The Eight Dimensions

Career Fulcrum Illuminations

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The Eight Dimensions

Continuums of possibilities

Expanding and Exploring Your Multi-Dimensional Opportunity Marketplace

In order to make a compelling, motivating argument to an organization, it is helpful to learn additional dimensions you can put to use to present yourself in a more creative, flexible and powerful way, to negotiate a “relationship performance” agreement that satisfies your needs as well as those of the company. The Eight Dimensions (See Figure 1) are intended to stretch your thinking and perspectives further so that you can create almost endless possibilities for yourself and relevant organizations. The Eight Dimensions expand upon the Career Fulcrum Fundamentals Series frameworks to give you even more options for your best future in the talent marketplace.

The purposeful complexity of this framework is aimed at giving you a series of new “brainquakes” (or at least a few gentle, reverberating rumbles) to awaken your personal creativity to appreciate options you may not have considered. These “new options” should expand your “personal possibilities horizons” by helping you realize that your goals and desires may not reside in only one place in any one of these dimensions. This framework provides you with many unique places to discover new paths for your best future.

With the Eight Dimensions, I hope to take away your thinking boundaries, rip apart your assumptions and abolish the limits you may be imposing on your career and its roles. We humans tend to reduce our thinking to over-simplified scenarios. In truth, reality rarely maps with our “either/or” dichotomies. We commonly reduce too many situations

Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.
—Albert von Szent-Gyorgyi

Home is where one starts from.
As we grow older the world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated.
—T.S. Eliot
and decisions to conclusions of good or bad, Republican or Democrat, conservative or liberal, off or on, fast or slow, domestic or foreign, Muslim or Christian, black or white and the even more trivial PC or Mac. These dichotomies are often only “brain shunts” to keep us from thinking correctly, as are assumptions, stereotypes, prejudices, dogmas and other dangerous and damaging mental shortcuts that we often turn to in mental expediency or laziness.

Limited, dichotomous thinking can quickly lead to errors and blind you to the actual truth of realities. The truth and the answers to the “big life questions” are rarely so easy to catch, and to capture the truth,
you often must chase it across a large territory of thought and painful consideration. In your career quests, the importance of thinking, investigating and learning across continuums (not thinking of each part as separate from the others), then planning and acting on your discoveries can produce formidable results for you. Thus, not only are the Eight Dimensions important to you in their separate subject matter content, but also in their presentation in a “continuum-based” thinking model that will, hopefully, cause you to break free of limited “either/or” thinking. In most career circumstances, limited thinking models inhibit you from realizing your full potential.

In the past, the employment paradigm was generally one comprised of limited dichotomies; for example, permanent versus temporary employment or advancement within your company versus “job-hopping” from company to company. Within those paradigms, it seems simpler to understand exactly how you relate to and participate with a company or an institution. At the same time, however, your ability to fulfill your potential in the best interest of both you and the organization is also restricted and constrained.

No more! Now just about anything you can imagine is actually possible! These possibilities exist across a wide number of totally different but interrelated dimensions (or contexts) in almost every profession, organization and industry today. Here I describe eight of many possible dimensions that you might apply to align yourself with an organization’s needs or to realize your own. There are many more, but this will be a good “starter kit.” You can utilize these to achieve a degree of appreciation of these eight differing “realms” for creative thinking and planning—giving you the means to never be paralyzed in your career quests or to no longer “box yourself into a corner.” Understanding only a couple of these dimensions should enable you to “leap to other dimensions,” to uncover more new options or solutions or escape from misery whenever you perceive yourself to be limited in career and work options.

Understand that I am openly portraying each of these dimensions as a continuum, for they certainly are. In other words, you can choose to move step-by-step along each of the dimensions, you can choose to be anywhere between the extremes, or, in fact, you can choose to be in different places across the continuums at once. There are endless possibilities within the extremes of each of these lines. In some situations you may settle across the entire continuum. I will repeatedly advise: there are no “good or bad” or “right or wrong” places on any of these; but rather, you simply need to position yourself in the right place, in the right way, for you, at this time, on each of these continuums. As you
change, and as other circumstances change, you will need to often make adjustments. As a group, they simply offer a variety of directions that may be more beneficial for you in attaining the desires and aspirations of your Personal Triangle and in satisfying the needs of Organizational Triangles.

Each of the Eight Dimensions may be related to every part of your Personal Triangle as well as every part of any Organizational Triangle. These relationships will be largely dependent on situation and circumstance, as well as how abundantly you and the organization unleash your creativity. Again, I cannot be too specific since I do not know what your environment is, nor what your personal aspirations are. Nevertheless, this framework offers more universal tools to navigate your career. That’s the purpose—to help you explore and exploit the possibilities across the continuum of each of these dimensions.

When you collectively consider a few or all of these varied possibilities, you can enjoy the explosion of limitless options and unite them into a wide range of options and choices. Look again at Figure 1 and begin to think about each dimension category.

### Affiliation:

We all know that “lifetime employment” is now assigned to the Smithsonian archives as a relic of the paternalistic industrial-age company, the “mill town,” owing your soul to the company store and all that sort of thing. In human resources circles, “permanent” is even an illegal term. As many now say, “Today, all roles are temporary—it’s just a matter of how temporary.” Now, when you are affiliated with the organization and the organization with you, your economic relationship exists only while each of you continues to provide attractive value to each other. It’s that simple! Expect no more, seek no less. Yet, today the nature of that relationship, the depth of the “reciprocal commitment,” and the structure that connects you and the organization can all vary.
greatly. Treating the “structure” as a variable can be a major advantage for both parties. The nature of your affiliation is highly negotiable and fully situational. Your relationship can be defined in ways that are optimal to the tasks and functions at hand as well as proportional to the creativity of both you and the organization. You may also choose to define your affiliation so that you are directly affiliated with an intermediary who then sells your talent to another organization.

Many of us are still uncomfortable exploring an affiliation with an organization in a manner outside the conventions of industrial history. After all, that was the way many of our parents and grandparents did it. We want a paycheck, a salary and a “job description.” However, for many of us this thinking severely limits our opportunities. What I ask you to do is to at least be open to other ways of economically relating to and bonding with an organization. Consider yourself a broker of your talent... especially when it better suits your Personal Triangle needs or makes you even more attractive to the needs of the organization (see The Personal Triangle Illumination). As always, it will be a symbiotic relationship structure that ultimately leads to the outcomes desired by both parties.

With this in mind, as shown on the one end of the Affiliation continuum on the previous page, you can still be quite conventional in a long-term relationship with an organization, be on the payroll and remain very structured in your affiliation. However, more and more people are rethinking conventional forms of affiliation in order to gain the lifestyle, quality of life, experience, increased variety or the income they desire (the “Effects,” right?). Growing numbers of people are electing to have contracting, consulting, freelance or other forms of interim relationships with organizations. In many of these cases, people are seeking composite roles, having more than one role at one or more organization(s) simultaneously. At the other end of the continuums, many are going their own way(s), blazing new paths as entrepreneurs, and in doing so are creating and building their own organizations.

