

What Color Is Your Parachute Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *What Color Is Your Parachute* is a classic for job seekers, equipping you with the tools, tips and strategies you need to quickly find the right gig in today's fast-moving market.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



What I love so much about books is the aura of longevity that surrounds them. Even if most books never reach a wide audience, technically, they can survive for 1000s of years, until one day, someone digs them up again. But longevity has its problems too.

For a book to take a stand over time it needs to not deviate from what it stood for when it was released. That's why authors of classics like *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* make as few changes to their books as possible. The price they pay for a strong message is that their books feel old today.

So how can you send a strong message without compromising your book's relevancy in a world that changes so fast? You could do what Richard "Dick" Bolles did: update your book every single year. He's done so with his bible for job seekers, *What Color Is Your Parachute*, since 1975, sometimes altering entire sections of the book.

What worked 40 years ago when trying to get a job won't work today. Thanks to Richard's continued effort, I can share 3 lessons with you about what does:

1. Take it slow, since it's become normal for the job hunt to take a while.
2. Don't mind your resumé, mind what comes up when people google you.
3. Job interviews are won before they begin and there are three things you can do to ensure you will.

Whether you've been out of a job or just feel ready for a new one, here's how to take your career to the next level!

Lesson 1: Don't rush your job hunt. It takes some time nowadays.

It might be the hardest element to deal with in finding a job: the uncertainty of when it'll happen. At the end of her second month searching, a friend of mine recently told me the rejections started to eat at her. I get that.

At the same time the last thing you want to do is to get cold feet, because eventually, you'll take any job, just to have one and probably end up unhappy *and* underpaid. To calm you down and give you some perspective: **it's normal for your job hunt to take a few months these days.**

In a pre-2008 world, unemployment turnover was high, meaning it took only five weeks on average for half of all unemployed people in the US to find a job again. But after the big crash of 2008, employers have continued to hold the upper hand and hire much more conservatively. Now it would take over a year for just 20-30% of unemployed people to find a new position!

What's more, most people, even in older age categories, have been at their jobs for less than a year or less than five years. Freelance gigs and part-time jobs are on the rise and if you don't want either, you'll just have to shop around for a while.

So don't worry, don't panic and *definitely* don't lower your standards.

Keep calm and carry on.

Lesson 2: Forget optimizing your resumé, optimize your online presence instead.

One of the most powerful lessons I've learned in my two years of freelancing is this: **You don't need a resumé to get a job.**

Because I've built such a huge body of work on the internet, I've gotten multiple, unsolicited requests for paid work along the lines of "Hey, I like your work, can I pay you to write some articles?" Though I rarely take them, it's incredibly reassuring to have the market approach you.

That's also why Dick Bolles suggests the first step to take in your job hunt is to . What comes up? If you were an employer, what would you think of your LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter profile?

First, eliminate all red flags, like drunk pictures, angry comments, racist jokes and potentially false info that doesn't match your actual resumé – or just plain isn't true.

Once you've cleaned up your online presence to make sure potential employers won't run into any *negative* surprises, you can now flip the switch in the other direction: start leaving a trail of *positively* surprising breadcrumbs on the web!

This could be a blog, a design portfolio, a well-groomed Twitter curation account or a public portfolio on Covestor. Whatever lets you show the world you know what you're doing when it comes to your line of work is fair game.

Let's play!

Lesson 3: There are three ways to score in a job interview and you can tackle all of them before you even show up.

Keeping your cool and building rapport online are nice, but sooner or later, you'll have to subject yourself to the scrutiny of the inevitable: the job interview. Think of it like an exam: you should only be terrified when you go in unprepared.

The trick to nailing an interview is to show up knowing you've already done the best you can do. Dick Bolles has three specific tips up his sleeve:

1. **Learn everything there is to know about the company.** The Google game isn't one-sided. You can play this too. Read their website cover to cover. Look up all employees on LinkedIn. Soak up their culture, history, facts and figures and whatever else you can get your hands on.
2. **Prepare questions.** In a great interview you won't do most of the talking. You'll *listen*, because the interviewers think you have asked such great questions. They drill you, you drill them. But you'll do it in such a way they won't know that's what's happening.
3. **Show your work.** That portfolio we were talking about earlier? You'll bring it right with you. Ramit Sethi calls this the briefcase technique. It doesn't just work for sales. It works for this too. Because at the end of the day, in an interview you're selling yourself.

When it comes to interviews, only fools fumble with unexpected questions. The pros show up locked and loaded. The impression it creates alone is well worth your time spent. Plus, you'll learn a whole lot.

And if it doesn't work out? You'll start right back at lesson one. Now go and build your own parachute.

What Color Is Your Parachute Review

I can't help but applaud the concept of updating your book every year. What a work ethic! When I heard this book was from 1975 I thought: "Great, another dust-catcher." I could not have been more wrong. I highly recommend *What Color Is Your Parachute*. Look at his flower exercise too.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- Interesting statistics about the labor market
- How many companies rely on social media to screen candidates
- What SEO techniques you can copy from bloggers, even if you don't have a blog
- Why job hunting is like dating and which parts of it haven't changed at all
- How to successfully negotiate the salary you want

Who would I recommend the What Color Is Your Parachute summary to?

The 23 year old business major, who's about to take her first job, the 45 year old industry pro, who recently got laid off, and anyone who's scared they won't get the job they want.