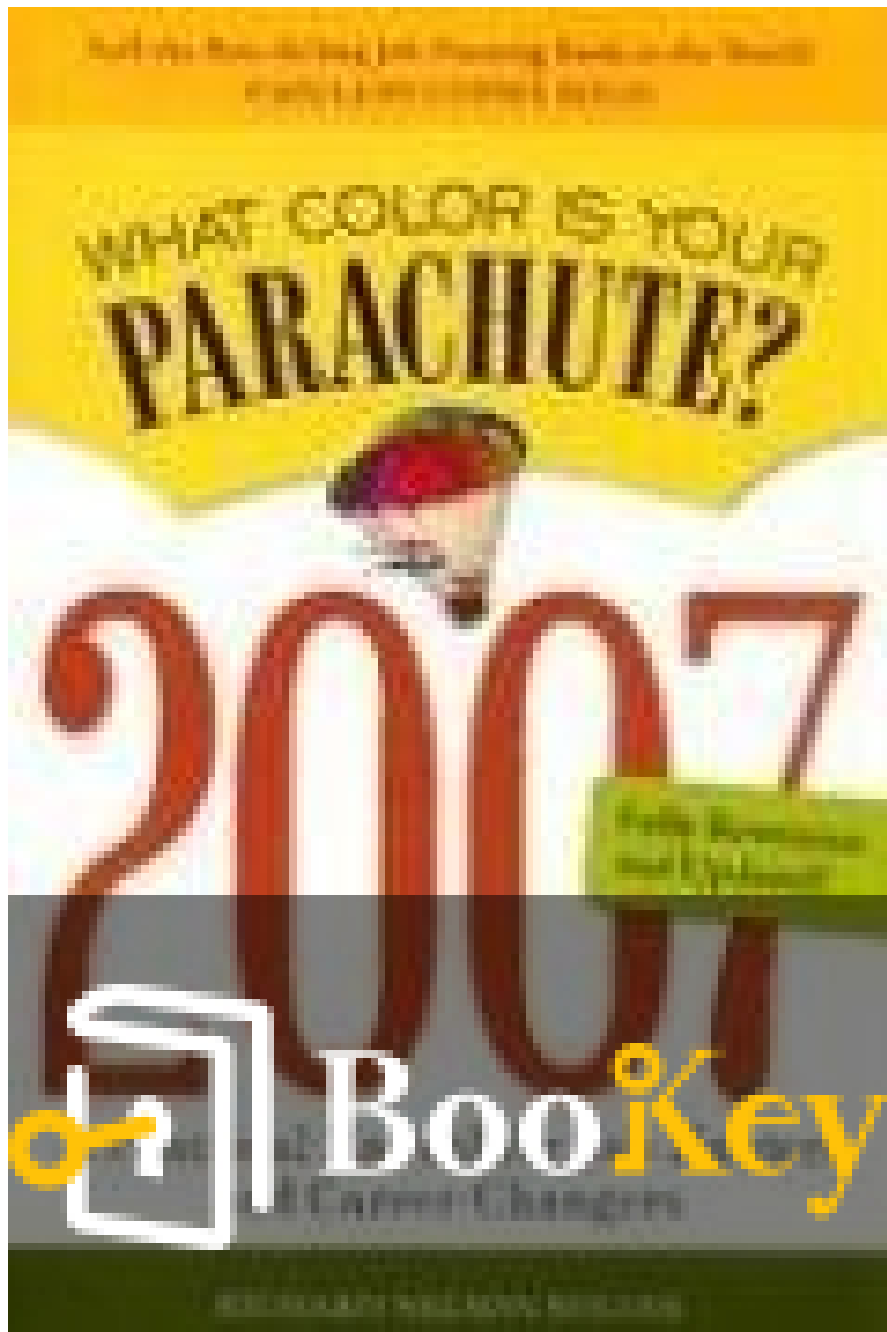


# What Color Is Your Parachute? PDF (Limited Copy)

Richard Nelson Bolles



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# **What Color Is Your Parachute? Summary**

"A Guide to Finding Your Perfect Career Path."

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## About the book

In a world of constant career shifts and unprecedented job market changes, Richard Nelson Bolles' groundbreaking work, *\*What Color Is Your Parachute?\**, has stood the test of time as a quintessential guide for everyone from the uncertain job seeker to the seasoned professional. With wisdom and wit, Bolles empowers readers to unearth their genuine passions, tailor their skills to match their dreams, and navigate the often intimidating pathways of career transitions. This book invites you on a journey of self-discovery, equipping you with creative strategies, real-world advice, and practical tools needed to reinvent your career path uniquely and successfully. Whether you're in a career crisis, contemplating a major change, or simply seeking inspiration, this transformative guide is your blueprint for designing a fulfilling professional life that truly resonates with your true color.

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## About the author

Richard Nelson Bolles, often recognized as the pioneering voice in career guidance and job searching, has the rare ability to blend practical advice with deep empathetic understanding of human aspirations. Born in Milwaukee in 1927, Bolles embarked on a soul-searching journey that saw him delve into physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before changing course to pursue a ministerial calling at Harvard University. His profound engage with the human condition came to the fore when, in the early 1970s, he penned "What Color Is Your Parachute?"—a book that transcends the realm of conventional career advice. Bolles' insightful explorations into understanding one's true career calling have profoundly reshaped career counseling landscapes. With a style deeply rooted in kindness, wisdom, and decades of experience, Bolles has transformed the way individuals approach job searches, enabling them to not just find work, but a vocation that resonates with their deepest passions and skills.

