

Workplace Equipping: Designing a Meaningful Workday

This course empowers learners with knowledge that will allow them to create meaningful workdays. Experiencing more meaning at work will contribute to the quality of their work and promote a positive workplace experience.

This course will give you an understanding of what you can do to add more meaning to your workday by providing research-backed information. You will also be encouraged to do self-enquiring and practical exploration to help you iterate a better daily work experience.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- **Analyse** how meaning at work is shaped by daily actions, personal values, and workplace context, and evaluate your own workday patterns using evidence-based frameworks.
- **Design and implement** practical strategies to align their work activities with personal values in order to create more meaningful and sustainable workdays.

When you're ready please click on the first lesson below, or the “*Start Course*” button above.

☰ What Makes a Meaningful Workday?

☰ Values and the Meaningful Workday

☰ Iterate and Evaluate Your Workday

☰ Summary and References

What Makes a Meaningful Workday?



Before we get started with our first unit please complete the evaluation questions in this [Google Form](#). There is no right or wrong answer here, this is just to understand your current experience.

Introduction

In this unit we will focus on creating a clearer understanding of the role of meaning in a workday. We will also bring more awareness to how you currently work.

Learning outcomes:

- **Explain** why meaningful work contributes to wellbeing and performance.
- **Identify** key psychological factors that influence meaningful work (progress, clarity, relationships, agency, contribution).
- **Map and analyse** typical workday activities to identify patterns in time use.
- **Reflect** on how current workday patterns influence a sense of meaning and satisfaction.

Various experts have studied job satisfaction extensively in recent years. Their findings point to the fact that the deeper psychological factors play a significant role in people's experience at work. It also becomes clear that each individual can play a role in their experience at work, although not every element is within their control.

Let's see what the experts have to say, scroll through the below carousel to read more about each expert's view.

Expert Research

We will now explore the work of Arthur Brooks, Daniel Pink, David Allen, Cal Newport, Teresa Amabile, Steven Kramer and Adam Grant. Each expert makes a significant statement about how humans relate to their work.

Step 2

Arthur Brooks: Meaning at work comes from relationships and agency

Arthur Brooks argues that workplace happiness and fulfilment are not driven by superficial perks such as ping-pong tables or free food, but by meeting deeper psychological needs. According to Brooks, meaningful work arises when people experience strong social connections with colleagues, feel empowered in their roles, have managers who listen and support them, and work in efficient environments where their time and contributions are respected. These elements contribute more to workplace wellbeing than surface-level benefits, helping employees feel valued and engaged in their daily work. This [article](#) by Dave Smith gives more detailed information.

Daniel Pink: Motivation is driven by autonomy, mastery, and purpose

Daniel Pink's research into motivation shows that people are most engaged and find work meaningful when three core psychological needs are met: autonomy, mastery, and purpose. Autonomy refers to having control over how work is done; mastery involves developing and refining valuable skills; and purpose is the sense that one's work contributes to a bigger cause. Pink argues that traditional "if-then" rewards often fail to motivate people in complex, creative roles, while intrinsic motivators aligned with these three needs drive deeper engagement and fulfilment. Tyler DeVries provides an excellent [book summary](#) for those who want to know more.

Step 4

David Allen: Clarity reduces stress and improves performance

David Allen's Getting Things Done (GTD) methodology highlights the importance of externalising tasks and commitments to reduce mental clutter and stress. Allen explains that when individuals record everything they need to do in a trusted system and clarify the 'next action' for each task, they free up mental space and can focus on meaningful work without distraction. According to Allen it is this clarity, rather than having too much on one's mind, that leads to improved performance and greater psychological ease. For more information see the [lessons](#) Peter Kang took from Allen's book entitled *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*.

Cal Newport: Focused work creates value and meaning

Cal Newport's book *Deep Work* defines this type of work as professional activities performed in a state of distraction-free concentration that push one's cognitive capabilities to their limit. It centres on the ability to focus without distraction on cognitively demanding tasks. He argues that sustained concentration allows people to produce higher-quality work, build rare skills, and experience greater professional satisfaction. In contrast, constant interruptions and shallow tasks erode both productivity and meaning. According to Newport, protecting time for focused work is not a luxury but a necessity for doing work that feels valuable. For more information see [Dhawal Kapil's analysis](#) of Newport's book.

Teresa Amabile & Steven Kramer: Progress fuels motivation

Teresa Amabile's research with Steven Kramer highlights that progress in meaningful work, even small, incremental achievements, is one of the strongest predictors of motivation and positive experience at work. In *The Progress Principle*, they show that when people make forward movement on work that matters, it significantly improves their emotional state, engagement, and overall satisfaction, while setbacks detract from these outcomes. Their work places emphasis on a person's 'inner work life' and they investigated this by having people submit work diaries where they reflected on their workplace experiences. See this [article](#) by the authors for more.

Adam Grant: Contribution and generosity enhance fulfilment

Adam Grant's *Give and Take* explores how people's interaction styles as 'givers', 'matchers' or 'takers' influence success and satisfaction in work and life. Grant's research shows that givers, who help others without expecting immediate reciprocation, often achieve both personal success and stronger social bonds. By contributing value and building trust, givers create environments where meaningful work and fulfilment flourish. For more on this see Kutsko Consulting's [summary](#).

