

# BEST JOB EVER!

**RETHINK YOUR CAREER,  
REDEFINE RICH,  
REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR LIFE**

**DR. C.K. BRAY**

**WILEY**

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Dr. C.K. Bray

## Introduction: My Story and Why You Need This Book

**W**alking across the large stage as bright lights illuminated my path, I was only moments away from receiving my award. Considered to be a pinnacle point in my career, I had won the coveted top sales award and was being recognized in front of the entire sales division. Working for one of the largest companies in the world, I had proven myself to be one of their best; I was about to be presented the crystal vase and plaque to prove it. After accepting my award and returning to my table, I couldn't shake the feeling that the whole night didn't feel right, yet I couldn't understand why. This was a celebration of my monumental achievement—wasn't I supposed to feel like I had finally made it and was at the top of my career? But it didn't feel that way at all. Instead, I felt empty, worn out, and depressed. I could barely converse with the others at the dinner table as the realization poured over me that I felt hollow, unfulfilled, and miserable. I was in the wrong place. I needed to make a change. How ironic that the night of one of my greatest career achievements was the night everything started coming apart.

If I had only known ...

position. (I did this by barraging him with hundreds of phone calls and voicemail messages reminding him why I was the best choice for the job.) Lucky for me, Woody Goodson gave me a chance, and thus began my career journey.

I started off with a bang. Woody was an amazing mentor. (The guy could sell anything to anyone—it was miraculous to watch him in action.) From him I learned the ins and outs of the business world: how to treat customers, how to interact with the vice presidents, and, most importantly, I learned how imperative it was to win. So that is what I did. I quickly learned that winning meant bigger bonuses, great award trips, and opportunities for promotions. My family was beginning to grow, and I knew that success would help me provide a better life for them.

But the newness and excitement of the job quickly wore off. A year into the job, I began to get a clear view of what this position meant for me. The actual job was not turning out like I had expected. Surprising to me at the time, the money didn't take away any of the sting of the dissatisfaction. I was beginning to question myself and wonder if this was what I wanted to do for the next 5 to 10 years of my life. During my long Texas drives in between customer visits, that voice inside my head kicked into gear telling me that I wasn't enjoying this. "But I am!" I would tell myself. I had a new company car that I didn't have to maintain, I was making great money, I had just bought a house, and I was starting to win some sales awards. I tried to tell myself that it didn't matter if I liked my job or not—I was successful! And so I silenced the warning voice.

So what did I do? In my great wisdom as a 20-something-year-old, I figured the best way to solve this problem was to get promoted and escape front-line sales. If I didn't have to sell anymore and I could be a manager, then I would like my daily work and that voice in my head would go away. So I was promoted and



all the people I worked with over the years, because they took me down the path of discovering what I really wanted to do.)

Fast-forward 12 years, five moves, three different states, and four promotions and you find me sitting at the awards dinner wondering what I was going to do next. It was on that awards night that a painful realization came over me that I had sold out my dreams of who I wanted to be and what I wanted to accomplish for “things.” Those things included the life, the house, the cars, and the image. I hardly recognized who I had become. I realized that no matter how hard I tried, how busy I had kept myself, I could never turn off that part of me that wanted to have a different job, one in which I would wake up in the morning and be excited about my work and feel like I was contributing to life in a productive way. If only I had known from the beginning the importance of having a career in which I felt a sense of meaning and purpose.

That evening began an incredible journey of finding my Best Job Ever!

The start of my journey began with deciding to work part-time and return to school to earn my first PhD in organizational leadership and development and later, my second PhD in industrial and organizational psychology. Near the end of my years of schooling, I began teaching at a local university, working with adults who were returning to school to earn their bachelor's degree. I worked with over 300 individuals weekly on career issues and organizational development. I am still close to many of my former students and credit them for being guinea pigs for many of my ideas and theories, systems, and programs regarding their career and personal development. They were such good sports!

