

DO GOOD

5 Ways to Find Your Work Meaningful — Even if Your Employer Isn't Mission Based



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If you're in the [88 percent](#) of millennials that believe it's important to give back to the community, you might think that your workforce options to do just that rest solely with companies whose mission to make the world a better place is obvious. But you can find meaning even if you don't work for a [nonprofit](#), social enterprise or Certified B



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— in which case, run! — read on to find out how you and your company can help change the world right where you are.

1. Remember that your company *is* making a difference.

Perhaps the greatest social contribution your company can make is employing you and your colleagues. After all, it takes a paycheck to pay it forward to charitable causes. Even if your employer isn't [headlining](#) major volunteer efforts or social impact conferences, it's showing up every day by giving you the freedom to make a difference with your money and your time off.

2. Reframe the way you think about your work.

Whether you sell tires or work in finance, your work matters. Instead of dichotomizing companies as mission-based or not, think of commerce itself as a social good and consider the specific role you play in advancing that social good. The happiest companies in the country weave a big picture approach into their brand and their culture, and it's the reason their employees report such high satisfaction. For an example, look no further than one of NAFE's best companies for executive women, General Mills, which inscribes its mission on its cereal box tops: "We serve the world by making food people love." Cereal is something that General Mills' consumers might consider a



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favorite nourishes stomachs, delights the palate and acts for many as a staple at chaotic household breakfasts. It's part of the human experience, and the company's pursuit of quality to that end is a service.

3. See the value in your skills.

Like the product or service your company provides, the copywriting or project [management](#) you employ at the office also has value – even if it isn't directly saving the rainforest or eradicating poverty. Instead of seeing your skills simply for their utility, such as the conversions they produced or the sales they delivered, think of them as art forms in themselves. There is beauty in the process of collaboration, as well as in the process of [organization](#), [communication](#), analysis, or any other skill that you might list on a resume. When done well, they improve the quality for the customers at the end of the process and advance your company's own unique way of serving the world. By choosing to see your [job description](#) as a celebration of the unique combination of gifts you can offer your company, you infuse meaning into your work.

4. Instill good practices at your company.

Regardless of where you sit on the corporate totem pole, you can help your company choose for good in everyday



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kitchen, find out who manages the purchases and make an economic *and* environmental case for recycled paper products. If you meet resistance at this level, even having conversations with colleagues about your stainless steel straw can spark [inspiration](#) that travels further than you might realize.

Similarly, if your employer doesn't have any corporate volunteering protocols in place yet, be the first to advocate for them — whether that means introducing a charitable match, volunteering as a company for an issue tangential to your industry, or encouraging time off to volunteer. The same concept holds true for advancing company ethics, improving your product's quality and implementing better systems for documentation and transparency.

5. Create the company culture that you want to see.

Beyond introducing specific initiatives at your workplace, you can advance a positive culture every day. Walk into work with a [determination](#) to leave the day better than you found it. Seek out the small steps you can take to foster collaboration, from the language you use in water cooler conversations to the decisions you make in team projects. Look for ways to marry coworkers' talents to your own, encourage your colleagues to find ways to win together, and leverage your power to help those



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