

CHAPTER 1

QUESTERS AND THE CONTEMPORARY CAREER

Would you know a Quester if you met one? Are you a Quester yourself? Could you become one? What are Questers, anyway?

Questers

Questers think of their work differently from most people. Like many individuals, Questers will probably spend a third to half of their adult lives working or thinking about work. But, unlike most people, at crucial points in their careers, they set off on quests to find the missing links in their lives. Their life stories start out a lot like everyone's, until the day they begin a personal journey of discovery to find a better life and a better career. You, too, can make this journey.

People with Quester qualities have been around for ages, but their numbers are increasing today. Questers know they will prevail during uncertain times by continuing to learn, change, and grow.

Questers tend to be complex, individualistic, flexible, autonomous, and open to risk. They may have the best of both male and female strengths. They tend to be self-confident and have a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. Many hunger for tasks worthy of their talents and skills, and have the courage to do what is morally right even though their actions will be unpopular. Questers question authority and often pursue socially

Quester Qualities

- Self-reliant, independent
- Flexible, resilient
- Self-aware
- Confident
- Genuine
- Purposeful
- Androgynous
- Optimistic
- Creative
- Altruistic
- Intuitive
- Involved in job
- Energetic
- Actualizing
- Interpersonal
- Achievement-oriented
- Have courage to risk
- Value internal job rewards (e.g., autonomy, challenge) over external rewards (e.g., prestige, security)
- Reassess values and goals periodically
- Turn crises into opportunities
- Feel connected to everything in the universe

responsible work. They have a high need for job involvement and for other vital work rewards such as challenge, self-fulfillment, a sense of achievement, and opportunities for growth.

Questers accept criticism and failures, viewing defeat as a useful experience from which to grow. Their coping devices include focus, hard work, prayer or meditation, healthy lifestyles, support from friends and spouses, and a sense of humor. When they experience life crises—such as divorce, the death of a relative or close friend, job loss or dissatisfaction, marriage or birth—they undergo intense critical self-analysis. At transition periods, such as age-30, age-40, or age-60, Questers take another look in the mirror to find if they like what they see.

For many Questers, economic security and status take second place to intrinsic satisfaction and the desire to have alternatives. They value flexibility and can reshape their identities through self-determined career choices. They have a playful, task-centered approach to problem-solving. They measure success by internal standards and value self-respect more than peer respect. Questers tend to be free from conventional restraints. They are independent and innovative, and have a rich supply of inner resources. Questers strive to maintain a healthy balance among work, love, and leisure. They love a challenge.

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Questers tend to have a cheerful, optimistic outlook. Cheated or disappointed in life? Hardly ever! Going to work usually is a joy. Few of them ever get bored because their work provides them with a sense of purpose, growth, and other desired job perks. Questers generally rise with a smile, ready to meet the challenges before them.

Surely, you're thinking Questers must be extraordinary, glamorous people. Not really. They are ordinary individuals who face career challenges common to most people. But they have learned to do something about their difficulties—to take control.

You probably know some Questers. They have been around in every age. Searching for fulfillment through self-determined career choices, they tend to continuously reshape their identities. Motivated by freedom, growth, achievement, job involvement, and job satisfaction, they measure success internally. *Abraham Maslow*, the father of humanistic psychology, called them self-actualizing individuals who strive to become all they can be!

By contrast, Questers are not like Traditionalists, who tend to be committed to an organizational career. Traditionalists tend to value advancement, power, position, salary, and the respect and esteem of others. Their mobility tends to be low and their adaptability is tied to organization-related flexibility and survival.

Many Traditionalists are concerned about how their careers measure up against the approved timetables for their professions. Failure to stay on

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track may leave them feeling panicky. Conforming rigidly to a single, narrow career track, Traditionalists feel they must travel systematically from section head to supervisor to manager to executive, from law clerk to junior and then senior partner. Recognition, they hope, comes to those who are faithful, attentive, and loyal.

Although they may achieve temporary security, their future options are severely limited. The desire for security has its cost. Traditionalists worry too much about doing the expected thing. They choose careers that conform to what is expected of them.

Self-Seekers, on the other hand, tend to be just the opposite. Motivated by a desire for personal fulfillment, Self-Seekers refuse to work as hard as their parents and contemporaries. They want the perfectly balanced life, with time for love, leisure, family, and personal expression. Their happiness formula is giving and getting love, and they shun ambition and leadership in their search for the comfortable life. They want gratification now and responsibility later. Self-Seekers assume they have the right to work less and be fulfilled while enjoying life's genteel comforts.