Further reading



If you would like to explore these concepts more in-depth please explore the pages linked in the text. Here is a list for ease of reference:

- **Article:** [Harvard professor says leaders have a responsibility to be happy at work because it can affect your stock price](#) by Dave Smith.
- **Page:** [Book Summaries Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us](#) by Tyler DeVries.
- **Page:** [Lessons from Getting Things Done \(GTD\)](#) by David Allen by Peter Kang.
- **Article:** [Why 'Deep Work' From Cal Newport Is A Must Read \[Review\]](#) by Dhawal Kapil.
- **Article:** [The Worth of Small Wins: Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer on The Progress Principle](#) by Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer.
- **Page:** [Summarizing 'Give and Take - A Revolutionary Approach to Success](#) by Kutsko Consulting.

To sum it up

Below you will see one key point by each expert highlighted. Before you click on each tile below to flip it around see if you can remember each expert's main takeaway.

Arthur Brooks

Workplace happiness comes from relationships and agency.

Daniel Pink

Motivation improves when people feel self-directed and purposeful.

David Allen

Clarity reduces stress and frees mental space for meaningful work.

Cal Newport

Meaningful work requires sustained focus.

Teresa Amabile & Steven Kramer

Progress, even small progress, drives motivation.

Adam Grant

Work feels meaningful when it helps others.

Examine your workplace actions

Below is a list of doing words associated with work. Please take a look and tick off the six things you do every day or most days. This will give you an idea of what takes up most of your time, allowing us to better prioritise it at a later stage.

- ☐ Plan
- ☐ Organise
- ☐ Schedule
- ☐ Decide
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Analyse
- ☐ Evaluate
- ☐ Compare
- ☐ Audit
- ☐ Write
- ☐ Edit
- ☐ Develop
- ☐ Design
- ☐ Build
- ☐ Create
- ☐ Revise
- ☐ Brainstorm
- ☐ Test
- ☐ Iterate
- ☐ Troubleshoot
- ☐ Adapt
- ☐ Resolve

- ☐ Meet
- ☐ Discuss
- ☐ Coordinate
- ☐ Collaborate
- ☐ Present
- ☐ Explain
- ☐ Communicate
- ☐ Document
- ☐ Feedback
- ☐ Implement
- ☐ Deliver
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Track
- ☐ Report
- ☐ Other: Make a personal note of any other tasks you may perform that aren't covered (use a digital or physical notepad)



PAUSE #1

Take a few minutes to write the six doing words you identified in order of priority. E.g. A freelance writer might compile a list like this on a digital or physical notepad:

1. Plan;

2. Research;

3. Draft;

4. Write;

5. Revise;

6. Deliver.

Now pause here. Look at your list and check in whether this feels accurate or true. Tweak it slightly if you experience any mental friction or discomfort. Sometimes we spend our days mindlessly doing activities. The goal of this task is to make what we actually do day-to-day explicit to ourselves. Later we will evaluate how much these daily tasks contribute to the sense of meaning we experience.

- Once you're happy, move on.

Summary

As we've seen in this lesson, work means different things to different people. What is shared, however, is that work occupies a significant portion of our waking lives. Because of this, the quality of our workdays has a meaningful impact on our overall wellbeing. Research consistently shows that work feels more satisfying when it is experienced as meaningful rather than merely busy.

Experts in motivation, productivity, and organisational psychology highlight several recurring themes:

- making visible progress supports motivation;
- clarity reduces stress;
- strong workplace relationships matter;
- having a sense of agency increases satisfaction;
- and work often feels most meaningful when it contributes to something beyond the self.

In this lesson, you also examined the practical actions that make up your typical workday and began identifying patterns in how you spend your time.

The next step is to connect *what* you do each day with *how* and *why* you do it, so that your actions better support a more meaningful work experience.

Describe how you would know if you were having a **meaningful** workday in **one sentence**, keeping in mind what you've just learnt in this course. Jot this down alongside the other notes you made throughout this lesson.

In the next lesson, you'll explore how your personal values shape your workplace actions and how aligning the two can help you design more satisfying workdays.

Values and the Meaningful Workday



Introduction

In the previous unit, we explored how meaningful work is experienced differently by different individuals. Research showed that factors such as workplace relationships (Brooks, 2021), making progress on important tasks (Amabile and Kramer, 2011), autonomy and trust (Pink, 2009), and the ability to engage in focused, deep work (Newport, 2016) all play a significant role in shaping how we experience our workday.

In this unit, we shift our attention to additional elements that can influence your daily experience of work, particularly those that shape how you feel during the day. Studies suggest that practices such as gratitude can increase positive emotional states and resilience at work (Emmons and McCullough, 2003). Similarly, collaborating with others and contributing to shared goals can strengthen a sense of belonging and purpose (Grant, 2013).

