen said.

People with the fit theory tend to select vocations that they enjoy from the outset - an indication of compatibility that is important to them.

In contrast, people with the develop theory prioritize an immediate vocational fit less, but focus on cultivating passion and fit over time.

"Thus, they are more likely to prioritize vocational characteristics other than immediate enjoyment, such as pay," Chen said.

The findings, which appear in the recent issue of *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, offer assurance to those who have not - or have yet - to find what they are passionate about: If you can't discover your [passion](#), you can learn to develop it.

Provided by University of Michigan

Citation: Passion for your job? If not, it's attainable (2015, August 21) retrieved 20 March 2024

from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-passion-job.html>

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