Some of the options you might consider include counseling, consulting or contracting independently (directly to others). This requires continually marketing yourself as well as invoicing yourself. This form of relationship is becoming increasingly attractive to many in the marketplace but the simultaneous requirements of performing and marketing can be challenging if done separately. On the other hand, if those options don’t offer enough structure, security or stability for your personality or situation, or if you don’t like the thought of constantly marketing and invoicing for your services, then you might consider becoming part of a consulting or contracting group that brokers and administrates for you—often making available to you resources, networks, a customer base and knowledge capital that you might be hard-pressed to amass.

—Laurence J. Peter
for yourself. There are many groups in almost every profession that you can use in this manner.

Consulting and contracting your talent through others often takes two very basic, yet different, forms. Since each form also can have many variations, the dividing lines between the variations are sometimes blurred. One form is the event-based or transactional brokering of your talent. In these instances, an entity, often a talent staffing company such as Manpower Professional™ or Robert Half International, markets you to organizations by selling categorized professional talent for either a project or a period of time, then they pay you directly while invoicing their client. The talent offered by them can include programmers, accountants, engineers, nurses, scientists and even executives. Often, this type of affiliation gives you the advantage of a degree of choice in the roles you can accept, and you can gain a wide variety of experiences in many different operational environments. In addition, you can often choose when you want to work and when you don’t. In this type of construct, the affiliation is directly with the staffing company (or sometimes more than one), that then places you in its client’s organization, usually for an interim or moderate time period.

Another approach is to have a more perpetual affiliation with a “talent and intellectual capital brokering intermediary” or a “talent aggregator.” Here you have a long-term and continuing affiliation with the intermediary, and accordingly you are then placed in service to a variety of its client’s organizations—sometimes you can even be embedded into its client’s operational environments. Examples of this type of intermediary are Accenture, EDS, Price Waterhouse or McKinsey, more specialized small “boutique consulting firms,” many law firm partnerships, healthcare partnerships and so forth. In all these situations, almost endless compensation arrangements and relationship structures are possible. Many can be quite flexible and adaptable to the needs of your Personal Triangle.

Beyond these more traditional forms of affiliation are many emerging forms in which individuals organize collectively to bring “total talent solutions” to organizations in the form of partnerships—similar to the way lawyers, doctors, mature consultant agencies and architects have offered their services in the past. Often, these “collective” partnerships themselves become a self-organizing form of “talent aggregation,” providing turnkey solutions in areas such as product design, website services and advertising. I often refer to all these as “collectives.” There are too many variations on this theme for me to cover adequately in this volume. Further, in today’s world there are new forms of emerging franchisees, cooperatives, guilds and syndicates that let you be quite
independent, much like a pure entrepreneur, yet you can have the support systems and community affiliations that may be important to your success with organizations and enjoy an attractive path to personal fulfillment. In many cases, you can even blend several simultaneous affiliations into your career paths. For example, you can have composite roles with multiple companies involving a variety of simultaneous affiliation structures. It’s all part of the new business of “YOU!” or as Tom Peters, respected thinker and management author, proclaims, “You, Inc.!”

The trick is to periodically consider what is right for you at this stage of your life, what best suits the needs that you define in your Personal Triangle and the needs that the applicable organization may have at the moment. Don’t limit your thinking to just one affiliation construct. Realize that it is occasionally possible to modify the affiliation structure within the organization with which you are already affiliated when it would be optimal for both parties. Keep in mind that organizations are increasingly more interested in performance-based compensation and agreements (often paying more to keep “risks” low and “investments” proportional to “outcomes”). Therefore, consider how incentives, bonuses, commissions, equity/options and other outcome-related compensation can be used to give both you and the organization the financial incentives that meet both parties’ respective goals. All of these are simply variations on this Affiliation dimension.

Moving between extremes on this scale from “entrepreneur” to “long-term, payroll associate” is an excellent way to propose to reduce the organization’s perceived risks in their Organizational Triangle. You should find that they’ll be proportionally much more generous if you perform to their expectations. When you are confident in your ability to deliver, this is also an excellent way to get the attention of the “passive” organization (described in the upcoming Motivation dimension). In other words, “make them an offer they can’t refuse” by using this dimension combined with the Participation dimension, and propose to the organization that they can have a relationship with you on both a trial and an outcomes/results basis.
Motivation:

Whenever two parties are involved, you can anticipate there will be varying degrees of motivation as seldom do any two parties, in any form of affiliation with each other, possess the same motivation or “proclivity to action” at any particular moment. This is especially true with regard to work relations. An organization’s attention to the endless aspects of work roles and their workers, including their functional needs as well as the worker’s needs, are fluid and ever changing. Likewise, a person’s receptivity or interest about new work role functions, changing work roles or even migrating to other professions or organizations, tends to ebb and flow like oceans tides. Each party may wax and wane in their relationship dance from extreme, intense interest to disinterest, indifference and apathy. This should be expected and carefully considered as you manage your career. Here are typical examples of situations that need consideration and responsiveness regarding the motivation dimension:

- As a worker, you may be very interested in gaining Organizational Triangle information about your work role, how you are being measured in your performance or how you are performing to those criteria, whereas your direct supervisor may be distracted, unavailable or seemingly uninterested in offering this information to you.

- You may be at a point in your career in which you become very interested in new work roles and are ready for a change, however within your organization or in the geographic area that you wish to live there are no organizations that appear to be actively seeking the value proposition you offer or the work role setting you desire.

- You may have a very important idea that the organization needs to know and consider immediately for its benefit, but you cannot seem to locate anyone interested in learning about it.

- Your leadership may have a pressing need of a new or different function they need performed or an important perspective they
wish you to consider as you perform your work role, but you offer only cool reception or are inattentive to their needs.

- You are gliding along in a state of flow in your work, and as such you are very passive and uninterested in perhaps even more satisfying or more rewarding work role opportunities emerging around you within your organization.

- The organization could benefit from your creativity and experience in solving an urgent and costly problem, but since you are unaware of the problem and how you could contribute, you can offer no solution.

With all the many inevitable differences in respective motivation that may be taking place in your work, career and professional marketplace, you can benefit by becoming more effective across this continuum from its “active” to “passive” extremes.

No one gains when you don’t know all you need to know about your work role, including every corner, bias and time parameter of the Organizational Triangle. Lack of personal knowledge about this can present great personal jeopardy for you. Likewise, you need constant updates as to how you are performing in all the critical areas of your work role. Some supervisors appreciate the importance of this, while others may or may not be pulled in so many other directions that they fail to offer what you (and they) need, despite their best intentions. It behooves you to acquire this information by working out a suitable arrangement to do so with your supervisor (more will be shared about this in the Relationship Performance Illumination that follows). Equally, your supervisor (and applicable others across your organization) can enjoy a wide range of benefits from knowledge about your Personal Triangle, your Flow Zone criteria and the values you can offer to the organization as well as your professional and career aspirations.