We will also look at how becoming more aware of your own progress, and actively shaping aspects of your role through job crafting, can help create workdays that feel more engaging and personally meaningful (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Together, these ideas invite you to reflect not just on what you do at work, but how your daily actions connect to what matters most to you.

Learning outcomes:

- **Define** personal workplace values and describe how these influence behaviour.
- **Assess** the alignment between their values and daily work activities.
- **Apply** practical strategies (planning, prioritisation, focus, collaboration, reflection) to support value-aligned work.
- **Evaluate** how small decision points affect the experience of meaning at work.



Reflection: Reflect on the last time you experienced a great sense of achievement or burst of joy during your work day. What were you doing? Who were you doing it with? What business/social impact did it have?

Jot down your responses along with the rest of your notes before moving on.

Actions that contribute to a meaningful day

Click on the plus sign next to each action to see more info.

Planning —

Planning your day helps reduce uncertainty and mental clutter, allowing you to focus more fully on the work itself. Research shows that clarifying tasks and next actions lowers stress and improves follow-through (Allen, 2001).

Prioritising —

Meaningful workdays are supported by prioritising tasks that contribute to important goals rather than reacting to everything equally. Focusing on what matters most increases both progress and motivation (Amabile and Kramer, 2011).

Focus time —

Periods of uninterrupted focus enable deeper thinking and higher-quality output. Sustained attention on demanding tasks has been shown to increase satisfaction and a sense of value in one's work (Newport, 2016).

Small tasks —

Completing smaller, clearly defined tasks creates a sense of momentum and achievement. Even modest progress can positively

influence motivation and emotional wellbeing at work (Amabile and Kramer, 2011).

Breaks —

Regular breaks help restore attention and prevent cognitive fatigue. Studies indicate that stepping away from work periodically improves concentration, creativity, and overall performance (Baumeister and Tierney, 2011).

Collaboration —

Working with others can increase a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Collaboration allows individuals to see how their contributions fit into a larger whole, enhancing meaning at work (Grant, 2013).

Implementation —

Taking ideas through to execution — rather than leaving them unfinished — supports clarity and reduces mental strain. Following tasks through to completion frees up cognitive resources and improves confidence (Allen, 2001).

Reflection —

Reflecting on what was accomplished helps reinforce learning and recognise progress. Intentional reflection supports self-awareness and helps individuals connect daily actions to longer-term goals (Schön, 1983).

Autonomy —

Having some control over how and when work is done increases engagement and intrinsic motivation. Autonomy supports a stronger sense of ownership and meaning in daily work (Pink, 2009).

Alignment —

Work feels more meaningful when daily tasks align with personal strengths and interests. Job crafting research shows that shaping work to better fit the individual can increase satisfaction and engagement (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

Video: Tips to Structure Your Day by Brian Tracy

Which of Brian Tracy's tips will you try to see if it will increase your productivity?

Tips to Structure Your Day | Brian Tracy



Productivity Tools

Let's have a look at some digital productivity tools you could incorporate into your workday. But, always remember, old-school pen and paper is also an option!

1

[Notion](#)

A highly customisable all-in-one workspace ideal for organising complex projects, databases, notes, and team collaboration.

Free/paid options available.

2

[Monday.com](#)

A versatile work management platform suited to teams coordinating projects and workflows with visual boards, automations and integrations.

Free/paid options available.

3

[Asana](#)

Best for breaking down tasks, tracking deadlines and milestones, and aligning team work with broader goals across multiple projects.

Free/paid options available.

4

[Trello](#)

A visual and intuitive kanban-style tool that helps individuals and teams organise tasks and workflows using boards and cards.

Free/paid options available.

5

[Todoist](#)

A simple and powerful to-do list and task organiser that works well for personal task management and small shared lists with others.

Free/paid options available.

6

[Evernote](#)

A flexible note-taking and information organisation tool that helps knowledge workers capture ideas, articles, images and reminders in one place.

Free/paid options available.

7

[Obsidian](#)

A markdown-based personal knowledge base tool particularly suited to individuals who want a linking, networked note system for ideas and research.

Free/paid options available.

8

[Freedcamp](#)

A straightforward project and task management platform with unlimited users and projects on the free plan, suited to teams or individuals needing basic organisation.

Free/paid options available.

9

[Clockify](#)

This is a simple time tracking website that will help you monitor how long tasks take.

Free/paid options available.

10

[Google Keep](#)

Here you can capture notes and reminders all in one place.

Free.

Video: Can Work Make You Happy? Should It? by Arthur Brooks for Harvard Business Review.

Arthur Brooks identified various markers of success which lead to workplace happiness, which of these surprised you?
Which one action will you take this week to serve someone else by your work?

Can Work Make You Happy? Should It?



The role of values in meaningful work

While daily habits and work structures influence how our days feel, many people find that their deepest sense of fulfilment at work is tied to something more fundamental: their values. Values are the principles or qualities that matter most to us and guide how we make decisions, relate to others, and evaluate whether something feels worthwhile.

Psychologist Susan David describes values as the direction we want our lives to move in, rather than specific goals to be completed (David, 2016). When our actions at work align with these inner priorities, we are more likely to experience a sense of meaning, even during challenging or demanding periods. Conversely, when our work consistently pulls us away from what we value, dissatisfaction and disengagement often follow.