Self-Seekers choose a lifestyle that suits them. They willingly pass up promotions and difficult business challenges that might threaten their comfortable lives. While satisfying work is important, Self-Seekers aren't prepared to sacrifice for their careers or to have their jobs dominate their lives. Their greatest fears are not having enough money and being trapped by the constant pursuit of money. This is their dilemma. To pursue freedom at the sacrifice of a comfortable life is almost unthinkable.

Questers can be distinguished from Traditionalists and Self-Seekers by their willingness to take control of their careers. Which are you: a Traditionalist, a Self-Seeker, or a Quester?

You probably are more like one than the others, but you may share traits of all three. Fortunately, you can be whichever you desire. Your personality is far from set in stone. You can create and recreate it every day.

To achieve the transformations you want, look to the Questers.

Carl is an achiever, a winner, the kind of guy for whom life is a warm sea breeze. He is husky and handsome, with clear blue eyes. Carl grew up in an orphanage but, through hard work, won a scholarship to an Ivy League college. He taught for a while, and then went on to graduate

school for a master's degree in educational psychology. Eventually he found himself in a Washington, DC, government department, where he rose with relative ease through several offices. But something was wrong.

“On paper I had it all,” he explains. “I had a prestigious, secure, and well-paying job; a pretty wife and two kids; a house in the suburbs; club memberships; and a respectable backhand. But I had a persistent and nagging feeling that life wasn't working. I never looked at the big tapestry—what I really wanted—because that was too scary. And, besides, didn't I already have the American dream?”

A series of small jolts forced him out of his velvet-lined rut. First, he learned that his wife was having an affair. What shocked him most was that he just didn't care. The couple divorced, and Carl was looking at life from a new angle. His marriage and career had something in common. He had gone into both because people expected him to. But now he began questioning whether he should devote his energy to living up to other people's expectations. He had traded self-fulfillment and meaning for security. Not long after that, Carl quit his job. He had no idea what he was going to do next.

Carl was a little frightened and needed someone to talk to. He found that person in the wife of a friend. “The first woman other than my wife I'd ever really confided in.”

Carl began his search for a new job with a painful but necessary transition. He moved from his comfortable home to a bare room in an apartment borrowed from a friend. He had a bed, a light bulb, and a stereo system. He missed his house and his children; he felt guilty because, as an orphan himself, he'd vowed never to leave his children. For the first time in his adult life, he allowed himself to cry. Yet, despite his loneliness and guilt, Carl also felt what he calls “the exhilaration of trusting myself for the first time.”

Carl now says he was unhappier before he made the break than during the transition itself. “Earlier, I was using up more energy just justifying a life that wasn't working,” he says. “But after the break, I was confronting myself for the first time. The fear and loneliness didn't begin to offset the feeling of integrity I had. The best way to describe it is to say that it was wonderfully terrifying.”

Carl survived because he made the right decision. After leaving

Washington, he started a management consulting firm in an Eastern city. Carl and his ex-wife became friends again. These days, his young son lives with him; his daughter lives with her mother. He thinks that switching jobs made his divorce less bitter than it might have been. “I would have been unhappy with myself and taken it out on others,” he admits.

Kathy also found she needed a change. Although she had a BA, she didn’t have a clear career goal. She was pretty, a good athlete, and had many interests and abilities. Kathy worked at a series of jobs until, at 22, she went for career counseling. That led to a one-year managerial training program with a large insurance firm. Kathy enjoyed her training. Her job seemed challenging enough. But within four years, she became bored and suffering from extreme mood swings, she realized she needed—even craved—challenge.

Her father’s death forced Kathy to take another look at her life. This time she decided to leave her job, and retrain for another occupation—the law. Today, she is excited about her work in the legal field.

Like Kathy, *Luke* is making a new start. For 30 years, Luke worked his way up from mechanic to middle manager for a trucking firm. Then, at 52, he bought a hardware store in a town 70 miles from the Western city where he had lived his whole life. Was the decision made on the spur of the moment? No, he says: “I planned my getaway. I saved my

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money and explored the communities within 100 miles of my hometown. I liked fixing things, and the hardware business will let me expand the store into a repair shop later if I feel like it.”

Luke is talking like a Quester. He feels like one, too. This is how he describes his job now: “It provides me with a sense of accomplishment, the opportunity to use my skills, and the feeling that I have some control over my life. I now have more energy left over at the end of the day to do other things. I feel rather peaceful and content.”

Like these three Questers, you can take charge of your life and your career. Career, family, relationships, and leisure will cross and intersect, clash and complement. The paths you choose will depend on your own

personality, goals, and life situation. To understand how you can control the direction of your life and make well-informed choices, you need to understand your place in the modern work world, and the different ways of viewing career development. Like the Questers, view setbacks as opportunities to transform your life.

