

Why the Creator Ethos Is Key to the Future of Work

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There has been a seismic shift in how people view work – how they work, where they work and with whom they work. No longer built around the idea of a 9-5 job, the future of work is becoming much more fluid, allowing people's creativity, passion and skill sets to shine. As this evolution continues, the creator economy and the ethos creators personify will pave the way for the future of work.

In many ways, the future of work is already here. The creator economy is estimated to hit over \$104 billion by the end of 2022. More than 50 million people consider themselves creators, and roughly 30% of American youth want to become digital creators instead of traditional occupations such as doctors and lawyers. But being a creator doesn't just mean using social media or monetizing online content. Being a creator means doing work that you're deeply passionate about – which often means sharing experiences, expertise or creativity with an audience. That audience can be millions of subscribers on YouTube or a few dozen clients on Kajabi. That's the beauty of the creator ethos: No matter what you have to share, there will be an audience eager to consume it.

Related: [How to Break Into the Creator Economy in a Digital Age](#)

Embracing a strong sense of self

At the heart of the creator ethos is a strong sense of self.

Rather than being “one of many,” or working for one company or marketplace, being a creator means being able to thrive on your own terms. In fact, this strong sense of self is one of the biggest differences between gig workers and creators.

In the gig economy, workers have some freedom, but for the most part, they are constrained by platforms that encourage uniformity among workers. For example, if you’re an Uber driver, you are told who to pick up for a ride and when to pick them up. This is markedly different from an artist who has the freedom to sell their work on Instagram or collaborates with other creators to produce art and show it on YouTube, or an aspiring musician who doesn’t just make music on Spotify, but also works with other artists to create music that gets picked up by TikTok creators.

Related: Can The Creator Economy Help Democratize Entrepreneurship?

There’s never been a better time to adopt the creator ethos

A confluence of events from the pandemic to technology to pay transparency laws is making this the perfect time to let your creator ethos shine. Although the seed was always there, this type of thinking has become increasingly prevalent as the way we think about work continues to change. The barrier to entry, which used to be traditionally high for most jobs, is dramatically lower. Today, you don’t necessarily need to go to school to become an expert in something. You can learn from a plethora of online courses, both from institutions as well as other creators.

The pandemic has undoubtedly accelerated the shift to remote work, making it easier for those who want to follow their passions to have the flexibility to do so wherever and whenever they want. In addition, the pandemic caused many

people to reevaluate their relationship with work and how they want to spend their time. Many people quickly realized that life is too short to do something they're not passionate about.

For some, embracing the creator mentality was an inevitable choice. For example, my wife left her 9-5 job to start her own coaching and consulting practice after her passion for helping people helped her realize the freedom from leaving oppressive systems. For others, becoming a creator was more circumstantial, like those whose livelihood was threatened by the pandemic and who unearthed dormant creative skills to stay afloat.

Broadway performer, Kari Cotone, shared her story with me of how she channeled her writing skills when Broadway shut down during the pandemic. Prior to the tech tools that power online creators, she had to juggle going back and forth between a performing contract and working in bars and restaurants. Now she's able to operate a freelance writing business, working with clients online, and can adjust her workload based on upcoming artistic gigs.

We can't forget the role of technological innovation in creating the environment and tools creators need to follow their passions. Without the creation of communications platforms like Slack and Zoom, the proliferation of affordable laptops, high-quality ubiquitous Wi-Fi and more, it's hard to imagine creators being able to make a living, let alone thrive.

Related: [How to Make Passive Income in the Creator Economy](#)

Businesses must make room for passion

There's no debating that passion breeds creativity. In today's

landscape, creativity drives more business impact than just pure hours. In fact, McKinsey research finds a strong correlation between both creativity and financial performance, and creativity and innovation.

In the next 10 years, I believe that over 90% of Americans will have some type of passion-related income or job. The amount of time people invest, the income they make and the size of the audience they reach may vary significantly; however it is inevitable that work driven by passion will continue to proliferate.

Whether you're a small business owner, a startup founder or a Fortune 500 leader, every business will need to adjust to this new reality and think about what's necessary to thrive in this changing environment. As business leaders continue to adapt to remote working and consider their employees' desire to be part of something bigger, problems will need to be addressed in the context of this shifting climate.

Now is not the time to stymie creativity and passion, but encourage it. When business owners encourage employees to adopt the creator ethos and employees give themselves permission to spend more time doing what they love, the future of work looks a lot brighter.

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