

You will probably end up with an eclectic list of careers, many of which you would never have thought of yourself. The purpose is not only to give you surprising ideas for future careers, but also to help you see your many possible selves.

After doing these three activities, and having explored the various dimensions of meaning, you should feel more confident about making a list of potential careers that offer the promise of meaningful work. What should you do next? Certainly not begin sending out your CV. Rather, as the following chapter explains, the key to finding a fulfilling career is to experiment with these possibilities in that rather frightening place called the real world. It's time to take a 'radical sabbatical'.



4. Act First, Reflect Later

In Search of Courage

In 1787, the pioneering feminist thinker Mary Wollstonecraft left her position as a governess for a wealthy family in Ireland and set out on a precarious career as a writer, at a moment in history when almost no women were professional authors. In 1882, Paul Gauguin gave up his steady and successful job as a stockbroker in Paris to become a full-time artist. At the age of 30, Albert Schweitzer left behind his glittering career as an organist and theological scholar in Strasbourg to retrain as a doctor, travelling to the African tropics in 1913 to establish a leper hospital.

While some people are inspired by such stories of bold career change, they may make others feel inadequate, even intimidated. Why? Because although we might dream of changing our jobs, we so often lack the courage to do so. Half the workforce in the Western world is dissatisfied with their careers, but around a quarter of them are too afraid to make any change, trapped by their fears and lack of self-confidence.⁵⁶ 'If the diver always thought of the shark, he would never lay hands on the pearl,' said Sa'di, a Persian poet from the thirteenth century. Fine words, but that shark can be constantly on our minds, preventing us from plunging into a different future.

We may have identified a range of careers, or 'possible selves', which offer the prospect of fulfilling work: perhaps starting a small

business, retraining as a solicitor, or becoming a freelance translator. But how can we develop the courage to change – and make the right choices along the way? Taking those essential next steps into the unknown requires far more than pumping ourselves up with positive thinking. First, we need to understand the psychology of fear, and why the idea of changing profession can create such anxiety. Second, we must start testing our possible selves in reality by undertaking experimental projects such as 'radical sabbaticals', 'branching projects' and 'conversational research', which I will go on to discuss. Finally, we should explore the concept of 'flow', which is not only one of the three key components of fulfilling work – together with meaning and freedom – but which can help us choose effectively between the options.

It will gradually become clear that our greatest hope for overcoming our fear of change and finding a life-expanding career is to reject the traditional model of career change, which advises us to plan meticulously then take action, and replace it with the opposite strategy, which is to act now and reflect later. We must adopt Leonardo da Vinci's adventurous credo, 'experience will be my mistress'.

Why We Are Afraid of Change

Nearly everyone who contemplates changing career is deeply anxious about doing so. While there are a lucky few who possess the courage of mythical Greek heroes like Odysseus, most of us are haunted by fears that can prevent us from travelling in new directions. We worry that the job might not offer the satisfactions we had expected, or that we won't succeed in a new field, or that we are too old to change,

or that we can't afford the financial risk with a big mortgage still to pay, or that we may be unable to return to our old job if our plan to become a puppeteer or perfumier doesn't work out.

Fear of failure is close to being a universal affliction. I have heard it expressed – in private – by everyone from burly army officers to millionaire CEOs, from government ministers to famous novelists. 'I tell very few people about my doubts – I'm outwardly confident but inside I'm not even sure I'm mediocre,' a prize-winning documentary maker told me. 'Can I really do it?' is a question carved into most of our souls.

It can be consoling to know that we are not alone in our uncertainties. When Anne Marie Graham decided, after twelve years, to leave her job as a project manager for a translation company and join a charity promoting foreign-language learning, she was anxious about succeeding in an area where she had little experience:

Moving from something you know inside-out to something which you know nothing about is quite scary when you are over 30. There were times in that first year when I felt lost, convinced I was doing a rubbish job and was completely out of my depth. I would sit in meetings where everyone sounded so knowledgeable and I knew I was blagging it. Then one evening, as I shared my concerns over dinner, my partner pointed out that everyone else might be blagging it too. That suggestion started to lift the cloud of doubt in my own abilities. I also remembered that my old job was daunting at first too – it was just so long ago I had forgotten. It was a realization that made a huge difference to my confidence.