Contemporary Career

Career as Movement

Your career is the path you carve out for yourself. It involves a continuing quest for a better fit between who you are and what you do. Your occupation is based on skills you've earned through education or training. But while you may have several occupations or several positions within an occupation during the course of your life, you will have only one career, because you have only one life. Your career is made up of a series of occupations or positions—yet, it is more than that. Your career is a lifelong process.

Like an obstacle course in which you climb, stretch, and swing to develop your muscles, your career spiral continues on—widening, ever-changing, mutable, dynamic, ascending, and expansive—throughout your life. It may be that one occupation satisfies just one facet of your personality. Each stop suggests more challenges ahead. Moving on restlessly, using each job as an opportunity to grow, you plot your next move. What matters is not promotion on your job but advancement of your whole person. To be fulfilled, you need work that is compatible with many aspects of your personality.

Howard discovered the need for fulfillment when he reached 32. Throughout high school he had dreamed of becoming an executive with a large manufacturing company. He had worked part-time for the firm during high school and was excited about becoming a manager. It seemed prestigious. At 23, Howard was well on his way to middle management.

During his first six years at the company Howard enjoyed his work. His first two supervisors were “fine people, supportive, and helpful.” But

the next six years brought different supervisors and changing company policies. Howard's position became meaningless. The work was "monotonous" and the atmosphere "oppressive." The money and the prestige no longer seemed to matter.

Whatever his difficulties at work, Howard's marriage was in good shape, and he enjoyed playing in a local band. As he became friendly with two of the band members, both policemen, they told him the pros and cons of police work. He learned more by participating in several volunteer police programs. Then, just after his 31st birthday, his mother suddenly became ill and died. For Howard, it was a turning point. He realized that life was short. If he was going to change, it would have to be now.

So, at 32, Howard decided to enter the police training program. He had discussed his disillusionment with his wife, and she said she was willing to take a part-time job to help pay the bills. Today, Howard is a police captain. He has found a career that will let him grow, one that provides meaning, variety, and an outlet for his desire to help others.

What happened to Howard? Like many, he simply outgrew his career. His needs, values, and priorities had shifted. He was no longer so interested in status. Money meant less to him. The decision to change jobs did not come easily; it was agonizing and took time. Moreover, Howard and his family had to give up many comforts. But today, Howard is confident his decision was the right one; so is his family. His career grew, and so did he.

Career as Job-Person Fit

Imagine the growth and development of your career as a spiral. If you could draw it, it would look like a track moving around a continuous curve toward a central point. That central point is you. You are the center of gravity and balance for your career spiral. If you look closely at the central point in your spiral, you will see a subtle, wonderful portrait of yourself. This portrait captures everything about you. It is a portrait of you as a whole person.

From this whole person, your energy radiates—your soul, temperament, needs, values, interests, skills, aptitudes, and goals. Like a dynamo that fuels your spiral, your energy feeds into your career track. Building a successful career relies on evaluating the harmony among your portrait,

your job, and your goals. Like your career, your personal characteristics and goals change as you grow. As your portrait changes, so will the results of your evaluation.

Let's take a look at *Al's* career to see how it developed and changed over the years. Al was born and raised in a Midwestern town. After high school, he entered a computer science program at a nearby university because, in his words, "computers were the field to be in...the opportunities for employment and making good money were excellent."

At 23, Al graduated with a master's degree in computer science, got married, and accepted a position as a systems analyst with a large firm 1,300 miles from his boyhood home. At first Al enjoyed his work. It gave him challenge and autonomy. As his star continued to rise, he and his wife had their first child.

But seven years later, as he neared his 30th birthday, Al began to feel as if something—some sense of purpose or meaning—was missing. For three years he searched his soul. Then Al left his job and returned with his family to the Midwestern town where he was raised. Using his savings to realize his lifelong dream, he bought a farm. Now Al and his wife are devoted farmers. They enjoy their lifestyle and their work.

Al changed because his needs and values changed. But why and how did that happen? As in Howard's case, the changes Al made were caused by many different events. Al's job had lost its challenge. He felt stifled. The birth of his child and the joy of becoming a parent helped him realize that his family was more important than his career. Al was also beginning to realize that time was passing. He was anxious to try something new—his longtime dream of becoming a farmer.

But what if, at the very moment that he was looking into his life, Al had suddenly received a fabulous offer—a promotion to senior analyst and a big raise? If Al had accepted, what would have happened to his career spiral? Would it have shot forward and upward? Unfortunately, no. It would have remained precisely where it was, in a state of suspended animation. Why? Because Al's development as a human being, as a whole person, would have come to a grinding halt.

Al's glance into the mirror of his dreams at 30 helped him to change. By moving back to a small town and buying a farm, Al created harmony between his portrait and the energy it was radiating for his career track.

