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Some jobs may seem off course from your career aspirations, but can ultimately help you achieve your goals in the long run, says Maureen Fan, co-founder and CEO at Baobab Studios. She shares how taking a job at eBay early in her career, led her to found her own virtual reality animation company. Never giving up on her animation dreams, she also shares how she took design courses in the evenings and discovered how drawing helped her think more effectively about business strategy.



Transcript

- So why did I go to eBay when I wanted to do animation? It's called tiger parents, so I really really wanted to do animation so badly, but my parents, I'm asian.. My Chinese parents told me that I would be poor and destitute if I followed my dreams and that I need to do something practical.. So instead of following my dreams to Lucasfilm, I took a job at eBay which was also super awesome so no diss on eBay.. Because it also used art, psychology, and computer science so that was great, but the entire time I was there I would take classes at De Anza College, community college, because all the Lucasfilm animators would teach there.. So at night time I'd take the classes thinking about the day that my stock options would be worth enough so I could finally escape and do my true passion.. But by taking these classes at night, I really learned about the skill of animation and continued to define my own path there instead of just doing one thing.. I also found that by drawing every single day and doing art, it made me better at my job at eBay on the business side, which I thought was really strange 'cause I thought it was always about focusing and just doing one thing, but by being cross disciplinary that's when you start finding connections between the different disciplines.. The best advice I ever got was from a professor here.. Her name was Laurie Lobue, she was a visiting professor and she taught animation.. She's at Dartmouth now leading up animation..

And back when I was at Stanford when I was all angsty about wanting to do animation and my parents not letting me, she said, "Don't worry about knowing "what you wanna do.. "The most important thing is "to do whatever job it is "that you have "and do it really well." Because you'll learn something that will help you in your path later and the people around you who see you work so hard with your work ethic, will come out of the wood works later on and help you...