

CAREER UNSTUCK

How to **Play to Your Strengths**
to Find Freedom and Purpose
in Your Work Again



CHARLOTTE BLAIR

Praise for *Career Unstuck*

‘*Career Unstuck* is the ultimate guide that combines the right mindset and practical methods to break free from professional stagnation and embark on a journey towards a truly fulfilling career. With its concise yet powerful approach, this book offers a perfect ten out of ten experience, inspiring readers to let go of limitations, take the leap and achieve success. A must read for anyone seeking to redefine their professional path and unlock their true potential.’

BEN LARKEY Founder, Learning Republic

‘Having worked with Charlotte on my CliftonStrengths and then reading this book, it really brought me into the mindset of thinking about how I work best and how I need to really focus in on my strengths. Sometimes it is easy to fall into the trap of being too risk averse and feeling like you’re not good enough. This book takes you through the steps to help you overcome this.’

WILLIAM BULL Problem Solver

‘This book transforms your path from discomfort and dissatisfaction to a ten out of ten life. It’s a full career workshop in a book. Read it to reset your imagination about what your life and work can look like.’

LISA CUMMINGS CEO, Lead Through Strengths

‘Charlotte has compiled a valuable post-pandemic toolkit for anyone escaping the matrix and searching for purpose in their work and lives. Packed with research, tried-and-true resources and personal stories of career triumph, she gifts readers with motivational nuggets that inspire even the most deliberative ones to take action to get “unstuck” and reconnect with their passions and path.’

BRIAN BAILEY Lifeaddict® LLC

‘This book is for anyone stuck in their career for any reason. It is a great balance of research and practical information, and it’s peppered with inspiration to give you everything you need when thinking about a career change. It has inspired me to think about my career and how to get “unstuck”.’

MICHELLE VAN RAALTE ANZ

‘Regardless of where you are in your career journey, *Career Unstuck* will inform, inspire and guide you to a place where work brings satisfaction and happiness.’

ELYSSIA CLARK General Manager of Customer, Insights and Marketing, Benetas

‘Awareness of your strengths will give you the courage to make a change or take a new opportunity. Magic happens when you play to your strengths, whether in your personal or professional life—a key ingredient in loving what you do.’

NATALIE PREVITERA CEO, NGS Super

'I am so pleased that Charlotte decided to write this book. Why? Because she is living her best 'unstuck' life because she has done the work and honed her skills through a strengths-based approach. Her knowledge and experience in this important aspect of career management are undisputed, and I am so pleased she's decided to share it with you, the reader who wants to get unstuck.'

MICHELLE REDFERN Owner: Advancing Women in Business & Sport

'Charlotte has an incredible ability to make you feel seen. In *Career Unstuck*, Charlotte shares her relatable personal experiences, paired with carefully curated questions and a strong call to action to shift anyone who is feeling stuck in their career. A must read for anyone seeking more 10/10 days!'

REBECCA FRY Leadership Strategist, Coach and Facilitator

'Charlotte is an absolute standout pro in the world of strengths. Her wisdom has impacted thousands of people worldwide, and she is in high demand as a strengths expert. In refreshingly real-world language, this book perfectly captures how to channel feelings of discontent, and that there has to be more to life into actionable steps toward a life of fulfilment.'

TYANN OSBORN Host of the podcast 'Turn the Page with Kyla and TyAnn'

**CAREER
UNSTUCK**

CAREER UNSTUCK

**How to play to your strengths
to find freedom and purpose
in your work again**

CHARLOTTE BLAIR

Career Unstuck

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Grammar Factory Publishing | MacMillan Company Limited
25 Telegram Mews, 39th Floor, Suite 3906, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5V 3Z1
www.grammarfactory.com

Blair, Charlotte

Career Unstuck: How to Play to Your Strengths to Find Freedom and Purpose in Your Work Again / Charlotte Blair.

Paperback ISBN 978-1-998756-39-1

Hardcover ISBN 978-1-998756-41-4

eBook ISBN 978-1-998756-40-7

1. BUS012000 BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Careers / General. 2. BUS059000 BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Skills. 3. BUS103000 BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Organizational Development.

Production Credits

Cover design by Designerbility

Interior layout design by Setareh Ashrafoghalai

Book production and editorial services by Grammar Factory Publishing

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FOREWORD BY MAIKA LEIBBRANDT

*'Hi! How are you?' she asked.
I bet you know the response.
'Fine, and you.'
Fine. Sure you are.*

RESEARCH ON DAILY experiences suggests otherwise. Especially post-pandemic, this new normal. The daily emotional experience so many describe includes far more anger, loneliness, worry and stress than I would imagine in someone who was doing well. If you are struggling, you are not alone, perhaps not even in the minority. Even if you were and if you are indeed 'fine' (or 'all right', depending on local culture), is that the story you want to write of your life?

I get it. I was there. It wasn't what I wanted, but somehow I had landed there. I was in my mid-thirties, responsible for a reality I had once only dreamed of having. But below the surface, I was hurting. I thought that hustle and grit were my ticket to career success, so I replaced joy with effort and kept charging onward. As a professional executive coach, I knew in my head that the way I was living my career life was not with

the ease I had promised so many of my clients. I taught them to listen to their own talents, and craft decisions that reflect ease and excellence. But little by little, before I recognised what was happening, I accepted my exhaustion as the price of admission. Career wellbeing, I thought, was an idea for the masses—something that was meant for those who didn't work as hard as me, didn't have the life I had, or weren't facing my unique challenges.

A 'fine' truth is that I would have kept going if my body and mind didn't shut things down for me. Now, in hindsight, the pivot I made was just the beginning of a maturity around my career that I wish I could gift you right now. It's a story of evaluating limiting beliefs and rewriting the narrative. A story where you, my friend, are the main character. And like any hero's journey, you will be called to a challenge several times. I bet today is not the first time you've been invited to take on the difficulty of a meaningful change.

When you answer the call, things don't get easier right away. In fact, it's likely you'll find yourself on a dark and challenging path. With help, you can look around those scary corners with curiosity, exploring what you find most important, where that importance came from, and whether you want to keep it. It can be the scary scene, one when you may even doubt the benefit of making a change at all. Certainty and predictability can be tempting captors, and you will long for the 'just fine' life they had created, and long for the certainty of the fine life you knew. Keep going. Look for the supporting characters to teach you and help you. Remember this story is no one's but yours, and you get to find beauty in the pain. You get to decide what deserves your energy and what is important. The further you go, the closer you are to recognising you were holding the pen all along.

People with the strongest career wellbeing are twice as likely to thrive in their lives overall. How you experience your work life is how you experience your life. And while a balance of relationships and experiences outside of work are crucial, you simply cannot out-vacation the wrong job. Be kind to yourself on this journey, because it's perhaps the most important one you can take.

I encourage you to keep your own story in your pocket as you read the one here before you. Charlotte makes this invitation easy to accept. You'll find this book to be a buoy on your journey, blending together perfect dosages of research, anecdotes and reflection.

If you can accept that you are holding the pen of your own story, use that pen now. Take notes, build insight, learn from the stories graciously shared here. Wherever you are on your career experience, you are not alone. The conversations this book brings to the forefront are courageous examples of what we all owe ourselves and each other—to speak our individual narratives into collective awareness. To know better, so together we can do better.

MAIKA LEIBBRANDT

Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach and
Executive Coach of Maika Leibbrandt Consulting

INTRODUCTION

A CRUCIAL JUNCTION

LOUISA IS fast approaching her fortieth birthday and it feels like a big milestone, as she is essentially halfway through her life. Louisa has two young daughters, Sarah and Abigail, aged four and seven. She went on maternity leave from her learning and development role at a multinational insurance firm just before having her second daughter and has not returned to full-time work since. She used to enjoy her work, but a few experiences since returning part-time have left her feeling unsatisfied. She feels opportunities are passing her by in corporate life, and that sometimes people don't leverage her full potential.

Louisa loves working with people; she finds it fascinating. She likes the company; she enjoys the culture most of the time and has made some great friends during her ten-year tenure. She loves the fact that she gets to learn—she goes on courses, becomes accredited in new models, and finds joy in the learning. However, she gets super frustrated when she doesn't have the opportunity to put into action what she has learnt. She also struggles with her micromanaging shitty boss, Eric.

In addition to all that, every day is starting to feel a bit like Groundhog Day. She gets up at 6:00 am, takes the dog for a quick walk, gets herself and the kids ready, does the school and day-care drop-off, and arrives in the office at about 8:45 am.

She goes through the fifty-plus emails that have come in overnight, most of which she doesn't need to be copied in on. There is an email from Eric, asking her to send him a list of everything she is working on right now, and to copy him in on all the emails going to the project team on the change program. Louisa thinks to herself, 'What? Does he not trust me now to do my job?'

Yesterday she got an email telling her that the request for pricing (RFP) she had worked on for the last three months was no longer going ahead. She feels like all that work has gone down the drain, and it's a blow to her confidence. She feels like she has little autonomy in her role. Yes, the job offers some flexibility, being part-time, and did pre-COVID, but she doesn't get to choose much else. She is told what to work on and when, and most of it feels pointless and like a waste of time.

When she is in the office, she tries to leave at 5:30 pm, but invariably gets stuck in traffic and is more often than not late to pick the kids up from after-school care. She is too exhausted when she gets home to go to the gym and work on her fitness goals, and she has let down her netball team more times than she would like to mention.

'There must be more to work and life than this,' Louisa thinks. She feels like she is at a junction in her life, and she is not sure which way to turn.

Sound familiar?

Is it time for a change?

81,396 hours.

That's how much time, on average, you spend at work in your lifetime, according to Gallup's *State of the Global Workplace: 2022 Report*.

Gallup® found fifty-nine per cent of people are emotionally detached at work and eighteen per cent are miserable.

With regard to the phrase 'emotionally detached', think of terms you might have heard recently, like 'quiet quitting' or 'not engaged'. These are the workers who are looking at their watch, willing the day to be over, putting in the minimum effort required, *and* still feeling stressed and burnt out because they feel disconnected from the workplace.

Those who are miserable are the 'loud quitters'. Their relationships with their employers may have been severely broken, the trust has gone, and they are acting out their frustrations verbally and through actions like undercutting goals or bad-mouthing their workplace.

Gallup's research into wellbeing at work finds that having a job you hate is worse than being unemployed—and those negative emotions end up at home, impacting relationships with family. If you're not thriving at work, you're unlikely to be thriving at life.