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## Chapter 1 Summary: - There Are Always Jobs Out There

The chapter delves into the tumultuous landscape of the job market following a severe recession, depicting a world where individuals grapple with loss, despair, and an uncertain future. Many people have lost not only their jobs but also their homes and savings, leading to a widespread sense of hopelessness. This bleak scenario is common after economic downturns, but this particular recession has been especially harsh, leaving many feeling abandoned and desperate.

Amidst the economic turmoil, there is a public outcry for the government to step in and create job opportunities. However, the chapter explains that recovery from a recession isn't primarily driven by government intervention; instead, it's consumer spending that reignites the job market. Post-recession, consumers typically focus on paying off debts and rebuilding savings, which delays their return to spending habits that stimulate job growth. Consequently, the job market remains weak, with recovery happening slowly and sporadically.

Despite these challenges, the chapter emphasizes that jobs do exist, albeit not as visible and accessible as before. Simple logic and data support this assertion: people inevitably require goods and services, which means jobs are constantly being created as workers retire, relocate, or switch careers. Citing studies, the narrative illustrates that even during bad times, millions



of jobs are created annually.

An intriguing element in this exploration of the job market is the monthly "unemployment figure," or as proposed, "The Relative Size of the Employed U.S. Workforce." This figure, despite its gloom, is a net statistic that doesn't fully capture the dynamic flux of employment—many jobs are continuously lost and found within each month. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' "JOLT" (Job Openings & Labor Turnover) report highlights the significant movement in the labor market, showing that while the net size of the workforce might shrink, millions of jobs are indeed filled each month.

The narrative also challenges the misconception that now, more than ever, job hunters must compete fiercely for fewer positions. In reality, competition has always existed. Historically, even during economic booms, there have never been enough jobs for everyone who wants one. This means that the challenge is perennial, not just a consequence of the current economic climate.

The chapter wraps up with a message of hope, underscoring that even in the depths of recession, new jobs are being filled, and opportunities exist for those willing to adapt and learn effective job-hunting strategies.

Highlighting the story of a successful former job hunter, the text aims to inspire readers to take control of their job-search journey with renewed optimism and diligence. Ultimately, the chapter positions itself as a source

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of hope, encouraging readers to redefine their career paths and pursue their dreams even amid economic adversity.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: - Where Do I Go from Here with My Life?

In this chapter, the discussion centers around the paradox that unemployment, while daunting, can also present a unique opportunity—a time for reflection and the pursuit of one's true calling. Amidst economic uncertainty, like the "jobless recovery" following a severe recession, many individuals face challenges in job-hunting, with 17 million unemployed in the U.S. alone. Yet, some see this period as a "time out" to reconsider life directions rather than hastily settling into any available job—a notion reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" where a purposeful direction is deemed crucial.

The chapter delves into the idea that despite the challenging job market, seeking an employment path that aligns with one's passions and dreams is crucial. Instead of settling for a mediocre job, one should aim for a role that excites and suits them, embodying their unique contribution to the world. The world requires diverse talents, and your distinct personality and skills fill unique needs in society, emphasizing that everyone's existence is vital.

Achieving this involves tackling introspective questions and realizing that you are incomparable to anyone else in history. Your life's purpose intertwines with your identity, suggesting that no job hunt should begin without first identifying what truly invigorates you—a sentiment echoed by



career experts who stress the need for a clear life vision before job searching.

Finding one's life purpose isn't simple; it requires unwavering determination and is akin to ascending a personal mountain of fulfillment and helping others, as described by a fictional job-hunter. The journey to find this purpose can be approached via three pathways: step-by-step planning, intuition, or depending on luck.

For planners, dissecting a dream job into essential components such as favorite skills, fields, traits, working conditions, and others, lays the groundwork to identify a fulfilling career path. Tools like the "Flower Exercise" break down these elements further, facilitating a clearer vision.

For those relying on intuition, the chapter outlines broad questions—sifting through passions affecting the mind, body, senses, heart, will, spirit, entertainment, possessions, and the Earth—helping to identify what resonates deeply within.

Meanwhile, for those who believe in luck, increasing one's attentiveness, embracing intersections with others, and arming oneself with knowledge enhances "lucky" encounters in job hunting.

Ultimately, this chapter underscores that recognizing what you desire from life—your passion or mission—coupled with how you naturally live (be it

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through planning, intuition, or luck), defines your approach to finding your ideal job. The key takeaway is that a well-defined personal vision ignites motivation and enthusiasm for the job hunt, urging individuals never to relinquish the pursuit of their dreams—a voyage as arduous as rewarding.

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# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Finding a lifework aligned with personal passions and dreams.

**Critical Interpretation:** In the face of economic challenges and daunting unemployment, there's an opportunity to pause and contemplate one's true calling without rushing into the first available job. This chapter inspires by shining a light on the importance of actively pursuing a career that aligns with your unique passions and dreams. It's about crafting a life where your role isn't merely about work but a reflection of your identity and contributions to the world. That alignment ignites a deeper motivation to navigate the job market with purpose. When you recognize the distinct talents and personality only you can offer, you understand that settling for mediocrity isn't an option. Such realization propels you beyond fear and uncertainty as you perpetually seek a vibrant path that fulfills you, echoes your life's mission, and benefits society.



