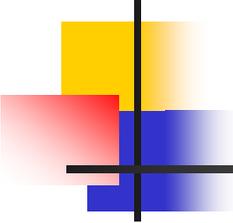


Fulfilling Careers and Full Lives

Alex Edmans

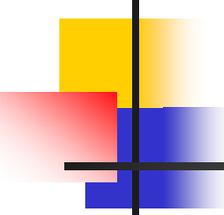
December 2014



Choosing a Career

- Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?
 - Don't think in terms of your job
 - Your career isn't what you do, but who you are¹
 - Investor? Advisor? Marketer? Professor?
 - You'll get to the top. What then?
- What do you do in your spare time?
 - Organise treks? Captain sports? Play in a band?
 - Common themes
 - Selling / teaching
 - Concept of "tribalism"
 - Why does Bruce Springsteen still perform?

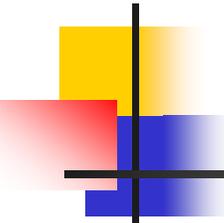
1. Prof. Laurie Hodrick ("Ten Questions" interview in Financial Times), paraphrased



Choosing a Career (cont'd)

- What are your values?
 - Write a personal mission statement¹
 - The secret to a happy life – find out what you like to do, and then find someone who will pay you to do it²
 - Mercenary careers can be fully consistent with your values
 - You've already written your personal mission statement

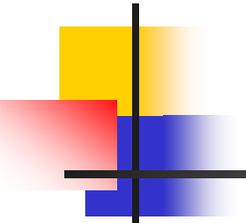
1. Dr. Stephen Covey ("The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People")
2. Prof. Greg Mankiw



How Do You Know When You've Found Your Calling?

- You want to practice it all the time
 - This does *not* mean working all the time
 - Concept of Flow: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
- Humility isn't about holding yourself in low esteem, but holding others in high esteem¹
- No-one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl
 - "The difference between what we are doing and what we're capable of doing would solve most of the world's problems" (Gandhi)

1. Prof. Clayton Christensen - *How Will You Measure Your Life?*, paraphrased



1. Savour

The Breadth, Length, Height, and Depth

- We are all good at achieving goals
 - Mountaineers “reach the peak, but miss the point” (Chris Warner of Earth Treks)
 - Savour the journey: the breadth, length, height, and depth of what you are doing
- Why do a triathlon?
 - To tell others?
 - To get a particular time?
- Do you do research to get tenure?
- Poem by Dale Wimbrow – *The Man in the Glass*
- Extract from Paolo Coelho – *The Alchemist*

2. Rest

Don't Just Do Something, Sit There

- Take rest breaks
 - Busyness is a boast disguised as a complaint¹, but driven by external pressure
 - It takes work to stop working²
- Learned helplessness (Martin Seligman)
 - Boxer in Animal Farm: "I will work harder"
- Eating / listening on the run vs. sitting and enjoying
 - We are human beings, not human doings
- "When you're in the room, be in the room" – *Hitch*
 - Mindfulness affects neuroplasticity of the brain

1. Tim Kreider – "The Busy Trap", *New York Times*

2. Mark Bittman - "I Need a Virtual Break. No, Really", *New York Times*

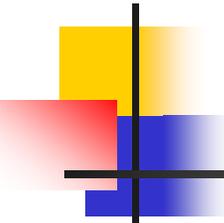
3. Respond

The Discipline of Contentment

- Between stimulus and response is our greatest power - the freedom to choose¹
- Contentment is a discipline; you have to work on it²
 - Scarcity mentality¹: society teaches us to be discontent
 - Abundance mentality: practice gratitude for what you do have
 - Ties in with savouring, and your values
 - If you don't like something, like it
 - Pre-frontal cortex can synthesise happiness (Dan Gilbert's TED talk)
 - "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so"
– *William Shakespeare (Hamlet)*
 - No glass is 100% empty

1. "Seven Habits"

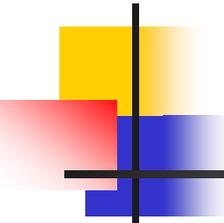
2. Jared Ayers, pastor of Liberti Church Center City, Philadelphia



4. Serve

Give Gifts of Unequal Value

- Abundance mentality frees us to serve
 - Good middle class living vs. true service
- How can we serve most effectively?
- Actions / Gifts
 - Serve the “homeless” of our communities
 - Serving seems inefficient
 - But consider the breadth, length, height, and depth of serving
 - Gardening, baking, the Toy Drive are inefficient
 - Starts with the smallest of things
 - “Few of us can do great things, but all of us can do small things with great love” (Mother Teresa)

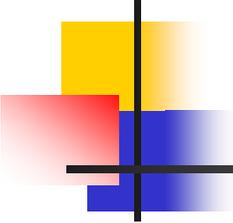


4. Serve (cont'd)

Give Gifts of Unequal Value

- Encouragement¹
 - Both words (not flattery) and attention
- Time²
 - *The English Patient*, Christmas situations are all doing things “for” people
 - “With” lies at the heart of service, but many of us are fixers
 - “With” is harder than “for”, asks more than we can give
 - Laszlo doesn't think twice before setting off for Cairo
 - What was the real reason?
 - We've all become Laszlo

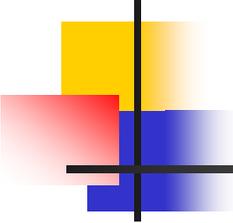
1. Mike Pilavachi of Soul Survivor
2. Sam Wells of St. Martin in the Fields



Beyond LBS

Metamorphosis By Attitude

- You face lots of dilemmas and conflicts over your two years here
 - But your MBA will not be defined so much by what you do here
- What is so special about the MBA?
 - Not the classes, treks, or clubs
- Crash diet vs. metamorphosis
- It will be much harder outside LBS
 - Take one thing (savour, rest, respond, serve) and start practicing it
 - Coming to LBS was the easy part
- Take a look around the room, what do you see?



Additional Materials

- <http://bit.ly/leadershipthroughfreedom>
 - “Leadership Through Freedom”, the original talk containing 7 principles. Four are included in this talk (but presented differently); three were cut from this talk due to time
- <http://bit.ly/whartongraduation>
 - Graduation address about how to make the most of life after an MBA (none of this is specific to Wharton, but applies just as much to LBS)
- <http://faculty.london.edu/aedmans/BSRLeadership.pdf>
 - Top ten readings on leadership, in LBS’s Business Strategy Review