Research in positive psychology also suggests that wellbeing is strongly linked to living in accordance with one's values. Laurie Santos' work highlights that happiness is less about external rewards or status and more about engaging in activities that feel purposeful and connected to what we care about (Santos, 2020). This helps explain why two people can experience the same role very differently, depending on what matters most to them.

Values at work take many forms. For some people, growth and learning are central — they feel most engaged when developing new skills or tackling complex challenges. Others place high value on contribution, finding meaning in helping colleagues, clients, or communities. Autonomy, integrity, creativity, connection, and stability are also commonly reported values that shape how individuals experience their work.

Susan Cain's research on temperament reminds us that values are deeply personal and often linked to how we naturally engage with the world (Cain, 2012). For example, some people value collaboration and visible impact, while others value depth, focus, and thoughtful contribution. Neither is inherently better; what matters is recognising which values resonate most strongly with you.

Understanding your values does not mean that every workday will feel perfect or easy. Instead, it provides a lens through which to make more intentional choices about how you approach tasks, where you invest your energy, and how you define a workday that feels genuinely worthwhile. Click on each of the below tiles to see a definition of that particular value.

Achievement

Valuing accomplishment and feeling satisfied when effort leads to tangible results.

Autonomy

Valuing independence and having control over how work is approached and decisions are made.

Balance

Valuing a healthy integration of work with rest, relationships, and personal life.

Belonging

Valuing feeling accepted, included, and part of a group or community.

Challenge

Valuing opportunities that stretch abilities and require problem-solving or growth.

Collaboration

Valuing working with others towards shared goals rather than working in isolation.

Competence

Valuing being skilled, capable, and effective in one's work.

Contribution

Valuing work that positively impacts others, society, or a greater cause.

Creativity

Valuing originality, imagination, and expressing ideas in new or innovative ways.

Curiosity

Valuing learning, exploration, and a desire to understand how things work.

Dependability

Valuing reliability and being someone others can trust to follow through.

Fairness

Valuing justice, equality, and ethical treatment of others.

Growth

Valuing continual personal or professional development over time.

Honesty

Valuing truthfulness, transparency, and integrity in communication and actions.

Impact

Valuing seeing clear evidence that one's work makes a difference.

Independence

Valuing self-direction and the ability to work without excessive oversight.

Learning

Valuing acquiring new knowledge and developing understanding or skills.

Meaning

Valuing work that feels purposeful and aligned with what matters most personally.

Mastery

Valuing improving expertise and striving to do work well over time.

Recognition

Valuing acknowledgement and appreciation for effort and contribution.

Responsibility

Valuing accountability and taking ownership of tasks and outcomes.

Security

Valuing stability, predictability, and financial or role-related safety.

Service

Valuing helping others and being of use through one's work.

Stability

Valuing consistency, structure, and routine in work environments.

Status

Valuing prestige, respect, or social standing associated with one's role.

Teamwork

Valuing cooperation and shared effort to achieve outcomes.

Trust

Valuing mutual confidence between individuals, teams, and leadership.

Usefulness

Valuing work that feels practical, relevant, and needed.

Wellbeing

Valuing physical, mental, and emotional health at work.

Work Ethic

Valuing diligence, effort, and taking pride in doing work well.

Values in action at work

Values are not just things we believe in; they are revealed through the choices we make and the actions we take each day at work. When our behaviour consistently reflects our values, work tends to feel more coherent and meaningful. Below are a few examples of how common workplace values might show up in everyday situations. Click on the plus sign for more information.

Collaboration/Teamwork —

Choosing to involve your team early when preparing a presentation for senior leadership reflects a value of collaboration. This could involve seeking their input, acknowledging their contributions, and sharing credit. Working like this signals that collective success matters more than individual recognition.

Growth —

Using a performance review to discuss skill development, and arriving with researched training options that align with both your interests and organisational goals, demonstrates a commitment to growth. This shows ownership of your development rather than waiting for direction.

Dependability —

Consistently meeting deadlines, following through on commitments, and communicating clearly when circumstances such as illness prevent you from delivering as planned reflects a strong value of dependability. Reliability builds trust and enables others to plan their work with confidence.

These examples illustrate how values influence not only what we prioritise, but also how we behave, often in small, everyday moments.

Imagine it's a fairly typical workday. You have a full inbox, a couple of meetings, and competing demands on your time. As the day unfolds, you're faced with several small decisions that shape how meaningful the day feels overall.

In the following scenario, you'll make choices about how you respond to common workplace situations. There are no right or wrong answers, instead, each choice reflects different underlying values and priorities. Feel free to explore all the options.



At the start of the day, which of the following feels most important to you?

