

Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work
has received these awards:

Winner of the National Association of Book Entrepreneurs (NABE)
 Summer 2016 Pinnacle Book Achievement Award
 in the category of Self-Help Books

Finalist in the category of Business-Careers in the
 Eighth Annual International Book Awards sponsored by American Book Fest

Finalist in the category of Business-Careers in the
 Thirteenth Annual Best Book Awards sponsored by i310 Media Group, Inc.

Praise for *Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work*

“As a dean at a public community college, I have seen many career guidance books, but Halimah Bellows' *Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work* is one of the best. She takes a very simple and intuitive idea--that happiness and success comes from following your passion--and turns it into an effective strategy for organizing your life. Furthermore, she provides simple tools, resources and strategies for helping the reader discover their skills, talents, and interests, and then translating that information into career choices. Finally, once a target occupation is identified, Ms. Bellows provides effective strategies for career development and success. This book is a great resource for any recent high school graduates or adult student seeking to find their vocational passion.”

--John Lederer
 Executive Dean, Career and Workforce Education
 North Seattle College

“Career counselor and coach, Halimah Bellows, delivers an insightful guide designed to help lead readers through the process of both choosing and pursuing a career that is the right fit for them. Uniquely combining career coaching with career counseling, the book presents readers with intensive questions designed to help them discover their individual skills, talents, goals, and passions, showing them how they can use that knowledge to select a personally fulfilling career, along with supplying innumerable tools and strategies to then acquire a position in their desired field. *Champion Your Career* is a fantastic resource for people of all life stages, from college students who are struggling to pick the right career path, to those who are already in the work force but feel ready for a change, all the way through the retirement stage—and I can especially see this being a great book for junior high and high school students who are beginning to plan for college and/or their future careers. “

--Johanna Bouchardon

“No matter what stage of career development you are at, whether just embarking or looking for a change in direction, this is the practical guide you need. A modern-day *What Color is Your Parachute*, but covering the entire life span, it is loaded with strategies, easy-to-use tools, rock solid advice, and a cornucopia of useful resources.”

--DJVS

“Ultimately, Bellows' purpose is to make you ask, ‘Who am I?’ As she says, ‘You have to know what your interests are and what you are passionate about. You need to explore your values and assess your skills, your strengths, and your talents.’ Because this is a question that we all need to ask, I highly recommend *Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work* by Halimah Bellows if you are at all unsure about what you are currently doing.”

--Josh Cramer for Reader Views

“I found *Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work* by Halimah Bellows to be a very useful book. I also think it is very relevant in today’s dynamic world where so many job opportunities and career paths are available, some of which are little known. Halimah Bellows has a unique, personal style of writing that instantly made me feel connected. Her advice, tips, and techniques are spot on and I am sure will be a huge help to anyone looking to switch careers or just anyone looking to improve their networking, job search, resume writing, and interview skills. I loved learning about the Holland Code model among other things and the detailed categories and related work fields were extremely useful to know. A very helpful read that I would recommend to anyone!”

– Gisela Dixon for Readers’ Favorite

“Halimah Bellows’s non-fiction self-help book, *Champion Your Career: Winning in the World of Work* shows how to make that dream job a reality if you’re willing to put in the effort required. Many of the exercises she proposes are fun and make a lot of sense at the same time. I particularly enjoyed those that had the reader look back at things he/she was good at as a child or young adult, as so many of those past pleasures or accomplishments can give the job seeker invaluable insights into what occupations will make working a pleasurable and fulfilling experience. Even if you’re relatively happy with your current position/career path, the techniques and information presented in this book may still help make a huge difference in job satisfaction.”

--Jack Magnus for Readers’ Favorite

“*Champion Your Career* by Halimah Bellows is, in fact, an eye opener. It taught me many new facets of things I knew, as well as a few I did not, with reference to selection of one’s career and the tools available for that. The book follows a logical flow and each new idea is introduced with ample assistance from charts and lists to make comprehension easy.”

