



STYLIST NETWORK

## “I’m a career coach – these are the 6 things you need to do to start enjoying your job more”

BY SUSANNE NORRIS 14 DAYS AGO



Whether it's a negative office environment or endless emails to scroll through, we all have aspects of our jobs that could be better. Here, career development coach Ellie Rich-Poole shares her six top tips for getting more satisfaction out of your role every day.

Does just looking at your to-do list make you feel queasy? There are the admin tasks that will take much longer than they should, the back-to-back meetings that could easily be sorted over email and the catch-up with your manager where you know they'll nod their head in sympathy but won't offer any support. And then there's your *actual* work to get done, too. Come the end of the day, it's no surprise if you close your laptop and the thought once again comes to the front of your mind: *I hate my job*.

OK, maybe you don't *hate* your job. Maybe you secured your dream position only to find it came with more issues than you first expected. Or possibly there are elements of your job (like meetings and constant Slack messages to answer) that take you away from doing the parts of your role that you love. Alternatively, maybe you really can't stand your job and are looking for something new, but in the meantime, you feel totally stuck doing something you just don't enjoy any more.

Sadly, you're not alone, and current statistics paint a bleak picture of the UK job market. [One study](#) found that over three-quarters of workers say they're "unhappy" in their roles, with further [research](#) revealing that just 17% of us would say "I love my job".

We know that not liking your job can have significant mental and physical health implications. And, [with over two-thirds of us showing signs of burnout at work](#), which can lead to exhaustion and disengagement, it's clear that something needs to change. The tricky thing is that low job satisfaction and enjoyment can be caused by a range of factors - including poor management, unsustainable workloads and being unable to switch off. "The problem with having our phones on us all the time is that we're always reachable, including for work,"

says career development coach Ellie Rich-Poole. "More often than not, this isn't bringing us positives or joy or increasing our productivity; it's just loading more and more onto us. There's pressure - often self-inflicted, sometimes boss-inflicted - to always be reachable."

However, while there are a range of factors that can lead to your job feeling uninspiring and demotivating, there are steps that you can take to inject some positivity and enjoyment back into your role. "You can influence your situation much more than you think," explains Rich-Poole. "If you want to do this, you need to harness the power of the good parts of your job and figure out how to use them at work every day."

If you feel like it's time to take control and work towards making your job more enjoyable again, Rich-Poole - who has over 25 years of experience in HR and talent recruitment - shares her six top tips for doing so.

### *Take the time to reflect*

"Invest some time into thinking and reflecting on what you enjoy and what you don't enjoy. Very often, I find that people have never actually taken any time to do this, so the first step is always granting yourself time to do some in-depth thinking.

"I recommend an exercise called the 'career timeline'. What this involves is reflecting on every role you've ever had and where you've been happy or not happy. Use this to plot your career journey. Reflect and ask yourself: *What made me happy at that job? And what made me unhappy in that role?* This will allow you to pull together a list of everything you need to feel happy at work - and that's a great starting point."

### *Find your energising strengths*

"One of the things I learned quite early in my journey as a career coach is that people are always happier if they are in a job role where they're able to use their energising strengths. This refers to the activities at work that we really love, the kind that make time pass really quickly and help you finish the day with a buzz. We all have our skill sets and the things that we have to do as part of our job, but it's the activities we love that really help us feel energised.

"What I often see is that when people get promoted or they move jobs, they're no longer getting to use their energising strengths. It could be that they're using their skills and all the things they've learned to do but not getting time for the things they love - and this can get draining, tiring or boring. So, it's time to ask questions: *Is management going to make me happy - is it one of my energising strengths? What do I love doing at work and what do I really dislike?*

"Sometimes, you might find that you're working with or for somebody where there's a value clash or you have a different approach that's draining you. So, you need to focus on what makes you love your job and figure out how you can play to those strengths, even in those situations!"

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# "We are happier using our energising strengths"

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## *Reframe how you view development*

"Too often, I'll hear people say, 'I haven't been trained on that' or 'We never go to workshops: I always stress that it's important to own your development and manage your career.'

"Start to flip your mindset around development to own your career: don't wait for someone to develop you but rather focus on your own development. This will look different for everyone, so do it in a way that suits you. Look out for podcasts, articles, books and things that interest you - whatever it takes to get you feeling inspired."

## *Stop saying 'yes'*

"Stop saying 'yes' to everyone and everything. Don't be afraid to say 'no' to the things that aren't necessary and aren't a core part of your job. Sometimes, you also have to say 'no' to things that you really don't want to do, whether that's because of a value clash or workload.

"Saying 'yes' to everything can lead to stress and burnout, so feel empowered to stop doing the things you don't have the time for. Research has found that women do a disproportionately high amount of office admin and volunteer for it, too. So, don't feel like you always need to be the one who offers to pop out and buy a colleague a birthday card - don't be afraid to push back."

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# "Don't wait for someone to develop you"

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## *Recalibrate your working environment*

"A big element of not enjoying your work can be caused by being in a negative space. If you have colleagues or a boss constantly moaning or being visibly negative, you can end up (even unintentionally) perpetuating this through a circle of negativity. If you recognise this in your working environment, try to tackle it with a mindset shift or by spending time with colleagues who are more positive.

"Where this gets particularly tricky is if your boss is a negative person. I would always start by going to your manager with ideas and solutions instead of problems. If you still can't make it work, consider where else you

can find positivity in your life. Maybe it's spending time with friends after work or doing some voluntary work with a charity.

"Within your workplace, build your network of supporters outside of your own boss so you still feel supported in other ways."

### *Don't let fear stop you from taking action*

"Once you've figured out what's important to you, go out and get it! It's all about being brave enough to step out of your comfort zone, because it *is* scary. You will have to do some thinking, and you will need to have some conversations, but it will be worth it. For example, if you want to work for a different line manager or in a different culture, this might necessitate an internal job move or requesting a different boss.

"These things take time, but you need to do it. Not everyone will need something as major as the job change, but make sure you take action to harness that sense of enjoyment."