## **Chapter 3 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: The Five Best Ways to Look for a Job**

The chapter delves deeply into the process of job-hunting, emphasizing the harsh reality of constant rejection and the extended duration that many individuals experience during unemployment. Starting with a vivid portrayal of the psychological "Rejection Shock" that job seekers endure, the chapter provides insights and strategies to mitigate this distressing phase. Career expert Tom Jackson highlights the necessity of resilience and preparedness for the inevitable refusals that one encounters before securing employment.

To navigate the challenging landscape of job-hunting, the chapter introduces 18 diverse methods to discover job vacancies. These methods are categorized based on effectiveness, ranging from conducting a self-inventory of skills and interests to leveraging the Internet for job postings and networking possibilities, visiting career centers, and even considering volunteering or starting a small business. The diverse tactics underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to increase the probability of finding suitable employment.

Research underscores the importance of employing multiple job-hunting strategies, as using a variety of methods greatly reduces the likelihood of abandoning the job search early. Empirical studies suggest that using up to

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four varied job search methods maximizes success; however, expanding beyond four can dilute effectiveness. The chapter conveys a sobering reality—that while numerous strategies exist, education systems often neglect to impart this crucial knowledge, leaving job seekers underprepared for the marketplace's demands.

The chapter transitions to a discussion of the efficacy of different job-hunting methods. It contrasts less effective approaches, such as relying solely on the Internet or mailing out random resumes, with more successful strategies like directly contacting potential employers or joining job clubs for mutual support and opportunities. The chapter outlines that proactive personal networking and self-assessment, as advocated by figures like John Crystal, yield higher success rates than passive job-hunting methods.

For those who struggle to find employment in their existing fields, the chapter advises introspection on transferable skills and exploration of related industries or hobbies that could pivot into new career paths. It emphasizes the importance of identifying one's passions and aligning them with career choices that reflect personal values and interests.

The chapter also addresses practical considerations for job-interviews, stressing the importance of balance in interview conversations, promptly sending thank-you notes, and demonstrating self-awareness and skills through storytelling. Tools like Checkster can assist in assessing personal



strengths through feedback from peers. The reality of the increasing digital dependency in the job market is noted, where using computers and online resources becomes vital in the job hunt.

Highlighted throughout the chapter is the need to adapt and be proactive, as job-hunting is not only about employing effective strategies but also requires perseverance, flexibility, and sometimes changing career directions based on societal and market changes. Despite its challenges, job-hunting is portrayed as an adventure requiring humor and resilience, with no singular correct approach but rather a need to understand the varying degrees of successful techniques. The chapter concludes by underscoring job-hunting as a complex yet rewarding process, dependent on both effort and serendipity, and encouraging a blend of prepared strategy and openness to new opportunities.

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# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Employing multiple job search strategies

**Critical Interpretation:** By embracing a multifaceted approach to job hunting, you can significantly increase your chances of finding fulfilling employment. Applying just one or two methods may leave you with limited opportunities, but when you diversify your tactics, you expand your reach and uncover potential roles you may not have initially considered. This strategy not only prevents you from leaning heavily on less effective methods but also guards against the emotional burnout that single-path pursuits often bring. When you use an array of approaches — such as personal networking, direct employer contact, and self-reflection on your skills and interests — you equip yourself with resilience and adaptability in a competitive market. This diversity in strategy is essential, not as a magic bullet for quick results, but as a way to stay dynamic and persistent in your journey, ultimately turning rejections into stepping stones toward success.

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## Chapter 4: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: How to Deal with Handicaps

The chapter delves into the common fears and perceived handicaps that individuals often believe will hinder their job-hunting efforts. It opens with a list of obstacles, ranging from physical or mental challenges to societal prejudices, like race or lack of experience. The author reassures readers that while certain handicaps may prevent employment in some places, they won't deter all potential employers. The focus should instead be on one's attitude towards these handicaps.

The narrative encourages job-seekers to adopt a positive mindset, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging the multitude of skills one possesses, rather than fixating on limitations. It proposes a practical exercise where individuals list their capabilities and limitations, enabling them to concentrate on strengths during the job search.

The chapter introduces the concept of Informational Interviewing as a crucial strategy for job-hunters, particularly those who struggle with shyness. John Crystal and Daniel Porot's PIE Method—Practice, Informational, and Employment Interviews—are explored in depth. This method involves a progression from casual practice interviews to formal job interviews, allowing individuals to build confidence gradually. Crystal and Porot recommend starting by engaging in conversations about



non-career-related interests, thereby diffusing anxiety and building conversational skills.

The chapter also highlights the concept of enthusiasm overpowering shyness. Discussing topics that one is passionate about can help individuals overcome shyness, making informational interviews more enjoyable and effective. Topics for practice can range from hobbies to societal issues, with the key being genuine interest and enthusiasm.

The PIE Method is broken down into three stages:

1. **P (Practice Interviews):** Engage in casual conversations on a topic of personal interest to build comfort in dialogue. The interaction should last only ten minutes unless otherwise requested to go longer.
2. **I (Informational Interviewing):** Conduct interviews to gather insights about a field or career, focusing on the person's enthusiasm about a common interest.
3. **E (Employment Interview):** This phase involves actual job interviews with prospective employers.

Porot's system encourages individuals to view themselves as resourceful rather than handicapped job-seekers, promoting a shift from feeling like job



beggars to knowledgeable candidates equipped with valuable skills and experiences.