Across your career, you should attempt to be vigilant and attentive in all circumstances so as to not suffer personal loss or opportunity from your failures to be responsive at those times when you are susceptible to being passive, distracted, indifferent or not “tuned in” to your supervisor’s or the organization’s needs. Equally, you should learn how to accurately and effectively apply the organizational triangle, target the right audience and create compelling presentations and arguments whenever the organization may be unresponsive, unaware or passive in its nature.

A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.
—Francis Bacon
If delivered effectively, when you create and use information that is designed with the Organizational Triangle in mind and laser-targeted to the correct audiences, it has the power to “wake the dead”! (Just as a manager or a recruiter who knows and applies your Personal Triangle and especially your flow zone, can predictably get your attention and usually your responsiveness!) Keep this in mind when you are trying to achieve anything regarding work roles—when one party is passive, the other party is best advised to be very active, smart and creative. Of course, timing can be applicable, for in some circumstances it may be ok to wait for the right moment when you, or the organization, is “active” or highly motivated. However, there are many cases where such waiting can lead to problems or lost opportunities.

Variances in motivation are one reason that organizations often use a headhunter/recruiter who, in effect, is a fully dedicated, highly-skilled sales and marketing person tasked to uncover the people the organization seeks and convey the most persuasive story of the organization’s opportunity. Headhunters are handsomely rewarded for success because often this is not easy to do. They work for active organizations that seek passive workers who are not even thinking of themselves as candidates. As such, they must devise and practice means and methods that work to get the results they desire. Accordingly, if you are not going to limit yourself to only the roles, situations, needs and interests that are actively advertised or expressed to bring attention to your value, aspirations, ideas, suggestions or complaints, then you may need the leverage of your knowledge of the Organizational Triangle, creativity, perseverance, strategy and a well-articulated, compelling message that is “hyper-relevant” to your audience. And just like the most successful of headhunters that seek the totally passive workers, your analogous successes can be equally rewarding! To get the most out of your work roles and your career you should become a master of “new role hunting”, be an “opportunities predator” with an insatiable appetite for serving wherever and however you may be needed, and when applicable, you should become an “idea marketing specialist”. In any of these contexts always remember: your guide to well-researched, crafted and presented information is the Organizational Triangle.

To my knowledge, there has never been a time when the orchards of work opportunities have been more laden with fruit for you. But as this metaphor implies, you must typically reach out and do the harvesting. The ripest, sweetest fruit is not likely to just fall into your hand. Nor are the roles that are best aligned with your Personal Triangle and your Flow Zones likely to be presented to you by your organization, show up in an advertisement, an online posting, through social circles or a phone call.
Even if they do, the information you have may not be articulated in such a way that you can recognize the positive potential that may await (job posting and employment advertising is historically notoriously weak and/or simply bad!). Again, getting into, and staying in, your Flow Zone is not an entitlement; you must find it and then earn it.

Most folks really “miss the boat” and lose countless prospective opportunities or have hidden risks in this motivation dimension. People who decide to choose and pursue their own best destinies reach out, discern, define and attain the best roles and know how to get the right attention as well as needed information in organizations—even those totally passive. Note the action words: reach out, discern, define and attain. To find the best roles for you, gain attention or get information, you must be pro-active. It is part of a trait or quality I call “strategic career resourcefulness”. That is, you must exercise competence in creatively and resourcefully seeking what’s best for you and organizations. You must investigate and discover. You can’t always elect to sit and wait for interests, meetings, interviews or “an opportune moment”. You cannot wait for luck to bring opportunity to your doorstep. Great work roles are often not advertised, and sometimes, not even considered by an organization until the right person shows up and makes a compelling value proposition. Paradoxically, this may be especially true in the organization you are currently working for in that sometimes those on the outside are more informed of new opportunities than those on the inside!

Equally, effective people with great ideas, suggestions and complaints know they must design and configure them to get them heard and considered by the right person(s) in a timely manner. In reality, an organization’s needs vary dynamically every day, sometimes even every hour. The possibilities for you, the definer of your own destiny, depend on how effective you are in causing the organization to become an active buyer or investor in what you have to offer to them.

I am not saying to avoid or shun organizations’ normal communications channels and protocols, “job postings”, “suggestion boxes” or information systems. I am suggesting that sometimes this simply may not be enough due to variances in motivation, theirs and yours. I also am not suggesting that you must be attentive and responsive to every possibility that comes your way, but I am saying that it may benefit you to stay more alert and “tuned in” to opportunities and needs that are occurring all about you each day. (Certainly you must be thoughtful, prudent and diplomatic in your presentation so as to not be a chronic nuisance or irritant to others, even more so when they may be passive.) Don’t leave
your professional life up to fate, luck or serendipity. Don’t be a victim to others’ timing, motivations, interests, unawareness and distractions. *Everyone loses when you have something that is valuable or important to offer and it remains unknown or unappreciated.*

**Application:**

The Application dimension, though unconventional, is loaded with possibilities and options, which through your creative thinking can generate new perspectives on possible opportunities and roles (it may also be the most confusing dimension!). By their nature, work roles are made up of tasks, functions and responsibilities. Indeed, by our definition, a role is an expression of the organization’s functional needs that can be filled by a human being. What a role requires from you is some combination of your mind and your body. As you explore the Application dimension, you will find ways to alter or expand the role’s requirements to better use some combination of your mental and physical capabilities, or by reexamining your assumptions about how you will offer to apply your mind and body to the role (your Personal Triangle), you will often be able to greatly expand your value and your rewards.

This dimension may appear to be simple, but is infinitely complex in reality. I will not go too deeply into the full complexities of this dimension, but I do desire to go far enough to give you a minor degree of personal awareness of what it is possible to discover in this area. I am taking huge liberty and license with sciences that are far beyond the scope of this volume. I do so only to awaken your curiosity, give you new perspectives and, perhaps, even destroy a few assumptions and limitations that you may be placing on yourself or allowing others to place on you. It will be up to you to learn more and delve deeper into the potential for you in this dimension.

Commonly, the mechanics of brain and body are grossly oversimplified, often purposefully so, in more than one way. In today’s workplace, you often hear people talking about work that either utilizes the “left brain” or the “right brain.” People are said to have either physically-centered
roles ("blue collar") or thinking-centered roles ("white collar"). Well, as we have discussed, rarely is it that simple and in such a neat box. All of us use all parts of our brains in all situations and circumstances. All of us think in our work. A salesperson or executive on a red-eye flight to the opposite coast to meet with a client uses a lot of physical attributes and stamina, just as a person fighting a fire or working in an emergency room does. People and their roles can no longer be categorized on the basis of the color of their “shirt collars” (white, blue, gray, etc.). We often underestimate and fail to consider how much of our minds and bodies we apply (or don’t apply) to our work roles, and in doing so, we are blind to present realities and to other possibilities that may exist as new role opportunities.

