

# Introduction

Would you quit your job today if I gave you \$10 million? If so, this book is for you. If not, you can put this book down because you probably don't need it.

Many books have been written to help readers choose a career. They feature personality and skill tests which are designed to narrow the options and match people with a suitable choice. While well-intentioned, these methods approach the process backwards. They're based on the idea that each career has a specific set of attributes and that each person has specific skills and personality and that it's just a matter of matching the person to a career. The notion that your best skills should determine what you should do for your career is arbitrarily limiting, disrespects your true multi-dimensional nature, and underestimates your ability to learn and grow. In the same way that judging someone based on his or her physical appearance is unfair, limiting your options based on your current skills, interests or performance level is also misguided.

The purpose of this book is not to help you choose a career. Rather, it is to teach you new ways to think about the questions and challenges you will face on your career journey. This book upends traditional notions you may have been taught about careers and arms you with new perspectives. It reframes the problem of career choice in ways that make your thought process easier and the action steps you should take more obvious.

Much of what we've been taught about lifelong work is based on the outdated paradigm of choosing a specific career and riding it to success. The process is essentially an exercise in attempting to imagine yourself in some predefined roles, choosing one, and then trying to mold yourself into that specific identity and set of behaviors. The very act of choosing an option already defined by someone else takes away your creative power to design a career that resonates with your highest values and interests. This causes career seekers to spend the majority of their effort looking for external opportunities rather than discovering their skills and defining for themselves how they will provide value to others.

This book is titled "Your Unique Career Path" because your vocation should not be something predefined by someone else, like an entrée that you

choose from a restaurant menu. There doesn't need to be a named profession falling into some predefined category for you to be able to produce value for other people. With the fast pace of modern technology and human progress, it makes more sense to focus on yourself and how you can add value in this new environment than on some predefined, prenamed career. You're a unique person. There's no reason to believe your career won't be as unique as you are.

The key reason most people don't find fulfilling careers is ignorance - of themselves and of the external world. Every person has an abundance of innate talents, abilities and curiosity to fill one hundred productive lifetimes. Sadly, few people realize their incredible potential because it takes time and work to uncover and develop it. Many have the false belief that they already know themselves well enough to make good decisions about their careers. They also falsely believe they have a good understanding of what is available to them. An enormous amount of exciting development is happening around the world in every area you can imagine, and even more so in areas you've never imagined. Traditional university training only scratches the surface in terms of exploring students' potential, giving them valuable skills, and exposing them to all that's available. True career exploration begins through personal exposure to as many interesting areas as possible and by trying as many new things as possible.

Under this paradigm, the daunting task of choosing a career is reduced to the much easier questions of, "What skills can I learn right now?", "What types of exposure are available?" and "What can I add to my portfolio which will broaden what I can offer to others?" If at any point you feel unsure about what work to do, it means you need to have more experiences, gain more useful skills, and learn more about yourself and your community. The better you develop yourself and understand what's going on in the world, the more value you'll be able to exchange through your professional pursuits. As your interests change over time and you evolve as a person, it's only natural that what you choose to do for work will also evolve. This book is intended as a guide to help you become the kind of person who has many enticing options to choose from and for whom deciding among these options is straightforward and personally fulfilling.

Each chapter in this book presents a central principle supported by fresh perspectives. This is an action-oriented book. Each chapter is followed by exercises to complete. Some are introspective, some encourage you to work with other people, and some require you to go out and have certain

experiences and evaluate your feelings afterwards. The exercises are meant for you to get to know yourself better and to serve as a starting point in your career exploration. You'll get out of this book what you put into it. So, your responses to the questions, the material you gather during the exercises, and your unique experiences and reactions will serve as your starting point for building your career.

After reading this book, your thought process should be clearer, making the next steps in your career more obvious. Be warned however, if you do this right, your journey will be longer and more challenging. If you're looking for easy answers, I suggest you put down this book and walk away because it doesn't contain any. The road I'm offering you is long, bumpy, exhausting, and often difficult. The easier road my competition is offering is paved with good intentions.

Are you ready to get started?