In summary, the chapter advises shifting focus from perceived handicaps to abundant skills, adopting an optimistic viewpoint, practicing conversation skills through the PIE Method, and engaging with others about topics of genuine enthusiasm to mitigate shyness and find job-hunting success.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: Resumes and Contacts

The text provides a comprehensive examination of resumes and job-hunting strategies, focusing on the myths and realities surrounding the resume's role in employment. It challenges the conventional belief that resumes are the primary tool for landing a job by highlighting their inefficacies and the low success rate of securing interviews through resumes alone. Here's a concise summary of the key points:

**1. Resume Realities:** Resumes are not as effective as many believe.

Employers often review resumes quickly, and many are discarded without a thorough read, especially when compared to more direct methods such as networking. The main purpose of a resume should be to secure an interview, not as a standalone job-finding tool.

**2. The Cynical Perspective:** The myth of the "magic resume" is perpetuated by various parties, including employers, coaches, and resume websites, who each have a vested interest in maintaining this perception despite its inefficiencies and high failure rate.

**3. Successful Job-Hunting Strategies:** There are more effective methods for job-hunting beyond resumes, such as leveraging personal contacts to gain introductions. Networking is emphasized as a crucial tool, especially



for penetrating smaller organizations, which are said to create a significant portion of new jobs.

**4. Resumes vs. Portfolios:** Alternative tools like cover letters and career portfolios are suggested. Portfolios provide tangible evidence of skills and accomplishments and can significantly enhance job prospects.

**5. Enhancing Your Resume:** The text suggests using a resume to organize your thoughts and experiences for personal clarity and for recalling experiences that can be used to impress in interviews.

**6. Networking is Key:** Building and utilizing a broad network of contacts is essential to identifying job opportunities and securing interviews. It's not only about who you know but how you can use these connections strategically.

**7. Targeting Employers:** A strategic approach to job-hunting involves identifying decision-makers within organizations and seeking mutual connections who can provide introductions. This is particularly effective in smaller organizations where hierarchical barriers are less pronounced.

**8. Debunking Myths and Changing Mindsets:** The guide encourages a shift in mindset from viewing oneself as a "job beggar" to acting as a "resource person," thereby shifting the dynamics positively in job-seeking

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situations.

Ultimately, the text encourages a multi-faceted approach to job-hunting that involves networking, strategic introductions, and personal branding through vehicles beyond the traditional resume, such as cover letters and portfolios. It underscores the importance of preparation, targeting the right employers, and understanding the job market's realities for effective job acquisition.

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# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Networking is Key

**Critical Interpretation:** In the intricate web of job hunting, viewing your network as a tool rather than just a list of acquaintances can be transformative. Imagine actively engaging with your connections and exploring the depth of opportunities they may hold. By nurturing these relationships, you can tap into hidden job markets, gain insider knowledge, and perhaps secure that coveted interview that a resume alone might not. Networking isn't merely about who you know; it's about the strategic alliances you create and maintain, positioning you as an intriguing candidate. This chapter will inspire you to embrace networking not as a secondary tactic, but as a primary strategy, revolutionizing the way you navigate your career journey and laying a foundation for enduring professional success.

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## **Chapter 6 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: Interviews**

The chapter provides an in-depth exploration of job interviews, emphasizing that they are more akin to dating than purchasing a used car. It's a mutual decision-making process where both parties are assessing if they want to work together. Interviews are essential not just for employers to evaluate candidates, but also for candidates to see if they would want to work at the organization.

The chapter underscores the importance of preparation, advising job seekers to thoroughly research the company beforehand, such as reading the “About Us” section on the company’s website, looking for news clippings, and speaking with anyone who has worked there. This process shows dedication and can impress employers since many candidates skip this step. Employers are looking for candidates who understand their company and its challenges and can provide solutions.

Job seekers should use the interview to gather data, questioning whether they fit with the organization and if their skills align with the company’s needs. On the flip side, employers are trying to determine if a candidate can solve problems, integrate well with the team, and contribute positively to the organization.

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There's a focus on the art of conducting oneself during an interview: aiming for a 50-50 balance of talking and listening, demonstrating skills with evidence, and illustrating a positive attitude and respect for others. Job seekers are advised to avoid common "interview mosquitoes"—minor personal habits or oversights that may derail the first impression, such as poor personal hygiene or lack of courtesy.

Preparation for interview questions is simplified into understanding five key inquiries from the employer's perspective: why you are there, what you can offer, who you are as a person, how you stand out, and if they can afford you. Candidates should also have their own set of questions ready, similar in essence but focused on ensuring the job and environment are right for them. For unconventional positions, suggesting the creation of a new job role, candidates need to articulate their skills and unique attributes clearly.

The chapter stresses the importance of follow-up, particularly with thank-you notes, as they reinforce your candidacy and demonstrate professionalism. It recognizes the imperfect nature of hiring processes and the potential for candidates to face rejection due to biases or pre-determined hiring decisions. However, it suggests seeking constructive feedback from any friendly interviewer to improve future performance.

In conclusion, the chapter advises ongoing personal record-keeping of achievements after securing a job, which is vital for future career



advancement discussions. Overall, the chapter asserts that interviewing is a skill that takes preparation, sincerity, and introspection, offering strategies to navigate the complex, often imperfect process of hiring.

Finally, the chapter hints at a subsequent discussion on salary negotiation, acknowledging it as a critical but separate component that requires its own focus.

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## Chapter 7 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: Salary Negotiation

The provided text is an insightful exploration into the nuances of job interviews, focusing predominantly on the crucial aspect of salary negotiation. It begins with an anecdote about a college graduate who secured her first job without discussing pay, highlighting the common mistake of failing to negotiate salary effectively before accepting a job offer. The narrative emphasizes the importance of negotiating salary and dispels the fear surrounding it by providing practical advice.