Yet even if we know that others share our fears, and are similarly riddled with doubts behind a carapace of outward self-confidence, we still need to understand why anxiety about career change looms so large in our lives. Why can't we just shake it off, send that resignation email and bound out of the door to do something new?

An answer lies in the peculiar attitude of human beings towards risk. In the 1970s psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman began a series of experiments that explored how we evaluate potential losses and gains, and discovered that we hate losing twice as much as we love winning, whether at the gaming table or when considering career change. According to Tversky, 'people are much more sensitive to negative than to positive stimuli . . . There are a few things that would make you feel better, but the number of things that would make you feel worse is unbounded'.⁵⁷ Evolutionary biologists have attempted to explain why we have this strong negative bias that means we focus much more on potential drawbacks than benefits. They speculate that it may be because early humans developed a high sensitivity to danger as a means of survival on the badlands of the African savannah: we are products of the primal terror experienced by our hominid ancestors. That hazy object in the distance could be a fruit-laden bush, but it might be a lion – best to steer well clear.

So when it comes to career change, we are psychologically disposed to magnify everything that could go wrong. Similarly, when thinking about whether a new job might suit us, we are more likely to highlight our personal weaknesses than our strengths. We find ourselves saying, 'I don't have the financial brain to run a social enterprise' more loudly than 'I'm great at generating creative ideas'. The result is that we tend to exhibit extreme caution, and

remain in jobs that – at least in terms of fulfilment – are long past their sell-by date.⁵⁸

'Without self-confidence we are as babes in the cradle,' wrote Virginia Woolf. She's right. The question, then, is how to let go of our fears, overcome our aversion to risk, and discover the courage we need to change.

Experimental Projects, or How to Have Thirty Jobs in One Year

Laura van Bouchout finally decided that she needed some professional advice. In her late twenties, and having already had five jobs – most of which involved organizing cultural events – she felt at a dead end, unable to find a career she loved. Luckily, in Belgium, where she lives, anybody who has worked for over twelve months is entitled to free sessions with a career coach. She booked an appointment, and after taking a standard personality test and being asked some probing questions, was told that she had been doing the wrong jobs for her personality. Now came the hard part: working out exactly what the right job might be. The coach told Laura to write down her dream careers, and the jobs of famous people she admired. But when Laura returned for the next session with a wildly long list covering several pages, the coach was as confused as she was. 'He didn't know where to start or what to advise me,' she recalls. 'I left the counselling sessions without an answer, but after moaning about it to my friends for a couple of months, I thought I'd take a risk and conduct an experiment.' This is what she did:

I decided to try out thirty different jobs in the year leading up to my thirtieth birthday, dedicating the whole year to my career struggle. So I'm working as a part-time programmer of music events to pay the bills, and in my leisure time I contact people who I think have dream jobs or interesting careers and ask if I can follow them or work with them for at least three days. So far I've 'been' a fashion photographer, a bed-and-breakfast review writer, a creative director at an advertising agency, an owner of a cat hotel, a member of the European parliament, a director of a recycling centre and a manager of a youth hostel.

The more jobs I try, the more I realize it's not a rational process of listing criteria and finding a job that matches them. It's a bit like dating. When I was single I had a mental list of qualities I thought my boyfriend should have. But some guys who met all the criteria on my list did nothing for me. And at one point you find someone who doesn't meet half your checklist but blows you away. I think that's what you have to look for in a job. I found it when following the advertising director; I was totally swept off my feet even though working in an advertising agency doesn't nearly match my ideals. So maybe it's not about thinking and planning, but about doing lots of job dating, trying things out until you feel a spark.

During the course of her thirty-job odyssey, Laura stumbled upon the most significant insight to have emerged in the last three decades of research into career change: act first, and reflect later.

Ever since Frank Parsons set up his Vocation Bureau in Boston over a century ago, the conventional wisdom for finding a new

career has been to 'plan then implement'. This model typically starts with a deep internal exploration, drawing up lists of your personal strengths and weaknesses, and your skills, interests and ambitions, perhaps with the help of a psychometric test or a career advisor. This is followed by thorough research into various industries and professions to find out which best match your preferences and abilities. Having made a final decision, you create an action plan, and start sending out your CV and making job applications.