1 Having control over how I approach my work.

2 Making visible progress on something meaningful

3 Working closely with others and contributing as a team

Scene 1 Slide 1

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide

2 → Scene 2 Slide 1



Scene 2 Slide 1

- 0 → Next Slide
- 1 → Next Slide
- 2 → Next Slide

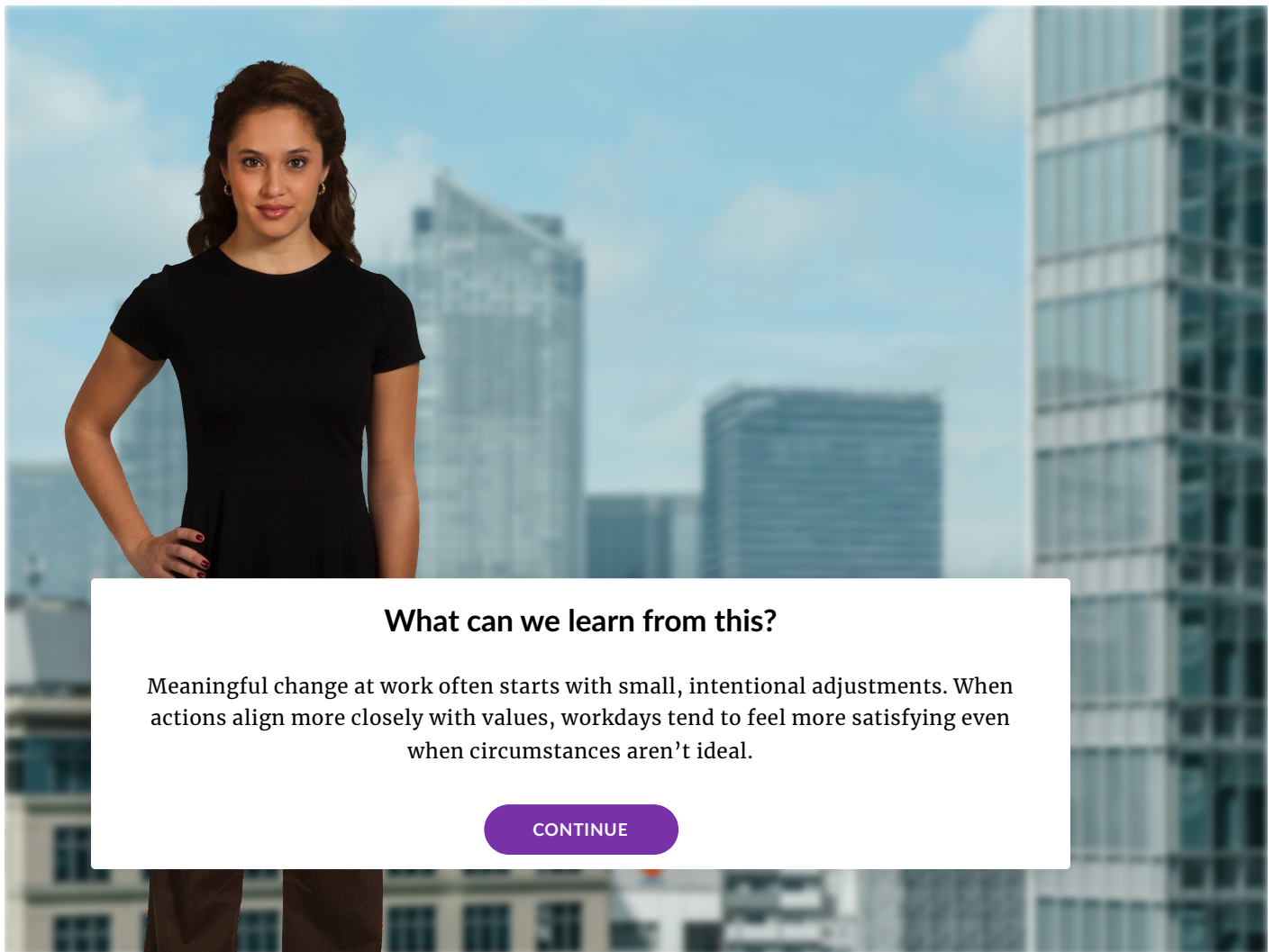


Scene 3 Slide 1

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1 → Next Slide

2 → Scene 3 Slide 2



What can we learn from this?

Meaningful change at work often starts with small, intentional adjustments. When actions align more closely with values, workdays tend to feel more satisfying even when circumstances aren't ideal.

CONTINUE

Scene 3 Slide 2

Continue → Next Slide



PAUSE #2

Now take a moment to answer the following questions:

Question 1: What are your top three workplace values?

- For example:

- Impact;
- Fairness;
- Security.

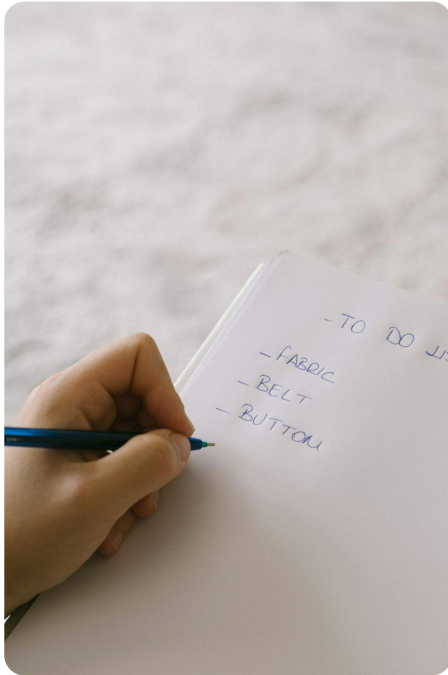
Question 2: For each value you selected, describe one action you currently take at work that reflects this value.