The process of salary negotiation is unfolded through several strategic steps. The text identifies the difficult-to-define moment in interviews when an employer decides they want a candidate and might extend a job offer. This is the ideal juncture to discuss salary, rather than prematurely during earlier interviews. If salary is raised earlier, three suggested responses help navigate the conversation without prematurely locking into a figure. The employer's persistence might reveal their inflexibility and hiring criteria based mainly on salary.

Once past the initial phase, the narrative advises holding salary discussions until the employer is committed to hiring the candidate. The text details why delayed negotiation can be advantageous: as the interview proceeds well, resulting impressions may compel the employer to offer a higher salary than



initially considered. Negotiations often occur when there is an implicit salary range, grounded in the employer's aim to minimize costs and the candidate's goal to maximize income. It's suggested that candidates aim to have the employer discuss a salary figure first, using a strategic countermove to avoid being the first to mention a number, as doing so could disadvantage the candidate.

Successful negotiation stems from informed efforts, suggesting thorough research on salary ranges within the industry, the specific organization, or both. Techniques for gathering salary information include leveraging online resources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics and salary-specific job sites, or engaging in off-line methods like discussions with people in relevant fields or temporary work experiences.

The narrative also advises preparation for interviews with a personal salary range informed by research, allowing candidates to pivot if needed during negotiation talks. Furthermore, benefits negotiation is underscored as equally essential, because fringe benefits significantly enhance financial compensation.

Finally, the text highlights the unpredictability of job offers and stresses the importance of pursuing multiple opportunities to ensure prospects continue, even when unexpected setbacks arise. This part of the advice is demonstrated through the experiences of a former Chinese professor who,



despite initial struggles, effectively used the strategies outlined in the book to land an excellent job in a small company, underscoring the efficacy of a multifaceted job-hunting strategy.

Strategically pursuing small but established or growing organizations is recommended, leveraging their inherent potential for providing opportunities with relatively less competition compared to larger entities. This approach is complemented by the anecdotal success story, demonstrating the transformative power of determined and informed job hunting.

Section	Summary
An Opening Anecdote	Highlights a common mistake of not negotiating salary before accepting a job offer, emphasizing the necessity of salary negotiation.
Crucial Timing	Suggests the ideal moment for salary negotiation is when an employer is decisively interested in hiring.
Initial Strategy	Proposes deferring salary discussions until employer commitment is evident; outlines response strategies if salary are raised prematurely.
Employer's Salary Range	Explains negotiations revolve around an implicit range, proposing candidates coax employers to suggest a figure first.
Preparation Techniques	Stresses informed negotiation by researching salary ranges through online resources and personal networks.
Negotiating Benefits	Incorporates benefits negotiation as a crucial part of enhancing overall compensation, not just the salary.
Handling Multiple Opportunities	Recommends pursuing several job options to mitigate setbacks and increase prospects.



Section	Summary
Anecdotal Success	Details how strategic job-hunting can yield success, highlighted by a former professor's journey to a lucrative position.
Strategy for Success	Encourages targeting small, burgeoning firms offering growth potential with less competition than larger organizations.

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## **Chapter 8: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: How to Choose a New Career When You Must**

In this chapter, the focus is on the process of choosing a career, whether you're about to begin your professional journey or considering a change. The author starts by acknowledging the common reliance on tests or assessments as a means to guide career decisions, emphasizing that while they are accessible and popular, tests are limited in scope. They categorize individuals into groups based on similar responses rather than providing a perfect match for individual uniqueness. By framing the context of career tests this way, the chapter debunks myths around their accuracy, urging readers not to equate test results with their true selves.

The author humorously recounts personal experiences to illustrate the limitations of such tests, highlighting the importance of remaining open to unexpected career paths and not predetermining desired test outcomes. Tests should serve as potential sources of inspiration, offering clues rather than definitive answers. By sharing a story of someone misled by test results, the author exemplifies the potential pitfalls of taking these assessments too literally.

Moreover, the chapter offers practical advice by suggesting multiple tests to widen career perspectives before narrowing them down. The strategy is to



avoid being prematurely limited in career decision making. Central to successful career planning is a broadening of horizons, followed by a measured narrowing of options once all possibilities are considered.

To support this journey, the chapter provides rules for career selection or

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I've learned. Highly recommend!

Alex Walk

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## Chapter 9 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: How to Start Your Own Business

The contemplation of self-employment often arises during moments of frustration, such as being stuck in traffic on the way to work or dealing with job loss. The allure of running a business from home and being your own boss is appealing. However, this journey demands careful consideration and planning due to several inherent challenges.

One of the primary issues with home-based businesses is the income disparity compared to traditional office jobs. U.S. home-based workers typically earn about 70% of what their office counterparts do. This raises questions about financial sustainability and profitability. Furthermore, managing a work-life balance in a home business can be tricky, as family obligations might interfere with business operations, and vice versa. Maintaining a steady flow of clients or customers is crucial but may involve constant job-hunting, as freelancers must continuously seek new contracts or clientele.

Exploring self-employment is tempting, and there are several strategies for navigating this path. Seven steps can guide aspiring entrepreneurs in pinpointing the right business venture:

1. **Research:** Delve into literature and resources on potential home

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business ideas. Books by Paul and Sarah Edwards can be valuable starting points.