– Roy T. James for Readers’ Favorite

Champion Your Career: *Winning in the World of Work*

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my mother, Rosalind Mona Bellows, my best friend and greatest supporter, who was a true diva, who charmed and inspired everyone she knew especially me. Her words of wisdom have never been forgotten and have influenced me on the many paths I have taken in my life. Her favorite words to me were, "If there is a will, there is a way. If you want to, you can do it, and there is no such word as can't." That's how this book came to be.

Thanks Mom

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

First and foremost I wish to thank and acknowledge my clients whose career paths I have been fortunate enough to play a part in. Your successes and willingness to follow your dreams and pursue your passions is what has inspired me to continue with the work that I do.

This book would not have come to be had it not been for Dr. Pat Bacilli, whose idea it was and who gave me the rights to the radio script, to turn my 10 week radio show into a book and a deck of cards. The deck of cards came first, now the book. Thanks Dr. Pat.

Many thanks also go to my family, friends and colleagues, who each read chapters and gave me their comments as well as encouragement to keep going. A big thank you to my first editor Linda Hurst who started the process of turning the radio scripts into prose. And finally, thank you, thank you, thank you ad infinitum to my developmental editor Julie Fretzin. Without her help, unwavering patience (with me) and the writing process, as well as her stellar writing and editing skills, this book would not have happened. Again, Thank you everyone who played a part in the creation of this book.

To my readers I wish you success in finding work that is right for you and in championing your career. I know you can be a winner in the world of work.

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CHAPTER 1

FOCUS ON YOUR FUTURE

I remember standing in the cafeteria line at school when I was nine years old when, occasionally, other children would come up and talk to me and tell me their stories. I didn't ask them to; I was just standing there, waiting in line for my food. They would start telling me everything about themselves or what their problems were, and I would respond with something like, "Wow, I can hear you've had a really hard time," or, "I hear that you're in a lot of pain," or something like that. And then they would talk some more.

I think I just had this gift, a natural ability that drew others to come and talk to me and to tell me their problems. Somehow they knew I would listen and that I would be non-judgmental. This natural ability followed me the rest of my life in the careers that I have chosen—as an educator, career counselor, and coach. I have always wanted to listen to and be of service to others. People have always fascinated me and the world of work fascinates me as well. By marrying the two as a career counselor/coach, I bring together my innate abilities and passions and the skills that have naturally flowed from me since I was a child.

This experience has given me the special joy that comes from championing the causes of other people and providing support that can help them discover new aspects of themselves, while watching them expand and develop. Life is full of obstacles and there are times when we all need someone to champion us; to be in our corner to cheer us on and guide us in finding effective solutions to our problems. Sometimes, however, we have to do that ourselves.

Become Your Own Career Champion

This book is designed to help you understand that you have the power to be your own champion. You can create your own positive perspective with the messages you play in your inner dialogue and then manifest those messages in the material world. You can do this for yourself. Do not allow other people to tell you, "Don't do this" or "You shouldn't do that" or "This is not good enough." Instead, you can say, "I know what works for me. I can make my own life and I can champion my career. I can make it happen for myself. I can be successful at whatever vocation I choose."

As you move through this process you will see that when you show up to work, you get to decide how your situation is going to be. There are no victims in the career development ladder unless you choose to be one. The inner voice that says, “I have to get a job,” gradually shifts to be more about, “I want to do something that feels good to me, something that serves me. I want to be in an environment that’s nurturing and productive.”

Career Development Theory

The theory of career development has not changed over the many years I have been doing this work. To answer the question “What career is right for you?” there are three important answers to seek out:

1. What are your interests? What do you love to do?
2. What are your values—professional as well as personal?
3. What are your skills and talents?

All of the career tests, assessments and services are designed to determine this fundamental information.