In contrast, Gallup found those who get to do what they do best every day are *six times* as likely to be engaged in their jobs and *three times* as likely to report having an excellent quality of life. Does this describe you? Or do you feel emotionally detached or even miserable at work?

Here's how that might look:

- 1 You feel overworked, burnt out and underappreciated.
- 2 Your workplace has a poor culture or management style (in Louisa's case, it was her shitty boss).
- 3 You lack the opportunity to do what you do best or develop and grow.
- 4 There is no purpose, challenge or sense of achievement in what you do, and you feel called to do something different.
- 5 Your work doesn't match your life stage or life goals.

And now the big one:

- Are you excited to go to work every day? Or do you wake up thinking, 'Argh, I have to go to work'?
- How often do you wake up thinking this?
- How does that make you feel?
- How long have you felt like this?
- How long can you sustain this?
- What will be the impact if you don't do anything about it?
- Who else in your life does this impact?

I had days that I felt like this, when I dreaded going to work. It would get to Sunday night and I'd have that sinking feeling. I'm sure you know that feeling, and what causes it... Being asked to work on something you know will be meaningless, as nobody will look at it. Joining a meeting that drags on for ages with no clear agenda, politics in the office, the ever-inspiring performance review (I'm being sarcastic here), the many spreadsheets you have to fill out, the systems you have to update, all the tasks you hate doing. All the time you are looking at your watch (or phone these days), with the minutes and hours dragging by. You get to the end of the week, excited about the weekend, and then get to Sunday and the same sinking feeling sets in, as you know you have to do it all again. Same shit, different day.

The time spent in the car commuting to the office, time you give to somebody else, time you will never get back in your life. The time you don't get to spend with your loved ones, exercising at the gym, walking the dog, working in the garden, reading a book, taking time to recharge and doing the things that matter to you.

But here's the thing.

Life is too short not to enjoy what you do. Life is too short to put up with the shitty boss (there are lots of them out there), to put up with a job that goes against your values, to stay in a role where you don't have the opportunity to do what you do best, to remain in a workplace that stops you from spending time doing the things you love and with the ones you love. Life is too short to find yourself curled up in the foetal position at the end of the day or constantly looking at your watch while at work, wishing for the next break and for the workday to end.

I'm a firm believer in the saying that it's better to regret the things you have done than the things you haven't done. At the end of your life, what are some of the things you would regret not having done, especially with your working hours?

Started a small business

Worked for a not-for-profit or a company that really made a difference

Cut down your hours to achieve a better work-life balance

Became a manager or leader in a certain timeframe

Turned a hobby into a profession

Designed programs for others

Passed your knowledge and experience on to others

Mentored others to help them in what they do

Spoke at a conference

Wrote a book

Feel free to add any others!

Of course, there could be many different reasons why you haven't been able to make a change—despite all the factors suggesting that it's time. As we'll discuss in detail in this book, it can feel incredibly scary to leave a job or a line of work that's familiar, even if you've grown to dislike it or even hate it. And this is where I want to say...

If I can do it, anybody can

At school, I was a typical 'average' student. I didn't go to university; I am more street-smart and connected than 'education smart'. In 2009, I felt a bit stuck in my career. When I thought about how much I enjoyed my job on a scale of one to ten, I realised that a five out of ten, on average, was not good enough for me. Something had to be done. I learn best through doing, so I dipped my toe in the water by gaining new skills and knowledge in coaching and facilitation. This helped me in my then career in IT sales, but also enabled me to shift industries and pursue a different career in the learning and development space. I moved from a huge global corporate with over 30,000 employees to a small firm with sixteen employees to follow my dream career. But it turned out that wasn't quite right so, a year later, I jumped right in by starting my first business.

I leveraged my talents and strengths, reframed some of my limiting beliefs, and got clear about what I didn't want to be doing, which helped shape what I *did* want to be doing. I found my 'WHY', tapped into my values and beliefs, and invested in my strengths. I found the right partners, and took pinches, handfuls and armfuls of advice from a 'pick and mix' of mentors. I experimented, failed and succeeded, but every day I kept moving forward, one step at a time. I now have two businesses, and I love what I do *almost* every day. What is crystal clear is that *every day* I have the opportunity to do what I do

best, playing to my strengths. Every day I keep investing in these strengths, so they get stronger.

My message here is: **YOU** have amazing talents and strengths within you already. Leveraging these, and other snippets of advice, means you too can achieve a score of ten out of ten every day in those working hours ahead of you.

*Choose a job you love and you will
never have to work a day in your life.*

CONFUCIUS

Achieving a 10 out of 10 every day at work

Most of us have to work. It's a fact of life, unless, of course, you've won the lottery, inherited a fortune, or married a billionaire. Given how much time you spend at work, I believe you should enjoy what you get paid to do.

I have one goal for this book: to inspire you to **ACT**. Specifically, to move forward towards something more meaningful to you in terms of paid work.

I will be there holding your hand (metaphorically) on this journey and, if I have served you well, by the end of this book you will think of the journey in a new way. One with options and different paths you can take, like a 'choose your own adventure' story, one where others are there to support you as long as they know you are making the journey. A journey that doesn't need to be hard, painful or scary but that is fulfilling and rewarding. Keep an eye out for the signposts along the way that will help keep you moving forward and on track, that fit into your own timelines and life needs.

There is no right or wrong way to complete the journey you will take by reading this book. You can run, you can amble, you can stop and think, you can ‘hop off’ at one chapter, go and do some research, and return for the next chapter. You can take a detour, or go back to the beginning. Whatever you do, I will be there when you need me.

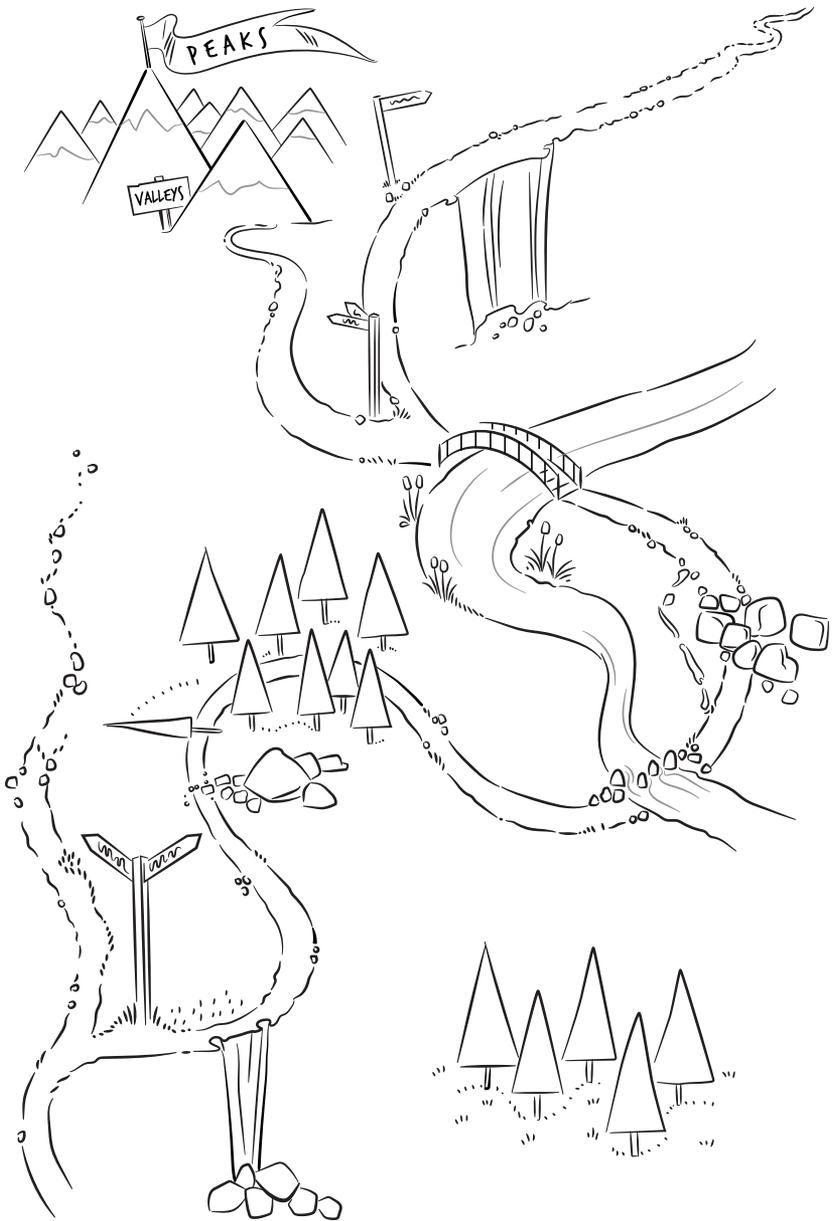
Ask yourself: what made you pick this book up in the first place? Your story and your journey are uniquely yours, although you may relate to some or even many of the stories and other findings in this book. As any good companion should, I will share some of my stories with you along the way and what I have learnt from them.

This book is born from my experience not as a former CEO of a big corporate, but as someone with a ‘standard’ job within a corporate who found her unique strengths, discovered her passion and purpose in work, and now loves what she does every day.

This book is designed to be easy to read, with research from global experts, resources and strategies that have helped me and countless others I have worked with make the shift. It provides questions to think about and reflect on, and quotes and stories from others who also put their brave pants on, decided to ACT, and now love work again.

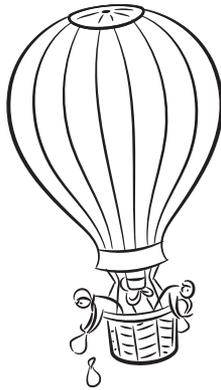
As I said, you can choose your own adventure when it comes to this book. You can skim read, refer back to previous sections, or choose an action that inspires you and go from there. But you must act.

Are you ready to get unstuck and find that ten out of ten workday, every day? Let’s do it.



PART I

THE WEIGHTY ISSUE





ASSESSING THE DAMAGE

TO UNDERSTAND job ‘stuckness’, we must delve into its underlying causes. As we’ll discuss in this chapter, there could be numerous factors contributing to a lack of happiness or fulfilment in your career—from mismatched job roles and limited career growth to toxic work environments, stagnant wages, excessive workloads, or a lack of work-life balance.

This chapter is about taking stock of where you are right now—no matter how icky it might feel or how ugly it might look. Wherever you find yourself on the scale for loving your job, this chapter will serve as a guide to understanding the causes and consequences of your unhappiness at work. Unhappiness at work is not a mere inconvenience; it is a pervasive force that can affect every aspect of your life. By examining the various factors at play, you will be much better equipped to make informed decisions about your career and take proactive steps towards a more fulfilling and satisfying work life.