2. **Dream Evaluation:** Reflect on personal passions and dreams, regardless of potential income differences, as personal satisfaction can outweigh financial gain.
3. **Community Needs:** Identify local demands for services or products, considering trends that offer convenience or cost savings.
4. **Mail Order and E-commerce:** Broaden the approach with internet-based marketplaces like eBay and Etsy to expand reach beyond local communities.
5. **Telecommuting** Consider working from home for existing employers, leveraging telecommuting opportunities.
6. **Franchising:** For those with capital but seeking security, franchising an established business model may be an option, albeit with risks.
7. **Invention:** Innovate or improve existing products, ensuring a thorough understanding of manufacturing and marketing processes.

For those keen on launching a specific business, whether continuing a familiar line of work independently or venturing into new territories, strategic planning is essential. Evaluating skills and gaps through a process like the "A-B=C" method allows entrepreneurs to determine what they need to learn or accommodate to succeed. Consulting with established business owners for insights on obstacles and necessary skills is invaluable, and these contacts are best sourced from regions where direct competition is less of a



concern.

Navigating the complexities of business involves understanding the market and managing risks. Online resources like the Small Business Administration (SBA) and various entrepreneurial websites provide essential guidance. The internet also facilitates international client acquisition and vendor relationships, opening up global opportunities.

Embarking on any new business venture requires bravery, as risks are inherent. Successful entrepreneurship hinges on preparedness: researching thoroughly, understanding potential hurdles, and having a clear contingency plan (Plan B) are crucial. Moreover, discussing implications with significant partners is vital, ensuring that any sacrifices required align with mutual goals.

In summary, entering self-employment is a multifaceted challenge. Success relies on a blend of adequate planning, continuous learning, community engagement, leveraging technology, and maintaining open, honest communication with loved ones. Each step serves as a building block towards creating a sustainable and fulfilling business.

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## Chapter 10 Summary: - Once You Know Exactly What You Are Looking For: Entering the World of 50+

As the Baby Boomer generation—those born between 1945 and 1964—embarks on what is traditionally referred to as "retirement," the concept itself may seem flawed for some. Retirement carries connotations of withdrawal from life's activities, as if one is simply waiting for the end. Instead, a more fitting metaphor for this phase is the Fourth Movement of a symphony, following the movements of infancy, learning, and working. This stage, akin to a blank slate, can be composed of triumph or a more subdued conclusion, like the contrasting finales found in Beethoven's "Eroica" and Tchaikovsky's "Pathetique."

In this Fourth Movement, the "instruments" we nurture—our body, mind, spirit, and heart—play crucial roles. Just like musical notes, the aspects of this life stage include sleep, health, love, and dreams, intermixed with challenges like loneliness and financial concerns. Planning, which is often emphasized in this stage, can be elusive because of life's unpredictability, a sentiment echoed by Martin Luther King Jr. as he emphasized the importance of pauses and reflection.

The Fourth Movement should manifest energy and enthusiasm rather than merely surviving. This energy—once a physical attribute in youth—must now stem from an inner passion for life. This is crucial for those past 50 who

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seek to continue working, as employers seek candidates who display vitality and eagerness. A cherished memory illustrates this: Auntie Bess, a vibrant eighty-year-old who, despite her frailty, exuded joy and energy while teaching children to clam. Her story underscores the ability to shine brightly with minimal resources.

For those in this phase, exploring personal passions and skills becomes essential to tap into one's internal energy reservoir. Engaging in pursuits that excite and invigorate us is not just preferable but necessary. Interviews become opportunities to showcase this energy, emphasizing alertness and enthusiasm regardless of age.

As we navigate this stage, mental acuity becomes paramount. Yet, we encounter challenges like short-term memory lapses more frequently, often attributed to age, medications, or simply the unexplainable "I don't know." The thoughts we dwell upon greatly influence our quality of life, aligning with the concept explored in "The Secret," which highlights the power of choice in thinking.

In making decisions, whether in our health or other matters, Dr. Jerome Groopman's "How Doctors Think" provides insightful guidance. Taking time, asking questions, and avoiding premature conclusions are crucial steps in decision-making, processes equally important for individuals over 50.

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Networking forms a vital component of finding new work opportunities, leveraging the diverse grapevine of contacts accumulated over years. Various online resources assist in finding flexible job options or exploring spirituality and faith, offering pathways to a fulfilling Fourth Movement.

Ultimately, the Fourth Movement signifies a time to reignite passions, embrace the outdoors, and maintain an engaged mentality, finding joy in the beauty of everyday life and continuing to manifest vibrancy, regardless of age.

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## Chapter 11 Summary: - The Flower Exercise: The Parachute Workbook

This passage delves into the transformative journey individuals undergo when seeking a fulfilling career that aligns with their deepest values and passions. It urges readers to move beyond a traditional job search, focusing instead on self-discovery to find a career that resonates with their life's mission. This pursuit is not selfish but rather a way to tap into one's unique offerings to the world, a world filled with disengaged workers merely looking forward to weekends, yet yearning for more meaningful contributions.

The process begins not with scanning the job market but with introspection. Readers are encouraged to discover their true selves through personal exercises such as listing what excites them, identifying common themes, and prioritizing these insights, akin to packing twice the amount of insight into oneself than knowledge about the job market. Renowned contributors like Barbara B. Brown are referenced for their input on gathering self-insight, to aid in making life decisions.