I returned later to corporate America in a completely different role as a global organizational development and effectiveness

vice president. (Try saying *that* three times without stuttering.) In this role, I was able to travel across the globe, working with individuals to develop their careers and their leadership skill sets. The international experience provided deep insight into how similar employees' needs are. Following a merger of the company, I started my own consulting business helping companies improve the effectiveness and productivity of their employees as well as helping the employees and managers develop their careers. This included providing them with training and tools to help them feel fulfilled and engaged.

It has been an incredible journey since that awards dinner.

After 20 years in corporate America, including education and experience in researching and studying careers, interviewing hundreds of employees and leaders, I am excited to share with you some of the principles I have learned and taught to thousands of others to help find greater success and greater satisfaction in their careers. More importantly, I have worked with and helped people just like you, who have struggled or are struggling with your own unique career issues and problems.

Over the last decade, I have helped men and women across the world to envision, plan, work toward, and obtain their Best Jobs Ever! By so doing, ironically and incredibly, this has ended up becoming *my* Best Job Ever!

Since most people are employed the majority of their lives, everyone should have access to this information on how to jumpstart their careers—to develop and create their own Best Job Ever! After years of hearing comments such as: “Dr. Bray! I have a friend who needs this information,” or “I have a brother who wants to get promoted,” or “My neighbor just lost his job and doesn’t know what to do,” I decided it was time to provide

this essential career development information in a way that would make it available for everyone.

Whether you are searching for your first job, have been in the same career for decades, are returning to the workforce after a hiatus, are self-employed, or work for others, this book will help you discover and then work toward creating a career that will be most fulfilling for you.

This book:

- Is a step-by-step guide for anyone who is struggling with his or her career or for anyone who wants to avoid as many career obstacles as possible.
- Will provide principles, tips, questions to consider, and action items to move you forward in your own personal career journey.
- Will give you tools to help you discover what you want and steps to achieve it.
- Will help you in developing a meaningful career, whether that means making changes that will bring you greater satisfaction in your current career or helping you know how to get promoted or take a leap to another career.

If you read and implement what I am about to teach you, your life will never be the same. This process works. It has worked for hundreds of others.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One will help you understand why you may feel stuck in your career and how to overcome some of the obstacles to career happiness. Part Two will help you define your priorities to know what true success and *rich* means for you. It will help you figure out what you really want from a career.

In Part Three, we will discuss your motivation and create a personalized plan to achieve your promotion or job change or just help you get out of your career rut. I will share some of the principles that helped me be successful—principles that can help you be successful in your own career.

*Your Best Job Ever! Rethink Your Career, Redefine Rich, and Revolutionize Your Life* will help you identify and deliberately create the job that will bring you personal fulfillment and success. Hopefully, that will mean an increase in your pay as well!

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CHAPTER

1

# You Don't Have to Wait for Your Dream Career to Be Happy

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*The grass is always greener where you water it.*

—Unknown

*Success is liking what you do and liking how you do it.*

—Maya Angelou

One of the first questions I ask my clients is, “If you could have any job, what would be your dream job, your perfect career?” Hearing their answers is always one of the best parts of my day. Let me share a few of their responses:



Client 1: I would travel Europe for a year.

Me: That's not a job, that's a vacation. Try again.

Client 2: I would own a business that I could live anywhere and only have to work three hours a day from a beach.

Me: Very few people I know can make a living working three hours a day from the beach to support their spouse and three kids with the same lifestyle they currently have. Plus you would get skin cancer.

Client 3: I want any job that pays me double the salary I make right now.

Me: *Brilliant!* Except according to employee market values, you already make 15 percent more than you should right now.

Client 4: I'm going to win the lottery so I don't have to answer your dumb questions.

Me: How long have you been playing the lottery?

Client: Twenty years.

Me: How much have you won?

Client: Fifty dollars.

Me: Excellent! You're on track to quit your job and start your perfect career when you are 2,500 years old. Why don't we start over and let's get you that dream job in the next year without the lottery. (This is where I restate my original question.)

Client 5: Any job but the one I have now. It's bad, Dr. Bray.

Me: (Silence) and an "uh, oh" (This comment usually means an emotional breakdown is on its way in the next 30 seconds.)