



## Stanford eCorner

### "Career Advice: Interests, Skills and Market"

Tina Seelig, *Stanford Technology Ventures Program*

April 12, 2006

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1467/quotCareer-Advice-Interests-Skills-and-Marketquot>

Seelig says that it is best to find the intersection between your passion, your skills, and the market. Passion is necessary, but passion alone is not sufficient to pursue a career, she adds.



#### Transcript

Find the intersection between your interests, your skills and the market. I want to tell you this is one of my favorites because people often tell you, raise your hand if someone has ever told you in your life, follow your passions. Everybody. You know what? That is a cop out piece of advice, okay? Don't listen to it. Passions are necessary but they certainly are not sufficient because you need to understand where your passions are, where your skills are and what the market is. So let's just dissect this a little bit. If you're passionate about something, let's say I'm really passionate about music but guess what, I can't carry a tune. Guess what, I can be a great fan. If you love something, if you're really passionate about it, you can be a great fan. I can go to concerts, I can buy music, I can put everything I love on my iPod and rock out walking across campus.

But guess what? Nobody is going to pay me for that. I'm a great fan. If I'm passionate about something and I'm really good at it then that means it is my hobby. That's what it is. I'm good at it and I love doing it. I paint, for example. I fill my house with all my crazy paintings, but guess what? It is unlikely that I'm going to support myself with artwork. So it's fabulous to have a hobby. It's one of the most important things in life, it's to hobbies, but it certainly is not necessarily a career. Now, let's look in the other direction.

If you have skills at something and there's a market for it, let's say you're an accountant, what would you call that? What would that be? It's a job, right? Most people in the world have a job. They have skills, there's a market and people pay them, whether they're digging ditches or working in any other role where they're good at doing something and people will pay them. But the sweet spot is when you find the intersection of your skills, the market and your passions. That is a career. That's what I encourage you to think about because oftentimes, we're led into believing that if we just have all our passions then it'll all work but you really have to look at the entire picture.