

By the author of the international bestseller
The Joy of Not Working

Real Success

WITHOUT

a Real Job

There Is No Life Like It!

Ernie J. Zelinski

Real Success Without a Real Job

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Preface

The idea for this book came to me shortly after a friend announced that it was seven years since he started his government job. This surprised me — I didn't realize it had been so long. We had met in a coffee shop more than a decade ago when he was unemployed and I was just starting my publishing and writing career.

Moments after my friend mentioned how long he had worked for the government, I realized that in October of that year it would be twenty-five years since I was fired from my engineering job at a public utility for taking two months of unapproved vacation. Better still, I realized that it would be twenty-five years since I had a real job.

Talk about real success — to me anyway! That called for a grand celebration with my paying the entire bill. I even felt compelled to locate the manager who fired me so I could thank him and invite him to the celebration. I had not seen the man since he liberated me from corporate life.

Alas, although I did contact him through a former colleague, my ex-boss had already made other plans for the evening of my celebration. Ironically, a few years back I had run into his successor, who told me — with a mischievous smile on his face — that he had bought my ex-boss a copy of my book *The Joy of Not Working* for a retirement gift.

Let's jump back to the fateful day that I was terminated from my engineering job. I was quite flabbergasted, indeed, close to being traumatized. I should have known at the time, however, that I was destined for much greater heights. A few years later I realized that, from a career perspective, my firing was the best thing that ever happened to me.

What's more, getting fired was great for other aspects of my life, including my mental and physical health. As I tell my friends, "The two best things I ever did for my well-being were to quit smoking and to get axed from my last real job, never to return to another."

The fact that I spent a princely sum to celebrate my not having worked as an engineer after having been fired twenty-five years earlier will surprise many people — particularly engineers. Not all engineers, however, given that there are many who would love to exit the field. Like a significant number of workers in all professions, a lot of engineers don't like how they earn their living and despise corporate life. Their personal lives may appear just

A career is a job that has gone on too long.

— Jeff MacNelly

fine to onlookers, but they suffer their jobs badly and with silent indignity. Indeed, there are many so-called successful people — engineers, lawyers, executives, and even doctors — in this sad and bleak situation who would like a more joyful career.

Yet it is in our idleness, in our dreams, that the submerged truth sometimes comes to the top.

— Virginia Woolf

Regardless of what profession you are in, you may also want to leave your line of work for something better. Particularly if you were intensely drawn to this book, a corporation is likely not the best place for you to hang out for the rest of your work life. The purpose of this book is to inspire people like you to reclaim their creativity, their freedom, and their lives.

In short, *Real Success Without a Real Job* is for individuals who:

- ◆ Are heavily committed to having “fun” in their work and want more freedom in their lives
- ◆ Want a more relaxed work environment
- ◆ Want no set hours and a lot of latitude in how their work gets done
- ◆ Want to avoid becoming just another cog who works for a faceless giant
- ◆ Want to find their own important mission, true calling, or passionate pursuit
- ◆ Know — without any doubt in their minds — that they are organizationally averse
- ◆ Believe that having two or three real friends and the time to spend with them is more important than making a lot of money
- ◆ Want to work at a dream job or run an unconventional business
- ◆ Want to gain courage to leave the corporate world forever
- ◆ Want to live an extraordinary life that is the envy of the corporate world

I don't dream at night, I dream all day. I dream for a living.

— Steven Spielberg

This is largely an inspirational book; it does not provide a specific road map for choosing your perfect unconventional career and making a million dollars at it in the next several years. Plain and simple, this book can't because a massive amount of detail the equivalent of many encyclopedias would be required. I include many recommendations

for further reading throughout, however, that will provide more valuable information on how you can attain real success without a real job in your own special way.

The success principles emphasized in this book are the ones I have followed to make a decent living as an author and self-publisher by working only four or five hours a day. What a great profession! Why work at a real job when I can get away with doing what I have been doing for so long? No doubt some people will say I am lucky. True, but I am lucky in the sense that I had the courage to do what had to be done to get where I am today.

Others will point out that not everyone can do what I am doing. True again, but I didn't allow my mind to make up this flimsy excuse for not doing it. Neither did Abraham Lincoln, Bill Clinton, or George W. Bush make up the excuse that not everyone can be president of the United States. Otherwise, they would never have become president themselves.

Besides, not everyone can work in a real job. If we use an excuse, we should use it in a positive way to better our position in life, and not in a negative way to justify an unpleasant situation. Since not everyone can have a conventional job, why not be one of the prosperous individuals with an unconventional job similar to mine? This way you will find success, prosperity, and happiness on your own terms.

Throughout the book I use the term "unreal job," which is loosely defined as anything you joyfully do for a living with a lot of flexibility in your working hours, rather than a traditional job, which requires you to work in a rigid corporate environment with fixed hours. I also talk about starting an "unconventional business," which is out of the ordinary because it requires few or no employees, has low start-up costs, and does not demand that you work the long hours that traditional businesses require.

I can sing the praises of the success principles in this book because these principles have worked for me. I believe that these same principles can work for millions of other people in hundreds of other occupations in addition to mine. Indeed, you will read about several people in much different

What advice would you give to someone just starting a new job in a large corporation?

Never let your boss know that you exist!



I believe you are your work.
Don't trade the stuff of
your life, time, for nothing
more than dollars. That's a
rotten bargain.

— Rita Mae Brown

fields than mine who have left the corporate world for good. The great news is they are living lifestyles that are about as good as anyone can imagine.

No doubt the principles in this book will not work for everyone. One reason is that many people apparently don't want freedom; they would rather be imprisoned by organizations that tell them what to do, when to do it, how to do it. As Lord Boyd-Orr once said, "If people have to choose between freedom and sandwiches, they will take sandwiches."

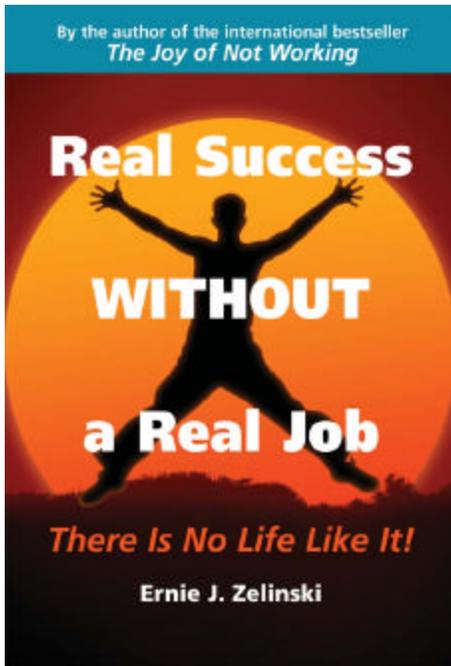
If you are one of those mundane people who would select sandwiches over personal freedom, real success without a real job is definitely not for you. On the other hand, if you are trapped in the corporate world as the majority is, but would like to be liberated, then the success principles herein can inspire and help you to create a much more rewarding lifestyle for yourself.

You will have to re-do your thinking, however. Totally! Money, material possessions, secure jobs, and free stuff don't make the world go around for truly successful individuals. What does? Purpose! Family! Friends! Challenging projects! Creative satisfaction! Job gratification! Spiritual fulfillment! And, above all, personal freedom!

This leads us into a major premise of this book, which is that you can't be genuinely prosperous unless you have personal freedom. You will have attained true freedom in this world when you can get up in the morning when you want to get up; go to sleep when you want to go to sleep; and in the interval, work and play at the things you want to work and play at — all at your own pace. The great news is that not having a real job — and creating your own unreal job instead — allows you the opportunity to attain this freedom.

If you are still not in the least way dissuaded from reading further, you already have enough presence to recognize that real success and happiness are possible without having a real job. Obviously your aim is much higher than simply working at a conventional job, and you believe in being paid for your creative results rather than actual time spent in a cubicle or office. Keep reading — this gets much better.

A Bold, Unconventional Career Book
For People Too Smart to Work in Corporations



- It's for “organizationally averse” individuals who don't want to work at a real job — but want to make a real good living!
- It's for people who want to attain financial independence without having to suffer for it!
- It's for individuals who are heavily committed to having “fun” in their work and who want more freedom in their lives!

Purchase *Real Success Without a Real Job* through these direct links:

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1

Life Without a Real Job Will Set You Free

Corporate Employment Is So Last Year!

Imagine that you are at your high-school reunion where former classmates are bragging about how successful they are or are about to become. Brock, the science graduate, talks about the mining company he manages and how he got a \$120,000 bonus last year in addition to the Porsche Boxster. Bella, who has been focusing her energy on international development projects with the government, is about to spend \$58,000 on tuition for a two-year MBA program that she thinks will increase her income from \$95,000 to over \$200,000 a year.

After listening to several people boast about their careers and how much their mansions are worth, you realize that either only the jet-setting moneyed class goes to reunions, or there is a lot of lying going on. Eventually the group curiously looks at you, wearing your T-shirt that says “Organizationally Averse.” Someone asks, “What do you do now and where do you live?”

You smile and say, “Actually, to millions of us, corporate employment is so last year! I don’t like working for corporations and like to work only when I want. Although I dropped out of university, I live in Vancouver half the time and spend the six coldest months of the year in Costa Rica.”

“So, how can you do this?” someone else quips. “Did you inherit a couple million or win it in a lottery?”

With a wry look of amusement, you answer, “No, I have never had any rich relatives and I never buy lottery tickets. So I have to work for a living, but I am a

Men go fishing all their lives
without knowing that it is not
fish they are after.

— Henry David Thoreau

Every day I get up and look through the *Forbes* list of the richest people in America. If I'm not there, I go to work.

— Robert Orben

one-person show specializing in the information business. This allows me to work on my own schedule — sometimes two hours a day and sometimes seven, other times on a whim taking three or four days off. I love a lifestyle without much pressure and with the freedom to do things on my own without the hassle of partners, colleagues, or employees.”

“Sounds like a dream job,” retorts Henry, a hugely successful dentist who lives in California and has just purchased a house worth three million dollars. “What about money? Can you make a decent living doing this? I read somewhere that many people who are self-employed live a pauper’s life.”