Defining Your Interests

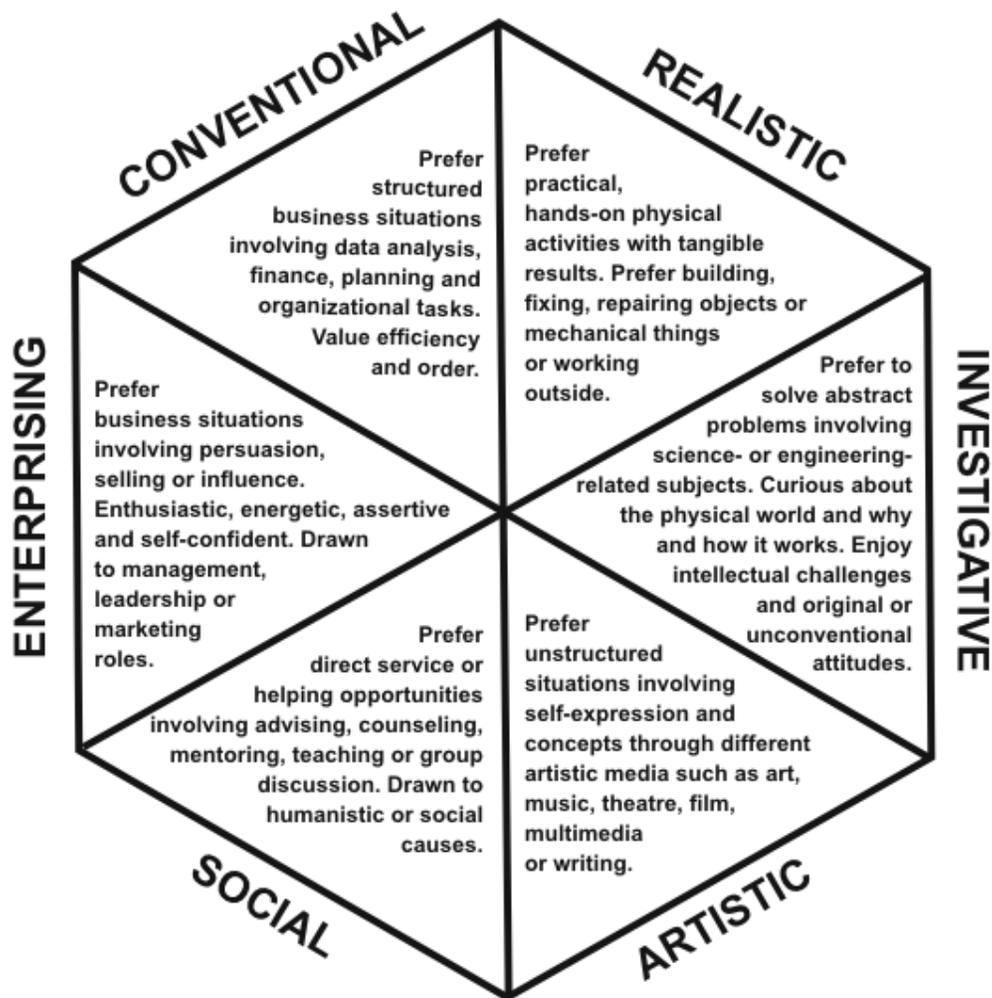
One way to develop a strategy for finding work that meets your fundamental goals is to take a very close look at where your interests lie. To help define them, you can try this assessment developed by Richard Bowles, the author of the popular *What Color Is Your Parachute?* It’s based on the Holland Code, which was created by John Holland and is the basis for such governmental resources as the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

The Holland Code describes a process by which all people and all jobs can be divided into six distinct categories. The model is drawn as a hexagon with the categories placed in a specific order. Beginning with the top and continuing in a clockwise pattern, the six categories are:

1. **Realistic:** Athletes and mechanical people who prefer to work with objects, plants or animals, or like to be outdoors.
2. **Investigative:** Scientists, people who like to observe, analyze and solve problems.

3. Artistic: Artists and musicians, innovative, creative and those who like unstructured environments.
4. Social: People who work with people; teachers, guides, counselors. They care and they are very good with words.
5. Enterprising: Managers, influencers, persuaders, lawyers.
6. Conventional: People who like to work with data in a systematic way. They are numerical, have clerical ability, and pay attention to detail.

HOLLAND CODE MODEL



This exercise allows us to understand our work preferences based on the six categories. The exercise begins as you imagine that you are at a party where people from these six categories are grouped together around the room. Notice which group you are drawn to join first. Imagine spending time with these people and see how that feels. Now see which group you would be drawn to next and imagine spending time with them. Repeat one more time so that you have chosen the three groups you were most attracted to.