- **For example:**
 - Prioritising tasks that directly affect clients, users, or stakeholders rather than focusing only on internal admin (**Impact**).
 - Speaking up when decisions or processes seem unclear or unevenly applied (**Fairness**).
 - Asking clarifying questions to reduce uncertainty around tasks or expectations. (**Security**).

Question 3: For each value, describe one activity or behaviour you would like to do more of in order to live this value more fully at work.

- **For example:**
 - Requesting feedback on completed work to understand its real-world effect (**Impact**).
 - Reflecting on your own assumptions and adjusting behaviour where bias might be present (**Fairness**).
 - Developing skills that strengthen employability and long-term confidence (**Security**).

Jot down your responses along with the rest of your notes before moving on.



Task 1

Reflect back on how you approached the above scenario activity. Next, take a look at the notes you made in the PAUSE sections.

Now write down a list of actions that you believe could positively impact your workday based on the values you've identified.

Keep this close at hand as we move on to the next unit.

Summary

In this unit, you explored how meaning at work is shaped not only by *what* we do, but by *why* we do it. You were introduced to the idea that values act as an internal compass, influencing how we prioritise tasks, interact with others, and respond to everyday work situations. By identifying values that matter most to you, such as growth, collaboration, impact, or security, you began to see how these values show up, sometimes clearly and sometimes less so, in your daily actions.

You also examined practical strategies that support more satisfying workdays, including planning, prioritising, focus time, collaboration, and reflection. Through scenarios and decision points, you considered how small, intentional choices can either support or undermine what you value at work. The key insight from this unit is that meaningful workdays are not about doing more, but about better alignment between your actions and the values that matter to you.

As you move into the next section, keep in mind: values don't require perfection. They act as guides, helping you

make choices that support more meaningful workdays over time. In the next unit, you'll take this insight a step further by examining your own workday in detail and experimenting with ways to design a more meaning-filled experience.

Iterate and Evaluate Your Workday



Simoné Scott

Introduction

Throughout this course we've emphasised that meaningful workdays do not happen by accident but that they are shaped through intention, self-awareness, and choice.

In the previous units, you explored what makes work feel meaningful and how this differs from person to person. You identified values that underpin your actions, examined practical strategies for structuring your day, and reflected on your current work experience.

In this final unit, you will move from reflection to action. You will examine your own workday in detail and begin actively redesigning it. Through guided exercises and structured experiments, you will test small changes, observe their impact, and refine your approach. This unit focuses on turning insight into action, helping you build practical habits that support more meaningful workdays.

Learning outcomes:

- **Design** a personalised plan to increase meaning in daily work.
- **Experiment with** practical adjustments to work routines and evaluate the results.
- **Iterate** the workday design based on reflection and feedback.
- **Develop** sustainable habits that support long-term meaningful work experiences.

Task 2: Audit a typical workday

The first step is to observe your current workday without judgement.

Choose any day this week and record the following:

- The main activities you complete during the day.
- How your time and energy are distributed.
- Moments that felt engaging, draining, or neutral.

This audit is not about productivity or performance. Its purpose is to help you see patterns in how your day unfolds and how your actions align, or fail to align, with what you values.

Instructions:

1. Open an Excel/other spreadsheet document on your computer.
2. Name it 'Your Name Workday Audit'.
3. After the first hour write down a bulleted list summarising which actions you took and why.
4. Create *four* columns: **Time**, **Action**, **Why it happened?**, **Values-aligned and why?**
5. Update the sheet every hour so as not to completely interrupt your workday.

Below you will find a printable you can download and keep on your desk to complete.



Printable for Task 1.pdf
67 KB



See an example of how to complete the form below.

Time	Action	Why it happened?	Values-aligned and why?
08:00	Check emails that came in overnight	Habitual and reactive; driven by fear of missing something and a need to kill time	Partially – <i>competence</i> , but unfocused

08:15	Attending morning check-in meeting	Required attendance	Yes – <i>collaboration</i>
08:30	Giving feedback on colleagues' work	Part of how we do things, but rushed	Yes – <i>collaboration</i> , limited impact
09:00	Attending social media briefing	Not relevant to core role; attended because I was invited	No – low impact
09:45	Respond to ad-hoc requests	Interruptions important to other job roles, fragmented my focus	No – reactive
10:30	Start priority task	Late start due to interruptions	Yes – <i>impact</i> , but compromised



Reflection: Take a few minutes to reflect on your audit.

Consider:

- Which parts of the day felt most meaningful?
- Which parts felt misaligned or unsatisfying?
- Were your values visible in your actions?

Task 3: Design a more meaning-filled workday

Using what you learnt from your audit, design a workday that better reflects your core values.