For the purpose of understanding this dimension, let’s consider all of you, from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. Now, let’s think of three separate, yet connected, functional parts of this continuum: the top part of your brain, the lower part of your brain, and your body. None of us fully understands the “fleshware” of the brain or its software, the mind. But it does help for us to compartmentalize the complex outcomes and power of the brain in order to plot our course into unknown territories. Because there is so much information for the layperson about the “right/left” sides of our brains, I am going to focus more on the “north” half, or upper, cerebral layers and the “south” half, or deeper, limbic components of the brain. For those of you in the science and medical professions, I am doing this as a general metaphor, not as physiological science.

By upper, cerebral functions, I mean higher-level “cerebral” thinking that often leads us to analysis, reductionism, mathematics, synthesis, logic, holistic creativity, intuition, integration of information, imagination and curiosity. By lower, limbic functions I mean the deeper, and some say older, more primal parts of the brain. These limbic functions serve us in organizing, sequencing, planning, socializing, supervising, regulating, avoiding risks, structuring, administrating, sensing, safety-seeking, expressing feelings, emotions, empathy and also making “fight or flight” decisions.

By the “physical,” I mean the body, not just the muscles, limbs, fingers, feet and bones that do manual work, but also a greater, whole “limbed” vehicle that carries us (with our brains on-board) to where we need to be in order to do what’s needed to satisfy the requirements of our roles such as reaching out and interfacing with the world around us. As a vehicle, the body has possibilities, and it has limits. It can move about as well as suffer fatigue. It provides energy, and it requires rest. Each of our bodies has parts that are developed, “tuned” and have undeveloped
potential. We also have parts that are challenged, have limits and possess handicaps. This physical element of the Application continuum impacts our roles and the choices we make about them. Few of us who have “thinking roles” recognize how much we also need our bodies to perform well in these roles.

Some roles are highly cerebral, some are mostly limbic, some are highly physical. However, almost all roles require combinations of the three areas and exist to some degree across the continuum. Although some roles are centered principally in one or two areas of this dimension, others are evenly distributed across all areas.

Often, by moving in one direction or the other on the Application dimension from where you currently consider yourself to be, you can creatively explore and discover interesting opportunities. For example, consultants focus mostly on the cerebral in activities, but they can often increase their income by adding a physically demanding travel schedule to their role. On the other hand, they can also choose to do less traveling if they increase the limbic dimension by moving to management, leadership, training, writing or support roles.

The Application dimension is probably the most complex and challenging for me to convey, and again I am electing to grossly oversimplify many enormously complicated elements. You should be very careful to ensure that you see nothing here as universally “good/bad” or “right/wrong.” No place on this dimension is inherently better or worse, more valuable or less valuable than any other. We are not comparing people, their levels of intelligence or their degrees of physical prowess. Instead, we are focusing on new ways you may be able to creatively utilize the full potential of your body and mind, so that you can move about the marketplace and discover or “reinvent” the best role opportunities for you. You may choose to remain in the same professional role categories and in the same organization while, at the same time, electing to provide greater utility and value to the company from the dynamic extremes of the cerebral, limbic and physical potential of your being. This is another continuum upon which you can navigate to fulfill your dreams. In today’s organizational landscapes, there is a place and need for everyone, a place that demands diversity of thinking and physical contributions. No direction is the right direction unless it is the direction that is true to your needs and will help you reach your personal objectives which should be included in your ever-growing and increasingly specific Personal Triangle.

As with the other dimensions, there are abundant personal marketing opportunities for you through effectively communicating what you offer.
to the organization and what you are enthusiastically willing to do for them along the Application continuum, meeting both your needs and the organization’s needs. For example, if you want to play a role in a new venture, whether in your organization or in a start-up company, hiring managers will probably appreciate that you are willing to span the full spectrum from cerebral to physical. They’ll recognize that you’re willing to do whatever it takes for corporate success without being stuck in the limbic zone that often needs a high degree of structure, or without avoiding structure when the moment arrives for it. They might even like the fact that you’re ready to help them creatively break the old rules of an industry. Bear in mind that they may not have even considered these possibilities themselves and thus may be unable to articulate them to you. Therefore, it will be to your distinct advantage to lead them. On the other hand, if you want to enroll in a police academy, land a role as an airline pilot, nurse or corporate department manager, you may elect to present another argument expansion—the limbic zone becomes essential in those roles! The point is that there are more possibilities to capture through movement and discovery across this dimension than most of us yet imagine.

Here are a few hypothetical examples of people who are proactively moving on this continuum. These examples may precipitate your own creative career navigation and help you see how you can build your value to an organization (and/or reduce risks to it) gaining the role that will satisfy the needs of your Personal Triangle (and, yes, I am purposefully and intentionally oversimplifying).

1. A digital systems analyst/designer (a cerebral role) desires to increase her value to her organization and thus her income, by developing and moving into a management/leadership role (limbic). This will require learning and applying new skills in social interaction, business processes, policies and procedures, adhering to budgetary finance structure, risk management, coaching influence and motivation of people.

2. A security person (limbic and physical role) desires to find greater fulfillment by moving into private investigation of corporate espionage, a role that combines more cerebral, limbic and physical activities.

3. An architect (cerebral) who is frustrated with chronic capitulation and interaction with demanding clients (limbic), and who also desires to move to a rural area for the slower-paced lifestyle (the “Effects” of the Personal Triangle) elects to capitalize on existing knowledge of home construction by opening a home
inspector business in a rural area (a role that now combines physical, cerebral and limbic functions).

4. A truck service technician (cerebral and physical) elects to explore his interest and career growth at his dealership by learning more about opportunities in customer relations (limbic) or sales engineering (limbic and cerebral).

Even though I realize we are covering a territory filled with an incredible number of variables, by just keeping it as simple as possible I hope to create an awareness of your options to move across this dimension. This may help you begin to consider and negotiate the best options for both you and any organizations with which you have a relationship.

**Location:**

The Location dimension is so obvious, so “in your face,” yet its value is so rarely exploited. Roles exist not just “out there somewhere,” but often all around you. Sure, sometimes the grass is actually greener beyond the walls of your company or beyond the city limits or state lines. But often the opportunity you seek is right down the hall, in another division or team, one mile from your home or in fact even in your home! On the other hand, sometimes a great role is waiting for you thousands of miles away with a global organization (perhaps even in another country) that may need you to represent them right in your hometown.

In today’s opportunity landscape, each of us has available a truly incredible world of emerging local and global options and everything in between. If you are receptive to relocating, or even have a desire to move in order to find the lifestyle and environment you seek, then explore the many possibilities that are “out there.” But if this is not you, know that there may very well be many options right at your feet.

