

My job has to be fun. Well then - enjoy it!

I often hear from my customers that the most important thing about a job is that it's fun. Is fun a meaningful category for assessing a job? Wouldn't terms like satisfaction or fulfilment be more appropriate? Or is this all just meaningless quibbling? I think that our choice of words has a lot of influence on whether we are satisfied with a professional situation or not.

Peter Näf

Most people will agree that work should also be enjoyable - after all, nobody wants it to be a burden, although unfortunately many people do. At first glance, there seems to be nothing wrong with the term "fun" and if fun were the only requirement of a job, I would have no objection to it.

However, most people equally want to be able to develop in their job and do something meaningful. But most development takes place during a crisis: We come across a problem that we cannot overcome with our previous solution strategies. When working together, we may be confronted with people with whom we cannot get along. In this respect, even the diversity that is rightly demanded to achieve above-average performance is not pure joy.

We don't grow in the comfort zone

And so, the fun ends in everyday working life and we are forced to leave our comfort zone. I assume that people have a natural drive to learn and develop. And that is often exhausting: if we want to grow, we must jump over hurdles, question ourselves and endure uncertainty; all things we would not consciously choose to do.

Professional satisfaction is realistic

I describe myself as very satisfied with my career. I also experience fun in my day-to-day work - more and more frequently over the years. This happens, among other things, when I get on well with my coachees and the collaboration runs smoothly - coaching then feels like dancing. However, I have learnt the most from my coachees, with whom the collaboration was exhausting, sometimes even frustrating. This was and is an ongoing investment.

In addition to consulting, there are also tasks in my company that I would not do voluntarily: I must take care of the IT, get the printer that is on strike up and running, do the bookkeeping, settle the VAT, optimise processes, etc. But there is one thing I have learnt in the process: if I dedicate myself to something with full concentration, I enjoy doing it over time. Enjoying work therefore also has to do with personal attitude, possibly even with working technique.

The same applies in our leisure time: when we enjoy skiing today, we have forgotten how difficult it was to learn when we were young. But back then we probably didn't expect life to be fun.

Perhaps, based on these considerations, we would be better off saying: «My job has to be fun from time to time.» And - isn't that a bit of word-play? I don't think so, because: Words create expectations. And unrealistic expectations are poison for a fulfilling career.

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