“Some do, many don’t,” you reply. “The fact that a person doesn’t have a university degree and is self-employed doesn’t mean that he or she can’t make a decent living. Although I don’t make as much as some of you do — not yet, anyway — I do make a much better income than the average person. More important, however, is the fact that I love what I do and I have my freedom. To me this is priceless, given that I am not the corporate type.”

Is this starting to sound like too much of an unattainable fantasy to you? It shouldn’t. If it is, you are likely too programmed with society’s meaning of traditional success and need to experience a paradigm shift to realize that you can escape the corporate world and still make a good living. Better still, life without a real job will set you free.

Perhaps you took the fast track to life. Since high school, heck, maybe since junior high, you had a plan. You visited colleges and applied for scholarships. You graduated with honors from high school, won more scholarships when you took your undergraduate program, and then attended graduate school, maybe even earned your doctorate.

When you entered the world of work, you couldn’t help thinking that the words “My future’s so bright, I gotta wear shades” from some obscure song applied to you. You began your career life exactly as planned. Everything went according to schedule and every year virtually every item on your career itinerary became a reality.

Today you have a decent paying job, the bigger than normal cubicle — maybe even an expensively furnished office with a great view — and are peacefully

Success has made failures of many men.

— Cindy Adams

coexisting with others in your office. There is one major problem, however: You are not happy in your work environment. Put another way, the thrill is gone — if it was ever there to begin with!

Perhaps you're questioning yourself and your place in this world more than ever before. Perhaps you are troubling yourself with intense self-interrogation. Perhaps you are filled with anxiety and fear. And maybe you believe you are the only one in your age group who feels so dissatisfied. Believe me, regardless of your age group, you are not.

A lot of evidence exists that many workers in North America are terribly dissatisfied. For instance, a recent survey by *The Globe and Mail* asked its readers "Are you suffering from career inertia?" The results:

- ◆ 33 percent answered, "Yes, I can barely drag myself into the office."
- ◆ 23 percent chose, "Yes, but I can't be bothered to look for another job."
- ◆ 25 percent selected, "No, I find ways to stay engaged with my work."
- ◆ 19 percent picked, "No, career inertia is just an excuse to be lazy."

What makes these results particularly fascinating is that most of the readers of *The Globe and Mail* are highly educated, are well-paid, and work in prestigious jobs. Yet at least 56 percent of the readers are suffering from career inertia. No doubt the figure is much higher for employees as a whole in North America. Indeed, several career consultants claim that up to 70 percent of all Canadian and American employees would escape the confines of the corporation if they found something they loved to do and knew how to pursue it.

Perhaps the people suffering from career inertia are the most likely to show up at school or university class reunions, so they get to tell others how much "success" they have attained, at least in the traditional sense of the word. The question here is to what end are these people trying to achieve all those things that define success? Another question: How much are these

What is it that you like doing? If you don't like it, get out of it, because you'll be lousy at it.

— Lee Iacocca

Oh, you hate your job? Why didn't you say so? There's a support group for that. It's called Everybody, and they meet at the bar.

— Drew Carey

people deluding others and, even more importantly, themselves?

Apparently not everyone deludes themselves. In a book called *The Great Divide* (Avon Books, 1989) by the legendary Studs Terkel, American worker Isabelle Kuprin talked about her job: “I’m a copywriter for an ad agency. It involves being a total asshole. I do it for the money, it’s easy and horrible. I do nothing good for society.” No doubt there are millions of people just as dejected about their jobs in today’s corporate world, particularly if they work just for the money.

Clearly, one of life’s biggest traps today is working hard for money, clinging to the illusion of job security, looking forward to retirement to make life a lot better. Sadly, fear — the fear of not paying bills, the fear of not being able to work for themselves, and the fear of not having enough money for retirement — keeps most people working at their corporate jobs. The darkest side of this fear is that it keeps employees in the vicious cycle of commute, work, commute, sleep, commute, work, commute, sleep, and so on.

Nine to five — what a way to make a living! We should pay heed to the song “Nine to Five” by Dolly Parton that was featured in the 1980s comedy film of the same name. In the film Parton and her two co-workers, played by Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin, teach their jerk-of-a-boss a lesson. The song, however, reminds us that the daily grind of a regular job can suck big time.

Regular media reports indicate that many workers, including well-paid professionals and executives, are experiencing low morale, burnout, and a diminished quality of life. Indeed, every year brings another new study concluding that people are more stressed out and less satisfied than they were the year before.

In the midst of it all, good news awaits, however. Perhaps you have seen the movie *The Great Escape*. There is an even greater escape you can make — the escape from corporate life. The reasons to do so are many. The typical workplace is demeaning to the human soul, particularly to the creative and independent soul. So is looking for a job, everything from drafting up résumés, sending out résumés, not

getting replies, the interview process itself, and the formalities that come with starting a new job.

Of course, after working at a job for a year or two things don’t necessarily get any better. This comes from the Idler website: “With

What fascinates me most about this field of business is how we stay awake all day conducting it.



very few exceptions the world of jobs is characterized by stifling boredom, grinding tedium, poverty, petty jealousies, sexual harassment, loneliness, deranged co-workers, bullying bosses, seething resentment, illness, exploitation, stress, helplessness, hellish commutes, humiliation, depression, appalling ethics, physical fatigue and mental exhaustion.”

The typical work environment — a world without career satisfaction and personal fulfillment — is likely not a place you want to be. Maybe you have a job and are looking for a better one. You will discover that when you apply for a job that appears better than yours, a thousand other people have already applied. When the thrill of their jobs is long gone, many people look for a new one. They think that a new work environment will actually make them happier. Most often it doesn't.

Then there are those who think that freedom is achieved by being promoted to a management position. Wish them luck. The promotion-in-waiting more often than not is trouble-in-waiting. In this regard, it is worth pondering the words of Robert Frost: “By working faithfully eight hours a day you may eventually get to be a boss and work twelve hours a day.”

Perhaps the answer is to find some way to like the job that you presently have. Good luck to you as well. It will just take you a lot longer to realize that you and your job were not a match made in heaven. Even if you trick yourself into liking your job, you are likely to encounter situations such as your office mate bathes only whenever there is a full moon, your boss expects an immediate response to his weekend e-mails, and you don't get a raise even after your creative breakthrough saves your company a million dollars or two.

In this day and age, if you want an office with a great view, I suggest that you make the great escape. Become self-employed like I am and perform most of your work on a laptop in various coffee hangouts. This way you can have many different interesting views and not just be confined to one. Of course, there are hundreds of other alternatives for escaping the corporate world other than what I have done to make my great escape.

Best of all, there are many fantastic reasons not to have a real job! Many

Dear, never forget one little point. It's my business. You just work here.

— Elizabeth Arden

I've been promoted to middle management. I never thought I'd sink so low.

— Tim Gould

reasons will be given throughout the book; for now here are the ones that initially made my top-ten list:

Top Ten Reasons to Have an Unconventional Job

1. Although they will never admit it, your ex-boss and former co-workers will be green with envy.
2. You can get up at the “crack of noon” every day instead of the “crack of dawn.”
3. After you get up, you can wear a T-shirt that says “Too Prosperous to Do Mornings.”
4. When you don’t have a real job, “multitasking” takes on a new meaning, such as working happily and leisurely on your laptop at Starbucks and watching attractive members of the opposite sex at the same time.
5. When someone new asks what your real job is, you can say, “I am too prosperous to have a real job; I have an unreal job instead.”
6. Not having a real job will really irk all your relatives (and, better still, your in-laws too).
7. *Late Night with David Letterman* can be the first TV program you watch in the evening instead of the last.
8. You won’t waste time reading the Dilbert cartoon every day because you won’t relate to it anymore.
9. You no longer have to witness the turkeys escape the corporate ax while the eagles either leave or get fired.
10. On your death bed, regardless of your age, your last words will be: “Hey, I don’t want to go just yet. The thing I enjoy most about life is working at my unreal job!”

I have to admit that the typical workplace is not a total waste of time if you are willing to stoop to its level. After twenty-five years of happily and successfully being without a real job, I am not. An unreal job such as the one I have created for myself really rocks.

You don't resign from these jobs; you escape from them.

— Dawn Steel

In my view, 95 percent of traditional jobs can’t even come close to providing the freedom I enjoy. The good news is that you can also create an unreal job that you love and that provides you with a good measure of freedom.

Ordinary Career Success Is a Real Good Job; Real Career Success Is a Real Good Life

A miserable work environment is often discussed by co-workers in the same manner as bad weather: Nearly everybody complains but few people do anything about it. Of course, the best way to experience a better work environment is no different than the best way to experience better weather. Don't try to change either — instead, find a funkier place to hang out!

Like me, many people do find a funkier place to hang out than the corporate world. Take, for example, Eartha Haines of Oceanside, California. Eartha wrote to me at the time I was writing this book. Receiving her letter was synchronistic because I was looking for a great example to start this topic. Here is the complete content of the letter that Eartha sent to me:

Kill my boss? Do I dare live
out the American Dream?

— Homer Simpson

Dear Ernie:

I purchased your book *The Joy of Not Working* over a year ago. I used to have a full-time job as a web developer working in downtown San Diego. I was a commuter and caught the train to and from work, an hour each way, so I read your book fairly quickly on the train rides. Since then, I have read it two more times.

I worked at my previous job for five years and was completely burned out and frustrated. However, I was a good employee and I brought my frustrations to my employer. He agreed to let me work from home a couple times a week but it did not solve the stress and demands of my job. After reading *The Joy of Not Working* I would daydream about being free from the daily commute and boredom of my current job. All I knew is that I no longer wanted to commute and whatever job I'd take next would be less stressful.

In March I turned in my resignation letter and agreed to stay on for three weeks so that they could

find a replacement and so I could get them up to speed in my duties. I decided to start my own Web company but as I quickly discovered, it was difficult to get clients. As word got out that I quit my job, former co-workers, who also quit to pursue their dreams, began to contact me for freelance projects. I no longer have a Web company, but I am a happy freelancer, which turned out to be even better because I do not have to deal with landing clients or with any of the office politics.