A central exercise, "The Flower Diagram," is introduced. This involves filling out seven petals on the diagram, each representing an essential aspect of a dream job: favorite skills, knowledges, people environments, values, working conditions, geographical preferences, and levels of salary or



responsibility. Through self-reflection exercises, readers derive a comprehensive picture of their desired career.

The passage emphasizes the need for a deep understanding of one's transferable skills, encouraging readers to recount accomplishments and deduce recurring skills from these narratives. Knowing one's value system is equally crucial. The text lists broad life outcomes—such as contributing to knowledge, health, beauty, compassion, justice, spirituality, entertainment, stewardship, and the environment—encouraging readers to determine which aligns most with their life mission.

Readers are advised to also consider their preferred working conditions and geographical preferences, ensuring these support their envisioned career. Techniques like the Prioritizing Grid help them weigh different factors effectively.

Next, the text guides readers on how to bridge the gap between self-knowledge and real-world application through "Informational Interviewing." This method involves engaging with individuals already in the desired field, learning from their experiences while uncovering the training or background required. The passage also advises on how to discern the right organizations to approach, the significance of temporary and volunteer roles, and executing proper research before pursuing a given position.



The closing sections detail practical steps in crafting the Flower Diagram, prioritizing elements like desired salary and responsible level, and further refining these choices through a meticulous information-gathering process. Ultimately, the journey is framed as a path to not just career satisfaction but deep contentment and the realization of one's life purpose, as inspired by both rational steps and intuitive insights.

The concept encourages taking bold steps to embrace one's true aspirations, challenging societal norms of balancing work and life while staying true to personal values and strengths. This reflective and actionable journey is designed to transform a traditional job hunt into a quest for lifelong fulfillment and contribution.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Transformative journey through self-discovery

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine how empowering it could be to shift your career search from merely finding a job to embarking on a journey of self-discovery. By taking the time to deeply understand what truly excites you, you're not just preparing to fit into a role; you're redefining what a fulfilling career means for you. Through exercises like listing your passions and using frameworks such as 'The Flower Diagram,' you gain clarity on your core values, talents, and aspirations. This insight becomes your guiding compass, enabling you to identify careers that align with your life's mission rather than just providing a paycheck. This approach fosters a stronger sense of purpose and satisfaction, transforming your career into a platform where you can contribute meaningfully to the world while staying true to your authentic self.

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## Chapter 12: Appendix A - Finding Your Mission in Life

The journey of job hunting can be transformative, providing an opportunity to profoundly reassess our life's direction and purpose. It invites introspection, allowing us to contemplate larger existential questions such as why we are here on Earth. We yearn for a sense of Mission, a compelling purpose that makes our existence unique amid the billions of human beings. Finding this Mission can grant us an unshakeable joy, a feeling of having been entrusted with a unique task that only we can fulfill.

Traditionally, the concept of a life Mission is intrinsically linked to religion, synonymous with Vocation or Calling, all implying divine intention. There's a trend, however, to secularize such concepts, detaching them from their spiritual origins. Yet, ironically, even the word "enthusiasm" derives from Greek for "God in us." In the context of job hunting, there's a peculiar openness to the idea of divine calling, predominantly among those who pioneer creative job-finding strategies, many of whom acknowledge a belief in God.

However, despite this widespread belief in God within cultures like the U.S., many struggle to integrate their faith with their work life, often compartmentalizing religious beliefs and professional aspirations. Unemployment, however, can spark a crucial dialogue between these realms, urging us to reconsider our life's purpose and align it with our work. This

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period of joblessness can serve as a pivotal life transition, a chance to dream anew and seek out the life we believe we were destined to live.

Discovering one's Mission in life involves a progressive journey akin to stages of development, where each stage of comprehension builds upon the prior. We are continually learning and unlearning. The journey generally comprises three overarching Missions:

1. **Seek Spiritual Intentionality:** Our first shared Mission is to live consciously in the presence of the divine, developing a personal relationship with God. This foundational task emphasizes knowing and enjoying the divine presence, which underlies all subsequent purposes.
2. **Make the World Better:** The next Mission also shared, involves contributing positively to the world moment by moment, guided by spiritual prompting. This entails bringing more gratitude, kindness, forgiveness, honesty, and love into daily life.
3. **Fulfill a Unique Mission:** The final Mission is distinctly personal, requiring us to leverage our unique talents in contexts and for purposes that resonate deeply with us and are deemed necessary by God in the world. It's about engaging with our greatest joys and gifts to serve a higher purpose.

The essence of these Missions challenges ingrained cultural assumptions

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about the nature of purpose. Our role is not just to stay busy but to embody values aligned with divine intent, understanding our shared human responsibilities, and realizing that our unique contribution is a collaborative choice with God that we must discern. Achievements may not always be recognized in a worldly sense but are vital in spiritual realms, often only understood in retrospective divine reckoning.

Engaging with these stages demands a profound shift from merely looking to achieve visible ends to embracing the internal and external influence our actions unknowingly ripple into the world. Instead of self-centered achievements, our success is intertwined with divine collaboration, emphasizing gratitude and humility over pride.

In secular environments such as the workplace, aligning these spiritual Missions with our professional life means re-establishing a divine connection and allowing this understanding to inform our actions, decisions, and contributions to society. During unemployment, this quest allows individuals to reassess their life's work within a holistic framework that inherently binds career with calling, helping to uncover a more profound sense of life's meaning beyond mere job titles.

