

Nine Lives

A creative exercise to help you think about
your career preferences



How to use Nine Lives exercise

Have you ever caught yourself thinking, "I'd love to work as a... if only..." Maybe if you had the right qualifications, more experience, more money, more time, or fewer responsibilities.

This exercise invites you to set those limitations aside for a moment. Imagine you've been given the gift of nine different lives.

In each life, you have a different career. You can choose any profession that genuinely appeals to you. The only condition is that you have to work, winning the lottery or marrying someone with money is not an option.

Every profession is viewed as equally successful and prestigious, so you don't need to worry about what others think of your choice. In each career, you earn as much money as you need to live the life you want.

You have all the qualifications, skills and experience needed to do any job you want.

In summary, here are the rules:

- You have nine different lives and you must work in all of them
- You have the training, experience and skills to do any job
- You make as much money as you need or want to make
- Every job has equal status and prestige

Let your imagination wander, have fun with it, and don't overthink your choices.

1 Identifying nine jobs

Taking into consideration the conditions stated on the previous page, take some time to think about what job would do in each of your nine lives.

Trust your intuition and give yourself the freedom to be creative and explore all possibilities. Remember, there are no limitations, and there are no right or wrong answers. Notice - and consciously ignore - any “but” statements that come to mind, like, “I want to be a painter, but I wouldn’t earn enough to support my family.” Don’t worry if several jobs feel similar.

In the space below write down the nine jobs you would love to do, no matter how improbable or unrealistic they may seem.

Nine jobs

2 Analysis

Now take a step back and look at the nine jobs as a whole. Some of these careers may not be realistic options, but they can still reveal recurring themes and give you a clearer sense of what naturally appeals to you.

Maybe your choices point to a desire for more creativity or independence. Or they may suggest that you would enjoy working outdoors or traveling.

Take some time to reflect on the jobs you selected and answer the questions below.

1. What common themes do you see?

2. Do these themes point toward a particular way of working, contributing, or living?

3. Which careers are noticeably absent from your list? What does this tell you about the kind of work that does not fit you?

3 Reflection

What are the most important insights you gained?

How will you use these insights to help you find/build your career path?

Remember:

The goal of this exercise is not to identify your next job, but to uncover recurring themes, interests, and values that can guide your future career decisions.

Want to take the next step?

Explore your career direction further with my Career Change Starter Kit.

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