I now wake up when I feel like it and my commute has been shortened to my office located right next to my bedroom! I am making a decent income and I can come and go as I please. I am finally living my dream because I took your advice and dared to make the first move toward a less stressful and happier life. I will continue freelancing for as long as it supports my needs. Even if I end up acquiring another job, I will be wiser in my choice. It will be much closer to home and something part-time. With the free time I have, I've also become a partner of an online store and it is taking off. Thanks for writing a great book. It will remain one of my favorites.

Sincerely,
Eartha Haines

Sometimes you wonder how you got on this mountain. But sometimes you wonder, "How will I get off?"

— Joan Manley

Obviously Eartha escaped corporate life because she was prepared to think differently and more creatively than the majority in North American society. She had a dream about how she could be successful in her own way. Then she did what she had to do to make her dream of personal success come true.

One of the keys to escaping a miserable work environment is to take a close look at what success really means to you. Although this is a success book, it is not a self-help manual on how to attain "success" in the traditional sense of word. It is an inspirational book on how you can attain a good measure of success, but you have to define success in a way that is different from any other person's on earth.

The biggest mistake that people make is adopting the

traditional paradigm of success instead of defining success differently. If all individuals had their own specific definition of success, they could achieve success a lot easier and experience a lot more of it. They could also escape corporate life. What an incredible liberation that can be!

More of us don't escape corporate life because money seems to be the bottom line in our fast-paced, overly materialistic Western society. Advertisers, the media, career consultants, and society in general place a lot of value on money and the things that money can buy, which are in themselves associated with success. Humans strive for a high-paying job so that they can have power, status, expensive SUVs, big houses, exotic vacations, and trendy clothes. These elements of success are supposed to make all of us feel successful, fulfilled, and happy.

There is a problem, however, even if people eventually attain the traditional model of success. When they do, many find that they still don't feel good about themselves. Now they are in serious trouble, because they cannot delude themselves anymore. On second thought, most people still can and actually do delude themselves, but it gets more and more difficult with time.

If you have adopted the traditional model of success, but want to attain success outside the corporation, it's wise to create your own model. When defining success, we should go beyond the normal parameters and look at what real success is to us individually. I would imagine that if we asked a million individuals, we would get a million different answers. Every one of us would have our unique version of what we would like to achieve in our lives.

There would be some elements of success that the majority would have in common, however. All of us want health and happiness. Most, perhaps all, of us want at least a measure of financial independence so that we don't have any money problems and the stress that accompanies these problems. Financial independence is often construed as enough money to do what we want, when we want to do it. For over 90 percent of us, having more money than we have today would be required before we achieve real success.

Of course, given that most of us would want to continue working even if we were financially independent, enjoying our work would be an important ingredient in our recipe for success. The sad truth is the vast

Success for some people depends on becoming well-known; for others it depends on never being found out.

— Ashleigh Brilliant

majority of people today, whether Americans, Canadians, or Europeans, don't stand a chance of achieving this element of real success if they remain in their present jobs.

What else would we have in common in our definitions of real success? Particularly for independently-minded individuals, freedom would be high on the list. Surveys of the new generation of employees entering the workforce, for instance, indicate its members value freedom highly. According to a recent survey by the international consultancy Watson Wyatt, new graduates entering the workforce tend to be less committed to their first jobs. Most seem to want flexible work arrangements, with some preferring a home-based office.

At this point it is worth asking, "What does success look like to you?" Besides the general elements of health, happiness, financial independence, job satisfaction, and freedom, what other specific ingredients would you add to your recipe for real success? These

Success is doing what you like
and making a living at it.

— Greek proverb

should be elements that have not been programmed into you by your parents, advertisers, the media, and society as a whole.

To help you get started on your model of success, I will share what success means to me. A good portion of my success paradigm was first introduced in *The Lazy Person's Guide to Success*, but this definition has changed somewhat since I wrote the book, and no doubt will continue to change to some extent over time.

One of the most important elements of real life success to me is having the freedom and independence to make choices in what I do with my life. Success means doing what I want at the time I choose. Corporate life, of course, would interfere with the freedom I enjoy.

Here is a sample of the freedom I have: After I get up — sometimes at the crack of noon — my first priority is to exercise one to two hours to maintain my physical health. Then I have a shower, which I truly experience in a leisurely and meditative state, followed by putting on my official work attire — most often a pair of jeans, sandals, and a T-shirt with something such as "I Am Big in Europe" written on it.

Unlike the majority of people, I fit in my work whenever I can, usually writing on my laptop in one of my favorite coffee bars. I don't know whether the owners of the coffee bars where I hang out consider me a coffee house phenomenon or a coffee house nuisance — I consider myself the writer in residence, which adds

to my experience of success.

Most days I start working about 3:30 in the afternoon and put in only four or five hours a day, sometimes a little less, sometimes a little more. The odd time I don't start work until 4:30 in the afternoon, at which time I chuckle to myself because government workers are already going home after having put in eight hours of regimented work.

Although I don't make as much money as I could by working more hours each day, I live comfortably and freely. I certainly wouldn't trade my present lifestyle for a boring or stressful job that pays a million dollars a year, not even for one year. This was even the case several years ago when I was struggling financially, \$30,000 in debt, and sometimes not knowing where my next month's rent was going to come from. Real life success to me does not entail being worth a million dollars or two, although I would certainly get satisfaction from attaining this status through my creative efforts — particularly without a real job.

In financial terms, real success to me is handling money wisely so that I don't have financial problems. Financial success means earning the money to buy the necessities of life and having a little extra to buy some luxuries, such as going out to a great restaurant two or three times a week. Financial success is also the sense of freedom that comes from having saved a nice little nest egg. This can come in handy in the event I want to do nothing but play for a year or if my income drops for some reason.

Success to me is having not only the time, but also the ability to enjoy a lot of leisure activities. It is also the wise use of leisure time. Maintaining optimum health at any age must be a priority. This can only be attained by allocating some leisure time for adequate exercise and meditation each and every day.

Given the important role friendship plays in our lives, success to me is also being able to spend plenty of my leisure time chatting, wining, and dining with friends at a small bistro instead of going to a big state dinner, which, of course, is fortunate because I am never invited to any. In chapter 7, I will discuss why finding and maintaining real friends is a big part of achieving real success without a real job.

Career success to me, above all, is having a worthwhile purpose to pursue. My purpose is to help people develop their potential,

If you get to be thirty-five and your job still involves wearing a name tag, you've probably made a serious vocational error.

— Dennis Miller

make progress toward attaining some of their dreams, and have a great work/life balance. Like many authors, I receive a great deal of feedback from readers, such as the aforementioned letter from Eartha Haines. There is no greater satisfaction than receiving a handwritten letter, e-mail, or phone call from someone who has benefited greatly from reading my books.

Another ingredient of career success is having my own attainable dreams, regardless of how old I get. One of my goals is to have one of my books appear on the *New York Times* bestseller list. Indeed, it would be nice if this one did. Although achieving this goal is not essential to my happiness, I would get great satisfaction from doing so. This is one of my career dreams that motivates me and brings me smaller career successes along the way.

Ask yourself the secret to your success. Listen to your answer, and practice it.

— Richard Bach

That is more than enough about what success means to me. Now you should take the time to think about and write down the things that really matter to you in order that you can establish your own paradigm of success. With no personal definition of success, you will have no distinct personal goals and career dreams to pursue. Your definition of success may be similar to someone else's, but surely it should not be identical.

Sample Elements for Your Success Paradigm

- ◆ Create and work at a job I love
- ◆ Own my own home business
- ◆ Maintain optimum mental, physical, and spiritual health
- ◆ Earn an income that is in top 10 percent of wage earners
- ◆ Have at least three real friends
- ◆ Have plenty of time for friends
- ◆ Attain financial independence with \$500,000 in savings
- ◆ Be able to take a one-year sabbatical every five years
- ◆ Write three books in the next five years
- ◆ Create something artistic of lasting value
- ◆ Learn a subject thoroughly and expand its frontiers
- ◆ Help make other people's lives better

Although the two are related, it may be worthwhile to create your own separate definitions for both career success and overall life success. To attain overall success in life it's important to have attained success in one's career simply because work takes up so much of our lives. Thus, your elements of career success may include job satisfaction, a healthy working environment, and some sense of control in your job.

There is only one success —
to be able to spend your life
in your own way.

— Christopher Morley

But career success in itself does not mean that we have attained overall life success. As many of us already know, having a good job does not necessarily lead to our feeling successful, experiencing freedom, and enjoying prosperity and happiness. The way I see it, ordinary career success is a real good job; real career success is a real good life.

Once you have established your success paradigm, it's important to determine which elements are most important for your happiness. Then you must set your priorities accordingly. You must be reasonable in which elements in your success paradigm you want to attain. How achievable the elements in your success paradigm are will eventually determine how successful you become and how successful you feel.

Here is a warning: For some of us the biggest obstacle to attaining and experiencing success is expecting too much. Avoid placing equal importance on driving a Ferrari, becoming a renowned entrepreneur, getting a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, learning twenty languages, becoming friends with both Donald Trump and Richard Branson, having a loving family, writing ten business books, and owning a twenty-four room mansion as well as a vacation home in Monte Carlo. Anyone who tries to attain this much or more will likely wind up being a total failure at everything.

Clearly, each and every one of us wants to win at the game called success. Above all, real success is being able to work and live in your own special way. Don't be a pig about it, however. Refrain from going overboard and feeling that you have to achieve all that the most ambitious of megalomaniacs wants to achieve. Excessive endeavor has been known to cause premature hair loss, nervous twitching, high blood pressure, and even insanity.

Summing up, if you can define what career success and overall life success mean to you in clear and compelling detail, you will have a much better idea if you, in fact, want to escape corporate

Success is simple. Do what's right, the right way, at the right time.

— Arnold H. Glasow

life. Career success in the corporate world is having a good job, one that either pays very well or has a lot of status. Career success for purposes of this book, however, is having gratifying work that is both personally and financially rewarding. If you can create a job that brings you freedom and creative satisfaction — a job that you feel good about and not just one that brings a good paycheck — career success can be yours in your own special way.