As you plan:

1. Identify actions that clearly express your values (e.g. in the above example we see the values of collaboration, impact and competence now it's time to find your own) .
2. Consider how you might structure focus time, collaboration, and reflection.
3. Keep your context in mind. Remember this is about realistic improvement, not having a perfect day.
4. Create a spreadsheet containing *four* columns again but title them: **Time**, **Planned action**, **Intentional reason**, **Values supported**.

Your goal is not to control every moment, but to increase the likelihood that your values shape how the day unfolds.

See a sample workday plan below:



Printable for Task 2.pdf
65 KB



Time	Planned action	Intentional reason	Values supported
08:00	Scan emails (15 mins only)	Identify true urgencies	Competence
08:15	Morning check-in meeting	Coordinate effectively	Collaboration
08:45	Deep work block	High-impact task first	Impact/Growth
10:15	Feedback on colleagues' work	Thoughtful contribution	Collaboration
10:45	Optional meeting	Not core to priorities	Impact

	declined		
11:00	Client meeting prep	Build expertise and value	Growth / impact

Task 4: Audit the redesigned workday

Put your plan into action on a real workday. At the end of the day, conduct a second audit:

- What actions did you take?
- Where did your values show up clearly?
- Where did the day unfold differently than planned, and how did you respond if/when it did?
- Now compare your planned day to what actually happened side by side by adding an additional *four* columns next to the plan you created in Task 2. Title them as follows: **Time**, **What actually happened**, **Adjustment made**, **Values preserved?**

This audit will help you understand how values can guide your behaviour even when circumstances change.

See an example comparison below:

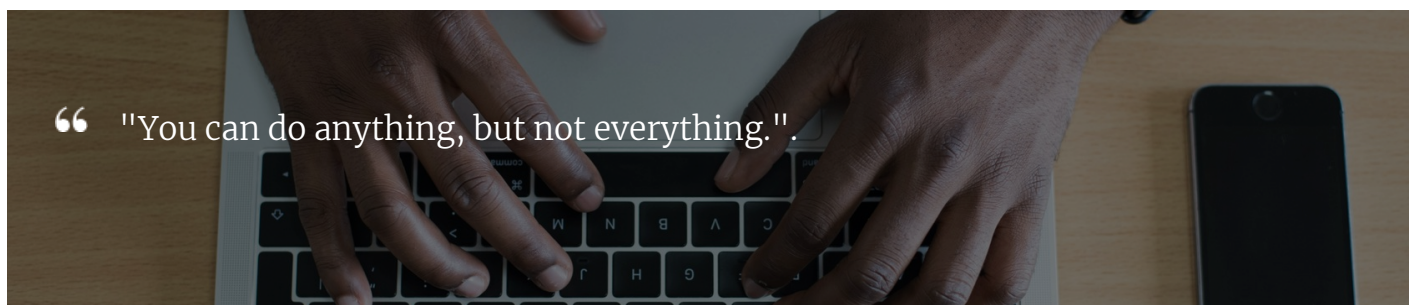


Printable for Task 3.pdf
67.2 KB



Time	Planned action	Intentional reason	Values supported	Time	What actually happened	Adjustments made	Values preserved?
08:00	Scan emails (15	Identify true urgencies	Competence	08:00	Lots of emails, so	Flagged non-urgent	Yes

	mins only)				email scan ran long	items for later	
08:15	Morning check-in meeting	Coordinate effectively	Collaboration	08:20	Late to meeting, apologised	Took notes for absent colleagues	Yes – <i>collaboration</i>
08:45	Deep work block	High- impact task first	Impact/Growth	08:45 – 10:45	Deep work interrupted	Rescheduled remainder later	Partially
10:15	Feedback on colleagues’ work	Thoughtful contribution	Collaboration	09:30	Urgent client request	Prioritised due to impact	Yes – <i>impact</i>
10:45	Optional meeting declined	Not core to priorities	Impact	10:45	Social media briefing missed	Took a few mins to send my apologies and notes via email as dealing with urgent request	Mostly – agency exercised
11:00	Client meeting prep	Build expertise and value	Growth / impact	11:00	Client meeting delayed	Rescheduled intentionally	Yes



Course assessment 1: Process documentation

Submit the copies of the rough notes you made throughout the course. The goal is to see your thinking process throughout the course before we get to your final (coherent) written submission. Here is a list of required notes:

1. Your doing words.
2. Notes on joyful moments at work (PAUSE #1).
3. The personal values you identified (PAUSE #2).
4. Your Task 1 – 4 notes.

Course assessment 2: Written submission

Write a reflection (between 150 and 200 words) summarising what you learnt from this process and submit it for grading.

Your reflection should address:

- What surprised you about your first workday audit.
- Which values you discovered mattered most to you.
- How it felt to check in with your day more intentionally.
- How your redesigned day differed from your original day.
- What you would adjust in future, recognising that not all days will go according to plan.

Confirm that this is your own original work. You may use AI to help you compose the work but everything needs to be carefully checked and rewritten if necessary.

☐ This is my own original work.

☐ I made use of AI exactly as is.