What's your number?

How do you feel this week about your current job? On a scale of one to ten, how much do you love what you do? I am sure the exact number will differ from day to day, but what about over a standard week? What about a month? What about over the last year?

The score YOU give is the consistent factor here, and your view of the number is the only thing that matters. Marcus Buckingham and Ashley Goodall, in their *Harvard Business Review* article 'The Feedback Fallacy', write:

"The only realm in which humans are an unimpeachable source of truth is that of their own feelings and experiences. Doctors have long known this. When they check up on you post-op, they'll ask, "On a scale of one to ten, with ten being high, how would you rate your pain?" And if you say, "Five," the doctor may then prescribe all manner of treatments, but what she's unlikely to do is challenge you on your "five." It doesn't make sense, no matter how many operations she has done, to tell you your "five" is wrong, and that, actually, this morning your pain is a "three." It doesn't make sense to try to parse what you mean by "five," and whether any cultural differences might indicate that your "five" is not, in fact, a real "five." It doesn't make sense to hold calibration sessions with other doctors to ensure that your "five" is the same as the other "fives" in the rooms down the hall. Instead, she can be confident that you are the best judge of your pain and that all she can know for sure is that you will be feeling better when you rate your pain lower. Your rating is yours, not hers.¹

There are parts of most people's jobs they dislike. For me, it used to be anything to do with Excel. Specifically, the numbers things like expenses, or filling in CRM systems for no reason

with data nobody was ever going to look at. For me, when it comes to loving my job, I need a solid rating of seven to ten to keep doing what I am doing. Life is too short to be in a job you think is average, let alone one you hate.

The question is: how long can you sustain working at the number you have given yourself? What impact is it having on you and others around you?

I was forty-two when I shifted careers, moving from IT sales to a learning and development role. The average age a person changes career is thirty-nine years old, according to an article from job site Zippia. Being unhappy in their career is the number one reason people make the switch. What constitutes that unhappiness for you?

What's the cause of your career unhappiness?

There are many reasons you may be unhappy in your career. Perhaps there is one major source or multiple sources. Here are some of the most common ones—and why they're so damaging.

The shitty manager

'I love being micromanaged,' said no one, ever.

Just like great teachers can have a huge impact on a child's engagement at school, great managers have the potential to make or break employee performance and happiness at work. When I was at school, my favourite subjects were all taught by teachers I liked, respected and enjoyed learning from. Physical education (PE) was my favourite and best subject. Mr Reed and Mrs Warren (whom I later found out were married) were great PE teachers—they made the lessons fun, and recognised and fostered talent and passion in their students. They went the extra mile to set up volleyball clubs at lunchtime, were firm but fair, and encouraged everybody to have a go.

In my second-last year of high school, we got a new PE teacher, Mr Jones. He was dictatorial and critical, and focused more on the then 'boy' sports like cricket and soccer. He stopped the volleyball clubs, put you in detention, or made you run laps of the field instead of playing in the netball game if you so much as spoke back to him. He took all the fun out of the classes. I went from loving PE to not wanting to go to school because of this one individual and his approach to teaching and students.

The same can be said for those who lead and manage in the workplace. In fact, Gallup has some sobering statistics about managers and the impact they can have on employees. According to Gallup, one in two employees have left their job to get away from their manager at some point in their career. One in two! That's fifty per cent of people. Scary, isn't it?

From my first 'proper' full-time office job as a work controller for Canon UK in 1993, which paid a huge £8,000 a year, to starting my own business in 2014, I have worked for six companies. Across those six different companies, I have worked for over fifty different people. Some outstanding leaders, some average managers, and some terrible bosses of the worst possible kind.

One of the last sales managers in the IT business I worked for was hands down the worst boss I have ever encountered. He rose up the ranks from individual contributor to manager. In our very first get-to-know-you conversation after I joined his team, we spoke about the accounts I was now going to be managing, the target and my approach. This conversation went well. It ended like any coaching conversation might. What action was I going to be taking and by when? I think I said something like, '*By the end of the week.*'

He replied, '*When exactly will you get that to me, Lottie?*'

I replied, '*As I said, by the end of the week.*'

'No, Lottie. I want to know exactly when you will get that back to me.'

'Um, okay. By 5:00 pm on Friday.'

'Right, good.'

A little tiny alert bell went off in the back of my brain, thinking this was very specific and insistent, but I shrugged it off. I am a woman of my word, so if 5:00 pm is what he needed to hear, no big deal.

It was a big deal. It was the start of the micromanaging slippery slope that almost turned me into an alcoholic. By the time I left the company, I felt broken, with my confidence shattered into tiny pieces. I left a shell of my former self. Something I never thought would happen.

This manager was a first-class corporate bully of the extraordinary kind. He started asking me to copy him into every email I sent and invite him to join every conversation I had with the customer. In fact, he went as far as to say I was NOT to contact or speak to the customer alone. This started to make me doubt myself and my own ability. I had had a successful career up until this point. Every sales role has its cycles, and ups and downs, but I had never been micromanaged like this before. I was always known as the trusted pair of hands. In fact, I was often given the problem accounts as I could turn them around with my relationship-building skills and reputation for doing the right things and doing what I said I would do. Why now was everything I was doing being questioned? It got worse, too. I was purposely excluded from meetings and phone calls, while bid responses and management summaries I wrote were being rewritten and pulled to shreds. Whatever I did was wrong.

At first, I questioned things. I have never been a wallflower. In fact, most people who know me would say I am bold and confident (and yes, a good few would probably say I'm even

aggressive at times). This was never met well. ‘*Why would you question me, Lottie?*’ he would shout down the phone. At first I laughed about the fact that he could be so childlike, but as it went on, it scared me. I have never felt scared at work before.

The more time went on, the more his behaviour affected me. My husband, who happened to work at the same company, could see the toll it was taking on me. Some of my colleagues also noticed and said I was a shell of the person I used to be; quiet and reserved. I have never cried so much as during that period of my life and, trust me, I am not someone who cries easily. I have never been a big drinker, but I started drinking every night the moment I got in the door. I used to enjoy going to work. But I started dreading waking up in the morning and going into the office. What barrage of abuse was I going to face? What put-down or snide comment was I going to cop? What was I going to intentionally be left out of, told I could not attend, or told I had done wrong?

I learnt a number of lessons from this experience. It inspired me to work with managers and leaders in a way that encourages them to care about their people and play to their strengths. It also gave me the push I needed to follow my passion.

Great leaders inspire you not only to discover, but also live your full potential. You look up to them and are inspired by them. You want to go the extra mile for them. Gallup has found that one of the most important decisions companies make is whom they name a manager. However, a Gallup article titled ‘*Why Great Managers Are So Rare*’ states that ‘*our analytics suggest they usually get it wrong. In fact, Gallup finds that companies fail to choose the candidate with the right talent for the job 82% of the time.*’

According to the same article, ‘*Managers account for at least 70% of variance in employee engagement scores across business units . . . This variation is in turn responsible for severely low*

worldwide employee engagement.' The things they say, the things they don't say. The things they do, the things they don't do.

Gallup also believes not every manager has natural talent. Their research shows that just one in ten people have the natural talent to manage a team. This research has also found that another two in ten people have some characteristics of basic managerial talent and can perform at a high level if their company coaches and supports them. Therein often lies the rub!

Some managers get appointed to the role for the wrong reason. In the sales environment I came from, more often than not someone was made a manager because they were a high-performing individual contributor. According to Gallup, appointing people for these sorts of reasons just doesn't work. In an article titled 'Managers Account for 70% of Variance in Employee Engagement', Gallup states, *'Experience and skills are important, but people's talents—the naturally recurring patterns in the ways they think, feel and behave—predict where they'll perform at their best.'*²

The bully boss

A Gallup article titled 'The World's Workplace Is Broken—Here's How to Fix It', states:

'In one of the largest studies of burnout, Gallup found the biggest source was "unfair treatment at work". That was followed by an unmanageable workload, unclear communication from managers, lack of manager support and unreasonable time pressure.

'Those five causes have one thing in common: your boss. Get a bad one and you are almost guaranteed to hate your job. A bad boss will ignore you, disrespect you and never support you. Environments like that can make anyone miserable.'³

For many people, it seems, there is no other option but to jump ship. In another article titled ‘7 Gallup Workplace Insights: What We Learned in 2021’, Gallup states:

‘In the summer of 2021, Gallup reported that 48% of U.S. employees were actively job searching or watching for job opportunities. Dubbed the “Great Resignation”, this era of unusually high quit rates left many leaders scrambling to fill crucial roles and rethink their employer brand.

‘And yet Gallup has found that it’s disengaged workers who are at the highest risk of leaving. It takes more than a 20% pay raise to lure most employees away from a manager who engages them, and next to nothing to poach most disengaged workers. High-quality managers who inspire and support their teams are an effective moat of protection for retaining their most talented workers.’⁴

According to McKinsey, fifty-six per cent of American workers claim their boss is mildly or highly toxic and a whopping seventy-five per cent say their boss is the most stressful part of their workday.

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a worker (or group of workers). In Australia, around the time of my bullying incident, Safework Australia commissioned a report titled ‘Bullying and harassment in Australian workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/15’. The costs of bullying to businesses is huge, with the report finding:

- The total cost of low levels of psychosocial safety climate (PSC)—which refers to an environment for psychological health and safety, and the balance of concern by leadership about psychological health versus productivity in the workplace—to Australian employers is estimated to be approximately \$6 billion per annum.

- Workers in low PSC workplaces had significantly higher sickness absence and presenteeism than those in high PSC environments. These workers took forty-three per cent more sick days per month and had a seventy-two per cent higher performance loss at work, equating to \$1,887 per employee per year in cost to employers.
- Workers with psychological distress took four times as many sick days per month and had a 154 per cent higher performance loss at work than those not experiencing psychological distress. This equates to an average cost of \$6,309 per annum in comparison with those not experiencing psychological distress.

According to the 2021 WBI U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, published by the Workplace Bullying Institute, an estimated 48.6 million Americans, or about thirty per cent of the workforce, are bullied at work. A staggering forty-nine per cent have been affected by it. Bosses remain the most frequent perpetrators across all WBI national surveys since they began in 2007. When asked the question, ‘What do you believe is the most common reaction to complaints of mistreatment (when it is not illegal discrimination) by American employers?’, sixty-three per cent believed it is negative reactions including discount, defend and deny it, versus thirty-seven per cent who believed employers acknowledge, eliminate and condemn it.