When he changed occupations, his career track leapt forward because Al, as a whole person, had advanced.

Marion's career also developed and changed over the years. Marion worked as a microbiology researcher for eight years while her husband went to medical school, then she took time off to raise their two children and do volunteer work. Then, at 39, Marion made a decision that would radically change her life.

She says: “I wanted something to do—not just a job to earn grocery money—something that would excite me. But like most women, I had the feeling that I didn’t have the right to please myself. After a great deal of thought, I decided what I really wanted to do was go back to college and get a master’s degree in counseling psychology. So I did. At first, I was terrified. What if I failed? How could I compete with young people?”

Today, Marion is a counselor at a women’s resource center on the West Coast. She spends her time counseling women who are asking the same questions she once did. She shares: “I understand where these women are because I was there myself. Like most women, they’re asking a very important question: What should I do with the rest of my life?”

Like Al, Marion decided what to do with her life by checking her image in the mirror. In her early 20s, she saw a young woman in a white lab coat. In real life, she worked hard for eight years to fit that image. When Marion looked at her portrait again in her late 20s, she saw a young mother. She had changed, and so had her life situation. After eight years as a lab researcher, she was bored. Her husband was practicing medicine and could support them both. The biological clock was ticking. If Marion wanted children, the time was now. So Marion fused her portrait and her career by taking time off to raise two children.

The children kept her busy. But nine years later, when she looked into her portrait again, the image was blurred. Marion was confused. The children were in school and her husband was engaged in his career. Marion knew she wanted to go back to work, but could she and should she? Marion’s interests, needs, and values had changed. She wanted a job that suited her new personality. But what? It took long deliberation, talks with her family, and career counseling before Marion concluded that she wanted to become a counselor.

Now when Marion looks into her portrait, she sees a career woman. The picture is clear. Marion created harmony between her portrait and herself by moving forward when she became dissatisfied with her life. Making changes wasn't easy, but she did it.

Career as Purpose

Career as purpose helps you express your inner self, your core or seed. It enables you to answer these questions: What was I born to do? Who am I? Who do I want to become? It helps you to choose an occupation and a lifestyle that give your life meaning and direction. Your life reflects a unity of purpose.

With a purpose, you have a step-by-step design; without a purpose you live by default. Your purpose is your compass. It helps keep you on the right path and realigns your activities when you get off track. It's the driving force in your life, the reason you wake up in the morning.

Candice's purpose is helping others. She discovered this by accident when, at 18, she worked as a sales associate in a Midwestern city bakery. Candice said she really enjoyed helping customers decide which products they needed.

After taking time out to raise two children, Candice returned to work part-time as a sales associate in a cosmetics shop. She loved helping customers feel good about their appearance. Candice did everything possible to learn this trade. She read and attended seminars, workshops, and conferences. She saved her money and opened one, then a second, and, finally, a third cosmetics shop. Candice says: "I've always wanted to help people...and despite all the frustration and debt I've experienced, I love my work. It makes me feel excited, gives meaning to what I do."

Candice's employees admire her as a boss. She is extremely knowledgeable and shows she cares about each of them. Candice's customers recommend new customers. In her spare time, Candice leads a young entrepreneurs' group at the local YWCA. Her children, now young adults, know their mother is always available to listen and help when needed. Although Candice leads a busy life, she manages her time well.

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Candice's life reflects a unity of purpose. Not only does her occupation reflect who she is and what is important to her, all of her activities are in harmony with her entrepreneurial position. Now 55 years young, Candice looks a radiant 40. She has never been ill and rarely feels tired, despite working 12 hours most days.

Purpose is the core around which many Questers' lives are organized and directed. Questers see all their activities—leisure, work, and relationships—reflecting a unity of purpose. But different themes run through the lives of each Quester. The theme that runs through Candice's life is helping others. Other Quester themes include healing, fixing things, building, creating beauty, leading, being a change agent, learning, teaching, and creating family harmony.

The occupations Questers choose help them express their life purpose and give their lives meaning and direction. They are honest with themselves because they are living out who they believe they are. You may, for example, have a job as a teacher, but if your position does not allow you to express yourself and give your life meaning and satisfaction, then you don't have a teaching career. Teaching is just the work you do for pay. Research shows that having a sense of purpose promotes health, happiness, a zest for life, successful aging, and maintenance of morale in difficult times.

Just as the course of your life is in constant motion, so too is your career. To live a truly satisfying life, you must periodically reassess all life components—occupation, family, spiritual, relationships, and leisure—and make necessary modifications to bring your inner and outer worlds into harmony.