Don't Work Solely to Make a Lot of Money and You Will Likely End Up Making a Lot of Money

If you don't jump out of bed every work day when the alarm goes off eager to do some work, you are likely not all that enthusiastic about your job. Perhaps you complain, roll over, and contemplate whether you can get away with calling in sick for the third time this month. In this case, it is quite clear that you need to find something more challenging and satisfying.

Perhaps you work at a job that not only has good pay but also has a lot of status. Although your vocation is rated as highly desirable in career guides, you still feel that you made a terrible mistake and feel sick just thinking about most aspects of your work. Even if you are a lawyer, a dentist, or a chartered accountant, so what? You are not the only professional to regularly look out the window at work and ask, "Is this all there is to life?"

If you are presently grossly dissatisfied with your work, it doesn't necessarily have to be this way. The key is to find out what you really want to do. Imagine how much better life would be if you liked your work as much as you like your most enjoyable leisure activities. Put another way, you would be willing to do your work even if you weren't paid for it.

People who think money can do anything may very well be suspected of doing anything for money.

— Mary Pettibone Pool

Truth be known, for most people, regardless of their occupation, work is a gross inconvenience or necessary evil they have to put up with in order to earn enough money to survive for the time they aren't at work. Even people who occasionally get some satisfaction from completing a heavy workload or a

challenging project constantly wish they were someplace other than the workplace. This is why most people feel they would have chosen a different career if they had their work life to live all over again.

A lot of people work in jobs they don't like simply because they don't even know what they really want to do. One research study indicated that 40 percent of workers drifted into their jobs without giving much consideration to what they truly like and don't like about work.

Believe it or not, 37 percent of Canadian employees can't even give an accurate explanation of what their company does. I would venture to say that just as many employees throughout the corporate world, including Europe and the United States, can't give an accurate account either. If employees don't even know exactly what their company does, there is not much chance that they have a higher purpose or mission associated with their work.

Weirdly, both new employees entering the workplace for the first time and seasoned employees looking for a better job don't give much thought to what type of work would really turn them on. This is the case even though the average person will spend at least forty-five years of his or her life working forty hours a week. This works out to 90,000 hours or the equivalent of 3,750 twenty-four-hour days that a lot of people will spend in misery, wishing they were somewhere else.

One of the biggest reasons people end up in jobs they hate is that they choose careers which offer the most opportunity for making the most money. Pick up the career section of a major newspaper and you are likely to find a feature story about the best careers to pursue this year. The article will list all the hot fields as well as the fields that have moderate and limited opportunity. How much money you can expect to earn in any of the occupations will likely be a highlight in a sidebar or within the article itself. Alas, there will be no mention of whether the people working in these fields actually enjoy the work they do.

Whether you choose to remain in corporate life or leave it altogether, above all, you want to make sure that you end up working at something that you love instead of working just for the money. Working at something just for the money is something fearful people do. It is a sign of their lack of self-confidence in their ability, talent, and creativity to earn money doing something they enjoy.

You are what you do. If you do boring, stupid, monotonous work, chances are you'll end up boring, stupid, and monotonous.

— Bob Black

People first, then money,
then things.

— Suze Orman

If you feel that work is just a job, a way to make money, you are wasting forty or more hours a week of your life. You are stealing life from yourself by spending time on routine and drudgery instead of spending time doing something that you really enjoy. Working strictly for the money usually leads to one or more of the following negative outcomes:

Consequences of Working Solely for the Money

- ◆ Feelings of disillusionment, dissatisfaction, and unhappiness
- ◆ Feeling continually stressed, which impacts one's health as well as relationships with family and friends
- ◆ Feeling underpaid regardless of how much money one earns
- ◆ Feeling unprepared or unable to accept a job that pays less money
- ◆ Compromising one's integrity by working for a company that is unethical
- ◆ Winding up in debt due to constantly buying oneself material goods as a reward for working at a lousy job
- ◆ A lack of creative fulfillment
- ◆ A feeling of imprisonment while at the workplace
- ◆ A lowered sense of overall self-worth
- ◆ A lack of self-confidence to pursue a much more enjoyable career

Clearly, money is important in the areas of life where it is important and useless in areas of life where it is not important. This will be discussed in a little more detail in chapter 6. For now, the main point is that, sadly, too many people believe that money is everything and end up with the above consequences.

There can be no doubt that getting trapped into believing that money is the most important thing in a job increases your chances of being trapped in a miserable job for the rest of your life. Generally speaking, the more money you make at your job, the more you become dependent on that job to take care of you. This is particularly true if you can't handle money very well. Of course, most North Americans are not masters of money given that savings rates are at an all-time low — negative, in fact, for the first time in

half a century.

Having a higher income allows you to buy more and more stuff on credit, putting you further and further into debt. Leaving corporate life becomes unimaginable when you have a mountain of debt that will take many years to pay off. Some desperate characters find a higher-paying job, which just locks them into corporate life even more because they buy more material goods on credit and the debt process repeats itself.

The truth is that most people have been living with debt for so long that they are truly used to it. They can't imagine what their lives would be like without a high-ratio mortgaged house and a car that is 95 percent financed and furniture that won't be paid off for another five years, let alone a maxed-out Visa card. As columnist Leah MacLaren recently wrote in *The Globe and Mail*: "No one wants to talk about debt, but it comes home and roosts on your doorstep like a big, fat, clucking hen from hell."

The core of the matter is that common sense is in short supply when it comes to our accumulating more and more debt so that we can buy more "things." American humorist Will Rogers put it much more eloquently than I ever could: "Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like."

If something is missing in your life, it's likely not more stuff. How many more things do you have to you buy before you realize you have way too many? If you are like the average corporate worker, you are probably too afraid to admit that material possessions — regardless of how fancy and expensive — are not doing much for your fulfillment. More possessions just help dull the pain and emptiness inside you.

Fact is, addiction to material possessions can imprison us just as much as corporate life. I recently allowed an acquaintance named Denis to park his brand-new Harley Davidson in my rented garage while he went to work on the oil rigs for a three-week stint. While showing the motorcycle to my neighbor, he asked how much it cost. I replied, "Denis said he paid around \$28,000 for it."

Later as I was driving my 1974 MGB to one of my coffee hangouts, I laughed out loud when I realized that the total value of

If you make money your god, it will plague you like the devil.

— Henry Fielding

We can create the ultimate job security by becoming less dependent on the organization for which we work and more dependent on our own resources.

— Bo Bennett

all my stuff — my clothing, three older cars, four bicycles, a laptop, and a bit of furniture — is around \$18,000. That's right. Although I have money in the bank, the total value of all my material possessions is \$10,000 less than what my friend Denis paid for a new Harley.

Do I feel deprived because I own so little in material goods? No, on the contrary — I feel extremely liberated! Unlike Denis, who feels compelled to work at a job that is not his dream job, just to make a lot of money to support his addiction to the latest commodities, I have been able to pursue something I enjoy and become a success at it. What's more, I now earn a decent living and am in a financial position to buy all sorts of things — even two or three new Harleys — for cash if I really want them.

Clearly, people living in debt and from paycheck to paycheck don't have freedom. What's more, they will never save a nice nest egg that can help them pursue freedom away from the corporation. Having a financial reserve could tide them over for a year or two if they wanted to pursue an unreal job or start an unconventional business at which they may not make that much money initially.

Speaking of freedom, one of the great paradoxes of North American life is the emphasis that is placed on freedom and how little freedom most people, in fact, have. Most North Americans are imprisoned by their jobs, by their material possessions, and by their financial debt. They could experience a lot more freedom if they worked for themselves, cut their spending on material goods, and attained financial independence.

My opinion is that the best way to attain personal freedom is not to work just for the money. It is a mistake to make your major purpose the attainment of money, whether you work in a corporate job, create an unreal job, or operate an unconventional business. The danger is that you will get so caught up in making money that you will forget to take time to enjoy life.

When work is a pleasure, life
is a joy! When work is a duty,
life is slavery.

— Maxim Gorky

Just as important, if your main focus is on earning a lot of money without having any major inner purpose to drive you, your chances of getting rich are not all that good. Trust me on this one: If you are not enough of an individual without a lot of money, you will not be much of an individual with it. Money can

buy exotic vacations, fashionable clothing, expensive cars, and whatever else money can buy. Money can't fill the emptiness of a human soul, however.

If you aren't working at something you enjoy, you are settling for much less than you deserve. It is no secret that the happiest and most successful people at work have great affection for their selected vocation. Generally speaking, they are also the most successful in the long term, whether they work for corporations or for themselves.

What's more, focusing your life solely on earning money will take your attention away from what makes people wealthy. Wealth is a result of creating a product or a service that people value. If you concentrate on creating something that people value highly, the money will follow automatically as people reward you handsomely for it. Put another way, don't work solely to make a lot of money and you will likely end up making a lot of money.

In short, you will surprise yourself how intelligent you really are when you start doing work you enjoy. Working at something you love makes it so much easier to learn things you don't know. Of course, the more you learn, the greater your expertise, and the more money you will end up earning.

Some people think it's holding on that makes one strong; sometimes it's letting go.

— Sylvia Robinson

If You Recently Got Fired from Your Job, Your Good Luck Has Just Begun

Whenever friends or acquaintances tell me that they have either got fired or quit their conventional jobs, my response is, "Congratulations." After I said this to a friend who quit his job during an economic recession not so long ago, his face lit up, before he started laughing and remarked, "You are the only one who has said this to me. Everyone else is asking me things like 'How could you during a recession? Jobs are so hard to come by!' or 'How are you going to survive?'"

I congratulate people who have quit or lost their jobs because I know that for people who want real success in their lives, this is an opportunity for them to go on to something better. In fact, if you have been in the workforce for over twenty years and have never gotten fired, you are likely not a risk taker or all that creative.

Indeed, some of the most creative and famous people in the world have got fired. In 1978 Lee Iacocca was fired from his job as president of Ford Motor Company by Henry Ford II, who told Iacocca, "I just don't like you." Soon after, Iacocca became the chief of bankrupt Chrysler Corporation and made it profitable for years.

Our disasters have been some of the best things that ever happened to us. And what we swore were blessings have been some of the worst.