When a business does nothing, the employee is often left with no choice but to leave. Again, the survey found that in sixty-seven per cent of cases, the outcome for the target was negative.

A negative workplace culture

Have you ever heard the saying ‘culture eats strategy for breakfast’? Culture in an organisation is king. I remember a

former manager saying, 'Culture is built by the stories we tell.' If you are surrounded by negative people who are dragging the culture down, it's hard to be at your best. We all contribute to the culture, but sometimes you might feel like you are bashing your head against a brick wall, in the sense that you're always the one to try and lift others' spirits, take action, and prioritise things that make a difference. Or perhaps it's the opposite, where your voice is drowned out by others. Maybe your organisation is rife with one-upmanship, whereby the squeaky wheel gets the oil, and the loudest voice gets the promotion. The culture and office politics drown you out and drag you down.

Like the rotten apple in the barrel, a bully/cynic/critic/naysayer can infect the others, destroying morale and team dynamics. In a two-day leadership workshop I ran recently, one individual was very vocal with their negative views of the organisation from the start. This person had been with the organisation for over thirty years and, while we have no idea what else might have been going on for them, it felt like they were 'loud quitting'. At break time, another newer team member voiced their frustration with this negativity and how it was bringing the group down. The thirty-year veteran disagreed and couldn't see it themselves. The next day, they called in sick. The temperature of the room changed significantly. There was visible and audible relief from the other participants in the room. A useful discussion progressed on the shadow we cast as leaders and the impact of our actions.

William Felps and Professor Terence Mitchell from the University of Washington's School of Business were inspired to conduct a study on how workplace conflict and citizenship can be affected by one's co-workers after Felps's wife experienced the 'bad apple' phenomenon. They analysed about two dozen published studies on how teams and employees interact,

and how bad teammates can destroy a team, and then went on to conduct their own studies. An article by *ScienceDaily*, titled ‘Rotten to the Core: How Workplace “Bad Apples” Spoil Barrels Of Good Employees’, states:

‘According to Felps, group members will react to a negative member in one of three ways: motivational intervention, rejection or defensiveness. In the first scenario, members will express their concerns and ask the individual to change his behaviour and, if unsuccessful, the negative member can be removed or rejected. If either the motivation intervention or rejection is successful, the negative member never becomes a “bad apple” and the “barrel” of employees is spared. These two options, however, require that the teammates have some power: when underpowered, teammates become frustrated, distracted and defensive.

‘... Felps and Mitchell also found that negative behaviour outweighs positive behaviour—that is, a “bad apple” can spoil the barrel but one or two good workers can’t unspoil it.

‘... “Most organisations do not have very effective ways to handle the problem,” said Mitchell. “This is especially true when the problem employee has longevity, experience or power. Companies need to move quickly to deal with such problems because the negativity of just one individual is pervasive and destructive and can spread quickly.”’⁵

Lack of flexibility and autonomy

Autonomy at work is you being able to produce the work you need to produce in ways that work best for you. It’s also being able to shape your working environment in the way that’s best for you. Have you ever gone from having your own desk—with the pictures, books and trinkets that are meaningful to you—to being told you are moving to a hot desk environment where

nothing is allowed on the desk? How did that feel? What emotions did it stir up in you? (Some people like hot desking, but others don't.)

In their book *Culture Shock*, authors Jim Harter and Jim Clifton state, '*It took a pandemic-induced experiment to learn how people really want to work.*' Now that people have experienced more flexibility and freedom in how they work, it's hard to reverse it. The 'endowment effect' is the behavioural tendency that causes you to value something more once you own it than before you owned it.

When people have autonomy to do their job in a way that suits them, to make decisions about how best to spend their time, and to meet and beat specific goals without having to depend on someone else's input, the outcomes, engagement and morale are higher. Studies by David Rock and the NeuroLeadership Institute show how being micromanaged and having a lack of freedom can increase employees' stress levels.

Flexibility is important too. A Citrix study titled 'Work 2035' found eighty-eight per cent of workers say that when searching for a new position, they will look for one that offers flexibility in terms of hours and working location.

A lack of autonomy and flexibility can lead to being overworked, which can lead to burnout. This can also be self-inflicted. In strengths discovery workshops I run, those who are high achievers and have a sense of responsibility to others tend to be prone to burnout. This can have you doing more than you are mentally and physically capable of doing, and you may find it harder and harder to get off the hamster wheel.

COVID-19 has given people a taste of what increased flexibility and autonomy can look like. It's why businesses are getting so much pushback when forcing people back into the office. I know managers who believed that if they couldn't see

you in the office that you weren't working. But there are countless studies to show that productivity increased during COVID when we had to work from home. Every person has different needs to be their best at work, and this often involves a decent level of flexibility and autonomy.

The fit isn't right

Maybe your line of work simply isn't a good fit any more (or never was in the first place). Maybe you followed a path your parents suggested you follow, and you didn't want to let them down. Perhaps you feel stuck or unfulfilled. Or perhaps your life has changed in other ways outside of work. Here are some additional factors that may be causing your career unhappiness.

Your circumstances have changed

Your career and line of work may have been a perfect fit once, but things change. People change, circumstances change. Often those changes are put upon you and you have no choice about it. Sometimes those changes are your choice. Those changes might include where you live now. Perhaps you've moved to be closer to ageing parents or childcare. You may have moved to be closer to your children's school, or for lifestyle reasons. Your life will continue to change, and sometimes your work needs to change along with it.

You are not developing or growing

People like to know they are developing and growing professionally, and that they have the opportunity to grow and be challenged (just enough to not cause stress and burn-out). If you are working somewhere where you don't get the opportunity to develop—or, worse, not apply what you have learnt—that could have a major impact on your happiness.

You lack passion and purpose

In a Gartner article titled ‘Employees Seek Personal Value and Purpose at Work. Be Prepared to Deliver’, Caitlin Duffy, Research Director in Gartner’s HR practice, states, ‘*The intent to leave or stay in a job is only one of the things that people are questioning as part of the larger human story we are living. You could call it the “Great Reflection.” . . . It’s critical to deliver value and purpose.*’⁶

The pandemic has made all of us reflect on what is important. Specifically, your purpose, your values and your motivation; why you get out of bed in the morning. Increasingly, people want to work on things that are meaningful, make a difference and align with their values.

The potential impact of your unhappiness

Think about how you felt in the last week, and the last month, at work. What were some of the emotions you felt?

Elated, satisfied, bored, frustrated, excited, angered, hopeful, proud, content, discontent? If you had to describe it as weather, what would it be? Grey drizzle (in England we call it mizzle—a combination of ‘miserable’ and ‘drizzle’)? Hot and humid, with a storm brewing? Constant rain that never lets up? A deep blizzard of snow where you can’t see more than two feet in front of you? Or maybe a clear, calm, sunny and fresh spring day, with dew on the ground and the promise of warmth growing. The weather can impact our mood sometimes. Our mood can impact others around us.

For me, before I made my career change, I often felt irrelevant. I felt like a cog in a machine, doing the same thing day in and day out. Making money for a big corporation, with a hierarchy of decision-makers dictating the targets we had to meet

and how to meet them, the products to sell, the number of clients to see, the forms to fill in, the systems to update. I would spend over twenty hours of my week, at least, sitting in a car in traffic or in meetings that didn't go anywhere, and filling out forms and spreadsheets that nobody would ever look at.

I sometimes think about all the things I could have been doing just with that wasted time. The food I could've been cooking and enjoying, and the extra time I could've been spending on the things I loved and with the ones I loved. Time spent with my children, for example, instead of paying extra childcare fees for someone else to spend time with them. Looking at the clock in the car when stuck in yet another traffic jam on my way to pick the boys up. Was I going to make it in time? Would I have to stop and phone up again, explaining that I was going to be late, forcing the boys to wait at the gate with bags in hand? The last ones to be picked up—again! For me, the passion had gone. Yes, I enjoyed the people I worked with—some of them became and remain best friends—but it was time for a change.

In 2009, Bronnie Ware wrote an online article titled 'Regrets of the Dying', detailing her time as a palliative carer. On her website, she writes:

'Working with dying people and developing close relationships with them during their last weeks changed me forever. To honour their wisdom and life-parting requests, I wrote this article. Very unexpectedly, the article gained multiple-millions of views worldwide. Requests poured in as people asked me to share more of my life and how to apply the wisdom I'd been bequeathed, and so my journey began.'

She went on to write her bestselling memoir, *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying—A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing*. Here are the top five regrets:

- *‘I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.*
- *‘I wish I hadn’t worked so hard.*
- *‘I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings.*
- *‘I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.*
- *‘I wish I had let myself be happier.’*

If you knew now that you only had weeks to live, would any of these apply to you? As Bronnie says, *‘you have the opportunity right now to embody the wisdom that many realised far too late.’*⁷

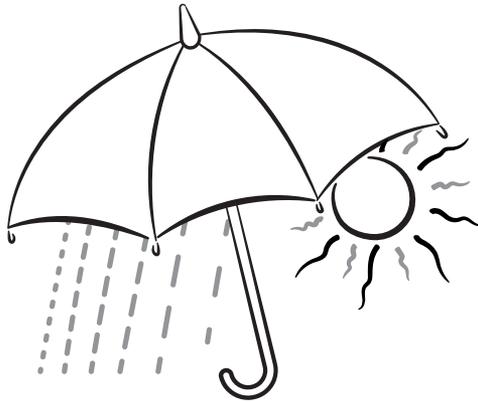
At the end of your life, do you want to be one of those who did—or one of those who wished they would have?

UNKNOWN

What weather are you are taking with you?

Countless studies have shown that the very act of seeing another person smile triggers an automatic muscular response that produces a smile on your face. Science has demonstrated in numerous studies that smiling is contagious.

People-watching is one of my favourite things. I am fascinated by humans and endlessly curious; some would say nosey. I suffer from RBF (resting bitch face) when I am thinking, or even not thinking. Hence, when resting, my face will tell a different story from how I am really feeling. I have been known to get the comment ‘What’s up with you?’ I therefore have to be mindful to smile. I try to be more conscious of when



I am smiling. I enjoy walking into a lift and smiling at the other person, or walking down the road and smiling at other people. I notice when someone smiles at me, and I smile back. I notice the effect it can have on me and, I hope, on them. Smiling is contagious.

Smiling releases neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin in your body, which can improve your health and wellbeing, and reduce stress.