Carl, Kathy, Luke, Howard, Al, Marion, and Candice are Questers, people who dared to change so that they could be themselves. Their work provides income, pleasure, and a sense of purpose.

Today, career development has become a continuing quest to create greater harmony between who you are and what you do. Surprisingly, studies show that many people who like their jobs would continue to work even if they inherited a vast fortune or won the lottery. But why is work so important?

Work Through the Ages

Most people spend a third to a half of their waking hours at work, commuting to work, or thinking about work. How ironic it is that work, considered by the early Greeks and Romans to be punishment and drudgery, is now so important.

Early Christianity slowly changed the meaning of work. As the centuries passed, the powerful Church came to recognize agriculture, handi-crafts, and commerce as valuable professions. Work acquired “spiritual dignity.” But not until the Renaissance was work recognized as a source of joy and creative fulfillment. The Reformation followed on its heels, shaping modern ideas about work and stimulating the development of capitalism.

The Protestant Reformation elevated work to a new status. The search for excellence had begun. Calvinism added yet another twist: Work and wealth were okay, as long as they weren’t enjoyed. Calvinists considered it a religious duty to choose a calling and follow it industriously.

Hard work, worldly achievements, high profits, and individualism were already entrenched in the work ethic when developments in scientific technology gave birth to the Industrial Revolution. The world was transformed. Entrepreneurs, employing specialized labor and equipment, needed workers for efficient production lines. Independent thinking, creativity, and personal ability were reduced.

Adam Smith believed money was the driving force behind capitalism, and that specialization and the division of labor were vital if capitalism was to succeed. Smith indicated that the division of labor would maximize production by allowing workers to specialize in discrete aspects of the production process. Moreover, individuals acting in their own self-interest would seek out economic activities that provided the greatest financial rewards.

The late 19th century brought a radical change to work theory when Frederick Taylor’s theory of scientific management was grafted onto Smith’s philosophy. Taylor’s main objective was improving economic efficiency, especially labor productivity. Inventing time-and-motion studies and a wide range of authoritarian procedures to increase productivity,

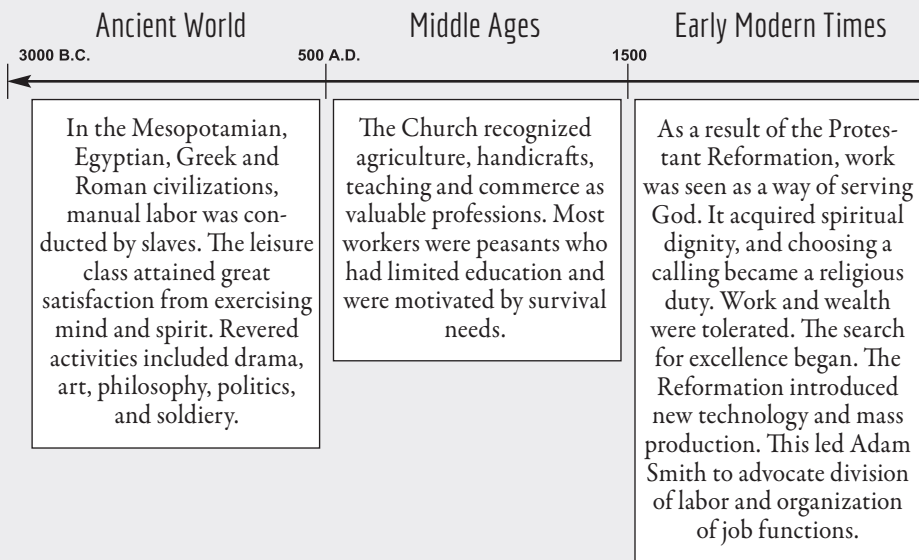
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Taylor effectively chained employees into systems that controlled their every movement. Money was the reward for getting the job done on time.

Industrial capitalism (an economic and social system in which trade, industry and capital are privately controlled and operated for a profit) gave birth to the modern corporate bureaucracy. The bureaucratic pyramid strengthened the idea that only those at the top had the capacity to make decisions.