The problem with the 'plan then implement' model is simple: it rarely works. What generally happens is that we find ourselves in new jobs that don't suit us, because we haven't had any experience of what they are like in reality. As Laura would put it, the job matches our checklist, but we fail to fall in love. Alternatively, we spend so much time trying to work out what the perfect career would be, ceaselessly researching or getting lost in confused thoughts about the best option, that we end up doing nothing, overwhelmed by fears and procrastination, trapped by the paradox of choice I discussed earlier.

The art of career change requires turning the conventional approach on its head. We should wean ourselves off the rational-planning mentality and replace it by a philosophy of 'act first, reflect later'. Ruminating in an armchair or poring through files at a career centre is not what we need. We must enter a more playful and experimental way of being, where we *do then think*, not *think then do*.

The most recent research shows that successful change requires a substantial dose of experiential learning. Just like we can't learn carpentry from a book, we can't shift careers without taking practical action. First we should identify a range of 'possible selves' – careers that we believe might offer us purpose and meaning (the previous

chapter should have helped with this). Then, like Laura, we have to trial them in reality by undertaking experimental projects. Following a period of job dating, we will be in a position to make better and more concrete decisions. As Herminia Ibarra argues:

By far the biggest mistake people make when trying to change careers is to delay taking the first step until they have settled on a destination . . . The only way to create change is to put our possible identities into practice, working and crafting them until they are sufficiently grounded in experience to guide more decisive steps . . . We learn who we are by testing reality, not by looking inside . . . Reflection best comes later, when we have some momentum and when there is something new to reflect on.⁵⁹

Experimental projects take three main forms, which I will address in descending order of personal challenge: radical sabbaticals, branching projects and conversational research. They are designed to suit different kinds of people, with different career ambitions, at different stages of their journey. All of them, though, can help pinpoint which of our possible selves offers the greatest prospect for fulfilment.

We have already encountered the first and most demanding form, the radical sabbatical. This was Laura van Bouchout's approach, and involves granting yourself a dedicated period for action-based projects, such as shadowing or accompanying people in their work, or volunteering in an appealing organization. Laura gave herself the unusual birthday present of a whole year to flirt with thirty possible future selves. She had no clear destination, just a basketful of ideas,

and made space in her life by working part-time to support herself, which left her plenty of time for experiential adventuring. But you might equally pursue a radical sabbatical – what I also think of as a 'job holiday' – by taking a few months of unpaid leave, or using a couple of weeks of your annual vacation. In fact, I think it would be a good idea if we all spent at least one week every year trying out a different career, even if we believe we are happy in our existing job. We may not even realize that we are unfulfilled until we immerse ourselves in an alternative world. Who knows – running a cat hotel might turn out to be unexpectedly rewarding.

2 A second and more common form of experimental project is the branching project, or what Ibarra calls a 'temporary assignment'. One of the most pervasive myths of career change is the belief that it requires a drastic shift to a completely new life, where we march into work on Monday morning and hand in our resignation, then boldly step into the unknown. That would put off almost anybody. But with branching projects, such a risky strategy is not necessary, because they are designed as short experiments pursued around the edge of our existing career, through which we test out our possible selves. Apart from options such as work shadowing or volunteering, we could do a training course that gives us a taste of a different career, or try out an initial, scaled-down version of a prospective job.

As an example of the latter, imagine that you felt stuck in your job as a literary agent and were thinking of becoming a yoga teacher. What should you do? Stop thinking about it and get into action by starting to teach yoga in your spare time, perhaps on a weekday evening or on the weekend, to discover whether it really does provide that spark of radical aliveness that you hoped for. If it does, you can

gradually increase your teaching commitments until you feel confident about leaving your old career behind you.

In effect, you will have taken a number of small and relatively unrisky steps, but which have led to big results. With each step you take the more confident you will feel, making the journey easier as you go along, and circumventing your inbuilt evolutionary aversion to risk. You will no longer wonder whether you might enjoy being a yoga instructor: after just a few classes you will have a pretty good sense of whether it is right for you, since there is no better way of learning than direct experience. And if it doesn't feel right, then you can start on another branching project to test a different possible self, perhaps spending a month of Saturdays helping a friend who has an online vintage-clothing store. It may take some time to work your way through several selves, but there is compelling evidence that this is a necessary part of the process of successful change. 'We short-circuit it at our own peril,' warns Ibarra.⁶⁰