— Richard Bach

No doubt, getting fired can be distressing, as it was for me when I got axed from my engineering position over two and a half decades ago. But it wouldn't have been distressing at all if I had known at the time that I was destined for much greater things. Indeed, if I had known where I would be twenty-five years later — experiencing real success without a real job — I would have been profusely thanking my boss the second he fired me. What's more, I would have had a celebration that day as expensive and as big as I had twenty-five years later.

As an author and occasional professional speaker specializing in helping people be happy away from the traditional workplace, I have had an interest in good quotations about work and the workplace. It naturally follows that interesting anonymous comments about the workplace in the form of graffiti also get my attention. Thus, I put together a collection called *Graffiti for the Employee's Soul*. (It's free — just like all the other best things in life! You can download the e-book in PDF format at www.creative-e-books.com.) The following twelve items come from the e-book:

Workplace Graffiti to Remind You of the Typical Workplace

- ◆ Working here is a nightmare. You want to wake up and leave but you need the sleep.
- ◆ I owe. I owe. And off to work I go.
- ◆ The thought of suicide has helped me get through many days at work.
- ◆ Teamwork magically inspires our group to come up with solutions that are consistently and considerably dumber than any one of us.
- ◆ My job is a big secret. Even I don't know what I am doing.
- ◆ As long as we continue to work here, happiness is just an idea.
- ◆ Can I trade this job for what's behind door Number 2?
- ◆ I'm just working here till a good fast-food job opens up.
- ◆ Like to meet new people? Like a change? Like excitement? Like a new job? Then screw up just one more time!

- ◆ Around here, “progress” is everything getting worse at a slower rate than it used to.
- ◆ I just took a self-improvement course and discovered I no longer need to punish, deceive, or compromise myself — unless I want to keep my job.
- ◆ My work cubicle is just a padded cell without a door. I want my freedom and I want it now.

If you have just been fired from your job and are considering another job like it, the above comments may motivate you to consider something different that will lead to real career fulfillment. Whenever you catch yourself yearning for the benefits that your old job provided, it’s best to look at the other side of the coin. It’s like reminiscing about an old love affair. We tend to remember the good things much more so than the bad ones. So when you feel a little dejected because you miss the routine of your old job, consider all the things that you didn’t like about the job.

The reality is that many hugely successful people have been fired at one time or another — sometimes several times — and gone on to better things. Most of these people admit that getting the ax placed them on a fast track toward career fulfillment. Indeed, it was the best thing that ever happened to them. For some, losing a job was the incentive they needed to open their own shop so that they didn’t need to work at a job they hate ever again.

Years after working at an occupation that he hated, Leonard Lee, owner of Ottawa-based Lee Valley Tools and Algrove Publishing, told a reporter with *The Globe and Mail*, “No amount of money is worth doing a job you hate. It rots your soul. It destroys you.” So why do so many work at a job they hate if it destroys their souls? Who knows? Perhaps they don’t value their souls.

Many people do value their souls, however, and are not willing to sell out to the corporate world ever again once they get fired. Instead, they pass up even the most prestigious and high-paid positions, often for much less prestigious unreal jobs and lower pay, so that they can avoid working for a corporation.

Getting fired, as I found out, is the universe’s way of telling you that you were in the wrong job in the first place. It is also the universe’s way of testing you to see whether you can take advantage of adversity and create some opportunity out of it, such as starting your own business. Put another way,

There's nothing wrong with
being fired.

— Ted Turner

Unemployment is capitalism's way of getting you to plant a garden.

— Orson Scott Card

unemployment is an opportunity to develop real character and true wealth.

If you are up to the universe's challenge, miracles will come your way. Money isn't as important as you may think it is. Many multimillion dollar businesses were started on kitchen

tables. Passion, purpose, and dedication will take you places where money won't.

The reality is that great corporate jobs are hard to come by in today's world anyway. "The traditional admonition of one generation to the next, 'get a job,' has been replaced with a more complex mandate: 'Go out and create a job for yourself,'" George Gendron, editor of *Inc.* magazine, recently told *Publisher's Weekly*. Being fired is an opportunity to create a job for yourself instead of finding another corporation that has a ready-made job for you, from which you can be just as easily fired some time in the future.

A corporation can take away your job and your job title but it can't take away your talent and creativity. By firing you, the corporation may be doing you a great favor inasmuch as you now have an opportunity to fully utilize your creativity and talent. Getting fired is a great opportunity to rethink where you are, what your priorities are, what's important to you, and whether or not you are in the right career. Getting another corporate job may only result in treating the symptoms — damage control, in other words.

It has been my experience that the best way to fully utilize one's creativity and talent is to shun a real job and create one's own unreal job. If you can be successful at an unconventional job that involves self-employment, you won't get fired ever again because you are the boss. Above all, getting fired is a great opportunity to pursue the unreal job that you have dreamed about pursuing for some time.

I was fired from my first three jobs, which in a funny way gave me the courage to go into business for myself.

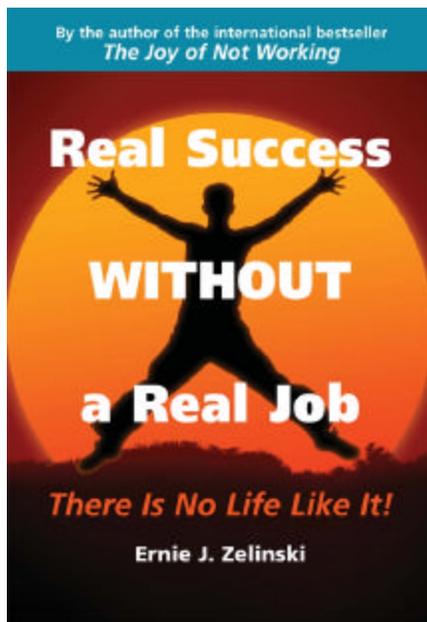
— Alfred Fuller

So again, don't look at being fired as all that bad of a thing. Your good luck may have just begun, particularly if you decide to make the great escape from the corporate world to pursue something totally unrelated to the field in which you were. You may feel that you have touched bottom, when, in fact, you are already headed upward. In the words of motivational speaker Zig Ziglar, "See you at the top."

The Life-Changing Career Book

By Ernie J. Zelinski

Real Success WITHOUT a Real Job



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“Ernie Zelinski helps others find the time to live.”

— Boston Herald

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2

Unreal Jobs — So Many Worlds; What to Do?

The Best Time to Pursue Your Dream Career Is Twenty Years Ago and Today

Business Week magazine recently surveyed 500 American business executives about their job satisfaction. Surprisingly, almost three-quarters (72 percent) were not in their dream jobs. The first question that arises is: What would executives rather be doing? Many, in fact, named creative professions when asked about their fantasy careers. Here are the executives' top ten career choices with the first being highest on their list:

- ◆ Entertainment manager or events producer
- ◆ Winemaker or brewmaster
- ◆ Chef
- ◆ Restaurateur
- ◆ Pilot
- ◆ Golf pro
- ◆ Professional athlete
- ◆ Rock star
- ◆ Neurosurgeon
- ◆ Bed-and-breakfast-inn owner/operator

Blessed is he who has found his work. Let him ask no other blessedness.

— Thomas Carlyle

Of course, dream careers will depend on a number of factors, including the age of the people surveyed. For interest's sake, following are the top ten dream jobs chosen by Canadian youths:

- ◆ Entertainment reporter
- ◆ On-air personality
- ◆ Fashion designer
- ◆ Hair and makeup designer for film or music/video shoot
- ◆ Music-video director
- ◆ Big cheese at TV station MuchMusic
- ◆ Record producer
- ◆ Magazine editor
- ◆ Game designer
- ◆ Concert roadie

As is to be expected, most young people are not in their dream jobs because they have not had the time to establish themselves in their careers. This leads to the second important question: Why don't more executives move on to something better if they are not in their dream careers?

The apparent answer is that most executives are trapped in the corporate system and don't have the guts to do something different. Yet many ordinary people with fewer skills and financial resources than corporate executives have managed to leave corporate life to pursue dream careers. These ordinary people have become happier, wealthier, freer, and more satisfied in their lives.

Never work just for money or for power. They won't save your soul or help you sleep at night.

— Marian Wright Edelman

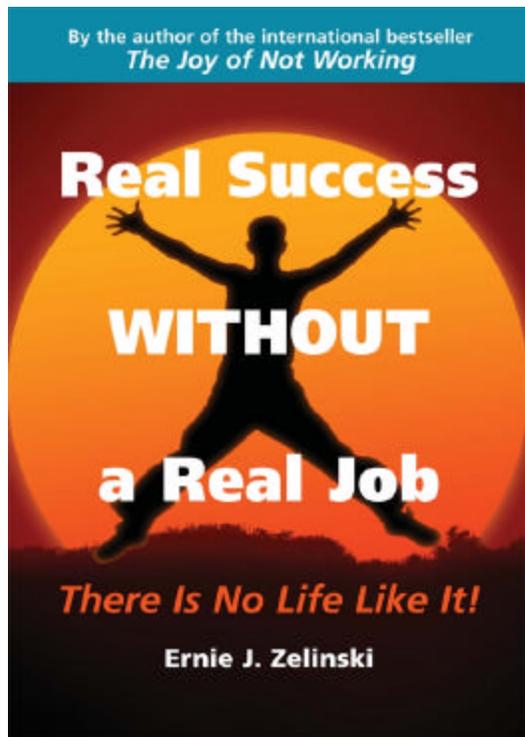
Estimates vary, but some career experts say that up to 90 percent of educated Americans don't like what they do for a living. There are several reasons why so many educated and intelligent people accept mediocre or lousy corporate jobs in the first place. One reason is that too many people go to college or university and major in the wrong field, which is usually recommended by someone else.

Take me, for example. I went into electrical engineering because my school principal recommended it. He felt I would make a good engineer because I was a whiz at physics and trigonometry. The truth is that I disliked engineering right from the start, but I had no idea what else I wanted to do. I also had no idea that people could make a great living outside corporations and actually enjoy their work.

Thus, I suffered through several years of taking engineering courses at a university and then another few years of working as

An Inspirational Book for the “Organizationally Averse”

By Ernie J. Zelinski



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- It's for anyone who wants to work at their dream job or operate a funky micro-business

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3

Extraordinary Success Is Achieved by Ordinary Individuals

Real People Attain Unreal Success — So Can You!

