

## **The 21st Century Workplace: 10 Trends**

By Christopher J. Kuselias

*“The best way to predict your future is to create it.” Stephen Covey*

We can all agree that, more than ever in our history, the future is filled with so many unanswered questions regarding what employment will look like. Industries are being consolidated and in some cases even eliminated seemingly overnight. International competition and the new global economy have made the world a much smaller place when it comes to marketing or producing goods and services. With so much uncertainty, you may be looking for a set of guiding principles to help you navigate through these uncertain workplace waters. Many feel like they have thrown into the rapids without a map or the proper equipment! This is our collective challenge as today strategies and techniques that may have worked in the past are now as obsolete as an 8-track player.

### **Today More Than Ever, You Are What You Do...**

The 21st Century Workplace promises more job change and dramatic industry fluctuations. In my experience, there are very few things as challenging as changing jobs and few life experiences as demoralizing as the loss of ones job. Here is why... Many people define themselves by their job title or description. I recently attended an open house at my daughters' elementary school, kind of a meet and greet for parents and teachers. It is so interesting to observe parents with small kids in today's competitive world jockey for positioning with the teacher, the principle and even the teachers aides. Anyway, we all convened in the cafeteria and were served juice and crackers and after we listened to the teacher speak about the curriculum and objectives, we were left to mingle with the other parents. Earlier that evening, I had told my wife Sue that I was going to keep a formal record of how many people asked me what I do for a living and where did the question of my occupational status come up in conversation with other parents. She said she would help (as long as I did not do anything to embarrass her.) During the course of the evening, which lasted two hours; I met a total of 54 sets of kindergarten parents. Of these 46 (85%!) asked me what “I did for a living” within their first three questions. After requesting my name, the curiosity as to my occupational status was the second most asked question. Do you find this to be the case in your life? I think we can all agree that “what do you do for a living” is a universally accepted phrase. Consider those words, which associate your job or career with a “living”, that is, how you exist...Clearly, your career is more than just a way to pay the bills...

Some people identify so strongly with their job title that if they are laid off or lose their job, they feel as if their identity has been surgically removed from their body. People have different value systems; some actually develop a self-concept based on their occupation, or even amount of money they earn. Ever heard of the six-figure club? One of my friend's wives had to remind him (in a not so pleasant manner!) that he may be the manager at work, but at home she was not his secretary and that the kids were not employees. It is often difficult to separate our work persona from our personal persona. My friend had the common challenge of making sure his identity was not defined by his job title or duties, but rather by a variety of personal and professional characteristics.

So what is the solution to competing and winning in the 21st century workplace? To begin, I am an advocate that while understanding the global landscape is important and necessary, your chosen career path should be based on your passions and internal beliefs rather than on availability or what jobs pay the most at any given moment. I am not naïve to practical concerns or being pragmatic when it comes to formulating a decision, but I am a strong advocator that **before falling prey to the trappings of a job and lifestyle that does not provide passion and purpose, one should explore their goals and objectives in detail.**

America remains the greatest nation on the planet earth; we simple have more opportunities and better resources. Here is a perspective...

***Fast fact: USA Today Snapshots ran a profile from the National Park Service that cited Americans flush down toilets 6.8 billion gallons of water per DAY...while there are 1.2 billion people worldwide who do not even have access to clean water!***

### **Personal Career Management Is A Must!**

*Avoid the single-minded danger Abraham Maslow observed:  
“He that is good with the hammer tends to think everything is a nail.”*

The global economy has created a paradigm shift where borders no longer exist and the perception of ones career identity must shift from the title on a business card to that of a solutions oriented resource. Although the world is more complex, simple is powerful. Here is a profound message as to how you should from this day forward, perceive your career...*ME, INC.* It is time to broaden your horizons and desist with a single minded, myopic approach to your livelihood. There is an ocean of opportunity created by this new global economy. Those who decide to put away the trappings of conformity and pursue their unique destiny are creating fortunes everyday. Maybe you are reading this book because you have recently faced a life-altering event like a layoff or illness or maybe you are simply tired of living an uninspired existence. Often the will is there but the knowledge of specific strategies and techniques to realize this new ambition is lacking. This is where *Career Calling* comes in.