I can personally endorse the idea of branching projects, having pursued one which took my career in a radically new direction. After several years as the project director at a small foundation, I had a yearning to leave and start running my own workshops on the art of living. But I was worried about the financial risks of doing so, and was equally anxious about whether they would be a success. After months of talking about it to my partner – should I stay or should I go? – she suggested I stop talking, take out my diary and choose a date for my first workshop. That's exactly what I did. I sent out an email to friends and recruited ten guinea pigs. Unable to find a venue, I ran the first session in my kitchen one Saturday, on how to rethink our attitudes to love and time. After a few more

weekend courses around the kitchen table – and while still working at the foundation – I approached the QI Club in Oxford and asked if they would host an evening class on the art of living as part of their public events programme. It soon became a regular gig, the classes grew in popularity, and within a few months I felt assured enough to leave my day job, having overcome my primal fear of failure.

A final form of experimental project is conversational research. Perhaps less daunting than a radical sabbatical or a branching project, it can be just as effective. It simply requires talking to people from different walks of life who are engaged in the types of work you might imagine doing. That may strike you as an obvious strategy. But it is worth thinking about why conversation is such a vital component of almost any successful career change.

One of the greatest obstacles to change is that we get trapped by the strictures of our social circle and peers. If you are a lawyer, and spend most of your time with other lawyers or professionals, this is likely to condition your ideals and aspirations: you may feel that you need to have a relatively high salary, or a nice house and luxurious holidays, and that working sixty hours a week is quite normal. In other words, our social milieu strongly determines what the German sociologist Karl Mannheim called our *Weltanschauung* or 'worldview' – our underlying mental frame of reference and belief system. The problem is that we may rarely interact with those who see the world very differently. As Tolstoy noted, most people 'instinctively keep to the circle of those people who share their views of life and their own place in it'. When was the last time you spent an afternoon with a bee keeper or a shamanic healer?

The result is that our existing priorities and values are constantly reinforced. You might dream of leaving the law to become a teacher in a Steiner school, but you will probably conclude that it is a whimsical, unrealistic idea – and so will most of your friends. As I know from my own experience, our worldview is a psychological straitjacket that restricts us from pursuing new possibilities. When I was finishing university, the only job options I could think of were working in investment banking, joining the civil service or becoming a journalist. Why was my imagination so extraordinarily narrow? Because those were the standard career paths considered by most of my college peers. Like almost everyone else, I followed the crowd. (In case you are interested, I crashed out of my banking interviews because I kept talking about my bonsai-tree collection rather than currency trading; I failed the civil service exams; and so I became a journalist – but not for long.)

One of the best ways to escape the confines of our worldview is to shift our peer group and talk to people whose work experiences and daily lives are very different from our own. If you really want to ditch law, it might be wise to spend less time with your lawyer friends, good company though they may be. More specifically, you can learn an enormous amount by having conversations with people who have made career changes that match where you hope to be heading. If you really are drawn to teaching at a Steiner school, can you find a Steiner teacher who was once a lawyer or doctor, and take them out to lunch? If you are a jaded academic hoping to become a garden designer, you should do everything you can to find a fellow scholar who has made this same move, or some other radical change.

Conversational research is also a particularly good strategy for making discoveries about careers that are difficult to test out in

branching projects. Imagine you are a yoga instructor who is considering becoming a literary agent. Unlike experimenting with teaching yoga, it's difficult to trial yourself as a literary agent: you can't exactly set up a mini agency in your spare time and try attracting a few client authors to see if you like it. A much more viable starting place is using every contact you have to arrange a meeting with a literary agent, where you can discuss the ups and downs of their everyday working life – and find out whether publishing lunches really are as long as is commonly believed.

Such conversations bring us closer to understanding the realities of career change, with all its pleasures and pains. Hearing first-hand stories from people, and asking them the questions that intrigue or concern us, is worth far more than reading about a profession in a glossy career guide, and can give us a vivid yet nuanced picture of a different life we might aspire to. Furthermore, studies of career change consistently show that most people find new jobs through personal contacts rather than official channels, and that shifting career requires developing new social networks.⁶¹ Conversational research creates openings in both these realms.