As already emphasized, the best way to experience a funky work environment in which to hang out is to free yourself from the normal shackles of the corporate world and create a fun or dream job that really turns you on. No doubt this is much easier said than done. In many respects, however, you are probably limiting yourself in what you can accomplish in this world.

Perhaps you are like the majority of humans on this planet who believe that it takes extraordinary character traits for a person to successfully pursue a dream career and actually make a living without a real job. I like the way Mark Twain put it: “The trouble with most of us is that we know too much that ain’t so.”

Popular belief has it that the highly successful have achieved extraordinary accomplishments due to their extraordinary traits. This may be true to a large degree in sports, but most individuals who have escaped the dreadful enslavement of corporate life have not been born with exceptional talent.

What’s more, being blessed with exceptional qualities does not guarantee real success without a real job. On the contrary, even traditional career success is not guaranteed by virtue of superior intelligence, a sky-high level of formal education, special skills, hard work,

I don't have a lot of respect for talent. Talent is genetic. It's what you do with it that counts.

— Martin Ritt

knowing the right people, or being in a high-status field such as law, medicine, or architecture. North America is full of well-educated, highly trained, and extraordinarily skilled people who have yet to experience any real success in their lives.

It's not that these people aren't smart — they are. Obviously they have proven their intelligence by getting a great education, which makes it all the more disappointing that they haven't gotten their acts together and done something extraordinary with their lives. What these individuals lack more than anything is the willingness to take creative action instead of opting for whatever comfort they presently enjoy.

Fact is, most extraordinary success is achieved by ordinary individuals. These people pull off remarkable achievements because they take action whereas others don't. Just as important, the difference between successful people and the rest of the pack is something American researcher Angela Duckworth calls "grit." She defines "grit" as "tenaciously pursuing something over the long term."

Duckworth, a psychologist who specializes in studying high achievers, has developed a "grit scale," to measure achievers' determination. The researcher believes people with this quality are more likely to succeed in work, school, politics, and other arenas than people with higher IQs and more talent.

Duckworth found grit was the key to the success of undergraduates, selected Internet users, West Point plebes, national spelling-bee contestants, and eighth graders. "Perseverance or grit does make a difference in the long run," she told *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "It allows a person to learn through their mistakes. Also by trying to achieve something day in and day out, you get better, and sooner or later there is a breakthrough."

Interestingly, Duckworth, along with many other psychologists, believes that the most important act parents can perform to help kids succeed is to guide them in finding whatever it is they can love over the long haul. Now, doesn't this sound familiar? This is what many career consultants advocate for adults, and what I have been stressing in this book.

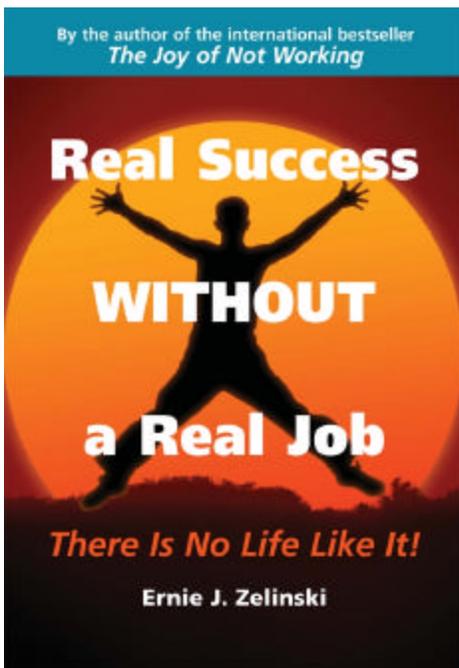
When you start living your purpose and pursuing your passions, you will have true grit, the incredible energy and drive to overcome the obstacles that appear. Eventually you will make a breakthrough and from then on your success will come more naturally.

All acts performed in the world begin in the imagination.

— Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

Real Success WITHOUT a Real Job

Signs That You Are Too Smart to Perform Manual Labor or Work in a Corporation



- You have been fired by corporations two times or more because management was threatened by your creativity and uniqueness.
- You can't even pretend to enjoy company functions.
- You consider having to wear a name tag demeaning and disgusting.
- You could never experience the freedom in a corporate setting to function at a high level and be happy.

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4

Get Creative — You Will Surprise Yourself and Change the World!

Creativity Is Your Biggest Asset — Bar None!

In my view, Mark Twain expressed a great deal of wisdom with these words: “Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered — either by themselves or by others.” The fact that so many people haven’t discovered they are geniuses is a major reason why they toil away at jobs they hate. As is to be expected, most corporations aren’t about to help their employees realize they are geniuses for fear of losing them.

By geniuses, I refer to individuals with the potential to make a difference in this world if they ever get around to developing and using their creativity. Unfortunately, most people have allowed organizations, educational institutions, and society to suppress their creativity for so long that they don’t realize how creative they can be. Truth be told, most people can be more creative and, in turn, more successful.

In this regard, there are two principles for creative success — one general and one definitive. The general principle is that virtually everyone has the ability to be more creative and accomplish extraordinary things in this world. The definitive principle is that almost everyone has volunteered to be exempt

The guy who invented the first wheel was an idiot. The guy who invented the other three, he was a genius.

— Sid Caesar

Creativity comes by breaking the rules, by saying you're in love with the anarchist.

— Anita Roddick

from the general principle. Put another way, few people spend time, effort, or thought cultivating their creative ability, which is an essential element for achieving real success without a real job.

The majority of adults don't get halfway to reaching their full creative potential due to their self-imposed limitations. Sadly, many people have suppressed both their desire and their ability to be creative for so long that they think they are naturally uncreative. You may be one of them.

How many times have you said to yourself or others, "If I only had the creative ability to pull that off" or "If I could invent something like that, my life would change forever"? All told, each one of us has greater inventiveness than we exhibit in ordinary life, but most of us are unaware of it, or refrain from using it. Again, there is no heavier burden than great potential that we are squandering. To deny our creativity is to lie to the world and, worse, to lie to ourselves.

Creative thinking, if diligently practiced, allows each and every one of us to accomplish feats that appear to be unattainable miracles to those who don't practice it. Creativity combined with action is a simple, easy, and sure-fire way to achieve health, wealth, and happiness in our lives; it is also an invaluable tool to help us experience harmony in this fast-moving and constantly changing world in which we live.

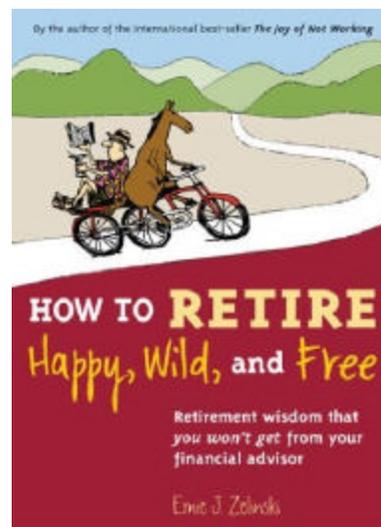
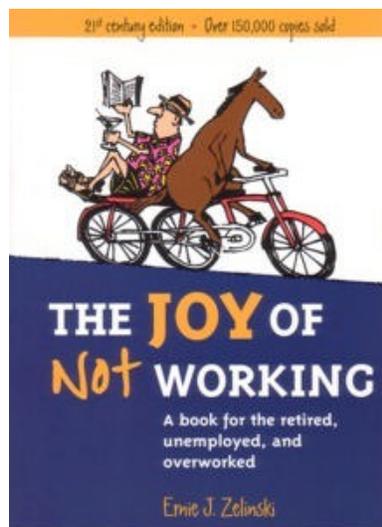
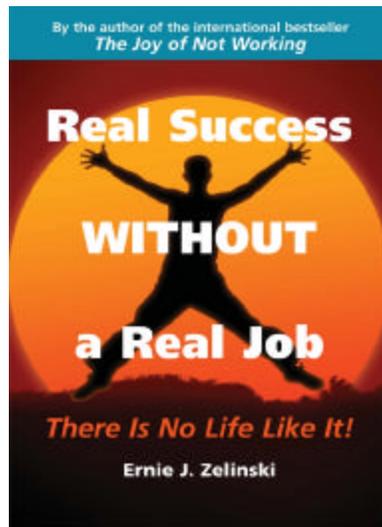
If you are serious about attaining real success without a real job, start with the premise that from both a financial and a personal point of view, your most valuable asset is not your job, your house, or your bank account. Plain and simple, it's your creative ability. Your creative mind has great value because it can solve problems. All employers have problems that they pay employees to solve. In the same vein, individuals have various problems, such as needing something to entertain them, that they pay others to solve.

The value you place on your creative mind should be at least one million dollars because you can use it to generate many times this amount over your lifetime. This makes creativity the poor person's wealth. Indeed, when you list the monetary value of your personal assets, the total should make you a millionaire simply by including the value of your creative ability.

Creativity is the sudden cessation of stupidity.

— Dr. E. Land

Three Irresistible Books by Ernie Zelinski For Winners and Not for Whiners



5

It's Not Just an Unreal Job — It's a Real Business!

It's Not Creative Unless It Sells!

Over the last few years I have been approached by many individuals who want to learn how to write a book and get it published. Because providing free advice was taking up way too much of my time, I prepared a two-page letter to send to aspiring authors. Here are two of the most important paragraphs from the letter:

Once you have written a book and had it published, you are about 5 percent of the way to making it a success. Whether the book is self-published or published by a major publisher, you must promote it. The best promotion for a book is not done by publishers, publicists, distributors, or bookstores; the best promotion is done by the author. In the academic world, it's publish or perish. In the real world, it's PROMOTE or perish.

Writing a good book takes creativity; effective promotion takes ten times as much creativity. Five years after I wrote *The Joy of Not Working*, I was still promoting the book with the same intensity as when the book was first released. Without this sustained promotion, it would never have eventually become an international bestseller.

Next to doing the right thing, the most important thing is to let people know you are doing the right thing.

— John D. Rockefeller

I made particular mention of promotion in my letter because

promotion is a critical factor for whether a book succeeds. Promotion, of course, is one aspect of marketing, and marketing is an essential ingredient for any business, regardless of its size. Marketing is also important for an unreal job that requires selling services to customers.