In the 1920s, management began to question some of its own beliefs. How valuable was authoritarianism? Were people only interested in

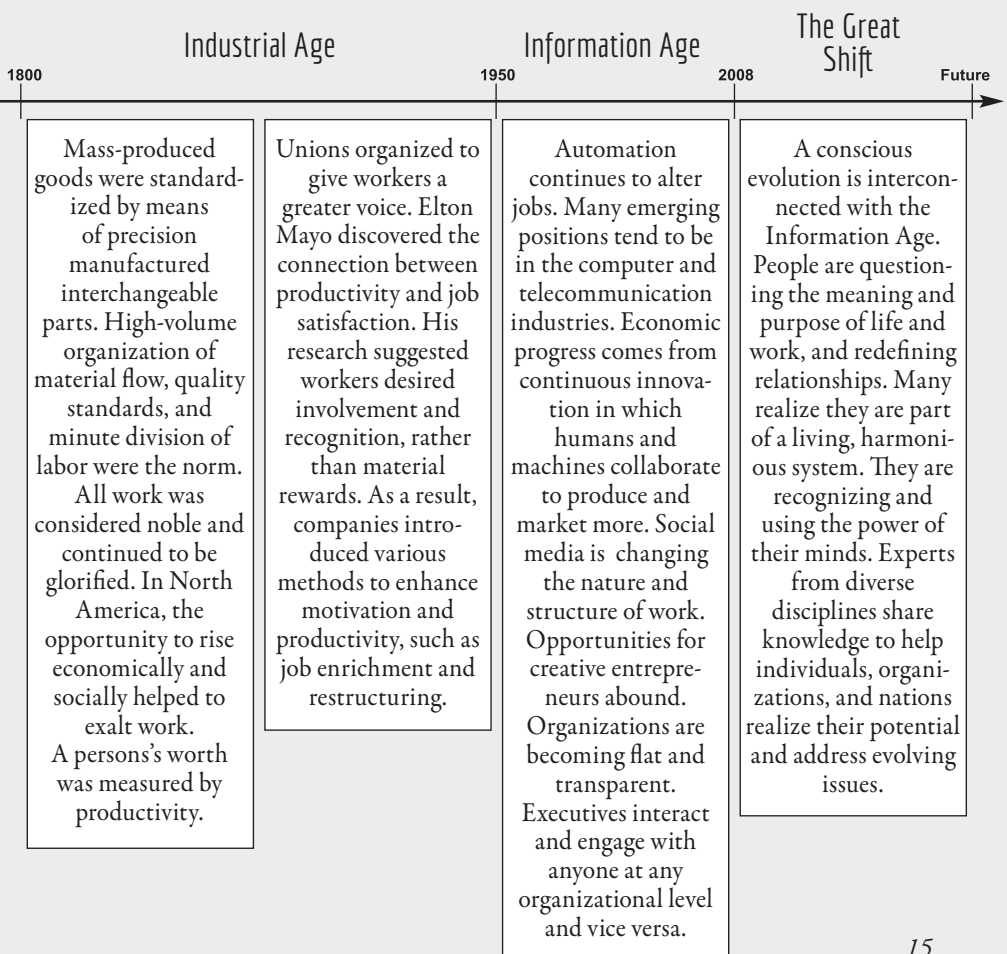
Work Through the Ages



making money? Should all decisions rest with the managerial talent at the top of the pyramid? In the late 1940s, the answers emerged. *Elton Mayo* discovered a clear connection between productivity and work satisfaction. What people really wanted was a satisfying social milieu that offered involvement, attention, and recognition. The human relations school of management had been born. Job satisfaction and career development had become important issues.

Automation and the Information Age

Forecasting the future is challenging. Some predictions are accurate;



others are not. Nevertheless, it's helpful to look at some labor-force trends and forecasts made by authorities.

World War II was the fountainhead of many technological, social, and economic changes that began to accelerate in the 1950s.

The late 1990s brought about an even faster evolution of technology in education, work, and lifestyle. This period, sometimes called the Information Age, Computer Age, or Digital Age, is characterized by the gathering and almost instantaneous transmission of vast amounts of information and by the rise of information-based industries.

The digital industry has created a knowledge-based, high-tech, global economy that enables the manufacturing and service sectors to operate efficiently and conveniently.

As IBM reports, much data that exists today have been created within the past two years, born from sensors recording every turn of the engine, every tick of a machine, and every tweet in a world in which everything is recorded, searchable, and permanent.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest are changing a lot of what we know about work, leadership, and management. The 9-5 work day is changing. The meaning and function of leadership is changing. Employees have a voice. They can share ideas with anyone within the company, and thus become leaders (not executives) who may influence a decision. A new breed of business leader, brave enough to apply big capital to big data and analytics, is emerging.

The collective intelligence of both organizations and individuals are making their way into enterprises around the globe. Companies can leverage the experience and wisdom of an entire workforce to solve a problem, and know how to communicate with identified problem solvers quickly. Social-savvy employees post queries, comments, and feedback to internal conversation threads or chat rooms.

Automation continues to alter jobs. More work is done by automatic controls and computerized equipment, and less by their human masters. Emerging positions tend to be in high-tech areas such as the computer and telecommunication industries. The number of jobs in the environmental and resource industries is accelerating as scientists explore the frontiers of oceans and space. Service jobs like sales representatives,

maintenance and repair workers, and home health care aides are increasing. Manufacturing jobs and jobs for unskilled workers are decreasing.

