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Never Settle for Less Finding Your Dream Job in a Volatile Economy

by [Susan Bryant](#)

Summary

- Tell-tale signs you may be settling
- A snapshot of your dream job.

How realistic is it to hold out for your dream job in today's economy? Is settling for less in your career just a necessary evil right now?

"Keep the dream alive," implores Joel Garfinkle of [Dream Job Coaching](#), a San Leandro, California-based consulting firm specializing in personal and professional fulfillment. Despite our current economy's challenges, Garfinkle still coaches his clients to seek a position that provides career satisfaction beyond salary and security. This can be a difficult concept to embrace when many of us are just looking for a job to pay the bills.

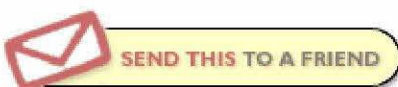
Indeed, Garfinkle is finding many of his clients lowering their expectations of what a new position can offer or tolerating jobs that provide little reward beyond a steady paycheck. How can you tell when the fear of losing your job has made you settle for a position long enough?

- You won't take the risk of asking for a deserved raise or promotion.
- You allow your coworkers or boss to take advantage of you or treat you unfairly.
- You play it safe by not expressing dissenting professional opinions.
- You participate in schmoozing or office politics to secure your employment.
- You become more cutthroat in the workplace and feel like you must compete with coworkers rather than cooperate with them.
- You've accepted that you hate going to work.

The thought of losing your job can be terrifying, and it's easy to see how these reactions can insidiously creep into an otherwise well-adjusted, professional individual. But while these behaviors may temporarily save your job, the toll they take on your psyche can be high. Obviously, today's economy dictates that marching into your boss's office to announce that your career fulfillment lies far, far away from your current position is not a smart career move. But do realize, as Garfinkle states, a fear of losing your job can stymie you into believing that a better job is more luxury than reality. Your dream job is still out there, and it looks like this:

- It taps into your innate abilities. If you are good at teaching, your job involves instructing others; if you are a whiz at selling, that would be your primary responsibility. Whatever your inherent skills are, your position uses them.
- It energizes instead of drains you. At the end of the day, you're excited about what challenges await you tomorrow.
- It allows you to be your true self all or most of the time. That is, the job is a good match with your values and personality. You don't feel you have to be someone else on the job.
- It fulfills your wants instead of your shoulds. You should be an accountant because you are good with numbers. You want to be a skydiving instructor. Check out skydiving.
- It is essentially effortless. That is, the above conditions have been met and doing your job is a natural extension of who you are.

Consider using today's job market as a call to action for your career, concludes Garfinkle. It's serious and scary to rock the boat and take a risk for what you really want, but never testing the waters just to remain afloat is a scary alternative as well.



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