Think about that ripple effect. If you are miserable, what impact is the ‘weather’ you are carrying around with you having on others? Being happier at work, including smiling more at and with others, could help you and them be healthier and live longer. Go on—do it now. Start smiling. To help you get started, think about the last time you laughed so hard you nearly wet yourself (maybe that’s just me?), or you had tears rolling down your face, or you felt super proud, or had a great catch-up with a friend. If you have a cat or dog nearby, look at them and smile. I am more of a dog person, with two of them pretty much always in my office since COVID. Cuddling a dog increases your levels of oxytocin, known as the ‘love hormone’.

Is the smile still on your face? How do you feel now?

It's not too late—but you need to act

There were a few moments in my career that created the spark for the shift, followed by a series of chain reactions that lit and fanned the flames.

In 2012, I had the opportunity to attend a Franklin Covey training course based on the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey. It was a career-defining moment for me, although I didn't know to what extent at the time. At the event, one of the first things we needed to do was create a mission statement.

Before the start of the program, participants were encouraged to write a mission statement and bring it along to the workshop. It was about getting thoughts onto paper without thinking about it too much. A personal mission statement is like a constitution by which you make the decisions of your life. It should focus on what you want to be (character), what you want to do (contributions), and the values and principles on which these two things are based.

We were encouraged to think about:

- The roles and relationships in our lives (in my case, these included mother, sister, aunt, friend, daughter, wife, co-worker)
- Our long-term goals and aspirations
- When we are at our best and our worst, and the talents we bring
- The people who have influenced us, and the attributes we most admire in them

Through the program, we revised and refined our mission statement. I realised that my mission and purpose in life was NOT to be selling IT for a large global firm. As much as it paid

well, the work-life balance was not great and there was no personal purpose for me. In order to define my purpose, I needed to think about what my goals were, my passion (other than family, horses and eating) and, ultimately, what I wanted to stand for. I also thought about how I wanted to be remembered by others, the roles I play for others, and what I wanted others to say about me at my eightieth birthday party. The thought of someone saying ‘Charlotte sells IT products and works long hours’ filled me with dread.

I wish I could find that original mission statement, but I know that ten years on I still live true to the core principles. To live life to the fullest, to help others, to enjoy the things that are important to me and my family. I often dig out the book or course materials to be reminded of the mantra ‘Begin with the end in mind’. You can find resources here to define your own mission statement: <https://msb.franklincovey.com/>

In order to successfully make a change, I also had to embrace the idea of ‘starting again’, which, for someone with an established career and a family, took some work. However, the work and the learnings were more rewarding than I ever could’ve imagined. This might be true for you as well.

Research shows that in your lifetime, the average number of jobs you have is twelve. A report by the FYA (Foundation for Young Australians) states, *‘It’s more likely that a fifteen-year-old today will experience a portfolio career, potentially having seventeen different jobs over five careers in their lifetime.’* Your parents might tell a different story, depending on your age, but I know my stepfather was an actuary. He worked for a number of different firms over the years before starting his own business, but had pretty much the same career through his life. My father, however, had many different jobs and start-ups—from a successful electronics business to running a pub and many other schemes in between.

Regardless of where you are in your ‘career’, it’s not too late or too early to reassess if you are unhappy and don’t love what you do. Millennials get a bad rap for job hopping, but maybe they have it right?

I wonder how much we fear the ‘sunk cost’ mindset. That is, ‘I have to stick with this as I have already invested so much.’ We will come to that later.

I talk to people from a wide range of life and career stages, backgrounds and education. With kids and without, with a mortgage and without, with degrees, double degrees and without, with thirty years’ experience and without. I talk to people who studied to be an accountant and have always hated the work, people who studied law and now work in marketing, people like me who left school but are studying later in life.

Research shows that careers are generally clustered into five stages:

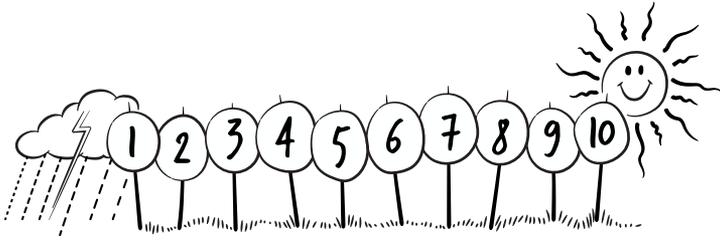
- Exploration—21-25
- Establishment—25-35
- Mid-Career—35-45
- Late Career—45-55
- Decline—55-65

Herein lies the subtle difference between **work** and **career**.

Career: an occupation or profession, especially one requiring special training, followed as one’s life work.

Work: exertion or effort directed to produce or accomplish something.

If you have trained for a ‘career’, regardless of the stage you are in, if you no longer enjoy it or have never enjoyed it, you can do something about it. I had a ‘career’ in IT sales. I changed my ‘career’ to learning and development. Work is what I get paid to do. If you enjoy stacking shelves at a supermarket, would you call that a career or work?



As we'll explore in later chapters, this book is about being happy in the work you do, finding meaning in the work you do, being able to play to your strengths in the work you do, finding out what matters most to you in the work you do, and pinpointing why you do the work you do. It's not career advice about moving up the ladder.

What's the number you would like?

What is the number out of ten you would *like* to give yourself when you think about how much you *love* your work? (Yes, I know it's a silly question. I am sure the answer is ten but I'm just checking.)

If 'love' is too strong a word for you, change it to 'enjoy', the 'sunniest of days', or whatever word or phrase speaks to you. Whatever it is, it should be the opposite of 'soul-sucking', or 'curled up in the foetal position at the end of the day'. Lots of people I speak to won't give a score of ten. The most they would give is a 9.5 out of ten, as there is always room for improvement. This might be the case for you too and that's okay. There is always room for more. As humans, we are never 'done' developing, so I get it.

As I stated earlier, the pandemic has been an experiment like no other. More and more people are evaluating their

careers and are voting with their feet. Many people who were not allowed flexibility before the pandemic were then told they had to work from home. Now, many workers are being asked back into the office and don't want to return. As a result, they're evaluating when, where, how and even why they work. More people are looking to their purpose and planning a change.

In its State of the Global Workplace 2023 Report, Gallup reveals eighty-one per cent of respondents in Australia and New Zealand believe now is a good time to find a new job, compared to fifty-three per cent globally. Additionally, forty-three per cent of the Australian and New Zealand respondents are watching for or actively seeking a new job.

In another wide study by Gallup in 2016, titled 'How Millennials Want to Work and Live', Gallup found that in the past, people accepted a job and stuck with it, largely without complaint, because they received a pay cheque and some benefits; that was the status quo. Workers did what their bosses told them to do and many likely felt rather unattached to their job, leaving it behind at 5:30 pm without much of an afterthought.

That scenario does not reflect the current workplace. Employees choose careers for more than a pay cheque—they want a sense of purpose. They want more than a five out of ten or even a seven out of ten. If this seven out of ten was a net promoter score, it would be classed as a detractor. This is what is driving more employees to re-evaluate their work and life. If they cannot find a sense of purpose in their current work setting, they will leave to find it elsewhere.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

So far we have explored:

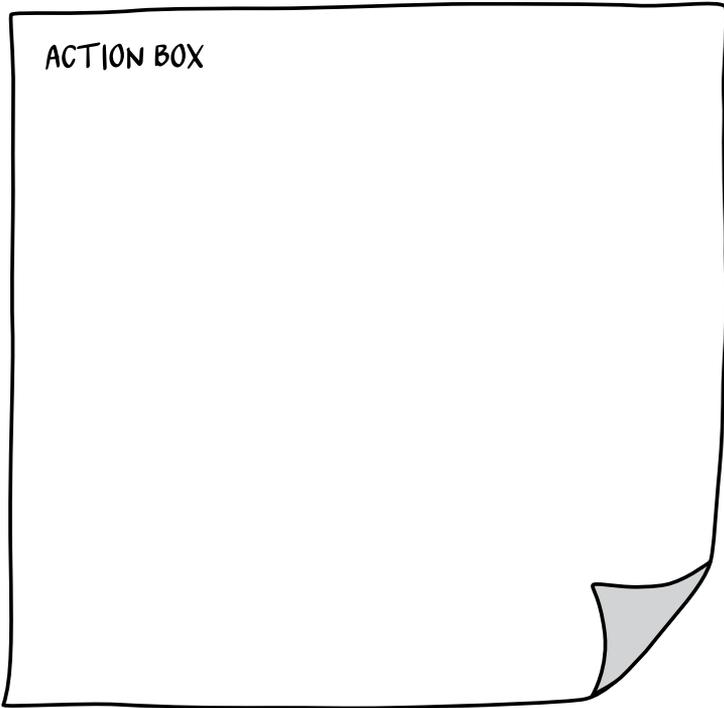
- Where you are on the scale of one to ten in terms of loving your job; this help you see what the potential is for movement.
- Some of the possible factors in your job stuckness, including your boss, the culture, a lack of flexibility or autonomy.
- The impact of your career unhappiness.
- Where you would like to be on the scale of loving your job.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

Before we move on in our journey together, here are some questions I'd like you to think about:

- How would you describe your current 'weather'?
- Who else is your career unhappiness impacting?
- You are looking at a signpost for the journey you are on now. What does that signpost say? 'Bored Pit Stop Here'? 'Burnt-out Creek'? 'Unfulfilled Valley'? 'Bully Boss Boulder'?
- Look ahead to future road signs. What do they say? 'Never let a stumble on the road be the end of the journey'? 'The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'?
- What would you want others to be saying about you on your thirtieth, fortieth, fiftieth, sixtieth, seventieth, eightieth birthday? Would it be different from today? How would it change over the years?
- What is one regret about your career you DON'T want to have?

I mentioned at the start of the book that it's my aim for you to take action. Are you ready yet or is it too soon? Use the box here if you would like to write your action down or even write down your answer to one or more of the questions.



Resources

Here are some resources you may find useful at this stage:

The Top Five Regrets of the Dying—A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing by Bronnie Ware

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change by Stephen R. Covey

Love + Work: How to Find What You Love, Love What You Do, and Do It for the Rest of Your Life by Marcus Buckingham

Culture Shock: An unstoppable force has changed how we work and live. Gallup's solution to the biggest leadership issue of our time by Jim Harter and Jim Clifton

WHAT'S KEEPING YOU STUCK?

'We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one. Uh-oh! Mud! Thick, oozy mud. We can't go over it, we can't go under it. Oh no! We've got to go through it!'

WHAT'S GETTING IN the way of you following your dreams? It's often that little voice inside your head, sabotaging your plans to do something, to take the jump. 'What if it doesn't work? What will others think? I am no good at X. I am not brave enough to do Y.'