Although people have and need a specific “location,” organizations do not have such constraints. Physically we can only be in one place at a time, but keep in mind that organizations, by their nature, can have a
presence anywhere and be in many places simultaneously. Even a small organization may need people to serve them across the globe. There are no limits to how far an organization can extend its activities, influence and roles. Remember that an organization is formed, in part, because they need capacity that a single human can not provide alone. These needs not only include functional capacities, but “capacity locations” as well. As you consider the canvas on which you paint the next phase of your career, you need to creatively ponder the almost infinite scale of the “space” in which you can work.

Here are just a few examples to get your creative juices flowing and generate your own responses and initiatives for your particular circumstance:

1. An education administrator decides to leave the city school system and pursue opening a local office for a national training company. The company responded to the educator’s advances and agreed that opening a local office in that particular market would be a good step in expansion and profitability. Here we have a person who desires to remain in a particular geographic community while keeping a basic professional career in place but changing the scope of the organization from strictly local to national.

2. After creating her Personal Triangle, an engineer desires to live in Lander, Wyoming in order to satisfy her “Effects” elements. She researches the local marketplace and uncovers a company that could benefit from the experiences and skills she possesses. The person leaves her multinational firm and fills a role in a regional/local 50-person company headquartered there. Here we have a person that pinpoints a new location she desires for quality of life, then researches the options and leaps from a global organization to a local one.

3. To have increased professional value, a corporate attorney with a Fortune 500 company seeks more international experience. The person requests a transfer to a European division from within this global organization. While this move is internal to the organization, it is still a global move.

4. A locally-oriented salesperson seeking new personal growth and increased income potential elects to consider regional opportunities. In doing so, he discovers that a wide range of options are available from organizations across the nation that have local or regional needs for representation. These opportunities were never advertised in his city, yet would allow him to continue liv-
The organization would enjoy his local network and avoid relocation expenses and potential spousal resistance. In this case, we have a person that elects to spread his net across regional opportunities instead of thinking only of local opportunities.

5. A graduating MBA student in California wants to get into a specialized niche of investment banking. In order to do this, she broadens her search across the full dimension of location scenarios and resourcefully explores all available information from a wide variety of sources. Ultimately, she finds the most desirable role in Orlando, Florida at a medium-sized local “boutique” investment firm, concentrating in the theme park industry.

Each of us has far more options available than we can fathom. Today’s information sources, such as the Internet, offer limitless windows through which to view organizations and their role opportunities around the entire planet. I am continually amazed at how much information organizations reveal about themselves, their challenges and their agenda; information that is available for all to use. This abundant information provides clues you can put to good use once you understand the direction and inventory of your Personal Triangle.

It is difficult for some people to see or appreciate the options available to them, even in their own organization, town and community. I remember someone once saying to me that “Each day you overlook a lifetime of incredible opportunities all about you at work and all around you as you drive back and forth to work. You just have to be more alert in order to recognize them.” In fact, as a result of false assumptions largely fueled by “blinding familiarity” and “frozen thinking,” it is in the local context that many are blind to possibilities. Don’t let this shortness of vision happen to you. That’s the worst thing about a blind spot—you can’t see it!
Most advertised and posted roles are **tactical**—that is, they represent an immediate need to deliver functions and tasks that are required for the company’s business and operational success. Addressing tactical needs is what many of us seek to do for organizations. On the other hand, there are many very attractive roles that are more **strategic**, such as helping the organization address long-term technological, societal, management, marketing, legal and political issues in order to create its best future and to find, create and realize new products, services and business opportunities. Opening the doors to strategic roles allows us to address more of the “why” issues rather than strictly the issues of “what” and “where.” Moving toward the strategic end of the Operation dimension also opens doors to participating in the organization’s ecology, marketplace and future.

Often, by allowing yourself to be flexible to think, move and serve along the Operation continuum, you can make yourself most valuable to the organization and fill its perception of its short and long-term needs. When you do this, you will gain great rewards and recognition. Many times the company is so busy attending to tactical needs that it hasn’t given any attention to strategic needs, and that should be an “opportunity bell” ringing in your ears when it is the right one for you. Sometimes, especially in new strategic ventures, the exact opposite can be the case. In those situations, being able to offer a base in tactical and “bottom line” financial performance can be significantly appreciated. Again, if it’s right for you and the organization, let the opportunity bell ring!

It will also be to your advantage to consider, when your original role with an organization has a strategic or a tactical perspective, you will often get the greatest opportunities for advancement by showing what you can do in the opposite context as well—the ability to understand and respond to both the tactical and strategic demands of an organization is rarely unnoticed. In any case, please make sure you let your thinking and actions consider this continuum’s benefit to your career quests.
Participation:

The Participation dimension is one of the areas of most radical change today. Certainly, many of our roles require us to be in, or participate at, a certain place, and often at or during a certain time. In the industrial and employment paradigms of the past, before you reported to your assembly line position, construction site, desk or surgery room, you actually went to a spot and put a card into a time clock to provide empirical evidence that you were in the right place at the right time. In contrast, the emerging talent market does not always confine you with such concerns that can often be irrelevant to success and your performance in the role. In fact, more and more opportunities are developing that make it possible for you to work from a cabin high in the Rocky Mountains while you provide your skills and talents to a company in downtown St. Louis. From a beach home on the Maine coast you could provide services in Web page design or patent application advice to a new venture in New Mexico. Increasingly, more and more roles are based only on success in outcomes, results and deliverables, instead of requiring you to be in a certain place at a certain time for a defined period of time. Even further, many organizations are letting you choose the time you want to be at the required place by allowing flextime and other such arrangements.

In the best interest of both you and the organization, what I ask you to do, especially in thinking of the Participation dimension, is to challenge both your assumptions and those of organizations. Keep in mind that many place and time-centered roles are that way only because that is the way it always has been. The question to ask yourself is whether the way you currently operate on the Participation dimension is still the best way for your future and optimal performance in the role. By stretching the assumptions—moving along this continuum—you can gain even more opportunities in some of the previously discussed dimensions such as Location. Often, you can live anywhere and yet work anywhere! In many cases, the organization can be headquartered anywhere on the planet, and you, likewise, can be anywhere you choose—yet both of you can still be of tremendous value to each other.
As in so many of these dimensions, the Participation dimension is loaded with possible conflict and paradox. For example, many of us value “propinquity.” (Now there’s a word you don’t get to use every day!) In other words, many of us have the need to work alongside others—working together in the same environment and enjoying the spontaneity and sense of intimate community derived from the work community’s connection and intimacy. Many telecommuters who value interpersonal community have told me that such a feeling of community is difficult to attain remotely. Even though these interpersonal dynamics inherent in a community environment provide huge benefits to individuals and to the organization, the sense of fellowship can be meaningless or counterproductive to some individuals. I have seen both scenarios—working in community and telecommuting—be hugely successful or fail miserably. There simply are no right or wrong answers. You must determine for yourself the type of participation that is optimal for both your Personal Triangle and the success within the Organizational Triangle.