Andy Bell knows just how powerful conversation can be. After dropping out of school at 16, he was offered work in a travel agency in a small English town, as part of a state-sponsored youth-training scheme. He hated it: they made him cut his punk hairdo and take out his earrings. Andy left after a couple of months and found a job on a building site. And that's where his conversational world exploded into life:

I met some wonderful people who told me loads of stories about travelling. It was a real education. The crew were all

hippies who had travelled and become tradespeople – carpenters, plasterers, roofers, bricklayers. It was great fun, getting up in the morning and going to work and just having conversations with them. I found them inspiring partly because they were from a different social background than me – they were ordinary people, working people, they weren't from pampered backgrounds or spoilt brats. Hearing all these fantastic stories about driving to India, being at death's door with malaria, going to Morocco and staying with the Berber people. It all sounded so appealing – the only place I'd been abroad was when I went camping for two weeks in Spain.

It definitely influenced my life. My aspirations then were to save up some money and go travelling, which is what I did for the next six years. I went to work in Greece for about two years, doing farm work, digging graves, unloading the frozen-fish trucks, laying irrigation pipes. I did it in Israel too: digging graves, furniture removal, delivering tiles. I ended up in New Zealand, becoming a full-time farmhand. I've probably done twenty or thirty jobs in my life.

Eventually Andy returned to England and started a small business as an organic farmer, running a weekly vegetable-box scheme delivering his produce direct to people's homes. As he himself admits, he wouldn't be where he is today without those conversations on the building site, which did so much to broaden his imagination and shift his worldview.

So what will it be? A radical sabbatical, a branching project, or a conversational exploration? The moment has come to lay this book aside and take action. My advice at this point is as follows:

- *Brainstorm three possible selves, then think of three ways you could 'act now, and reflect later' to test each of these selves. Give yourself half an hour right now and get started. Phone an organization that interests you and ask if they take on volunteers. Register a domain name for a business idea you have. Order a prospectus for a training course you could take. Email a wide-achiever friend and ask if you could meet to discuss how they manage it.*

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Even taking small steps such as these can give you an uplifting sense that you are making change and be catalysts for re-forging your future. No time? Too tired? Worried nobody will want to speak with you? Then allow Goethe to lead the way. He understood the wisdom of acting now, reflecting later:

Then indecision brings its own delays,
And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days.
Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute;
What you can do, or dream you can, begin it;
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.

I Flow, Therefore I Am

The quest to find fulfilling work begins with acting, but is resolved by reflecting. Because even when we have tested a selection of our possible selves, we still need to judge which is the best option (or combination of options, for wide achievers). How can we know which career is right for us at this time in our lives? We ought to ask ourselves

some basic questions about the worlds of work we've dipped into through branching projects or other experiments:

- *How were the careers you explored different from what you had expected?*
- *Which kind of work did you find yourself talking to people about afterwards with most enthusiasm?*
- *Which best provides the kinds of meaning you're looking for in a career?*

The last question is vital, because meaning is the ballast of a fulfilling career. But we should recognize that meaning is not sufficient for human fulfilment: you might use your talents as a sculptor, but nevertheless feel lonely much of the time as you hack away at the stone. Most of us also want to enjoy our jobs on a day-to-day basis. That prompts another question about the jobs you tried:

- *Which gave you the best 'flow' experience?*

Flow has the potential to provide this sense of daily enjoyment. Never heard of it? Don't worry. Let me explain what this mysterious elixir of flow is, and how exactly it can help us choose a career.

The concept of flow dates from the 1970s, when it was first developed by the Hungarian-American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (and you thought Krznaric was difficult to pronounce). It is now widely accepted as one of the most fundamental indicators of 'life satisfaction' or 'happiness'. A flow experience is one in which we are completely and unselfconsciously absorbed in whatever we

are doing, whether it is scaling a rock face, playing the piano, doing pilates, giving a conference presentation, or conducting a surgical operation. As Csikszentmihalyi puts it, we are 'so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter'. When this happens, we are 'in flow', a state that athletes often describe as being 'in the zone'. He says that we enjoy such activities because they are 'autotelic', or intrinsically motivating: the action is valuable in itself, not a means to an end. In a typical flow experience, we feel totally engaged in the present, and future and past tend to fade away – almost as if we were doing Buddhist meditation. In his renowned study of surgeons, Csikszentmihalyi found that when performing operations, 80 per cent of them lose track of time or feel that it passes much faster than usual. They're in the zone.⁶²