Take writing this book, for example. When someone first suggested to me that I should write a book, I laughed. My response was, 'Pah! I couldn't write a book. I am highly dyslexic, and even spell check has no idea what I am trying to say half the time.' That was my limiting belief. I then came across a book titled *This is Dyslexia: the definitive guide to the untapped power of dyslexic thinking and its vital role in our future*, by Kate Griggs. I was surprised to discover as many as one in five people are dyslexic. There are some very famous people in all fields that are or were dyslexic, like Richard Branson, Will



Smith, Ed Sheeran, Steven Spielberg, Lewis Hamilton, Roald Dahl, Steve Jobs, Whoopi Goldberg and Muhammad Ali.

What Kate wrote in the book really resonated with me. For dyslexics, because our brains process information differently, we sometimes struggle with certain things that others might find easy. These things are often the skills that we are assessed on and benchmarked against, or which people generally link to intelligence. It's important to remember that if intelligence was measured as the ability to see the big picture—or demonstrate creativity, innovation, imagination or communication skills—then dyslexics would ace every exam or work project.

Dyslexia can show up in different ways. For me, it's mainly via spelling and grammar. I now have a line as part of my signature that says '*I'm #MadeByDyslexia—expect curious ideas and curious spelling*'. When facilitating workshops, I openly share that I am dyslexic. In short, I now own it. I know where my talents lie and where they do not. But for a long time, I let my dyslexia hold me back.

Is something holding *you* back? In this chapter, I will outline a number of mindsets and obstacles that could be keeping you stuck in a career you don't love. Let's start with one of the big ones: imposter syndrome.

*The whole problem with the world is that fools
and fanatics are always so certain of themselves,
and wiser people so full of doubts.*

BERTRAND RUSSELL

Imposter syndrome

The late actor Paul Newman, who won numerous awards, always had the fear that one day someone would push through the crowd, grab him by the arm, and say, 'It's over. It was all a mistake. You are coming back to paint houses.' Do you ever feel like that?

What it is, who has it and why

Imposter syndrome is commonly thought of as the feeling of being inadequate and a fraud despite a reputation for success at work.

Dr Gail Matthews, professor of psychology at Dominican University of California, conducted research on the prevalence of imposter syndrome and found that about seventy per cent of respondents experienced imposter feelings at some time in their lives.

Do women experience imposter syndrome more than men? Much of the research and articles written about imposter syndrome seem to indicate it's more common among females, although research shows that a significant number of men experience the same feelings. However, in my experience, having been a part of many women's groups, women are much more likely to talk about it and do something about it. Based on my coaching experience, men are less comfortable publicly

admitting to feeling like a fraud, and therefore it appears externally to be predominantly a ‘women’s issue’.

Are we born with it? Do we blame our parents? Is it nature or nurture? A bit of both, apparently. In his book *The Imposter Syndrome: Why successful people often feel like frauds*, Hugh Kearns writes:

‘Imposter beliefs are likely to have developed in early life. Young children get messages about what’s right and wrong. As you learned to walk, talk, read and write you made mistakes. How the significant people in your life, your mum, your dad, sisters, brothers, teachers and sports coaches responded to these mistakes had a big impact on how you decided to deal with failure and setbacks and opportunities later in life. These messages influence your mindset and your view of the world. And once you’ve got your world view, you then set about proving that it’s right.’⁸

We all have moments when we think, ‘I shouldn’t be here’, whereby your brain conspires against you, making you ‘feel’ like you are out of control, and you end up catastrophising things. Fortunately, there are ways to combat this.

Name it and tame it

The 2015 Pixar movie *Inside Out* is a comedy adventure set inside the brain of Riley, an eleven-year-old girl. Riley is upset about her parents’ decision to move states, which involves her changing schools and leaving her friends. In the film, Riley’s emotions are played by five characters: Joy, Sadness, Fear, Disgust and Anger. Riley bounces back and forth between these emotions, with the film focusing on the interplay between these ‘characters’.

Around the same time, I was undertaking an Advanced Diploma in Facilitation with Group Works. One of the modules

referred to our ‘community of selves’—a little like *Inside Out*, but with more characters. The aim was to be in your ‘wise’ self, like a wise old owl. You have other selves within you, like joy, fear, anger, disgust and sadness. You might have the know-it-all, the naysayer, the judging self, the people pleaser, the bossy self, the perfectionist, the attention-to-detail self. The cast within your head can be large.



Each of these selves has a gift, which you need to acknowledge. For example, in the case of the perfectionist, she is trying to make sure everything is the best it can possibly be. However, you cannot let her dictate your behaviour. If you do, she could slow things down. Instead, you thank her for the gift of trying to ensure things are the best they can be and reassure her by saying, ‘It’s okay, we have this. It will be the best it can be, but done is better than not done.’

Take time to identify your ‘selves’, give them names, and talk to them (just watch out if you do this in public, as you might get funny looks). Kate Morris, the founder of Australian online cosmetics retailer Adore Beauty, calls her imposter self ‘Kevin’. ‘Oh, that’s just Kevin. Thanks for that, Kevin. Now just zip it.’

Think about the gift each self is offering you and what happens if they are driving the bus (your thinking and actions) the whole time. Life is easier with an awareness of your

community of selves. If you understand yourself better by recognising the roles each self plays, you can be kinder to yourself, braver, and allow the bus to move forward in the direction you want and need. All these other versions of yourself, taking up space in your brain and stopping you from taking advantage of all the opportunities that come along, can be kept at bay. The key is to name them and thank them for their contribution in trying to keep you safe, but ultimately recognise that a safe place is not always where things grow and flourish.

In short, if you're struggling with imposter syndrome or other limiting mindsets, you need to name it and tame it.

Other ways to overcome it

Hugh Kearns suggests a number of things to try when your imposter feelings start getting in your way:

- 1 **Remember there is nothing wrong with you.** It's important to remember that more than seventy per cent of people struggle with imposter syndrome at some point (and I'd say some of the remaining thirty per cent are lying!). While the focus of this book is about you and your journey, it's comforting to know others have walked this path, and have felt what you are feeling. (As I write this book, I still have thoughts like 'Who's going to read this? What will they think?' But I am writing it anyway.)
- 2 **Recognise that feelings are not *facts*.** You might be more of a feelings person, meaning you live life a little more by your heart and your gut, focusing on what 'feels right', whereas a facts person tends to think more logically, focusing on the data, evidence and statistics. Both are helpful and sometimes one gets in the way of the other. In this instance, looking at the facts—rather than focusing solely on your feelings—is the best course of action. I remember riding

my horse at a competition a few years ago, and thinking it had gone really badly. I got to the scoreboard later in the day and found I had won.

- 3 **Look at the evidence.** You are the best judge of your pain, but are you the best person to judge the evidence? In my riding competition, I certainly wasn't. It felt bad, but the evidence—the fact that I won the competition—said otherwise.
- 4 **Expect to make some mistakes and learn from them.** We will discuss this more in chapters five and seven.
- 5 **Create a brag file.** When you get feedback on something, maybe it's a presentation you have given or a workshop you've delivered, what do you normally focus on? Is it the one negative comment, not the ninety-nine positive ones? Feedback is a gift, but we focus on the wrong things sometimes. If you were looking to go on an amazing holiday in the Maldives, and every person on Tripadvisor had given it five stars but one person gave it three, would that stop you from going? Try keeping two files—one with all the positive comments you get, the things you have done well, and another with all the negative comments. When you are having that moment of doubt, go look at the files. Which is bigger? For the one per cent of people who might not support you, the remaining ninety-nine per cent have your back, are cheering you on and want you to succeed.
- 6 **Be brave and take action.** This is the theme of this book. It's all about putting one foot in front of the other, forward movement, and taking opportunities that come along, even if they feel scary. And sometimes you just have to jump! Or else you miss out. These are moments of growth. And the more you do it, the better you'll get at it. Seth Godin, in his

Akimbo podcast, states that the biggest gatekeepers are the voices inside your head. Instead of waiting in line for someone to pick you, what if you pick yourself? I picked myself when I started my own business. You can do the same.

*The only thing that can stop you
from fulfilling your dreams is you.*

TOM BRADLEY

Your past experiences

The negative thoughts you have, which can sometimes block your progress or attainment of your dreams and happiness, are based on your past. This could stem all the way back to your childhood or be more recent. For example: ‘I spoke up in a meeting and my idea got shot down, so now I’m too scared to share any more of my thoughts.’ Imagine if a baby took their first wobbly steps, fell over, and thought, ‘Bugger that! That hurt and I must have looked silly. I am giving up on this walking lark.’ If that were the case, we would never have evolved as humans. We tell our children, ‘Keep trying, never give up.’ Yet why, as adults, do we give up at the first hurdle, or after one or two bad experiences? Take the ‘I spoke up at a meeting and got shot down’ example. How many times have you spoken up at a meeting and *not* been shot down, and instead were listened to and had your idea adopted and valued? Are you keeping score on these outcomes too? If not, why not? What is it about the ‘bad’ experiences that stick?

Alice Boyes, PhD, is a former clinical psychologist turned

writer and is the author of *The Healthy Mind Toolkit*, *The Anxiety Toolkit* and *Stress-Free Productivity*. In an article for *Harvard Business Review*, titled ‘How to Stop Procrastinating’, she suggests that your past can influence your decisions—but there is a workaround. She states:

‘A lot of compelling research shows that you can heal these emotional wounds with compassionate self-talk. Here’s an example of what that sounds like: “I’ve been disappointed with my performance in the past, and that’s making me hesitant. That’s a normal and understandable feeling. But I was a beginner then, and I’m not now. It’s okay to learn through experience.” Find and then re-use self-talk that works for you.’⁹

According to research published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, using ‘you’ rather than ‘I’ when talking to yourself tends to be more effective. Here are some examples:

- ‘You are enough.’
- ‘Progress, not perfection, is your focus.’
- ‘You are unique.’
- ‘You accept your failures—they do not define you.’
- ‘You have come this far—you can keep going.’

Maybe think about what your parents might say to you, or a mentor, or maybe someone you admire. What encouraging words have they said that you can recite back to yourself?

Your limiting beliefs

*Whether you think you can, or
you think you can't—you're right.*

HENRY FORD

We all have beliefs. Our beliefs are usually set before the age of seven. This is often known as the 'age of reason' and was first described in a 1976 article by child psychiatrists Theodore Shapiro and Richard Perry titled 'Latency Revisited: The Age of Seven, Plus or Minus One'. It refers to the development of thinking patterns, as well as emotional and moral states that provide children with an internal conscience and better capacity to control impulses.