**Partition:**

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**Partition** may seem a strange word to apply to work relations, or even your career, at first impression. However, partitioning can be a vital concept for managing your life as well as forming the best relationships with organizations. The word partition is defined as:

a. The act or process of dividing something into parts
b. Something that divides or separates, as a wall...

Source: *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*

Work is an integral part of your life. Work is not separate and apart from it. The concept of “work-life balance” frustrates me, for it presupposes that work is something that you do outside of your life. This is nonsense and can be a dangerous error in one’s point of view. Our precious life goes on 24/7, regardless of what we are doing or where and with whom we are living our finite moments. Work is an essential and very significant part of our lives and well-being. For some of us, components of our life’s identity and elements of our purpose are reflected in part through

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*I had been my whole life a bell, and never knew it until the moment I was lifted and struck.*

—Annie Dillard
our service and purpose expressed within our work. Furthermore, our work normally comprises a substantial portion of our lives, especially when you subtract the time consumed by non-discretionary and essential functions such as sleeping. (The fact that work typically demands such a very large segment of our life is another reason to make it everything we desire it to be for our personal fulfillment... but I digress.) Thus in the context of this dimension, it is no small irony that many have unintentionally put a “false partition” in place with the concept of work-life balance. Sadly, this leads to many unintended problems of how we manage our work and the remainder of our lives beyond our work, but it doesn’t have to be this way.

As you have probably guessed, this dimension of partition relates to all aspects of your life, with work’s aspects being just a part of your life. Applying partitions provides the ability to divide our life into parts just as walls divide our houses and commercial buildings, keeping one part from imposing or intruding on the other inappropriately. If we have reasons to do so and so choose, we can erect strong “walls” as partitions to insulate or protect one aspect of our life from encroaching or “leaking” into others. Establishing any of life’s partitions should be a well-considered option in any circumstance, work and beyond, to assist in the “ground rules” defined and understood by both parties. Partitions maintain clarity and prevent problems, frustrations and abuse of goodwill and good intent of others, as well as yourself.

There are many examples of “segments,” “zones” and “roles” throughout life that may merit and justify constructing and maintaining partitions in order to have the quality of life we desire, enabling us to perform our roles well. Examples of some of these zones are:

- Friendships, personal networks and associations
- Relations with spouse or special friends
- Parenting and our relations with our children
- Our relations with others in our family, such as parents and siblings
- Our workplace relations
- Our professional relations, which can be entirely separate from our work roles
- Our personal hobbies, means of recreation, pleasurable pastimes as well as the typical needs for personal “downtime” and “quiet time” to decompress from our other activities

For many of our respective situations, each of the above deserves much thought and care regarding whether we should construct strong partitions to protect one or more zones from another. Differing aspects of
your life can “seep in” and cause problems or difficulties for you and those people “between” those zones. Sometimes partitions go beyond relationships and the list above, or are interrelated with other factors such as:

- Time and your allocations of time
- Privacy and protection of personal information deemed important
- Personal finances and matters of money
- Opinions, points of view, values and philosophies, such as religious beliefs and political opinions
- Information, in either direction, considered confidential or secret, that must be kept securely in its partition and not leaked to others

It can be quite important for you to consider what partitions you should erect to protect what you hold dear from the compromises and encroachments of other aspects of your life. Obviously, well-designed partitions can have a very positive impact on almost every facet of your life (far beyond work contexts), such as the classic challenge of carving out enough time for your spouse or friends to be separate and apart from your children or other family members’ needs. Conversely, poorly constructed partitions can cause many problems.

By now I expect you get the basic points, and you may already know that this isn’t easy. Good intentions are never enough; it requires extremely good and clear communication along with discipline and sometimes negotiations. Most of us have also learned that well-built and maintained partitions, best for us and those we care about, sometimes demand flexibility and compromise to achieve.

As in the other dimensions, partitions are seldom simple and are always a matter of placement on a continuum. In this case, the continuum ranges from one extreme of “none” to “many” on the other end. (Some see another continuum relating to partitions from “flexible” to “rigid,” which for simplicity I am choosing not to show, but feel free to use that too.) Some people live their life happily without any partitions. They allow all aspects of their life to blend into one big integrated “life soup.” An example may be in a traditional family-run business, such as a farm or self-employed consultants working from home. Child care, work chores, giving attention to the spouse’s and parent’s needs and making business decisions all become one big fully-shared interrelationship brewing 24 hours a day, seven days a week. On the other hand, there are those that like to have every aspect of their life neatly and totally segregated, each part of their life isolated from others. For them, every
part has its own place and time, with each being regarded as entirely apart, even alien to the other, as they do their best to “keep their worlds from colliding.”

Once again remember, just as in all of the other dimensions, there are no universal right or wrong approaches or answers to partitions. Simply, there are those designs that work best for you and the life you desire, as well as for your work role and organization. More specifically to your personal work role mastery, you and your supervisor should have a clear understanding of the partitions that each of you require and the others that you desire in order to have the best relationship. Keep in mind, these relate to anything that may encroach on the many aspects of your life, time, privacy, opinions, etc.

You may desire no partitions and have an “open life, open book” approach to work. This is almost prerequisite for those that have severe 24/7 roles, being on call at a moment’s notice, such as in military, law enforcement, fire and healthcare emergency professions. In fact, people in severe roles sometimes benefit from integrated activities and understandings between family and work. On the other hand, others among you, as well as your supervisors and organizations, may have certain partitions that are very important, such as not being called during non-work hours at home unless it is a true emergency, as well as the supervisor’s right to call you if it is deemed important. Is your family welcome in the workplace? Are they seen as a distraction or in potential harm to be there? Are there certain topics such as religion that you desire your supervisor to refrain from in casual discussion? The list can be endless and amazingly varied.

Perhaps even greater in importance to many of us in modern times, are extended work hours acceptable, or do you need to protect other aspects and priorities in your life from the loss of time that is required to provide needed attention to the work aspects of your life? This has been amplified recently in our society by the introduction of personal portable and ubiquitous devices for communication and personal productivity such as e-mail, contact managers and ASP software that make it especially difficult for some people to “escape” work, whether daily or even on vacations. Many people feel like they are held bound by invisible but strong chains to laptops, cell phones and the growing number of other personal information devices. These devices, and the workplace conventions that accompany them, can make the concept of partitions very pertinent and important to discuss and reconcile in your role, since formerly, some partitions took place by default. That is, when you were away from work, it was not possible for you to “be at work.” However today, many of us find it very hard to escape work no matter how remote
we are (and feel guilty if we don’t), unless we have elected to pursue the
workable and effective approach to discovering partitions that work for
all parties.

