

# Your Ideal Work

Created by Sharon Davey

This exercise is FREE with *Awesome Careers for Gen Ys: easy strategies to create an amazing career and life* by Sharon Davey

I created this exercise in 2001. Lots of people have told me that they have gained real clarity about their lives as a result of doing it. I hope you enjoy it.

The activity requires you to **really get into your imagination**, to **put any ‘should do’ thinking aside** and to **be as creative as you can be**.

**It works best if you actually write the answers to the questions down, in the present tense (write ‘I have’ rather than ‘I want’) and be as detailed as possible with your answers. Use positive language.**

Sometimes people find that it’s a lot easier to know and say what they DON’T want. If that applies to you, firstly make a list of those things that you definitely don’t want in a job or in the work you do and then when you’re doing this exercise, write it in a positive format. For example, don’t write “I don’t want a boss who yells at me” but something like “My boss always respects me and speaks pleasantly to me”.

If your ideal work is working alone or for yourself, it is still worth answering these questions.

Put aside job titles and deliberately not picture anything that is connected to a job or any work you’ve thought of or heard about. The things you come up are IDEAL for you – you would love to have these things in your world.

## **My Ideal Work**

### **The work environment**

If it’s in an office, how big is the office? Do you work on your own in this space or are others there too? How many others? Do you have a desk? How big is it? What’s it made of? What size is your chair? What colour is it? What storage do you have? What other equipment or technology is on, beside or under your desk? Are there windows? How many? Do they open? What is your view as you look out the window? Are you on the ground floor? What floor? Are there pot plants? Are there pieces of art work on the walls? Charts, maps? What other things are in this space? (Remember: lots of detail required)

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If your workplace isn't an office, write down, in as much detail as possible what it physically looks like and contains (using the previous question as a guide)

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Are you in a city? If so, what city, what street? If not, how far from the city are you? Are you in the suburbs? The country? Near the sea?

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**Perks**

What perks are there in your workspace? Do you get free coffee, Wi-Fi, wine, biscuits, lunches, gym membership, healthcare? Do you have a car or ready access to one? What sort is it? Do you have a mobile/cell phone as part of the work you're doing? What other perks do you have?

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**The People – your boss**

Are you the boss? If not, what is your boss like? What values/ characteristics/ skills/ habits does he/she have? How do they treat people in the workplace?

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**The People - your colleagues**

How many are there? What values/ characteristics/ skills/ habits do they have? How closely do you work with them? What is the culture within the workplace? How is decision-making handled in the workplace?

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**Your work**

Are you in charge of/responsible for anyone else? How many? How much autonomy do you have? What happens to suggestions you make?

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What percentage of your time is spent handling information, percentage on doing physical things, percentage on talking with colleagues or clients?

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What percentage of your time is involved in being creative, being practical, solving problems, organising data, writing reports, making calculations, counselling others, healing others, working out strategies, or any other activity that you love?

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How much money do you make? (Reminder: this is not about what you think you 'should' get, it's about how much you want – ideally!) \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours do you work a week? (ideally) \_\_\_\_\_

How are those hours organised? For example, do you work 30 hours over 3 days or do you work 9.30-4.30 to allow time to get the children to school in the morning? What are the ideal hours for you?

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How flexible are your work arrangements? Are you able to leave early if the project is finished? Can you work some or a significant amount of your time remotely?

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Are there incentives for a completing particular projects? What do you get?

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Do you travel for work? Where to? How often? What percentage of your overall work is spent travelling?

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**Your clients**

What are they like? Are they wealthy or poor? Do they have any common problems? Are they voluntary clients or have they been government or court ordered to be there? What age are they? What nationality are they? What is your workload like with these clients? Do you get paid a retainer or incentive to work with them?

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**Other questions about the workplace**

How much training is available for you? Is it internal or external? What specific training will be provided to you? Does your workplace pay for all your training?

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Does the workplace have a commitment to philanthropy, of helping others less fortunate? How is that expressed?

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Does the workplace have a commitment to the environment? How is that expressed?

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How family-friendly is your workplace? Is it OK to take a couple of hours off to see your niece in a concert or take time out if your child is sick? Do they have a subsidised crèche?

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Just in single words, write down what you would like to see in the workplace mission statement

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If there is anything else you can think of that you would like to see, have or do in your workplace, write it here (in positive language, in present tense)

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Now that you have completed the exercise, put it aside for a couple of days.

When you come back to it, read it through, add things in, change the way you have expressed something and then make a few notes about what you have recognised about yourself as a result of having done this exercise. For example, 'I saw that I need...' or 'X is really important to me'.

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What will you do next? When will you do it by? (Hint: If you have a copy of *Awesome Careers for Gen Ys* look at the chapter on Changing your Job and Course and/or the chapter on Getting the Job or Course you want)

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What did you feel when you wrote your responses? Many people say that they felt relief that it was out there on paper and that it made things a lot clearer for them.

***'Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes'. CG Jung***