For instance, take a baby who has never had an interaction with a spider before or any stimulus from others that spiders may be 'scary'. They might respond differently from a baby who has watched another person run away from a spider in terror.

An article by the National Library of Medicine in the United States, titled 'The biochemistry of belief', states:

'Beliefs are basically the guiding principles in life that provide direction and meaning in life. Beliefs are the preset, organised filters to our perceptions of the world (external and internal). Beliefs are like "internal commands" to the brain as to how to represent what is happening, when we congruently believe something to be true. In the absence of beliefs or inability to tap into them, people feel disempowered.

‘Beliefs originate from what you hear—and keep on hearing from others, ever since we were children (and even before that!). The sources of beliefs include environment, events, knowledge, past experiences, visualisation, etc. One of the biggest misconceptions people often harbour is that belief is a static, intellectual concept. Nothing can be farther from truth! Beliefs are a choice. We have the power to choose our beliefs. Our beliefs become our reality.’¹⁰

In my new hobby of beekeeping, when we extract the honey and take the top layer of wax off, we get the cappings. We then melt these down and extract the ‘rubbish’, and are left with pure, clean beeswax. The possibilities are endless as to what we can do with this wax. We can keep remelting it, shaping it into candles of different shapes, or make lip balm, furniture polish and other products.

When you choose to act, you are dictated (consciously or *unconsciously*) by your beliefs. The awareness that you are part of this ever-changing molten wax—and what you can do with this—helps to unlock the immense power within you. And it is your awareness of this awesome truth that changes everything. When you look at yourself not as a passive onlooker but as an amazing creator of possibilities, the past is what it was and the future is what it can be. Your beliefs provide the script to *re-write* your reality. When you can reframe your limiting beliefs, the possibilities are endless.

It's the repetition of affirmations that leads us to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things will begin to happen.

MUHAMMAD ALI

Name it

In order to reframe your limiting beliefs, you must start by naming them. They might be generated by phrases like ‘I can’t... I have to... I don’t have...’

Take one of mine as an example. ‘I can’t write a book because I am dyslexic.’ Yet I have written in public forums before, including Facebook posts, LinkedIn posts, articles and proposals to clients. What makes a book different? What are the emotions this conjures up, for me? Fear, namely. What will others think? Will I be judged? For me, it comes back to my experience at school. The comments in the school reports, and even some comments I get when I say I didn’t go to university (some people judge you for that).

Writing a book has been on my New Year’s list of goals for the last four years. It frustrated me when, in the fourth year, there it was again: the goal of writing a book, and I still hadn’t achieved it. Why not? I wasn’t sure. I discussed this with my coach, Clare. By asking great questions, we discovered that, actually, I did know enough about the process of writing a book, what was involved, where to start.

Reframe it, claim it and reimagine it

Following on from the discussions with my coach, I sought to reframe that limiting belief of ‘I can’t write a book’ to an enabling belief: ‘I can write and I can find out more about what’s involved in writing a book.’ I started with a few people I knew who had already written a book. One of the people I knew and admired, who had written a number of books, was Donna McGeorge, author of *Engaging Training*, *The 1-Day Refund*, *The First 2 Hours* and *Making Work Work*—most of which I have read and are go-to sources in my library. Donna quickly said, ‘*You need Kelly Irving from the Expert Author Community*,’ so I went and had a conversation with Kelly. After this,

I couldn't wait to get started. I realised I *can* write a book and there are processes, groups, support mechanisms and frameworks that make it far less daunting.

Coaches and consultants I work with are reluctant to put themselves out into the world through fear of what others might think. There are also many people who don't want to ask for help for fear of disturbing another person. When we reframe and reimagine, the question becomes: 'Who are you depriving of the opportunity to work with you as they don't know where to find you?' or 'Who are you depriving of the opportunity to help you and feel good about themselves simply because you haven't asked them?'

We're born with success. It is only others who point out our failures and what they attribute to us as failure.

WHOOPI GOLDBERG

DAISY'S STORY

Daisy is a registered nurse who worked in numerous wards before specialising in anaesthetics, an area she worked in for fourteen years for some of Australia's top private hospitals. She used to love her job, but gradually over the years—with long hours, shift work, and difficult surgeons and management staff—she reached a point where she'd had enough. *'Most days felt like a minus one out of ten. The final straw for me was when a senior manager in a meeting referred to the nursing team as "you bitches",' she said.*

Daisy resigned not long after this, something her husband was supportive of as he could see the toll it was having on her mental health, her wellbeing and their relationship. After taking some time off, Daisy thought about the parts of the job she loved and the parts she hated, and she weighed up her options. Her exploring journey took her down the path of cosmetic nursing. She looked into what qualifications she might need to shift her career and completed the training required.

On her journey Daisy had doubts, just like you and me. ‘Will I succeed at this? What will others think? Who am I to set up in business? What if no one comes?’ She ignored these voices and took a step forward to her own destiny. She reimagined what life could be like and reframed her thinking—from ‘What will others think?’ to ‘I care what I do and think’, from ‘What if no one comes?’ to ‘One person at a time’ and from ‘Who am I to set up a business?’ to ‘Who do I know that could help me?’

Daisy now runs her own successful cosmetics business. She has full autonomy and works when she likes, with whom she likes. She has a steady stream of repeat clients to her consulting room in the country town where she lives. She loves her job; every day is a nine or a ten out of ten day. She has long appointment times that allow her to build relationships with her clients, something Daisy excels at. Everyone knows Daisy and there are not many people she doesn’t know. She finds it more financially rewarding than her previous role and has full flexibility to go away when she wants, walk the dogs, or meet up with friends. Her diary is her own. She loves work again.

Let others lead small lives, but not you. Let others argue over small things, but not you. Let others cry over small hurts, but not you. Let others leave their future in someone else's hands, but not you.

JIM ROHN

Your money mindset

Do any of these statements sound familiar to you?

‘Where is my next pay cheque going to come from if I leave the security of my long-term job?’

‘I have spent so long saving. I can’t just blow my savings on a job change.’

‘I need to support my kids and their future.’

‘I have to pay my mortgage, insurance, and contribute to my pension or super.’

‘I’m the breadwinner in our house. It’s too risky without impacting my family.’

‘I can’t cope with the feast or famine of working for myself.’

‘I have already sunk all that money to train as an XYZ.’

We all have beliefs, values and a narrative about money, often known as your money mindset. In her book *Stop Worrying about Money*, Jacqui Clarke refers to it as your money story. According to Jacqui, you should reflect on the things that might have impacted your own story, such as the stories your parents told you or the things that were talked about (or not) at the dinner table. She writes:

‘If you were writing your life CV right now it would no doubt inform your money story. Beginning in your childhood, recording every TV show you watched, every book you’ve read, the neighbourhood you grew up in, your education and the jobs you’ve had to this point, will have impacted your money story.’¹¹

I have had a job every day since I was ten (my first job was mucking out horse stables). However, I would say that I had a privileged upbringing. My parents had a big impact on my own money mindset, and it was a positive one. They taught me the importance of money and if I wanted something, I was not just given it. I had to earn it through pocket money or through a job. The values my parents passed down, both good and bad, have helped me create my own destiny.

I came from a blended family—my parents divorced when I was very young and both remarried. The cars we had came from both ends of the scale. My father liked nice cars and at one point had a Porsche and a Rolls-Royce. My mother and stepfather, however, had the crustiest, most beaten-up old cars. My brother used to hate being dropped off at school in the dirty old Renault 4. He was so embarrassed that he used to ask Mum to drop him off around the corner. Cars were not important to my mother and stepfather—or to me, either. To me, they are functional things. For other people like my father, they are a symbol—something associated with prestige, status and comfort—and that’s okay.

What are your values and beliefs about money? They’re two slightly different things but are intertwined.

Your values might include:

- Philanthropy
- Financial freedom
- Material possessions

- Appearances—keeping up with the Joneses
- Security
- Assets—ski chalet or boats
- Simple living—food and shelter
- Building a legacy

Beliefs about money might be limiting or enabling, including the following:

LIMITING	ENABLING
• I'm no good with money.	• I understand all my financial obligations and can meet them without feeling stressed.
• I can either make money or do a job I love, but not both.	• I plan my spending and saving well.
• Money is there to spend—you can't take it with you.	• Money is one of the tools I use to live the life I want.
• My family has always struggled with money.	• I don't have to be a millionaire to be wealthy.
• I'll never get out of debt.	• I have achievable financial goals and a plan to reach them.
• Money is confusing.	• If we talk about money, we know where we are at. That is, how much we have to spend, what we need to save for, etc.
• We don't talk about money—it's taboo.	

I am no financial adviser or planner. There are lots of experts out there who have written amazing books and helped endless numbers of families break free from debt and get in control of their finances. Like Martin Lewis in the UK, Dave Ramsey in the US, and Scott Pape, the Barefoot Investor, here in Australia. And of course, Jacqui's book, as mentioned earlier.

What I do know from countless coaching sessions and interviews for this book is that often our biggest fear in taking

a step towards a purposeful career is the money side of things. ‘I fear I won’t have *enough* to support my family.’ Is this a self-sabotaging belief? Knowledge is power and by knowing what you fear, you are one step closer to overcoming your fear. What is ‘enough’? How much exactly do you need to earn each month to support your family? I don’t need you to share that number with me, but do you know? The concept of ‘enough’ is something we’ll discuss in the next section.

Own your money story

It feels big and scary thinking about a career move if money is the main thing that’s holding you back. So, let’s go back to this idea of ‘enough’. In order to own your money story, you need to be very honest with yourself and your family.

Have you sat down with your spouse and your family to discuss the topic? How much do you realistically need each month to support your family? What could you sacrifice to make funds stretch further—at least temporarily? The avocado on toast at a pricey café every weekend? Your pay TV subscriptions? What is non-negotiable for your family?

You also need to ask yourself: where is my money coming from now (salary, gifts, inheritance, stocks, shares, side hustle) and where is it going (mortgage, super/pension, bills, living expenses, holidays)? Have a look at your bank statements. Are there things you pay for that you hardly ever use? Subscriptions to things you really don’t need? When was the last time you looked at your internet provider costs, mobile phone plans, and so on? Maybe it’s time to speak to one of those really annoying people trying to sell you cheaper electricity. Where is your money currently going?

