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Changing Your Career in Midlife: The Practical Guide

When Marc Miller published *Repurpose Your Career: A Practical Guide for Baby Boomers in 2012*, he struck a nerve with a lot of people who had lost their retirement in the economic downturn and who couldn't, or didn't want, to keep doing the same thing for another several decades. But his practical instructions for pivoting a career also resonated with Gen Xers who found, when they hit their 40s, that nothing looked as they expected it to, including their career landscapes. That prompted a new second edition, *Repurpose Your Career: A Practical Guide for the Second Half of Life*.

Miller's Career Pivot.com has been listed as a top career site by organizations including Forbes and Career Sherpa and his strategies for a career transition have been featured on Mashable, Life Hacker, and Money. A "recovering engineer," who spent years working at IBM, Miller's own career journey started when his bicycle collided with a car, nearly ending his life. The experience changed his perspective on what he was doing with his time and launched him on a search for career fulfillment that led him to jobs including teaching in the inner city, fundraising for a non-profit, and working for startups. He decided to parlay his experiences—and his engineer's expertise at breaking big tasks into manageable steps—into helping others find long-lasting career fulfillment.

Gallup polls show that 70 percent of employees are disengaged from their jobs and 50 percent are constantly looking for new opportunities. But many don't understand what's driving their discontent or what will satisfy them. Plus constantly changing technologies and economic shifts mean many kinds of work that exist today may not be here tomorrow. Miller gives people tools to evaluate their own personal operating systems, what they uniquely need and want from their work and work environment, and teaches them how to make a series of pivots that will help them move from one career to another. It enables them not only to be prepared for changes that may come but also change the way they experience their current jobs. His book tackles the deeply personal challenges faced by an accomplished adult who now has to start over, with all the financial, health and family issues that many people in midlife carry.

Written with professional writer Susan Lahey, *Repurpose Your Career* is not only an easy read but packed with practical information and specific action steps. Available after March 17, 2017 in paperback on Amazon and Kindle. It's the guidebook people in their 40 and beyond need to carry them into the next phase of life. **For early copies, contact Marc Miller.**

Summary Points for Repurpose Your Career: A Practical Guide for The Second Half of Life

Changing careers in midlife seems Impossible, but it's often imperative

Between technology transforming what skills people need to succeed, and the general discontent most people feel about their jobs, people in the second half of life need more than the admonition to “follow your passion.” They need practical steps to change careers in a way that is reality based, while leading them to real satisfaction. They've spent decades building up a set of skills, contacts and experience. Rather than toss them and begin again, they need a way to pivot them into challenges and opportunities that will both inspire them and provide for their financial needs.

The key to finding a fulfilling new career is to know thyself

Most of us have a whole system of underlying, core needs we're not aware of. They're so much a part of us, and so rarely a part of the conversation regarding careers, that we don't factor them in when looking for a job. Knowing things about yourself, such as how much control you need, how much diversity in daily tasks, what kind of environment helps you be most productive and what kinds of rewards you're seeking, translate into fulfillment far more than salary and title. People in midlife are in a better position to identify what's important to them.

A career pivot is a set of practical steps

The best approach to a career change is a series of pivots that get you where you want to be. This includes identifying your personal operating system, networking and using social media strategically, and building a tribe. This also includes learning how to negotiate for what you want, remembering that you're not just putting yourself out there, hoping someone will have you. It's not easy for someone with experience and some gray hair to deliberately choose to step down from the position of “expert.” But overcoming pride and taking these steps is the path to greater fulfillment for the rest of your life.

Author Bios

Marc Miller is the founder of Career Pivot, a career design firm especially geared to people in midlife who want a more fulfilling work life. His own career has included nearly 20 years at IBM as an engineer, salesman and trainer followed by stints as a high school math teacher, fundraiser at an Austin non-profit and work at two different Austin startups. He has taught in 35 countries.

Spurred by incidents such as a nearly fatal bicycle accident, he has dedicated years to understanding the elements that comprise a satisfying career life from every angle, including how people relate to status, social interaction and physical activity. Then he uses his engineer's analytical skills, combined with his teaching expertise, to break down the process of identifying a compatible career and taking practical, powerful steps to transition from one career to another. A networking "connector" and long term resident of Austin, Miller speaks, gives workshops and helps individual clients find careers they can grow into for the rest of their lives.



Susan Lahey is a professional journalist and author who has covered business, technology, art, and sustainability—among other topics. She's ghostwritten several books on personal and career development and co-written books on finding a meaningful career and creating a meaningful workplace.

