

Great Work: Do What Matters Most Without Sacrificing Everything Else

Amanda Crowell

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The principled career guide Great Work aims to help people do the work that matters most to them.

Amanda Crowell's *Great Work* is a guide to achieving a meaningful career based on one's personal, distinctive talents.

Based on the principle that one's work impacts their sense of fulfillment, their relationships, and their personal growth, this book asserts that people should devote themselves to work that is important to them, that draws upon their individual skills and viewpoints, and that can help them to develop their ultimate legacies. It suggests five steps for getting there—methods designed to facilitate self-discovery. These include identifying one's ideal work outlet, freeing up time in order to do that work, actualizing the great work, learning how to improve upon the work, and learning to handle possible failures.

The book's distinguishing techniques include a self-assessment exercise to identify and prioritize one's work projects; an exercise for categorizing one's project goals; and thoughtful differentiations between types of project failures. It works to counter common work mindsets, including the sense that making mistakes and asking questions signify a lack of intelligence. It also shows how one's beliefs can lead to fixed mindsets, like the idea that change and growth are not possible without preexisting creativity, financial management, and physical abilities. The book's suggestions to develop weekly tasks, to define one's quarterly goals, to review one's strategies, and to continually reexamine one's interests and desires are also edifying.

Further, the book illustrates its perspectives with helpful anecdotes, including about how people are impacted by their different chronotypes, work schedules, personal goals, and methods of work. It has recommendations for those who multitask—as well as for those who do not; it emphasizes the importance of self-expertise in an encouraging manner, too. The inclusion of in-depth questions about the factors that guide one's decision making, the parts of a person's life that they would like to change, and the types of outlets that they wish they had are of additional use.

As Crowell encourages her audience to visualize their futures, imagining what might be accomplished if their personal visions are pursued, the book becomes more inspirational and courage-building. These tones pair well with its frequent mention of specific, concrete steps that can be taken in the pursuit of one's ultimate goals. Indeed, the book's recommendations are actionable and accessible throughout.

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EDITH WAIRIMU (April 8, 2022)

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