Most of us are aware that our organizations strive to become more com-
petitive or even survive through increasing personal productivity. This
intensity can have relevance to partitions in both directions, for you and
your organization. Experts agree what this means to you and your role
should be approached with reason and in empathic dialogue between
workers and their organizations. Many roles cannot tolerate certain
personal partitions while many people cannot be responsive to certain
organizational or managerial partitions or lack thereof. The attitude of,
“What I do outside of my work is my business!” may not be acceptable
in many situations. Organizations need to know about the other aspects
of your life, to mitigate risks such as substance abuse, propensity to
divulge secrets or inappropriate or destructive behavior that impacts
your role performance and ultimately the organization. Some personal
partitions in such cases may not be able to reasonably coexist with a
role. Many roles require investigation into your background when you
are a candidate, including your credit and criminal history to protect
the Organizational Triangle, especially if related to preventing work role
liabilities in the “risks corner.”

Reliable and well-placed partitions seldom happen accurately by acci-
dent or by relying on assumptions. It is in the best interest of all involved
to give the dimension of partitions the diligent consideration and dis-
cussion it deserves. Documentation is always a good idea to ensure
agreement and prevent confusion and assumptions. Often designing
and building partitions requires a balancing act between the various
needs of the many parties that are a part of your life. Don’t forget, parti-
tions can be non-existent, sparse or numerous. They can be general and
occasionally observed or may be very rigid and severely enforced in the
way they separate the zones of life and work that are important to you,
as well as your supervisor and your organization. **What is important is
that you and your supervisor carefully work to design partitions to be
where they need to be, to not be where they should not be and make
sure that everyone related to you and your work roles knows they exist
and agrees to respect and maintain them.**
Attention:

There are many ways to use the word attention. However, as one of the Eight Dimensions it is used in a special manner to reflect the narrow or wide range of where you place your focus, hence your attention, while serving in your work role. You might say, “I put my attention on my work!” This may be quite true, but the question remains, “How so?” To bring the topic of work role attention to better understanding, let’s consider the two extreme ends of this continuum.

**Mission or greater purpose**

When a person has their attention to the mission of their organization or the greater purpose of the group, team or community in which they work, they put their energy into meeting the needs and dictates of the larger agenda, whatever that may be. A person that is mission-focused tends to have an interest or curiosity to continually learn better means to serve the needs of their group or organization’s mission. They keep up with happenings, news, innovations, competition and other forces that may be acting on the nature of the mission, be it positive or negative. A person whose work role is at the extreme “mission” end of this continuum will put the mission foremost in his/her heart and mind, typically with passion and enthusiasm, performing numerous professional functions to achieve the mission’s objectives. In fact, if a person’s attention is on the greater agenda, they often treat their profession and skills as variables, doing whatever it takes to serve the agenda. Many great leaders, coaches, public defenders, soldiers, educators, health-care professionals, clergy, politicians, entrepreneurs, public defenders, researchers, non-profit executives and the teams around them are often very mission-centered people. But anyone in any industry can be mission-centered in any role or profession. Many citizens of Japanese organizations are traditionally known to be mission-oriented, as are many workers in the US and around the world serving the purpose of their large or small organizations over long periods. Those who are quite mission-oriented have roles and career tracks that are dynamic and fluid to serve the best interest of the corporate agenda. Mission-centered people are normally not passive bystanders to the agenda at hand. Quite the opposite, they are deeply engaged in the purpose and
often participate in a variety of roles and in every way they are capable and qualified to perform. The mission or greater purpose can be related to the organization or community that one belongs; their market, service or basis of need; their industry or that which is greater than their community. In almost all cases, mission and greater purpose is greater than any one person and spans substantial time in its accomplishment of objectives.

**Profession, skills or craft**

At the other end of the continuum is the “professional” or “craftsman.” This is the person that puts their attention to becoming better at their profession. Their profession drives their interest, curiosity and enthusiasm. They approach the functions they perform with a passion that often brings them to the level of mastery. These “professionals” tend to stay current with the latest news in their professional sectors and communities. They often are quite active in their associations and regularly attend relevant conferences that serve their profession. People centered in their profession often consider organizational missions as transferable or interchangeable. Indeed, they may be considered mercenaries, and in some ways they are, for they bring their expertise and competence to whoever offers them what they are seeking at the moment in personal fulfillment. When their “price” is met, they serve well and everyone benefits from their professional strengths. You probably know of many of your friends that are like this. They may be a front-line manager, technician, top executive or salesperson. If a better opportunity comes along, they can instantly leap to the new setting (and new mission). Attorneys, accountants, consultants, mechanics, pilots, database administrators, engineers, Web masters and IT professionals are but a few that sometimes find deep satisfaction in the professional area. Somewhat like expert nomads, they are ready to serve whoever has a need for their expertise, competencies, knowledge and experience. At the extreme edge of the continuum is the professional or craftsman that puts their full attention to being the best at their professional role, with any mission or greater purpose, if relevant at all, being considered secondary.

One more time, none of the dimensions have good or bad points on their continuaus. As the old saying goes, “some mason’s minds and hands lay bricks with mortar, others form straight and strong walls, others create a beautiful cathedral, others seek well-being of the community and yet others serve God.” Each mason resides somewhere different on the continuum, and they each can perform their role as a mason well. Regardless of your profession and where you work, there usually is somewhere that is best for you, your role and your personal
work role mastery in this continuum. Seldom do people reside at the extreme edges of this continuum. Normally, a person is somewhere in between the two extremes, simply biased to one side or the other. Most professionals have a varying degree of interest in the missions they serve. Likewise, most mission-centered people have an interest in their professional development for personal growth as well as for the best service to their mission. In many cases, this changes over their careers as their profession and the missions they serve change with the passage of time. Seldom does a person find they reside at a single point on this continuum. On the contrary, a person may find they are most comfortable in a relative range or span within the continuum, while others will have a quite narrow range. A few people may manage to successfully span this continuum almost from end to end.

In many cases of work dissatisfaction and being out of Flow, it is often due to something incorrect or suboptimal with where you reside on this continuum. Auditing and assessing where you are on this continuum (or where you want to be) is discovering where you want your responsibilities, accountabilities and accomplishments to reside. Another way is considering what interests, associations do you have related to your work and industry? Looking at these honestly can be very revealing to where our hearts and minds lie. It allows us to see more clearly, “Why do we do the work that we do?” and “Where do we find our Flow?” In many cases, when we discover this, it is almost like “who we are” and “what we do” converging or overlapping in the Flow framework.

In many workplace or institutional situations, circumstances dictate specific role requirements about how one views and what one knows about the mission, and conversely, a very large number of roles demand strong professional qualities or even professional certifications and licenses. As in the other dimensions, it is important that you understand where you are the most satisfied in placing your attention within your work role. It is equally important that you understand how your organization sees this continuum for your role. In some cases, it can be challenging to make major shifts in this continuum “overnight.” Often this is because the Attention continuum relates to deep-seated personal preferences, traits, values or points of view. You may think that ideally, one could balance the two extremes and find the greatest satisfaction residing in the center. This may be true in a few cases, but usually there are biases in the person or the role that nudge them to one side or the other. However, if the person wishes to grow within the organizations and be most valuable, they often are encouraged to extend healthy interest to the “other side” from where they most easily give their attention.