You can have the best idea or product in the world, but if you can't market it, you may as well have the worst idea or product in the world. Product here refers to you as a contract employee, any service you may be offering to society, or any innovative item you have developed with the potential to change people's lives.

If you don't want to become a marketing expert, then you have to hire one. Fact is, however, marketing experts don't come cheap. Therefore, you may have to do what I had to do for the first few years: Learn how to become a marketing expert yourself and enjoy it. If you don't like certain forms of marketing, then avoid them.

A market is never saturated with a good product, but it is very quickly saturated with a bad one.

— Henry Ford

Concentrate on the areas that work best for your product and your own nature.

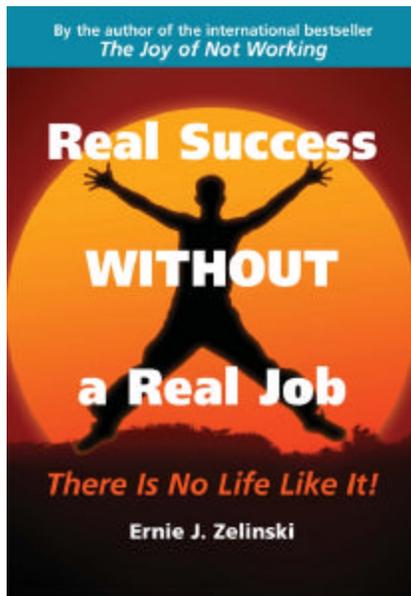
Regardless of your initial inspiration to undertake your unreal job, you must recognize that it's not just an unreal job — it's a real business. Unlike a traditional job, you are getting paid for results produced instead of time put in at the office. Whether you like it or not — and a lot of people don't — marketing brings more results than virtually all other work activities. This means that if you are an artist, for example, you must strike an adequate balance between how much time you spend painting and how much time you spend marketing.

A good balance often requires more time spent in marketing than in creation of the product. Some of the most successful people in the information business invest 90 percent of their time in selling, self-promotion, getting publicity, and hustling new business. Only 10 percent of their time is spent developing new products or services. If artists were willing to spend at least a third of their time marketing their art, a lot more of them would not have to experience the starving-artist syndrome so common in their community.

Marketing is the art of turning your ideas and dream projects into profits. You have to be clear, however, that just the fact that you think people should be buying your product or service doesn't mean there will be a market for it. Many people who decide to provide a service or product fall into the trap of believing that every human being is a potential buyer. Your opinion of what is

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“If you are unhappy in your work (or retirement) and want to find something more fulfilling and yes, even fun, *Real Success Without a Real Job* is a great book to help you put in place all the internal ingredients (desire, commitment, persistence, etc), so that you can take action and achieve your dreams.”

— Leslie G. Truex, Author of *Jobs at Home* and President of the *Work-At-Home Success Website*

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6

Prosperity Comes When You Do the Right Things with Your Life

More Money Won't Bring You More Happiness — It Works the Other Way Around!

As I start writing this chapter at one of my favorite coffee bars, the time is 3:30 P.M. Today is November 23, a day when it is common to have two feet of snow on the ground in Edmonton and a temperature high of 21°F. The lowest temperature recorded for this time of the year is -29°F (yes, that's a minus). Because today's temperature reached an abnormal high of 61°F, and there was absolutely no snow on the ground, I went for a most enjoyable bike ride for an hour and a half in the early afternoon — and just for the record, I didn't get up until the crack of noon.

Yesterday, also a bright sunny day, was even better when the temperature reached a record high of 68°F. I went running for an hour wearing just a T-shirt and shorts, something I could normally not do on November 22 unless I flew to Las Vegas, at least 1,500 miles south of my hometown. Both yesterday and today I saw only a handful of people taking advantage of this great weather to run, cycle, golf, or walk. Not only did I feel prosperous, I felt truly blessed to be able to do what I wanted to do, when I wanted to do it.

Sadly, most people in conventional jobs, even if they earn \$500,000 a year

Money will buy you a bed but
not a good night's sleep, a
house but not a home, a
companion but not a friend.

— Zig Ziglar

or more, could not take advantage of these two great days as I was able to do. Some motivational speakers say that although money can't buy happiness, it can buy freedom. I agree that money can help buy a good measure of freedom, but the financial pursuit can also imprison people — in more ways than one. No doubt many Edmontonians, both yesterday and today, felt imprisoned by their jobs — the source of their money — when they couldn't take advantage of the great weather. In an indirect way, they were not able to do this because of their pursuit of the almighty dollar.

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is to put money in its proper place so that you have realistic expectations about what a great amount of cash can do for you — and what it can't do for you! If you need less money in your life, you won't have to work as much and as hard for it. Just as telling, you will find it much easier to give up a well-paid job to pursue a dream career or unconventional business and be able to enjoy the freedom I enjoy.

Contrary to public belief, earning or having more money can be a trap that leads to a diminished quality of life. More cash often leads to more spending on items that require a lot of one's time and more money for maintenance of the items. Of course, if the items

have been purchased on credit, there is the pain of having to make even more money to make the payments in order to avoid personal bankruptcy.

To be clever enough to get a great deal of money, one must be stupid enough to want it.

— George Bernard Shaw

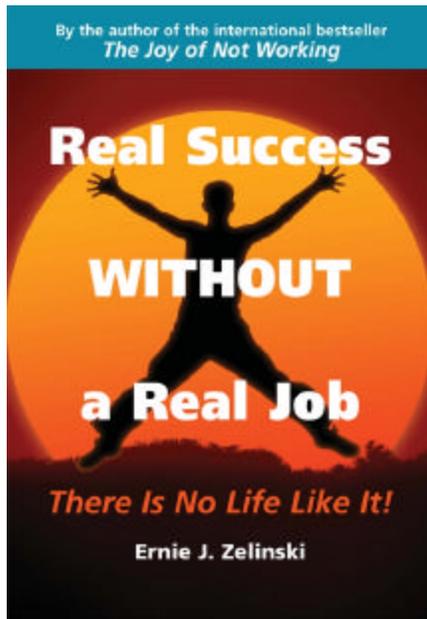
More money should bring more freedom and more security instead of more slavery and more worry. Yet research studies indicate that financial

prominence can bring its own form of hassles and worries. More money leads to alienation from previous peer groups, the pain of having to lose a lot more of one's assets in divorce, and more acute feelings of fear of someone stealing one's property and money.

Weirdly, there is a certain luxury in not having a large portfolio. I discovered that having financial assets can be somewhat of a burden. Managing my nest egg is frustrating and time consuming. Where do I put it? Don't ask me for my cash and other financial resources, however. It's not as troublesome looking after my nest egg as it would be for me to give it to you.

Following is a letter that shows another way how we can get trapped by the almighty dollar. Thomas Allen (his name has been changed) from the city of New York wrote to me five months before I started this book. Up until then I had received several hundred letters about *The Joy of Not Working*, but none of this nature:

The Book That Inspires You to Make a Living in Unusual Ways



- It's about earning real money without a real job.
- It's about working in a jerk-free environment.
- It's about reducing work stress immediately when it strikes because you have the freedom to do so!
- It's about creating intellectual property so that you make some real money while you sleep.

"I found *Real Success Without a Real Job* absolutely incredible! I can't even put into words how much I enjoyed reading the book and there were times I didn't even want to put it down. I am not one to send e-mails or write reviews so for me to be this moved my hat is off to Ernie."

— David Morris, Senior Retirement Plan Consultant,
Charles Schwab

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7

Real Success Means Having Real Friends

The Richest Person Is the One with the Most Real Friends

“People report being happier when they are with friends than when they’re with a spouse or child,” according to research cited in a recent cover story in *Psychology Today* magazine. Think about this. People experience greater joy while spending time with their friends than while spending time with their children or with their mates. This should give you an idea of the value of friendship.

Interestingly, friendship is one of the most researched items on the Internet. Based on my field work, “friendship” is typed into search engines such as Google and Yahoo much more than “happiness.” This indicates that hundreds of thousands of people are interested in making new friendships and enhancing old ones.

Given how important friendship is in our lives, have you ever noticed how little has been written on the subject? Compare, for example, the number of books written on how to handle money to the number of books on how to create and maintain great friends. Yet in many ways friendship is much more valuable than money. Indeed, our human interactions, particularly those with close friends, provide most of the joys or disappointments we have in life.

In my opinion you can’t experience real success unless you have real friends. Therefore, I am devoting a whole chapter to friendship. About a year before starting this book I wrote a gift book called *Life’s Secret Handbook for Having Great Friends*, which

If you can't make money,
make friends.

— Mezz Mezzrow

was turned down by a number of American and British publishers. I am confident it is a great book, nonetheless, given that it is being translated and published by major French and Spanish publishers. As a bonus to my English-speaking readers, I have adapted almost half of the content from *Life's Secret Handbook for Having Great Friends* along with some additional new material about friendship for this book. This is in keeping with one of the most important principles for achieving success in any unreal job or unconventional business — give your customers more than they expect.

Of course, the more success I end up having with this book, the more time I will have for friendship. It has been my experience that one of the great benefits of not working in a corporate setting is having the freedom to spend time with my friends virtually any time I want. Just as important, I have more time available to make new friends and don't have to spend time with workplace colleagues, who seldom turn out to be real friends.

The richest man in the world is not the one who still has the first dollar he ever earned. It's the man who still has his best friend.

— Martha Mason

Given that passing time with friends provides us with so much joy and happiness, the question you have to ask yourself is, "Am I seeing my friends as much as I should?" According to a recent study, Americans spend 8.9 hours a week with their friends. Canadians spend slightly less time than Americans with 8.7 hours and Britons spend more time with 11.1 hours. Interestingly,

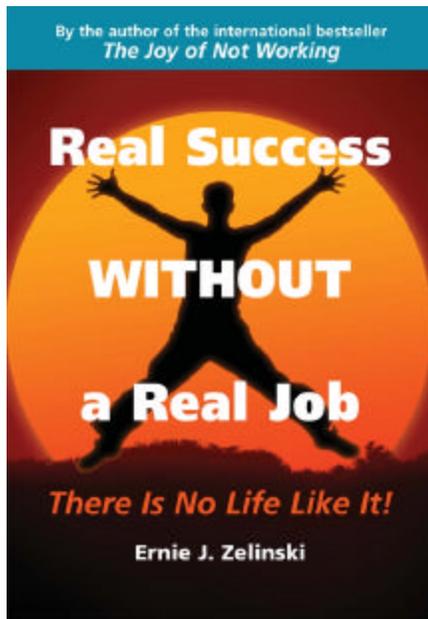
American men spend 10.4 hours weekly and American women spend 7.6 hours weekly.