*Question: Have you have reached a point in your life where you have lost your job or desire to change your position and/or are no longer willing to tolerate an unfulfilling professional life that provides financial compensation but little else in the way of reward?*

Maybe like millions of workers, you have looked at recent world events and have decided to marry your skills and talents with a more rewarding occupation. Maybe you have confronted your own mortality and have a new perspective on what is truly important and what is not. Every day, I hear more and more people say, “I am willing to work for less money if I feel I am making a difference in my job”. Or they will say, “I want some meaning in my life and a career that makes me feel good about myself”. Sound familiar? I am of the belief that there is a paradigm shift occurring where people in record numbers are searching out for the emotional benefits associated with a career that

provides a measurable benefit to society. We want to know that we matter...we do not wish to be deemed insignificant.

*“I know this now. Every man gives his life to what he believes. Every woman gives her life for what she believes. Sometimes people believe in little or nothing, and so they give their lives to little or nothing....” Joan of Arc.*

To support this more concentrated search for purpose and this growing trend towards integrating religious our beliefs with our career, in his book, *“How To Find Your Mission In Life”*, well known career author Richard N. Bolles points out that, *“according to fifty years of opinion polls by the Gallup Organization, 94% of us pray, 88% of us believe in God, and 33% of us report we have had a life changing experience (The Peoples Religion: American Faith in the 90’s. (MacMillan & Co. 1989).*

It is evident that an increasing number of people seek to realize a similar level of empowerment from their career that they derive and/or experience from their spiritual undertakings. Clearly, the process of attaining your calling is not limited to your physical or intellectual talents, but should include consideration for your total emotional being. **Finding your calling is in essence, a process, which combines your intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional capabilities to create a feeling of positive contribution and the peace of mind associated with serving others.** Please keep in mind that attaining your calling, like your religious pursuits, is an ongoing process that one never masters, but gets closer to the ideal.

For others, perhaps you have recently lost your job. There is a whole set of vocabulary for this evolving trend towards less full time workers with paid benefits to more part time workers or contracted employees. Ever hear of these words...

- Let go
- Fired
- Downsized
- Displaced
- Right sized
- Reorganized
- Reengineered

Or maybe you were just “surplus” and part of a “cost reduction exercise”. Whatever you call it, the process of losing your job is no fun and can for some, be emotionally crippling.

Consider Paul’s story...

*Paul lost his job as a tool and die maker after 37 years of valued service (he never missed a day for being sick in 37 years!) who described the loss of his job as a loss of his **identity**. In fact, Paul, the displaced worker in this example stated that he felt like someone had, “surgically removed my identity.” Without his job, Paul did not know who he was anymore or what to do with his time. His company provided outplacement program offered information on the mechanics of finding a new job (his resume, cover letter, etc.) but spent little time on what Paul desperately needed, which was, coaching him through his emotional loss and the step by step re-building of his self esteem. What*

*Paul needed most was not a resume and a handshake, but the re-establishment of his confidence and a plan for determining where his passions and contributions could be utilized.*

*Paul identified with his role as a tool and die worker so strongly, that he had confuse his own self-concept that he literally felt like a part of him had died when told he could no longer work in his former capacity. His value system was completely imbalanced and because he had been conditioned this way for some many years, I prescribed a career makeover. Paul was initially resistant to the process... after all; he had not been on an interview for nearly 30 years!*

*My solution was obvious: help him with the process of transition while simultaneously assisting him to appreciate and recognize his non-work related aspects and joys, which also (even Paul did not initially realize or appreciate) shaped his sense of self and purpose. His work life was only a fraction of his total identity. Paul was a grandfather, a husband and a “dad”. He was a member of the local Knights of Columbus, which spearheaded several community-based contributions and was active in his local church. Paul was an extremely tough case; he was angry and resistant to let go of his resentment towards his former employer for “ruining his life”. He had trouble sleeping and was often short with his loved ones.*

*After much support and time to gain perspective on the importance of his non-work identity, Paul began to soften and eliminate the hate in his heart. He became a member of the local Senior Business leaders group and even took a course at the local community college. Paul has lost most of his bitterness and is re-inventing and re-building his identity, on his way to finding a new calling and the next great chapter in his life.*

What can we learn from this story? To begin, never let your work consume your identity to the point where your value is dictated by your job title or role. Jobs are fleeting and can be taken away or eliminated at a moments notice. Do not let yourself get to the point where your entire life revolves around your work meaning if work is going great you are happy and when things are not so great on the job, your personality reflects this as well. The lesson is to be mindful to not let yourself investing your entire identity and reason for being into a job or work related function. You are much more than that but in today’s fast paced, win at all cost, bottom line global economy, this takes a constant effort and daily reminder.