SUBMIT



Remember to focus on insight rather than perfection. Submit your final assignment via email to: simscotty@gmail.com.

Assessment overview

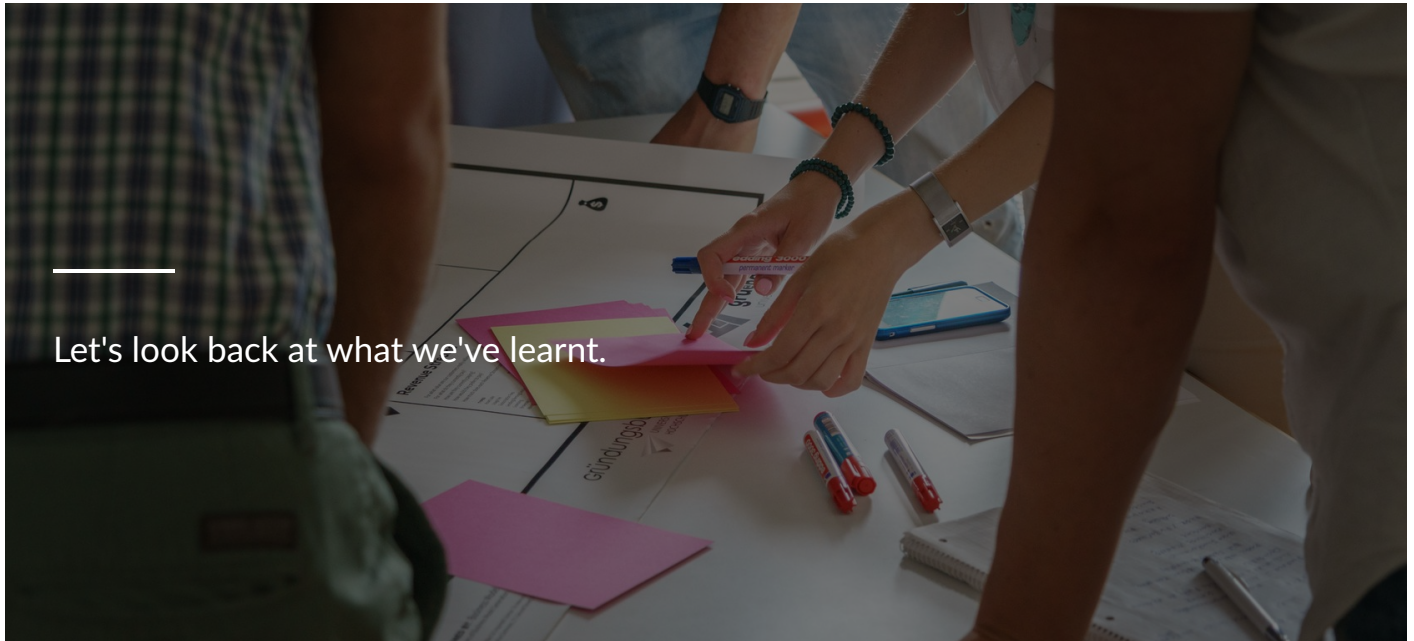
Your final grade is based on **two** components:

- 50% for completing course activities.
- 50% for your final written submission.

Thank you for joining us on this course! We trust you will have many more meaningful workdays in your future.

Summary and References

SS Simoné Scott



Let's look back at what we've learnt.

This course began by exploring the idea that meaningful workdays do not happen by chance. Drawing on research from organisational psychology, motivation science, and productivity studies, you examined what contributes to a sense of meaning at work and why this experience differs from person to person. You were introduced to key ideas such as progress, clarity, focus, relationships, and agency, and considered how these factors influence not only performance but also day-to-day satisfaction at work.

You then moved beyond theory to look more closely at your own working life. By mapping the actions that make up a typical workday, you were encouraged to notice patterns in how your time and energy are spent. This process highlighted that work can easily become reactive or fragmented, even when we are busy and productive. The course emphasised that meaning is not created by doing more, but by making more intentional choices about how work is approached.

In the second part of the course, you explored the role of values in shaping workplace behaviour. Values such as growth, collaboration, impact, fairness, and security act as an internal compass, guiding how decisions are made and

how work is experienced. Through scenarios and reflection, you considered how small, everyday actions can either support or undermine what matters most to you, often without you realising it.

Finally, you applied these insights through a practical workplace audit. By comparing a typical workday with a more intentionally designed one, you were encouraged to experiment with aligning actions more closely with your values. The key takeaway from this course is that meaningful workdays are not about perfection or control. They are about awareness, adaptability, and making small, values-led choices that, over time, contribute to a more satisfying and sustainable working life.

Key Takeaways

1

Meaningful workdays are **not** about **perfection** or **control**.

2

Meaningful workdays are **created** by **awareness**, **adaptability**, and making small, **values-led choices** that, over time, contribute to a more satisfying and sustainable working life.

References

We quoted several sources in this course, please see a comprehensive reference list below. Feel free to use it as a departure point for any additional research you might like to do, but please note that over time websites may alter/delete pages.

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Thank you for finishing this course!