She loves what she does for a living.



Fact Sheet: Repurpose Your Career: A Practical Guide for The Second Half of Life

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Reviews

Repurpose Your Career provides jobseekers of all ages with essential information and action steps that can transform their lives. The book should be as survival gear. It will help you navigate the deep questions such as: Do you even know what your talents are? What makes you love one job and not another? Do you know how to describe the kinds of environments that put you "in the zone" from a work perspective? As Miller writes: "People tend to look at jobs from the perspective of salary and benefits but there are so many other things that matter."

Kerry Hannon, Work and Jobs Expert, author of *Love Your Job: The New Rules of Career Happiness and Getting The Job You Want After 50*

How can I find purpose and a paycheck in my next act? Figuring out what comes next is a journey. Marc Miller offers practical guidance and informed advice for anyone looking for both meaning and money in the second half of life.

Chris Farrell, author of *Unretirement*

If you're ready to pivot to a better career, don't miss the revised edition of Repurpose Your Career. It's an up-to-date guide that is filled with captivating stories and step-by-step strategies for taking control of your career - and your life. Smart, sensible and action-oriented, this is an important read.

Nancy Collamer, Semi-Retirement Expert and Founder of MyLifestyleCareer.com

Marc Miller's guide is a highly useful roadmap for anyone who'd like to make a career pivot. Its timely, practical tips on strategic networking, job hunting and building a personal brand are first-rate for the second half of life.

Richard Eisenberg, Work & Purpose Editor, [PBS Nextavenue.org](http://PBSNextavenue.org)

Career transitions are challenging, particularly in today's increasingly complex work environment. In Repurpose Your Career, Marc Miller proposes a compelling and insightful set of practices that anyone can use to pivot from a long-held career to new opportunities and a sustainable second-act.

John Tarnoff, Reinvention Career Coach, author of *Boomer Reinvention: How to Create Your Dream Career Over 50*

The disruption we're experiencing in when, where, how, and even why we work means many of us are reevaluating our goals, choices, and futures. And that disruption affects us all in different ways, forcing many to ask what's next? Is this it? or How did I wind up here? Everyone from baby boomers to gen X, to even millennials, will find inspiration from the

advice and actionable tips Marc offers in the second edition of Repurpose Your Career. Read this book to find your own answer to the question, what's next?

Brie Weiler Reynolds, Senior Career Specialist at FlexJobs

Most people know how jobs are filled. Few know how to execute a career pivot. To change direction and earn our living doing the things we really enjoy and are good at. To do this, we must know ourselves better. What we have, what we seek and what we need. Marc is my favorite expert on this vital life skill. And it requires a scientific approach to execute successfully. Marc's own life and experiences have given him all the qualifications needed to understand and explain how we can all find meaningful and rewarding work in the 21st century. Better still, if you follow the advice he presents so clearly here, you'll never hate your work again.