One of the curious characteristics of flow, according to Csikszentmihalyi, is that it is not limited to 'high-end' professions like being a surgeon, but can equally be experienced by butchers, welders or farm workers. He would certainly recognize the presence of flow in the following scene from Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, when the shy aristocrat Levin joins the peasants on his country estate in a day of scything:

Swath followed swath. They mowed long rows and short rows, good grass and poor grass. Levin lost all count of time and had no idea whether it was late or early. A change began to overcome his work which gave him intense satisfaction. There were moments when he forgot what he was doing, he moved without effort . . . The longer Levin mowed, the oftener he experienced those moments of oblivion when it was not his arms which swung the scythe but the scythe

seemed to mow of itself . . . These were the most blessed moments.

Perhaps an excessively romantic portrayal of life as a serf in nineteenth-century Russia, yet it is the kind of existential state that most of us have experienced. What kinds of activities typically give us flow? It most commonly occurs when we are using our skills to do a task that is challenging, but not so hard that we fear failing. That's why surgeons get a lot of it: the operations they perform are difficult and require immense concentration, but they are sufficiently trained that they feel confident of success. Flow is also enhanced when we are being creative and learning new skills, when we can see the immediate impact of our actions, and when we have clearly defined goals.⁶³ I am generally in flow while writing a chapter like this one, but not when answering administrative emails at the end of the day.

The implication of the flow theory is that we should aspire to be working in a career that offers us a high flow content. But this is the point at which it gets controversial. Csikszentmihalyi and many of his followers claim that almost any job can be altered so that 'its conditions are more conducive to flow'.⁶⁴ Even an apparently mundane job such as being a supermarket cashier, he says, can be approached in a way that makes it brimming with flow. So we may not need to change our career at all if we are feeling miserable in it: we just need to give ourselves more challenging tasks, or focus on the creative aspects of the work.

The problem is that the majority of jobs cannot be magically transformed to provide better flow experience. It might be possible if you are a fashion photographer, by deciding to shoot in more demanding



Jackson Pollock painting. What gives you flow experience?

locations or by playing around with new lighting techniques. But if you are deeply unhappy working as an IT project manager, you are unlikely to be able to recalibrate your daily tasks so they give you all the challenge, creativity and purpose you need to experience flow. Most workers, especially those in bureaucratic organizations or who do repetitive tasks, just don't have that much scope to alter their own jobs. I have consistently found that people who feel unfulfilled in their jobs are unable to adjust them sufficiently so that they can squeeze substantially more flow from them.

— So instead of trying to *create* flow in our existing job, I believe that a more sensible path to pursue is to *find* work that gives us flow. Where can you discover that secret list of high-flow careers? It would be rash of me to offer one, because each of us experiences our work differently, depending on our skills, creative resources, fears and foibles. Which is precisely why it is so important to conduct branching projects: the best way to discover whether a career has high flow potential for you is to have a go at doing it. You can then choose between the options on the basis of which is most likely to put you in the zone.

The idea of flow can help us make career decisions in two other ways. First, through conversation. When talking to people whose jobs interest you, don't just ask vague questions such as 'What's it like being a taxidermist?'; ask them about flow – how often do they have that sense they are in the zone, and what precisely are they most likely to be doing when this occurs? A second strategy is to become a detective of flow in your own life by creating a Flow Diary. Spend a month keeping a daily note of the kinds of activities that give you flow – whether it is writing a tricky report at work, or cooking a Sunday

lunch for a dozen people. You can then use this knowledge to help identify potentially fulfilling careers.

We must set our sights on finding a career that allows us to sing out to the world: I flow, therefore I am. But we should nevertheless beware becoming a flow junkie. Flow isn't everything. Necessary, yes. But sufficient on its own, no. We could be doing those challenging and creative flow tasks, yet still not find our work ultimately rewarding, because it does not embody our values or offer any of the other profound forms of meaning explored earlier. I used to experience flow when writing academic articles and lecturing, but I still didn't want to work as a university professor. What we need is both flow *and* meaning. Yet even this heady combination is not enough for the deepest forms of fulfilment. There is one more element we must consider, which is whether a job can offer us the liberating gift of freedom.