Economic progress comes from continuous innovation. Opportunities for creative entrepreneurs abound. Many doors will open for you if you know how to use computers, telecommunications, and social media.

As electronic systems become smarter and more efficient, every profession and industry feels the impact. There is a diminishing need for such jobs as cashiers and bank tellers. No need to fear, though. New jobs such as brain signal decoder, clone rancher, extinction revivalist, robotician, ergonomist, business recovery planner, and cybersecurity technician are developing as the need for different ones diminishes. People will also find creative ways of using their skills. For example, they can add new skills to their existing jobs (retrofitting) or combine skills and functions from different jobs to create new specialties (blending).

Another emerging development is whole-brain emulation or mind uploading (sometimes called mind transfer). This is the hypothetical process of transferring a conscious mind from a human brain to a non-biological substrate by scanning and mapping a biological brain and copying its state into a computer system or another computational device. While the brain today remains one of the biggest mysteries of all, the next 100 years are likely to host neuroscience advances, bolstered by the power of quantum computing that could make an uploaded mind an actuality. Advances in law, philosophy, and politics should help answer such questions as “Is it human?” and “What are its rights and responsibilities?”

To thrive in today’s digital world, you need to acquire skills that can’t be easily automated. Questers know this. They are in tune with the continuous work world changes, and adapt by constantly strengthening skills and attitudes needed to succeed. Many Questers, for example, keep on polishing “meta-skills” such as critical thinking, problem solving, continuous learning, research, and creativity. They are aware that trust, intuition, relationship building, and ethical leadership are important qualities to develop. In addition to perfecting their computer skills, Questers maintain expertise.

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Many use Twitter as a communication tool to advance their professional lives. They communicate with clients, potential clients, and the general public to share information and strategies about themselves and their company or brand, and vice versa.

The Great Shift

A consciousness evolution or spiritual reawakening is interconnected with the Information Age. A growing number of people are questioning the meaning and purpose of their lives. They are redefining their relationship with the Universe, the Earth, and each other.

Disasters and crises at the micro and macro levels are causing people to reassess values and goals. At the micro level, crises such as job loss, illness, or divorce precipitate self-appraisal. Macro disasters such as the tsunami in Southeast Asia, 9/11 in the United States, climate change, and economic recessions have provided impetus for nations to reevaluate goals and work cooperatively to resolve problems.

Experts representing diverse disciplines are turning to higher levels of consciousness to expand knowledge and enhance services. Professionals in fields such as physics, biology, health, psychology, and religion are integrating knowledge. *Edgar Mitchell*, Apollo Astronaut and co-founder of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, postulates that the world is part of a living, harmonious, whole system. He believes people participate “in a universe of consciousness.” Mitchell and renowned scholars share research to help individuals and organizations realize their potential.

Dr. Willis Harman, author of *Global Mind Change*, contends that we are living through one of the most fundamental shifts in history—a change in the actual belief structure of Western industrial society. He shows the interrelationship of all human endeavors and explores possibilities for social transformation through internal change. Harman, whose career spanned both technical and social sciences, writes: “No economic, political, or military power can compare with the power of a change of mind. By deliberately changing their images of reality, people are changing the world.”

The New Attitude Unfolds

To your parents and grandparents, career was a simple concept. Work

rewards usually centered on moving up the corporate ladder, achievement, individualism, and delayed gratification. Success meant social standing, respectability, being a good parent, sacrificing for the children, having money for the good things, security, and independence. No one agonized over or discussed self-fulfillment. No one thought of quitting a job; that was a sign of instability or irresponsibility. The future was as certain as the day was long.

Today, nothing is certain. The value of work is judged more by personal and job satisfaction and less by money and position. Success means different things to different people. Authenticity is making a comeback.

You have the option of creating the kind of work and lifestyle you want. You can design meaningful work by modifying your current position, convincing others to hire you, taking time out to study or travel, becoming a full-time homemaker, or establishing your own business. To thrive in the changing workplace, you must adapt to new rules, and confront both the risks and opportunities they provide.

To adapt and succeed in the digital age you need to learn new attitudes and patterns of coping, new values, and new skills. You would benefit from strengthening Quester traits.

Tapping into Career Rewards

There are a number of rewards you can derive from your career, including a sense of identity, self-confidence, status, and material comforts. But if who you are is what you do, what happens when you don't find your work meaningful or satisfying? Like a steam cooker, life's pressures can build up until they explode. To relieve this pressure positively, you must discover who you are and what you want, then find a job setting, occupation, or series of occupations that fit your developing personality and desired lifestyle.