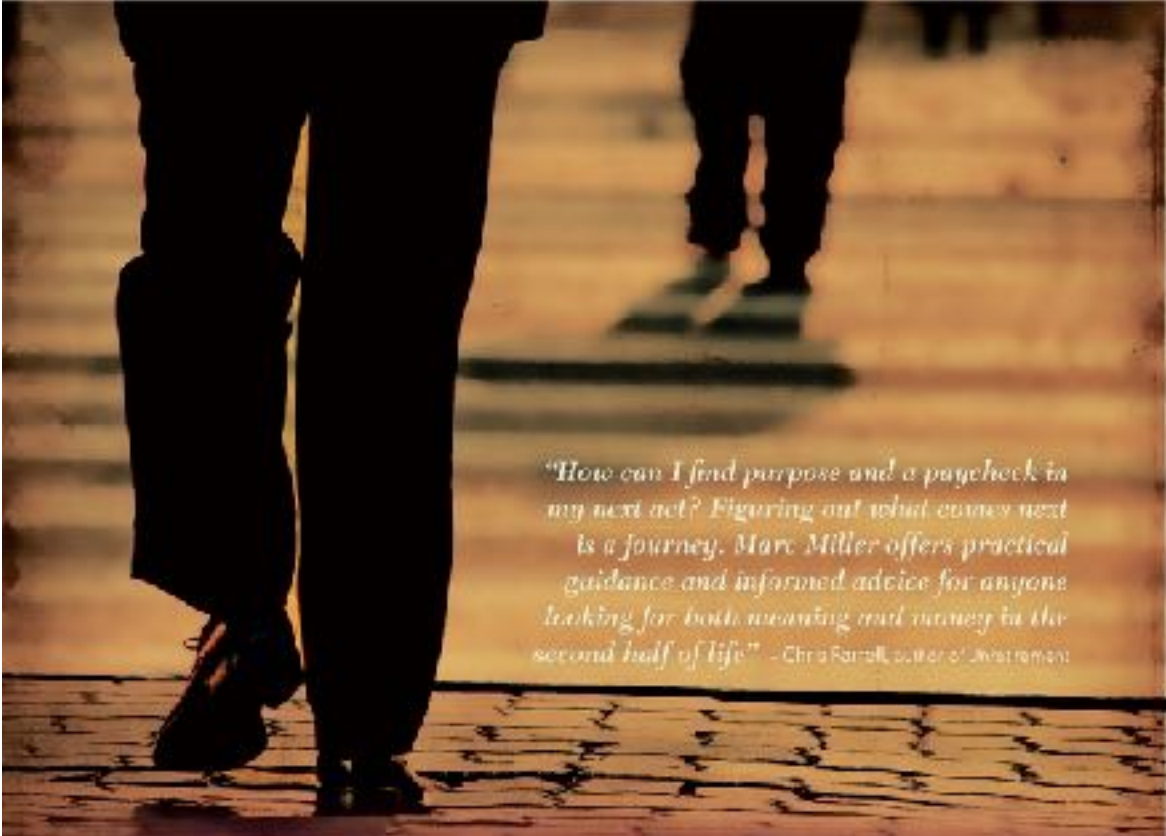
Neil Patrick, Editor: 40pluscareerguru.blogspot.co.uk

Marc dismantles any notion of the hands-off approach to your career. It is contrary to much of the traditional job search advice. You're the advocate and catalyst of your career. If you rather take part in a passive approach to your career, then skip this book. The most relevant career advice in 2017 is you driving engagement with people online and off, keeping the relationship fires stoked – employed or not –, and being empowered pilot opportunities before investing the best of your ideas into a career. A job search in 2017 without networking is like cereal without milk.

Mark Anthony Dyson, founder of "The Voice of Job Seekers" blog and podcast

As we all progress through our life journey, there may be times where we find ourselves stuck in situations that are suboptimal to fulfilling our life purpose. In this book, Marc Miller provides valuable insight on how to recognize the need for change and how to quickly leap back on to the road of success.

L. Xavier Cano, aka The Resume Whiz®



"How can I find purpose and a paycheck in my next act? Figuring out what comes next is a journey. Marc Miller offers practical guidance and informed advice for anyone looking for both meaning and money in the second half of life" - Chris Farrell, author of Retirement

REPURPOSE YOUR CAREER

— second edition —

A Practical Guide for
the 2nd Half of Life

MARC MILLER
with Susan Lahey

Marc Miller's guide is a highly useful roadmap for anyone who'd like to make a career pivot. Its timely, practical tips on strategic networking, job hunting and building a personal brand are first-rate for the second half of life. — Richard Eisenberg, Work & Purpose Editor, PBS NewsHour.org

When you're in the second half of life, everything looks different, and your career is no exception.

- Did you miss the path to a really satisfying career? • Is it too late to change?
- And what do you do about money in the meantime?

The world is changing fast. Whole industries are being disrupted by technology; globalization is changing the boundaries of the workplace and nobody's sure what skills will be important tomorrow. If you're in the second half of life, you're experiencing your own shifts and upheavals, finding—as we all do—that things aren't as we thought they would be when we hit our 40s and beyond. You need a strategy to figure out where to go from here.

Repurpose Your Career: A Practical Guide for the Second Half of Life provides that strategy. Career design expert Marc Miller helps you repurpose your old career, using the experience you've gained so far to make practical pivots into a new career. He teaches you to identify what you, uniquely, need for a happy work life in the long term. He gives specific advice on knowing yourself, building a tribe, networking strategically, using social media and interviewing successfully.



Marc Miller has parlayed his own career journey as a programmer, network architect, global training expert, high school teacher and non-profit fundraising professional into a successful business helping those in the 2nd half of life design careers that they can grow with and enjoy for decades to come.