In *Stop Worrying about Money*, Jacqui Clarke has some great practical tips and resources to explore this. Getting a handle

on three critical money items will set the building blocks of the journey towards a future with (potentially) less money. If you have less worry over money, you can take that step forward to the work you love. The three items are:

1 Understanding and recognising your expense creep.

Taking the last five years as an example, this means thinking about questions such as:

- Are you an over-spender?
- Have your family or parents helped you financially?
- Have you bought or leased a new car?
- Do you typically select more-expensive grocery items or home brand items?
- Do you buy more than you need?
- Have you got more than one or two streaming service subscriptions?

2 Analysing your 'open the front door' costs.

This is where you go through bank statements and credit card statements line by line, with the goal of finding out what it costs to 'keep the lights on' when you open the front door of your home. These may include your mortgage, all utilities, council rates, mobile and internet costs, subscriptions, insurances, food, car running costs, and other bills.

3 Creating a new base line.

This is about taking your 'open the front door' list and creating a wish list of future expenses like school fees or holidays. You can then see where you can make decisions about keeping or dropping expenses. You then get to create a more accurate baseline.



Rethink sunk costs

In his blog, Seth Godin talks about a common mindset in relation to sunk costs. Specifically, the amount of time and money you might have already put into your career of choice and how you feel about never getting that back.

You might have spent years studying to be an accountant, for example, followed by even more time in the profession itself. The years at university, the first few jobs you had in different accounting firms, and the blood, sweat and tears that went into all of that. ‘I can’t throw that away,’ you might be thinking. But are you actually throwing it away? Or was it a gift? A gift of the past, from your *former self*, one you are grateful for, but it no longer serves you. Think forward to the gift of tomorrow and how new possibilities might serve you.

As Seth writes, ‘*We hold on to the old competencies and our hard-earned status roles far longer than we should. The only way to be creative is to do something new, and the path to something new requires leaving something else behind.*’¹² Ever had a lemon of a car, where you just keep throwing good money after bad?

The same is true of your career. When do you draw the line? If you know it's just not right, I would say something now.

Don't be afraid to share

Money is often one of those things we are told not to talk about, along with religion, politics and sex. I am not religious, know little about politics (to me they all stuff it up), but the other two topics are fair game in my eyes.

When it comes to money, getting stuff out in the open often opens up new insights. I did some work recently for a super-annuation company. They directed me to a website, Fierce Females, and from there I found a whole host of really useful podcasts that had me thinking totally differently about money and saving. I am now entering into very different conversations about money at home, whereas before I usually would have stomped off when the topic was raised. I didn't used to like the word 'budget'.

However, talking about money with family, friends, neighbours and others in your life can, surprisingly, lead to discovering just what you need. When my father-in-law died, we found he had a debt that had grown from an initial loan of £3,000 to over £30,000. If only he had talked about it with my husband and his brothers, they could have happily helped him earlier so that little debt didn't grow into a big debt. In his family, money was not talked about at all.

Taking time to discuss your financial options with your family or trusted friends is important and often liberating. Yes, it might freak you out a little knowing how much you spend and where it is going. But believe me, if you know more about your money story, you can change it. Ignorance is not bliss, and there is no better time to start than today.

Put the big rocks first. Isn't your happiness at work one of those?

Plan for feast or famine

The saying ‘feast or famine’ is believed to be associated with food shortages during certain periods in history. Some historians believe this phrase first emerged in England in the late fifteenth century, when it was used to describe the abundance or lack of various supplies. My very favourite stage show as a child, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, is based on the character of Joseph from the Bible’s book of Genesis. After Joseph’s jealous brothers hatch a plan to get rid of him, he finds himself enslaved and then thrown in prison, where he interprets the dreams of his fellow inmates. The Pharaoh is intrigued when he hears of the young slave’s ability. Joseph is brought before Pharaoh and offers his interpretation of the Pharaoh’s dreams, stating seven years of bounty will be followed by seven years of famine. Pharaoh is so impressed that he appoints Joseph to a post in the government, in charge of storing food for the upcoming hard times.

Many people would love to start their own business but fear this notion of feast and famine. It’s real, but if you store in times of feast, you’re more likely to have enough in times of famine. So, how can you store enough to cover a potential famine? This comes down to your individual situation. Specifically, your existing savings and your expenses.

If cutting back on the avocado on toast is not going to be enough, then a bigger change in expenses might be an option to consider. Renting a room in your home maybe, or even renting out the whole house for a while and downsizing. This obviously all depends on your family situation. If you have kids, you obviously need to consider the stage of their education, and whether it’s feasible to move to a new area.

James rented out his house for eighteen months and moved back in with his parents at the age of thirty-nine. This allowed him to save enough money to pay for his career shift from banker to landscape gardener. It gave him the time to study,

covered his set-up costs, and provided an eight-month buffer if his business was slow to get going. It wasn't, as it turned out. In fact, he never needed to touch the money, but was glad he had a back-up plan. He says:

'It didn't feel great, being a thirty-nine-year-old and "still" living with the parents, and we all had to make adjustments, but my parents had a spare room, my old room, and were willing to help me out. They now have an amazing-looking remodelled garden, which I can also use in my marketing. Win-win.'

Whatever route you are thinking of taking on this journey, it's advisable to have some sort of safety net, also known as a rainy day fund. When I started my business, The Strengths Partners, we at least had my husband's salary to rely on. We also had about \$30,000 of savings if we needed it. We never touched it.

Maika Leibbrandt is well-known in the Gallup coaching community. In addition to hosting multiple coaching podcasts, she is an expert in the human development field. Maika left Gallup in 2022 to set up her own business. She says:

'Evaluate your fears, and truly give them an analytical viewpoint. For example, I thought healthcare was going to be an impossible burden. Then I investigated my options and realised I could fund my family privately for just a small amount more than I was already paying on my employer's plan. That's just one example.'

What I would say is: don't be surprised by what is possible. I used to be in IT sales. It paid reasonably well. When I first moved into the learning and development space, I had to take a pay cut. It was a cut that, as a family, we calculated we would

manage if we cut back on expenses. Then when I started my own business, I anticipated that the income would be lumpy. I was aware of the feast and famine concept. I have had two roles where my sales targets were over four times my salary in revenue generation. In one instance, I thought, ‘Why don’t I do this for myself? If I could earn half of that, I would be happy.’ And I have. Don’t think that by working for yourself, you will always be earning less. With the right set-up and support, you could be earning more than you do today without all the things that currently have you feeling stuck.

Be clear on what the ultimate reward is for you—even if it means earning less money initially. Happiness, fulfilment, a sense of purpose? What price do you put on that?

*If you don’t like where you are,
change it. You are not a tree.*

JIM ROHN

CHAPTER SUMMARY

So far we have explored:

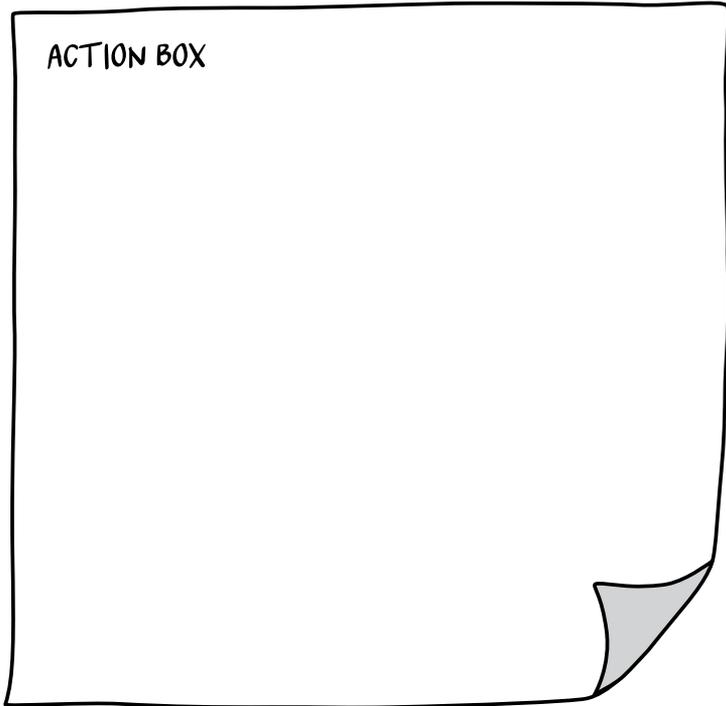
- What is keeping you stuck where you are? Is it the cast of your own movie, acting up inside your head?
- Your past experiences and potentially limiting beliefs, along with strategies to reframe them.
- Your mindset about money, including some tips from Jacqui Clark on how to evaluate your costs.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

We covered a lot of ground in this chapter, so I've divided the questions into four categories:

IMPOSTER SYNDROME	PAST EXPERIENCES	LIMITING BELIEFS	MONEY MINDSET
<p>What is the 'imposter' in your head saying to you?</p> <p>Imagine the imposter is a five-year-old child. What would you say back to them?</p> <p>Who is the cast in your movie? What are their names?</p>	<p>What is something that happened to you as a child that has had a lasting negative impact on your beliefs?</p> <p>How can you reframe/retell that story in a way that will be empowering and useful?</p> <p>What is something negative that has happened at work in the past that holds you back?</p> <p>What are the lessons from your past that are helpful?</p> <p>What would life look like if a particular past experience was erased fully?</p>	<p>What is a limiting belief you have that is holding you back?</p> <p>What are the consequences of this belief?</p> <p>Who else does that impact?</p> <p>What would it look like, sound like and feel like if you were to reimagine it as an enabling belief?</p>	<p>Who do you need to have a conversation with about money?</p> <p>Why are you putting it off? What would it enable if you had that conversation?</p> <p>Do you <i>really</i> know where your money is going?</p> <p>How much money would you need in the bank to cover no wages for, say, six months if you were to retrain, take a pay reduction or start your own business?</p> <p>What are your beliefs and values about money?</p> <p>What is your money story?</p>

How are you feeling now? Any actions you are thinking about yet? If it's just to keep reading, that's great too.



Resources

Here are some resources you may find useful at this stage:

The Imposter Syndrome: Why successful people often feel like frauds by Hugh Kearns

Being True: How to Be Yourself at Work by Cassandra Goodman

Stop Worrying about Money: Start Planning Now to Secure Your Financial Future by Jacqui Clarke

The Barefoot Investor: The Only Money Guide You'll Ever Need by Scott Pape

This is Dyslexia: The definitive guide to the untapped power of dyslexic thinking and its vital role in our future by Kate Griggs

Beating Burnout, Finding Balance: Mindful Lessons for a Meaningful Life by Melo Calarco

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