

10 Work Expectations to Manage

Most of us want to be recognized for making a difference doing something we love, with flexibility that allows us to pursue other passions -- and get fairly compensated to boot. What could be more ideal?

Unfortunately, most jobs don't meet every single expectation we have. But that's okay, since most of us are willing to accept getting *some* needs met, and not others. Some of us are perfectly satisfied working outside of our "calling," as long as we advance and are recognized. Others are happiest making a significant impact, and are perfectly fine if that means they have to sacrifice a bit of fame and fortune.

Is one of these approaches better than the other? Absolutely not. However, it's extremely important to your overall job satisfaction to understand what you need – and expect – from work. Understanding which categories are most meaningful to you is the first step in figuring out what contributes to your job satisfaction. It can help you determine what's missing, as well as what you need to add.

1. **Financial Reward.** Those who approach their work as a means to an end place more emphasis on their paycheck than they do on their interest in the work itself. People who fall into this category are motivated by money, and find fulfillment when they are paid for their performance. Those who fall into this group easily move on when a higher-paying job comes their way.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

2. **Stability.** Those who see their work primarily as a way to provide for themselves or their family often put emphasis on stability, rather than on advancement or career growth. In tough economic times, particularly when layoffs are rampant and new jobs are hard to come by, those who usually put stability toward the end of their priority list may find themselves moving it higher up the list.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

3. **Advancement and Recognition.** Those who are motivated by advancement and recognition approach their work with their career in mind. They are more willing to put up with doing things they don't enjoy in the short term, as long as it allows them to climb the ladder in the long term. People in this group are motivated and fulfilled by power, prestige, and status. Opportunity to move onward and upward—and to see their progress—make them happy.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

4. **Impact.** Those who are motivated by the impact they have—on the world, on other people, on the field they are working in, or even on the organization itself—are focused on making a difference. They get their satisfaction from contributing, and from understanding how that contribution matters in the big picture.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

5. **Process.** Those who are motivated by the work itself view their job as a “calling” or as their *raison d’etre*. When all is said and done they love the actual work itself, and that is their focus. An artist, for example, may find fulfillment in the act of creating, and that may take precedence over fame, fortune, or making a difference (which is not to suggest that other artists won't find satisfaction in those things!).

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

6. **Structure.** Some people really love being part of a team, while others prefer autonomy. Some people love highly defined jobs with clear instructions, while others like forging their own way. For people who place structure high on their list of things that contribute to job satisfaction, the way a company organizes and operates is key to their happiness.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important
I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

7. **Expression.** Those who are motivated by expressing their identity, values, and creativity place high value on working in an atmosphere that allows the work they do to reflect who they are and what they can do. People who place emphasis on expression find the most happiness in an organization that values and seeks out new ideas.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important

I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

8. **Environment.** Workers who are motivated by their environment place high value on enjoying the physical and social aspects of work. They want the physical environment in which they work to be comfortable and supportive, and also want to be able to enjoy their co-workers as friends. People who fall into this group are likely to be dissatisfied by an environment in which their physical or social needs aren't met.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important

I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

9. **Relationships.** Those who are motivated by the relationships they forge—both inside the organization and out—are focused on interacting with others in a meaningful way. They get their satisfaction from working closely with others.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important

I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

10. **Balance.** Those who rank balance as high on their priority list want to work in an environment in which both professional and personal commitments are appreciated and respected. They are happiest when their personal life doesn't suffer as a result of their work life, and vice versa.

For me, this is: Extremely important Somewhat important Not important

I am getting this need met: Very well Somewhat well Not at all

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