



'In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity'

Albert Einstein

Career clarity

How an unexpected change – like the pandemic – could fast track thought, understanding and possibility

By Melanie Pritchard, Success Coach
+ Corporate Wellbeing Trainer

While the pandemic has been one of the greatest disruptors we have ever known, in the wise words of Lord Byron: 'adversity is the path to truth'. So I ask you this, dear Reader, could now be the perfect opportunity to clarify one of the greatest determiners of life happiness: what kind of career will really bring you joy?

For despite the many negatives of the pandemic, whether financial hardship, professional flux, romantic challenges or of course, human loss, Covid19 has revealed one great pearl of wisdom: that the best paid are not essential and that the seemingly most 'successful' are not necessarily the happiest.

What kind of norms has Covid19 made you question? How has this huge global test shaken up your notion of purpose, meaning and value in your life and career? What kind of truths has it brought to your attention? A preference for working from home, a desire for greater work life balance, or a yearning to cut and run from the past at a time when change has never felt so normal?

The question that lies at the heart of all this is what does success really mean to you? Is it doing

something that truly energises you, is it earning money at any cost, is it something that gives you geographic freedom or otherwise?

As a career and mindset coach, I work with countless clients who come to me feeling empty in their careers despite attaining considerable wealth in sought-after, high earning roles. Whether banker, lawyer, accountant or high achieving sales executive, they have one thing in common: they feel they are not living a life of purpose and meaning and feel considerable unhappiness and confusion as a result. This isn't too surprising when we consider that author and coach Tony Robbins states: 'The real joy in life comes from finding your true purpose and aligning it with what you do every single day.' Others define true work fulfilment as VPJ – what brings you the most value, profit and joy?

This may seem an obvious question, but if there was ever a common trap a typical client, nay, human being, falls into, it's falling into a job because your parents thought it sounded like a good idea or being attracted to a job title that impresses at dinner parties, but fails to set your soul alight. Case in point: I was once asked in a final interview for a role in recruitment: 'How



would you feel telling people at a dinner party that you're a recruiter?' I turned the job down and went on to train as a lawyer. Somewhat ironically, I later left the world of law to find greater meaning in helping people find work they love and helping businesses boost employee wellbeing. And I've never been happier. In a similar vein, the pandemic has brought about a recalibration in a society that has privileged moneymaking in favour of what is now truly valued: public service, social connections and wellness.

So I ask you again, could now be the perfect opportunity to clarify what success means to you and to find work that brings you true meaning and purpose? For if you look closely at what lies behind any confusion, demotivation and frustration you may feel about your career, you'll find a sign post to what you really need more of. Let's say you're in a finance job working with numbers 24/7 and feel exhausted by the lack of people contact. What's really frustrating me? And what's the opposite of that? What's the one thing I wish I could be, have or do more of? See, you're already clearer than you think.

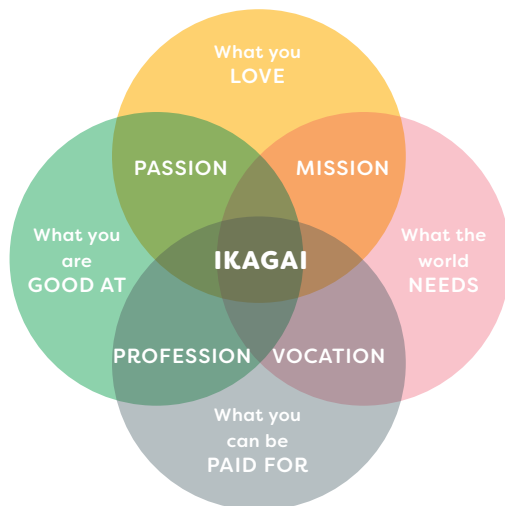
Another magic tool for getting clear on your career purpose, is what the Japanese believe is the secret to a meaningful life – Ikigai - the sweet spot where your passions, strengths, needs and money collide. Sound too good to be true? It's not. If that could be yours, how would you feel? What would be benefits be? What would be better? Disclaimer: suspend any doubts about your ability to do whatever comes up! If you really want something, there's always a way.

And for the naysayers reading this, the evidence is stacked against you! I managed it, countless clients have. If they can, you can too. Doing a job you don't love 9-5, five-days-a-week can be unhealthy, simple as. If you can change this, then don't settle for mediocre. That's why Ikigai is where it's at. Kiss the days of working to live versus living to work goodbye and wrap your day up as I often do.

Feeling like you're doing exactly what you're meant to, that thing you love, the thing you're

IKIGAI

A Japanese concept meaning
"A Reason for Being"



good at, the thing the world needs and the thing you can be paid for.

Disclaimer: I didn't fulfil my move from lawyer to life and career coach overnight, but if you identify the core components of what you want, it will drive you forward through every step and challenge. As Friedrich Nietzsche wrote: 'He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.' It's called the reason for being for a reason and is the best guarantee for a regret free life there is.

So don't wait, if you possibly can take a step back and consider the above while you still have the rest of your life ahead of you. As we know more than ever right now, that's a privilege not everyone is afforded.

melanie-pritchard.com
[@melaniepritchardcoaching](https://www.instagram.com/melaniepritchardcoaching)