This exploration might reveal that individual Missions often center on love, truth, beauty, and service—manifesting in ways that enrich both individual lives and the world collectively. From creating art that speaks to the soul,

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building communities through kindness, or promoting healing and justice, the unique Missions illustrate how personal talents meet communal needs through divine purpose.

Ultimately, embracing the journey of finding and living out our Mission grants a freedom from fear over life's uncertainties, like death or failure, and fosters a vital, purpose-driven existence. Knowing our purpose not only enriches our present life but aligns us with a deeper cosmic order, assuring that our time on Earth is profoundly meaningful. Engaging with the job search as a component of this larger journey can lead to transformative revelations that provide not just a livelihood but a renewed understanding of our place in the world.

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## Chapter 13 Summary: Appendix B - A Guide to Choosing a Career Coach or Counselor

In this passage, the focus is on individuals seeking assistance in their job-hunt or career-change endeavors. For those unsatisfied with the guidance provided by this book, various professionals are available, commonly referred to as career coaches or counselors, although the market is largely unregulated. These individuals charge fees for their services, but the quality and reliability of their guidance can vary significantly.

The passage emphasizes skepticism towards career counseling certifications and acknowledges that job-seekers generally prioritize effective assistance over credentials. It categorizes career counselors into three groups: competent and honest, honest but inexperienced, and dishonest individuals seeking only monetary gain. Unfortunately, there is no definitive list distinguishing these groups, underscoring the need for personal research and interviews to find suitable help.

The text cautions against overconfidence in self-judgment based on intuition and highlights the importance of objective research to avoid pitfalls, such as manipulative sales tactics. Several anecdotes illustrate the consequences of trusting the wrong advisors.

To identify a competent career counselor, the text suggests sourcing

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recommendations from friends, consulting the Sampler list in Appendix C (which is not an endorsement), and utilizing resources like Yellow Pages. Upon gathering potential candidates, job-seekers are encouraged to conduct comparison shopping by interviewing at least three counselors and assessing their approach and interactions.

Several red flags indicate potential pitfalls, especially concerning large firms. Potential issues include promises to handle everything for the client, reluctance to allow meetings with the actual counselor, or evasiveness about their experience. The text advises caution, particularly with firms needing payment upfront. Unlike these firms, many career counselors work on a pay-as-you-go basis, functioning similarly to therapists by charging hourly fees.

For those with limited budgets, group sessions are suggested as a cost-effective alternative, often yielding substantial results from peer interaction. Additionally, some community-based workshops, sometimes offered for free, can be beneficial. Finding such resources requires local exploration.

Advancements in communication technology have enabled "distance-counseling" or "telephone-counseling," expanding accessibility worldwide. While this convenience is positive, the author warns that not all counselors are skilled at remote counseling. Comprehensive research is



essential to ensure quality engagement.

Distance-counseling necessitates discipline and ongoing assessment through forms to facilitate effective communication between client and counselor.

The final appendix offers a Sampler of career coaches and counselors, with a disclaimer urging thorough research before selecting a provider. This caution aims to help individuals find competent guidance, contributing positively to their job search or career change journey.

The passage encourages individuals to take responsibility for their job search journey, ensuring their research efforts align with personal goals and context.

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## **Chapter 14 Summary: Appendix C - Sampler List of Coaches**

The provided text appears to be an extensive list of career counseling and coaching services across various states in the United States and some international locations, along with contact information for each entity. The entities range from independent career counselors to large institutions like universities and career centers. These organizations provide services including career counseling, job search strategy, career transitions, and personal development.

### **Summary of Key Sections:**

#### **1. Career Counseling Services:**

- This section includes a variety of professionals such as licensed counselors, career coaches, and career transition specialists. They offer services related to career change, job search strategies, career development, and personal coaching.

- Examples include "Career Discovery Services" in Scottsdale, AZ and "Renaissance Career Solutions" in Phoenix, AZ, with contacts such as Sandy Somers (RN, MS, ACC) and Betty Boza (MA, LCC), respectively.



## **2. Educational Institution-Based Services:**

- Universities and colleges often have dedicated career centers offering career counseling and job placement services for students and alumni.
- Examples include Arapahoe Community College in Colorado, and the Alumni Career Center of the University of Illinois.

## **3. Specialized Career Services:**

- There are organizations focusing on unique demographics or sectors, such as Jewish Vocational Services in Los Angeles, CA, offering tailored career support services, and Cuyahoga County Public Library's Career Center in Ohio, focusing on library users.
- Career transitions services are also a focus for many, providing expertise for those undergoing significant professional changes.

## **4. International Services:**

- International career services extend to countries like Canada, the UK, Australia, and Israel, among others.
- Notable services include "Careers by Design" in Toronto and "Transitions & Resources, Ltd." in Modiin, Israel, illustrating a global reach of career counseling efforts.



## 5. Key Contact Information:

- For each entry, detailed contact information such as phone numbers, email addresses, office locations, and websites are provided for those seeking specific services or inquiries.
- Some entries also include personal contact details for leading professionals within these organizations.

## Potential Use and Insight:

- For individuals seeking career guidance, this document can be a resourceful directory providing multiple options across various locations and areas of expertise.
- The diversity between place-based centers and specialized services, such as those for women or religious communities, denotes significant accessibility to career-related support in various contexts.
- For professionals in the field, this list might serve as a networking tool to build connections across different regions globally.

In conclusion, the content is a resourceful listing for career counseling and coaching, showcasing the vast landscape of career support services available both nationally and internationally. Each entry provides specific contact information, facilitating direct communication with service providers for individuals seeking career advancement or change.

