

## YOUR JOB IS WHO YOU ARE True or false?

by Sonja Bohlander



**“Our self-identity should be defined as who we are as individuals.**

**What we do for work is only a piece of our lives.”**

**Rachael Tulipano**

**A**s the answer to this question will undoubtedly be different from one person to the next, let me comfort you - there is no ABSOLUTE correct answer to this question! It will depend on how you see your own position in your respective profession and how that fits into your personal life.

It is however true that some people may allow their jobs to define who they are simply because they do not know how to separate their jobs from their personal lives. A healthy work-life-balance can often be out of reach if you let it be!

**Have you achieved a healthy work-life-balance?**

Most of us spend at least one third of our day at work – that would be a healthy work-life-balance – and the rest of the time on our families, hobbies, community work, etc. and sleeping. If you allow your work to encroach on the other two thirds of your day you are allowing your work to tell you who to be.

**Do you believe that your work defines your Identity?**

In my opinion and after talking to some others in our profession (Personal Assistants) and having done some research on the subject, I would say that NO it does not.

We work because we have to pay the bills. Even though we love our jobs and we give more than what is needed, while doing it with a passion, we have to allow ourselves to separate the two from each other. Our passion for what we do at work should not outweigh our passion for being partners, parents, caregivers, etc.

**Are you a different person at home than you are at work?**

I believe that how we do our work and how we handle our customers and colleagues is an image of ourselves and certainly our personalities. You cannot separate that. We always advocate that the image you portray in your work is also the image you portray of your manager and the company.

**Do you think you make that first impression a lasting one?**

In our roles as PAs we have to be on the same level of commitment as our managers. We handle the office in their absence, and so what we do and how we handle ourselves is a reflection on them.

Your job does not have to define WHO YOU ARE - it should merely provide you with the tools and skills to be the best that you can be. Invariably what you have learnt in your job is also put to use in your personal life. However, you cannot separate the person you are at work from the person you are at home. You cannot be two people with different personalities switching it on and off like a light switch. Surely your values should always be the same at work as it is in your personal life.

**Last question: What legacy are you leaving behind?**

Resources:

Renee Kotze, PA Sasol Sasolburg Operations

Marieta Botes, PA Sasol Group Technology

<https://gentwenty.com/reasons-work-doesnt-define-you/>

<https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/money-career/its-actually-a-good-thing-if-your-job-doesnt-define-you/>



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**She is a member of PAFSA's AoE 2018, and past Chairman of Presidents' Forum Committee; finalist 2012 PA of the Year Award and received a Crystal Award in 2017.**

**Sonja believes that:  
Knowledge MUST be shared!**

*It doesn't matter if you work at a fast food joint or if you are the CEO of a Fortune 500 company. Your job title does not define your purpose. The size of your paycheck does not make you worthy. What makes you valuable is your contribution to the world and the legacy that you leave behind. Stop defining yourself by what you do, and start defining yourself by who you are!*

*John Geiger*