Unfortunately, the modern work world makes our individual lives busier and more fragmented. The result is that many people neglect to devote time to making close friends. "Friendship seems to be the last thing that anyone's getting to," says Jan Yager, an American sociologist and author of several books on friendship. Yager adds, "Friendship is not something that you get to when everything else in your life is taken care of. It's an important relationship even after the school years for emotional health, for career advancement, for physical well-being."

For anyone who has left corporate life for retirement or self-employment, making and maintaining great friendships are keys to creating a new sense of community that translates into social, emotional, and physical well-being. Several research studies conclude that people who have intimate relationships with others

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— Nick Lore, Founder of the Rockport Institute

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8

It's All in How You Play the Game, Isn't It?

It's Never Too Late to Be What You Might Have Been

Over the last few years, whenever working on a new project, I have reflected upon the words of Thomas Carlyle: “The best effect of any book is that it excites the reader to self-activity.” In this regard, I hope that this book will infect you with the motivation and commitment that you require to pursue some of your dreams.

Whether it’s making new friends or having a more fulfilling career, a dream not acted upon will remain just a dream. The strongest single factor for attaining any one of your dreams is self-esteem — believing you have talent and creativity, believing you deserve your dream, and believing that it is possible for you to attain the dream.

It’s important to contemplate the wisdom of this Chinese adage as it relates to your dreams: “If you get on the train today, you’ll overpay your fare. But if you don’t, you’ll be left behind in the dust.” In other words, you can pay the high price today that has to be paid for you to pursue your dreams, or you can keep waiting for the perfect moment when you don’t have to pay the price, and end up never getting to where you want to go.

Most of us, above all, are committed to comfort, low risk, and stability. We don’t want to work at anything important in life; on the contrary, we want all the important things in life to come

The cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.

— Henry David Thoreau

without any obstacles, stress, or difficulty. When we are comfortable, we say we are “feeling no pain.” Unfortunately, feeling no pain is not synonymous with the memorable experiences of accomplishment, satisfaction, and creative fulfillment that come from pursuing and attaining our dreams.

It comes back to the issue of commitment: You should constantly challenge yourself as to whether or not you are truly committed to pursuing your dreams. You need to determine what you want in life and do whatever it takes to make it happen. If you don’t, you are likely to wake up the day you turn sixty and wonder why you didn’t take that vacation, make more real friends, or chase that dream career.

Some time ago a number of individuals, all over sixty years old, were asked what advice they would give themselves if they had life to live over again. It behooves us to pay attention to six of their most important suggestions:

How to Be More of a Person than You Have Been

- ◆ Take the time to find out what you really want to do with your life.
- ◆ Take more risks.
- ◆ Lighten up and don’t take life so seriously.
- ◆ Be more patient.
- ◆ It’s best to suffer from the Peter-Pan syndrome — relive your younger days. What were your dreams when you were young?
- ◆ Live the moment more.

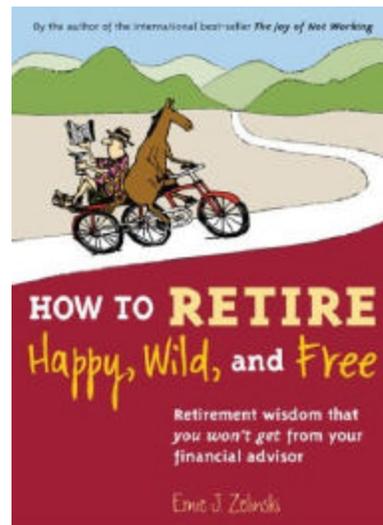
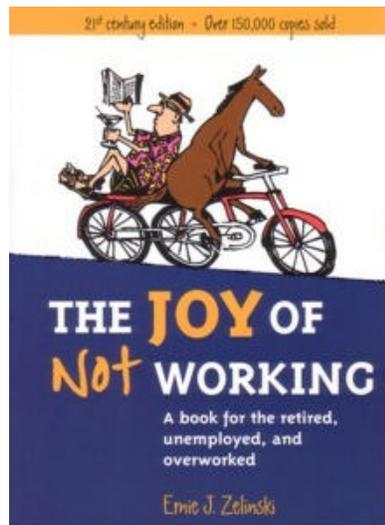
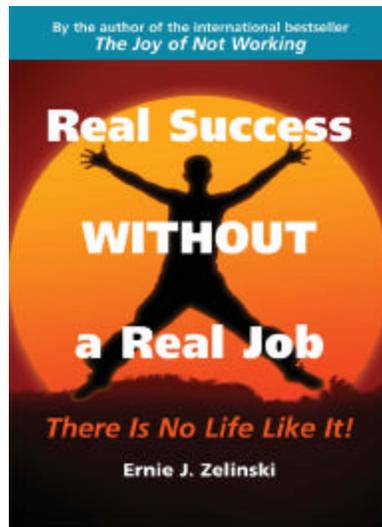
The deepest personal defeat suffered by human beings is constituted by the difference between what one was capable of becoming and what one has in fact become.

— Ashley Montagu

That is to say, you don’t want to leave this world with songs unsung that you would like to sing. Nor do you want to end up on your death bed pleading, “Lord, give me one more shot and I’ll give it all I got.” It’s best that you start singing these songs today if you want to ever sing them. Instead of spending most of your spare time watching TV or wondering whether there is life after death (sorry, there are no points for this one), spend more time experiencing life after birth by chasing your dreams.

As a kid what was your answer to the question “What do you want to be when you grow up?” At one time we all had dreams of becoming someone we looked up to, such as a musician, a police officer, a bank president, or a train engineer, to name just a few.

Three Life-Changing Books by Ernie J. Zelinski

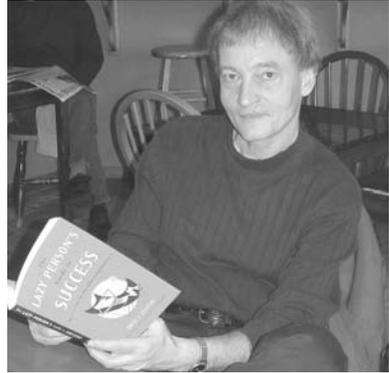


About the Author

Ernie Zelinski is best known as the author of *The Joy of Not Working*, an international bestseller that has sold over 225,000 copies and has been published in sixteen languages. He has negotiated ninety-four book deals with key publishers in twenty-five countries for his fifteen books.

Feature articles about Ernie and his books have appeared in major newspapers including *USA TODAY*, *Oakland Tribune*, *Boston Herald*, *The Washington Post*, *Toronto Star*, and *Vancouver Sun*. He has been interviewed by over 100 radio stations and has appeared on CNN TV's Financial News and CBC TV's National News.

Ernie has an Engineering degree and an MBA from the University of Alberta. Because he is truly organizationally averse, he has not had a real job for over twenty-five years. Ernie speaks professionally on the subjects of real success, retirement, and applying creativity to business and leisure. You can e-mail Ernie at vip-books@telus.net or write to him at Visions International Publishing, P.O. Box 4072, Edmonton, AB, Canada, T6E 4S8.



Photograph by Greg Gazin

Irresistible Websites by Ernie Zelinski

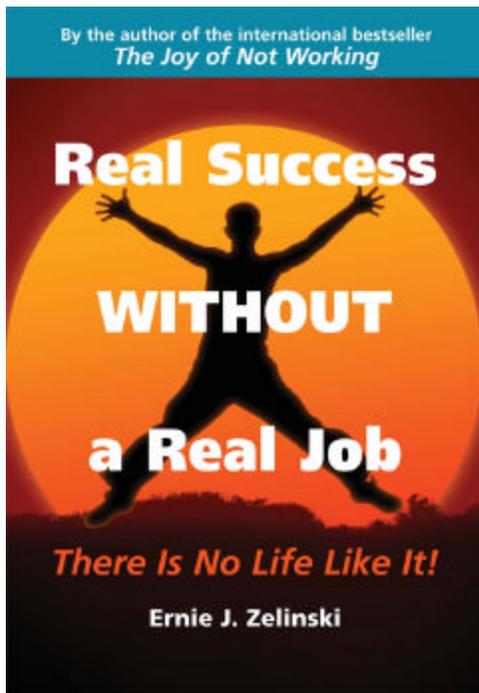
Ernie's two websites (listed on the bottom of this page) will further challenge and/or inspire you with cool stuff such as:

- ◆ The free e-book *1001 Best Things Ever Said about Work (and the Workplace)*
- ◆ Other free e-books including a fine slice of *The Joy of Not Working*, seven volumes in the *Graffiti for the Soul Series*, and over half of *How to Retire Happy, Wild, and Free*
- ◆ Resources to help you escape corporate life
- ◆ Real life success stories from readers
- ◆ What's new to help you attain real success without a real job
- ◆ News about Ernie's latest projects

www.Real-Success.ca

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- Be creative and have fun in your work.
- Restructure your life so that it has meaning, direction, and joy.
- Take charge of your physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual well-being.
- Experience true personal freedom in all areas of your life.
- Above all, get the most out of your life – personally and professionally!

This revolutionary book is for those millions of organizationally averse people who would like to break free of corporate life so that they have complete control over their lives. Throughout the book you will read about several ordinary individuals who have attained extraordinary success without a real job. International best-selling author Ernie Zelinski also uses experiences from his own life to show how the powerful success principles on the pages within can help you joyfully avoid the shackles of the corporate world for the rest of your life.

Positive, lively, and captivating, *Real Success Without a Real Job* is designed to help you live an extraordinary lifestyle that is the envy of the corporate world – **there is no life like it!**

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– Boston Herald




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