Now you have a three-letter code based on the first letter of each group (in the order you chose them). Your code might be R-I-A, A-S-C, I-E-C, or any of the other possibilities. We seek people like us. If you are an entrepreneurial type, you are probably going to want to spend more of your time in that kind of environment and with those kinds of people. Careers work the same way. So once you determine your code, you can research the industries, jobs, companies and people that are associated with your code and with each category. This book will show you how to do this research.

Obviously, this is a very simplified version of the assessment process but it is definitely a way to get started. This is a self-directed assessment and there are no right or wrong answers. Keep in mind, however, that the categories that are right next to each other in the hexagon are most compatible. It is going to be easier and more straightforward to find a career that marries two or all three of them. With two types on the opposite ends of the hexagon, such as a C and an A, you are going to have a harder time finding work that is satisfying to you. Maybe you will find work that satisfies one category and decide to develop the other interest outside of work time.

No job is going to give you 100 percent of what you want, but my advice is to aim for at least 70 percent job satisfaction. The latter is a really good figure and you could be quite happy with that level of career-related fulfillment. When the figure starts to go down to 50 percent job satisfaction, it means that half the time something is not right, something is out of place. Remember this is half of your workday. You then must start looking honestly at your situation and determine if you are “stuck” in the job.

Some people might make the decision to accept a 50 percent satisfaction level from their work life, because perhaps they happily leave their job at the office and then come home and pursue a hobby like playing music. You need to look at your own workday to determine if you

are able to make a 50 percent job satisfaction work for you, or if you feel you are stuck in a dead-end situation.

As you know, you have two sides of your life: your work life and your personal life. What you should aim for is to blend the two together to come up with a TOTAL satisfaction level. If your work life and your personal life do not add up to a high enough level of satisfaction, then you might be ready to look at a career change. Either way, this book will help you determine what your basic needs are for happiness in the workplace, as well as your personal life. Then it will help you move on to a higher level of overall satisfaction in your life.

A Note for College Students

In the past, it was normal for students to declare a major related to a career, complete a prescribed set of studies, find a job in a related field, and stay in that field until they retired. One decision and that was it! Today, however, it is far more common for students to change their majors and do several career searches and changes in their work lifetime.

People change their careers for a variety of reasons. Perhaps they made an unwise choice initially or the career they selected no longer exists. Often they want to match their changing values and needs to a new set of career possibilities.

Making the right plans for your future during these changing times can be difficult. The self-assessment tools provided in this book can give you more choices, broaden your options, and give you the confidence that you are on the right career path.

A self-assessment can reveal your characteristics, interests, values and skills. It will define your strengths and your weaknesses. Looking for a match between these and the work you are considering is the most important step you can take before you write a résumé or begin your job search. In fact, when the time comes to write your résumé and prepare for a job interview, you will find the task easier if you have completed the self-assessment process first!

Recognizing the Need for Change

If you are already working, there are three main reasons why a career change might be right for you. First, it could be that you have the right job with the wrong company. For example, you may love the work you do as an administrative assistant, but you may not like the philosophy of the company, or you may find that you cannot stand behind their mission. Their

values are not a match for yours. If the environment, including the people, is not a good fit for you, even the right work you do will feel like you're in the wrong job.

The second reason could be that you have the wrong position in the right company. In this case, you should look at your passions, interests and skills and find a way to put them to use in your own position or in another job within the same company. For some people, it might be about finding time outside of work to make use of those skills.

The third reason that career change might be right for you is that job security is an illusion. You might love your job and your company, but the company could move, reorganize, or go out of business due to various unforeseeable circumstances. This is why determining your skills and talents is such an important strategy in career development—no matter where you go, you take those skills and talents with you.

In this book, we'll delve into identifying your interests, values and skills, and then provide you with the concrete tools to choose, develop and change your career, no matter what stage of life you are currently in. These will include networking, goal-setting, researching, and decision-making. Sections are dedicated to writing résumés, cover letters and follow-up letters, as well as appropriate dress attire and other interview strategies.

Students will find specific guidance for launching a new career after college. Retirees will learn how to retire with fire by enlivening their retirement years with work they are passionate about. So get ready to champion your career!