Your career may also function as a way to gain varied experiences. Job changes no longer signal instability or indecision. A variety of work roles can be a hedge against obsolescence and indicate personal drive, flexibility, and generalist skills. Acquiring many different skills can also be protection against unemployment. Nowadays, changing jobs may be necessary due to a variety of factors including mergers, new technologies, outsourcing, and other trends. Questers tend to monitor their

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careers and prepare for the possibility of layoffs. They are careful not to stay too long in repetitive jobs that may rob them of flexibility, growth opportunities, and the possibility of being replaced by younger, cheaper talent.

At the same time, Questers are not job-hoppers. They tend to make appropriate choices and initially like and are involved in their work. But after three or more years, if they can no longer grow in their jobs, they leave. They are willing to take prepared risks.

Not all Questers live to work though. Some work to live. Others have difficulty separating the two. If you work for a paycheck, you probably work to live. If you're engrossed in work activities, you may live to work. Compartmentalizing work and non-work activities suggests you strive for balance. There are many lifestyle patterns from which to choose. Which one is right for you?

John, a professor, says: "I could retire, but choose not to because work is too much fun...If I wasn't paid, I would continue to work. If I retire, there is only one thing left to do!"

Anil doesn't differentiate between work and play: "I like being challenged, making a difference. Work is an extension of who I am, my purpose." This entrepreneur is involved in numerous projects that enhance the quality of his life and that of others.

Lorrie has a different perspective: "My calling is to enjoy life. I work to live...I work for money to supply my lifestyle. Although I do get satisfaction from doing good work, I devote my life to hobbies and volunteer activities."

Today, career issues are being debated in the public forum. Career is viewed as an arena for achieving social equality and humane working conditions. The movement toward civil rights in the workplace promises fair hiring and promoting practices. Organizations face increased pressure to eliminate unsafe working conditions that threaten the physical or emotional well-being of their employees. As people become increasingly aware of their rights and responsibilities in the work world, job quality and employment practices become issues for political drum-beating. Studies in vocational, industrial, and social psychology show how career satisfaction and adjustment—including job involvement, organizational commitment, and burnout—affect people's lives.

There is no best lifestyle. Each person should select a lifestyle that is congruent with his or her personal qualities. All life components are tied to your identity. How you feel about one area is interwoven with how you feel about other areas. Your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual being are one. Expressing yourself fully requires a careful meshing of all parts that make you special.

Some Famous Questers

You may suspect by now that many Questers are either highly successful in their careers or complete failures. The truth is that success is measured differently by Questers than by most Traditionalists and Self-Seekers, as we have already seen. Yet the Questers have included many famous successes among their ranks. Most of them also found purpose in their work.

Pablo Picasso had this to say about his work: “What is always there is your work. It is the extension of you—not your child, but you. You are your work. The passions that motivate you may change, but it is your work in life that is the ultimate seduction.”

Eminent French designer *Coco Chanel* was indomitable at work. In private she was totally vulnerable. Everything worried her. “I believe that every little girl should be taught as early as possible something she can do to take her through her whole life. I shall always be grateful to my work because it taught me independence. Even more important, it saved me from boredom. Boredom is a terrible thing.”

Lee Iacocca suffered a devastating emotional blow before masterminding Chrysler’s remarkable financial turnaround. Iacocca had spent 34 years working his way up to president of Ford Motor Company when he was fired in 1978. A generous separation agreement guaranteed him \$1 million a year until 1980—if he remained unemployed. By joining Chrysler, he would trade \$2 million for the helm of a faltering auto giant teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. To fail would add hundreds of thousands of Chrysler employees to Detroit’s unemployment rolls. The future of Detroit was on the line. To take the job was to jeopardize his reputation. But he did. By December 1984, Iacocca’s marketing genius

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had turned a dying company into a 2.3 billion-dollar financial giant—all for the love of a challenge and a concern for humankind.

People always thought *Barbara McClintock* was an oddball. She didn't let anyone stop her from doing what she wanted to do. She played sports when other girls didn't. When she grew up, she studied genetics, a field considered inappropriate for women. She investigated chromosomes while everybody else was looking at DNA. And when she made the remarkable discovery of jumping genes, other scientists thought she was crazy. Dr. McClintock knew she was right. She won the Nobel Prize in Physiology in 1983, when she was 81 years old—three decades after she made her discovery. The other scientists had finally caught up with her. This remarkable researcher was the first woman to win an unshared Nobel Prize in any science category.

The Questers you have met in this chapter found both the courage and the means to take command of their lives. Why did they do it? What personality traits gave them the courage to risk and to persevere? Could you do the same? Are there characteristics you already possess or could develop that would turn you into a Quester?