"Repurpose Your Career provides jobseekers of all ages with essential information and action steps that can transform their lives. The book should be seen as a survival gear. It will help you navigate the deep questions such as: Do you even know what your talents are? What makes you love one job and not another? Do you know how to describe the kinds of environments that put you "in the zone" from a work perspective? As Miller writes: "People tend to look at jobs from the perspective of salary and benefits but there are so many other things that matter." — Jerry Hamon, Work and Jobs Expert, author of Love Your Job: The New Rules of Career Happiness and Getting the Job You Want After 50

"If you're ready to pivot to a better career, don't miss the revised edition of Repurpose Your Career. It's an up-to-date guide that is filled with captivating stories and step-by-step strategies for taking control of your career - and your life. Smart, sensible and action-oriented, this is an important read." — Nancy Coleman, Senior Retirement Report and Founder of MyLibertyCareer.com



Questions for Marc Miller, author, *Repurpose Your Career*

- 1. In a world where employers want experience, how does a person in their 40s or beyond make their case for a new career?**

It is all about your ability to demonstrate that you know your stuff. You will need to create something that demonstrates your skills and knowledge. This might be building an online portfolio on Pinterest or SlideShare, creating a blog, speaking at the local Rotary club and videoing the event, or writing a book. A lot of people in midlife feel embarrassed that they don't have the specific skills listed on the job description but they have to make the case that their experience translates well, possibly even better, than what employers are looking for.

- 2. What are some of the biggest obstacles people in midlife face in transforming their careers?**

It boils down to two things: The first is fear—fear of failure, fear about finances, fear of what other people will think. We have been programmed since childhood that failure is a sign of weakness rather than a learning opportunity. We make up stories on what could, should or would happen if change careers. All of these stories are made up in our head and inhibit progress.

The second biggest obstacle is that we don't know who we really are or what to do next. That's why I always include a lot of introspection in this process. People will tell you "I don't know what I want to do next" and so they wind up doing nothing.

- 3. What's the most important step people in the second half of life should take to find a better career?**

Figure out who the hell they are. What makes them happy? What makes them tick? When have you been happy? When have you enjoyed work?

- 4. What's the biggest mistake people make in changing careers?**

Not doing their homework. Not dealing from realities. That's what I did when I went off to teach high school, I didn't do my homework I learned a hard lesson. I had one client who was a project manager sitting behind a desk for 20 years who decided he wanted to be butcher. So he went to classes, took a seasonal job in a meat department. He found out he didn't want to be on his feet all day, it was a really hard, physical job. He did his homework before making a career transition that would not have worked out.

- 5. One chapter is on MSU Disorder. What is that?**

Making Stuff Up, or you can substitute another word for stuff. People tend to create their own stories about what's possible, what hiring manager or recruiters are thinking, what their bosses are thinking, and make bad decisions based on what they made up in their heads. In this book I deal not only with people looking to change their careers but also people looking to change their experience of their current jobs. MSU Disorder can lead to misery and it doesn't have to.

6. What is the most surprising thing you've discovered between your first and second books?

The most surprising thing is how fast things are changing and how adaptable people are when they decide to be. Every pivot they make teaches them to adapt and helps them grow and be ready for the next one. Since things continue to change, that's immensely important.

7. What were your best and worst career moves?

The best move I ever made was leaving IBM and going to a successful startup. It got me out of the monolithic organization where I worked for many years and into a smaller one. It taught me a lot about what I really liked.

That worst was switching from an IBM sales organization to being an IBM IT consultant. I assumed I was so technical I could go back to that, but I was sitting in a cubicle eight hours a day writing technical specifications and I hated it.

8. Tell me about your nearly fatal bicycle accident. How did it change your perspective?

I was riding my bicycle and I collided head-on with a 96 Toyota Corolla. Our combined speeds were 50 miles per hour. I totaled the car with my body. I was 46 and survival rates at those speeds are 10 percent, but I was up, walking on crutches in a matter of days. I had no business living through that. That made me really look at "What am I doing with my life?" Since then I've always done things to help people.

9. What piece of advice in your book do you think readers will have the most difficulty with?

I would have to repeat what I said in the book—it's asking for help. If you've been in a position where you have been the expert and you're going to where you are the novice, that's a major step down. That's hard on the ego. And it's just hard for a lot of us to ask for help.

10. Is the information in your book only applicable to people in the Second Half of Life?

No. Most of the practical steps to finding a career run across generations. The part that applies more directly to midlifers is the introspection part. They have a lot more career and life experience to draw from than younger people. They have more previous choices to examine to help make future choices.