This continuum may seem especially fuzzy and hard to grasp or accurately quantify in the beginning. However, many career problems and
work role failures originate in the inability to understand one’s self as well as one’s work role in this dimension. Problems in this dimension can “sneak up on you and bite you” without warning, regardless of where you are on the continuum, if you and your role are mismatched in this dimension. I hope with introspection and consideration of what seems most natural and normal for you in your work, as well as through applied practice in conversations with your supervisor, the power of this continuum will reveal itself, and you will use it to your advantage. Remember, you are a “work in progress.” As in most or all of the other dimensions, anticipate that you will move about as time passes as you strive to stay in your “sweet spot” for both personal fulfillment as well as role success. Exploring the Attention dimension periodically can often open up new possibilities in your work, career and life.

Summary

If I have not overwhelmed you, perhaps you are beginning to appreciate at least the merit and the basics of these Eight Dimensions of thinking, action and planning. Try to remain open to the options that each of these dimensions present so you can creatively and proactively move about as you chart the course of your life and your career. I have only scratched the surfaces of each dimension, and I know all of this can be quite daunting, whether you consider these individually or as a whole.

However, isn’t it incredibly exciting to know these dimensions are available to you and can be used and combined for your benefit? Even if you begin by using only one or two new dimensional categories of this framework (or any of the other frameworks), you may be surprised to see how this can free up the log jams in your mind, in your professional life, even in other aspects of your life, and quite possibly open many new doors to a better future for you.

I ask that you seriously and continuously contemplate how the Eight Dimensions can contribute to and augment the many and varied elements of the previous three frameworks. They can increase your personal options to meet your needs in the Personal Triangle and can also help you gain more compelling positions and value in the Organizational Triangle. The Eight Dimensions also will provide avenues for negotiation, creativity and navigation as you seek to optimize your roles across your career. See Figure 2 for one hypothetical example of this.

You now have ample tools to prevent yourself or your targeted organization from ever being limited by outdated assumptions and conventional think-
There is no reason any of us should be a “career victim,” feeling that we are helpless to guide our work lives in the direction we would wish them to go. For all of us the best options often reside beyond the falling rubble of the old walls of limited thinking. We all have a huge influence upon our own destiny. Define and create yours; then savor it and enjoy it!
What she did: Cynthia, a young, single, computer systems programmer, worked in a full-time affiliation with her fairly traditional company. She had a typical cubicle, worked the 8-to-5 routine, on call one week per month, was assigned task after task and became a bit restless.

What she wanted: Having examined her Personal Triangle, Cynthia wanted to experience more, travel more, earn more and stretch herself in new directions. However, she desired a degree of security and she needed a stronger feeling of community.

What she did about it: At this stage of her life, Cynthia decided to shift her focus. She created a new Personal Value Proposition for a new role as a consultant for an IT consulting agency where she now works in a mentoring program that strategically advises companies in systems architecture. She now travels across the country with a team of consultants and works within a variety of companies. She has set a more rigid partition to allow her pursuit of personal goals like running a marathon, and sets aside “her” time everyday away from her cell phone and laptop. She is more fulfilled, is learning and growing in her profession daily and has doubled her income.

She plans to do this for the next five years or so. Then she plans to adjust her Dimensions to “settle down” geographically and come off the road (as the Effects part of her Personal Triangle may ultimately demand). She believes the experience will ultimately give her exposure to possible full-time relationships with the right company (a company that may currently be passive, not actively seeking to fill a role until they meet her and see her performance first hand).
There are a number of authors doing much writing and thinking about work and the social implications of the changes taking place in the workplace. There are also a few authors taking a look at the even bigger shifts in the nature of work:

*The Future Of Success*, by Robert Reich... ex-labor chief brings perspective;
*Post-Capitalist Society*, by Peter Drucker... the sage invented “the knowledge worker;”
*The End of Work*, by Jeremy Rifkin... predicts deep social shift happening in work.
*Work 2.0*, by Bill Jensen... In a Work 2.0 world, the future of business success is tied to every individual's success. We win together or not at all

The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI™) that I advocate for your personal self-discovery and outward promotion, presents your preferences to certain thinking functions of the brain described in four quadrants. As you use the Application dimension to expand your perspectives of role opportunities, it may be more helpful to not only address the left or right-brain issues (although these certainly are crucially important to your Personal Triangle as well as to roles’ Organizational Triangles). Instead, while considering the Application dimension, we consider the upper, cerebrum-centered functions, and the lower, limbic-centered functions of the brain, for this type of distinction often does not get the consideration, respect and attention it deserves.

A personal friend, the late Ned Herrmann, made great metaphorical and physiological advancements in aligning the understanding of our “thinking mind” and our “physical brain.” He helped people all over the world better understand their thinking, behavioral and activity preferences—in essence, he helped us understand ourselves. His original book, *The Creative Brain*, is an excellent gateway to understanding these matters, especially that which I address as the limbic (the “B” and “C” areas of the Herrmann Thinking Styles) and the cerebral (the “A” and “D” areas) components of this profile. For more information on his work, see www.HBDI.com.

For more extensive exploration of our incredible brain, I advise reading the many fine books of Antonio Damasio, Oliver W. Sacks and the more challenging book, *Synaptic Self* by Joseph LeDoux.

Today many people have technological skills and ingenuity yet fail to appreciate how much more valuable they could be to an organization if they were to acquire new or exploit existing capabilities in areas such as effective social interaction with others. In many organizations there is a direct correlation between a person’s income and a linear and cumulative progression in his/her capabilities toward addressing the needs of the organization's sociology. This progression exists in an ordered sequence: technology › psychology › sociology › ecology. In other words, even though technical skills (that can be either cerebral or limbic) are certainly valuable, often the organization perceives increased value in working effectively as a peer or manager with other individuals, utilizing psychology (a function of our limbic area) in the performance of the role. There may be even greater value to the organization when you can realize your potential as a group or team leader to meet desired organizational community objectives (utilizing sociology, which is often both limbic and cerebral). Beyond this, the greatest value is often perceived in those people who can strategically lead the company across its marketplace and its future (ecology).
When I think of the Location dimension, I am fascinated by the weird things that can happen within most organizations. Most people seem to find it easier to seek opportunities outside of their organizations rather than within them. And, most hiring managers and leaders in an enterprise can more easily, or with fewer negative consequences, find talent outside the walls of the organization than they can within their own community. To the detriment of everyone, this dysfunction is often due to existing, outdated policies, dogma or suffocating organizational politics. The black-out of information regarding opportunities and talent availability within a company should cease. The free-flow, unrestricted, uninhibited exploration of all that is possible within an enterprise should break free of politics and policies to allow free and open markets to exist within companies, just as they do everywhere else.