

Finding the Job that Fits

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One of life's biggest decisions is deciding where to work. If you have recently changed jobs or are considering a job change, you know how big a decision it is. Recent data from the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) shows that the average US employee works 8.06 hours per day. Many people work much longer making work the place where people spend most of their discretionary time. If for no other reason than you spend most of your waking hours at work, your decision on where to work is a major one. Add to it the impact it has on your income, attitude, and general wellbeing, selecting your job is right up there in importance with selecting your mate.

Given the significance of work, the approach used to select your work is equally important. How do you select a job? How much research do you do? What type of research do you do? Do you go to [Glassdoor](#) to review people's comments or review their list of Best Places to Work? Or do you go to career sites like [Indeed](#), [CareerBuilder](#), and [Monster](#)? Do you seek career advice? Work with a career consultant? Work with a recruiter? Complete aptitude assessments? Or just keep working where you've always worked? Yes, these might all be good ideas. Other practices include targeting specific companies, pursuing specific positions, looking for specific workplace cultures, working with specific people, and performing interim assignments.

Even more fundamental for many job seekers is deciding whether or not to start their own business. Another is whether to work for a big company or a small one. Or to work for a profit or non-profit organization. Or domestic or international company. Or private or public. Which is better? The answer is "it depends". There are advantages and disadvantages to them all. The right fit largely depends on your skills, interests, education, experience, and dreams. There are also risks. None are failsafe. With the rapid pace of change in the economy and society, there are no guarantees that what might be a good decision now will remain a good decision later.

Before doing research and targeting specific opportunities, consider which type of organization is the best fit for you. Listed below are notable advantages to each:

- **Large companies** – Most known for opportunities to grow in your career, take on more responsibility, and be part of a recognizable brand. Typically provide comprehensive benefits and abundant resources to help you succeed. Common benefits include employee development and training programs, affinity group activities and programs, and association memberships. You can also generally count on receiving a reliable income.
- **Small companies, startups** – Roles typically involve broader responsibilities and less bureaucracy. Decision making is much quicker. If the company does well, growth can be fast and lucrative. Perhaps the biggest benefit is the opportunity to work in different areas and make a significant contribution. You can also learn a variety of business domains such as finance, marketing, sales, development, operations, and customer service.

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- **Self-employment** – Allows the most independence in making decisions and schedule flexibility. You choose what you want to do. Provides the potential for upside compensation when the company does well. Gives people who want to be paid for performance the ultimate opportunity to reap what they sow. From a tax standpoint, allows you to deduct more of your expenses.
- **Franchises, cooperatives, agents, partnerships** – Provide an established brand, recognized products, and proven services. Provide resources as a large company which allows you to become operational quickly, but with much of the independence and upside potential of self-employment. Also, like self-employment, the more you put in, the more you get out.
- **Non-profits** – Typically give meaning to the work people do as these organizations provide critical services to people and societies. Can leave employees with a great deal of satisfaction in their work and lives. You work with other like-minded people who hold the same values and passions. From a financial perspective, non-profits have access to exclusive sources of funding.
- **Public schools, universities, governments** – Typically provide stable and long-term careers with above-average benefits. Many positions are less impacted by economic swings and not in competition with private sector jobs which means less time pressure and stress. In some positions you can work on long-term projects not available in the private sector.

If you already have job, make the most of it. If for some reason it doesn't work out, don't let it be your fault. If or when a change happens, as the proverb says, find a job you love and you'll never have to work again.

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