

INTRODUCTION

Why are you here?

It was about two years after moving to Canada from the Philippines with my daughter, as a single parent, that I had an epiphany that triggered the tipping point in my career. I got home from work feeling highly stressed and tired and my daughter started talking to me about her day. I said, “I don’t want to chat right now. Could you leave me alone?” My brain just wanted to shut down for the day; I was up to my ears in my woes, and I couldn’t handle any more stimulation. And then, one day shortly after, I found myself stuck in traffic at 7:00 p.m., having to call my daughter to give her step-by-step instructions on making dinner, then bawling in the traffic on the highway to home. While we lived a comfortable life in the Philippines, I had decided to move to Canada for a better quality of life, and this was not it. I quit my job and my new journey began.

There must be some tipping points in your career. It could be a breakdown in your relationship with your boss, a family event that needs a change in your work-life situation, or the realization that your work does not align with your goals. In some instances, ambition or a desire for a better position or a more fulfilling job pull people out of their comfort zone to seek better opportunities. If you’re reading this, it must be because you are searching. Your career might be meandering, lacking direction, stuck, or not where you want it to be. You’ve come to the right place. Whatever your reasons, hopefully they align with your agenda for a successful career. Here are a few ideas about why this book might resonate with you:

1. You want to fast-track your career. Although you are doing well in your job, you want to move to the fast lane.
2. You want to jump-start a lagging career. From where you’re sitting, you know you can do better and you want to get out of the rut.
3. You see the value you offer, and you feel you are not living up to your

potential in your current role. To some extent, you have outgrown your current position.

4. You are stuck and don't know how to get out of the career muck you are in right now. You do not see any apparent options but you're looking for a way out.
5. Your work doesn't resonate with you. You want to do work that is fulfilling, but you don't know what that is.
6. You're unhappy with your current state but you don't have a clear idea of how to move forward. You want to know what option is safe to take. You may not think you need some coaching now. Even so, this book is a good read for when a circumstance pulls the rug from under you:

Reflection

- When you take a hard look at your current career situation, what could be better?
- Suppose your career is better. What might be different?
- What are you willing to do to create the future that you prefer?

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1. You lose your position for a business reason you're not expecting at all. You're thinking, "No, it couldn't be me. I've been here for twenty years. I'm too valuable to the company." Then it happens to you.
2. Your company is merging with another company, either by acquisition or strategic merger. Your position has become redundant. Now it is a battle between you and your counterpart, who, soon enough, may or may not even be human.¹ Then you find out it is you who is leaving.

3. Your company unexpectedly moves to another location for strategic business reasons. It becomes too far for you to travel so staying with the company is not feasible for you.
4. You get to the peak of your career in the company and find yourself stuck at a dead-end job. There is no room for you to grow.
5. You wake up one day realizing that there's something else you want to do. You don't know what that is or how to get started.

Reflection

- On an optimism scale where ten is highly optimistic and one is the opposite, how optimistic are you that:
 - your career will be better in three to five years?
 - you will be in a fulfilling career in five to seven years?
 - your career will be how you envision it to be in ten years?
- What decisions have you made to enable these to occur?
- What changes do you need to make now?

Experts expect the next couple of decades to be quite disruptive for the professional world. Technology is evolving fast, and there's growing concern that many workers will lose their jobs to robots. More and more people are choosing to be independent or work freelance.² Companies across the globe are continually working on improving the ways they manage their talent.

Preparing for the future of work, Pew Research Center recommends an “increased emphasis on continuing education and retraining for adults seeking new skills, and a social safety net that has been revamped to help people move from job to job and place to place.”³

If you find yourself in any of these situations:

- you are looking to move up at your job,
- you are in-between positions, or
- you are already carving a new career path.

It is always good to take the bull by the horns and take charge of your career future now.

Why coaching?

Meghan (not her real name) was in a management role in a high-profile advertising company when I met her. She was looking to make a sharp transition from her current position into an unrelated career. She was very well paid and admitted that she enjoyed a high-quality lifestyle which added a great deal of anxiety to her decision-making process. She badly needed help in mitigating this problem as it was making her physically sick. After three months of Career Clarity Coaching[®], she was well on her way to strengthening her resolve to make a career change. In less than six months, she made the big leap. She said this after our work together:

“ After having worked with Gina, I am confident in taking my career path, knowing that I won’t live to regret it. Having defined my ‘core values’ and knowing that as long as I live my values, the choices I make would not lead me astray. I am confident that I’m moving in the right direction.”

The satisfaction I get from my work is in seeing how clients help themselves through their journey. There is no doubt that Meghan is inherently talented to begin with. She had all the skills and capacity to make this decision on her own but she was up against the worst enemy—FEAR. Other than fear, there are a lot of other saboteurs in our heads that cause decision-making to be challenging. They hinder our ability to move forward with confidence. It is in this moment that a coach, as an uninvolved and objective third party, can illuminate a situation and light the way for us.

In the course of my work as a Career Strategist (also known as a career coach), something stood out for me based on the experience and feedback of my clients.

This is what they say:

“I feel empowered.”

“I can’t believe I was this good.”

“I think I know now what I’m going to do.”

“I’m more confident now.”

And so on.

I realize that one of the biggest benefits clients get from coaching is a sense of clarity about what they want, thereby, making it easier for them to make career decisions. Secondly, coaching helps them flesh out their value proposition, making it easier for them to present themselves to the best extent on their résumé and in interviews. The biggest reward for me from all my coaching hours is seeing people realize the value they offer when I shine the light on them, mirror it back to them, and assist them in articulating their value proposition.

The goal of this book is for the reader to appreciate that what they offer to the world is valuable. If this book helps build the confidence of even one person to step into the spotlight and show the world their unique qualifications and value proposition from a place of authenticity, then the goal would have been achieved.

How to use this book

Your Career, Your Business is meant to be a self-help book that may be read selectively based on your individual needs or read from cover to cover. As a self-coaching handbook, there are questions in most of the chapters for you to ponder. I encourage you to pause at these points to reflect upon the questions until the answers come to you. The space after each chapter is provided for you to write notes in response to the inquiries. You will find the value of this book from those blank spaces. There is nothing more important than what shows up when you listen to your own thoughts—the insights that manifest when you reflect on your experiences and what you learned from them. My best hope is for

you to be able to compile all your answers after finishing the book to create your very own career map. This will help you to navigate moving forward toward your goals and be able to make informed and astute career decisions along the way.