In sum, what is important is to focus on the essence of your contributions and the positive feelings generated rather than on the job title or outer trappings of work such as title, or the prestige of ones position. If you lose your title or role with one employer, you can feel confident that you can replace or re-channel your contributions in a modified way, because you have taken the time to recognize what your unique and compelling skills are.

The world is changing...often faster and more rapidly than any of us are comfortable with. Although many people yearn for the simplicity and traditions of yesterday, a simpler time when human capital dominated the workplace, the reality is that technology and innovation are here to stay. You can try to fight it and protest by keeping your old hand written Rolodex, refusing to buy a cell phone, printing your brochures

versus accessing the Internet and sending out mass mailings as opposed to applying on-line, but you will inevitably lose that battle. Technology wins, any way you look at it...

Fear not my fellow seeker of a career calling, there is a strategy to mastering this rush of life and it is contained within the pages of this book. All you have to do is complete it! To assist you in understanding the playing field where we all will be competing, here is a list of 10 trends I see for the 21st Century Workplace.

## **10 Trends For The 21st Century Workplace**

### **Trend 1: Americans Are Working Harder and Longer**

*“Despite longer hours and advances in education, technology, service, product innovation and the global economy, the majority of individuals are still underachieving in the organizations they work for.” - Christopher J. Kuselias*

Our workaholic culture is legendary. We have seen a gradually increase in the required commitment to our jobs which is having a negative effect on our family life. I have observed a disconcerting development where workers seem to categorize how many hours they work as a badge of honor. “I put in 80 hours this week, yea baby!” is a common boast as workers today struggle to get ahead and claim their rightful place in the corporate world. We are becoming richer with regard to our material possessions (bigger house, larger SUV, home gym equipment, etc.) but losing more of our most precious resource... our time. In her book, *The Overworked American*, Harvard economist Juliet B. Schor states, *“the shrinkage of leisure, experienced by nearly all types of Americans, has created a profound structural crisis in time.”*

***In 1990, Japanese workers averaged 2,031 hours per year while Americans averaged 1,861, almost 10% less. Today, the average American works 36 hours more than the Japanese (1,825 vs. 1,789). According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, South Koreans lead the world with an average 2,394 hours per year while Norway’s average worker spends only 1,364 hours on the job.***

According to the Families and Work Institute, as of 2002, dual income households with children under eighteen, were putting in ninety-one hours per week (up from eighty-one hours per week 2 years earlier). Consider these facts:

- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1/3 American workers feel they will experience burn out within the next two years
- According to the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention, more people die on Monday at 9AM than any other time of day or any other day of the week!

At the risk of pointing out the obvious, working harder does not necessarily translate into greater productivity and a faster promotion. Working *too hard* is often symptomatic of a lack of balance in one area of life (i.e. health, financial, relationship, spirituality) and is often an unconscious attempt to mask boredom, loneliness, loss or pain created in another area of a person’s life. We see this a lot in unhappy marriages, an

inability to create or maintain a healthy social calendar or a lack of hobbies and non-professional outlets. Hello! People...we all need to let loose and let off a little steam on a regular basis or we become dull and uninteresting.

In my experience as the founder and Chief Executive Officer of *Career T.E.A.M.*, an *INC500* company (an award given annually by *INC Magazine* to the 500 fastest growing, privately held companies), here is what I have found when it comes to hiring and retaining employees. Individuals that are consumed with work, promotion and conduct themselves in an overly ambitious manner, often burn out and “hit the wall” before those who pace themselves and live a life of balance. When interviewing new staff, we as an organization, target candidates who demonstrate a healthy balance in their personal and professional lives because we know, experience has shown that those candidates stay longer, have less sick time and are better role models to their peers.

There is no definitive formula for how hard to work but the easiest measure is your own personal thermostat, where you can feel when you have invested too much time and energy in your professional career; at the expense of your personal life. I have had the privilege and pleasure to meet some of nation’s most successful entrepreneurs, managers and builders of quality organizations who all share a similar view. Focus, commitment to excellence and good ole fashion hard work are essential ingredients to upward mobility (promotion) but no amount of dedication can make up for the challenges associated with an unhealthy professional life caused by overwork.

Working and particularly the pursuit of ones career calling requires a tremendous amount of energy and perseverance, but not at the expense of your health, fitness, family, hobbies or spiritual pursuits. It is only one of five key areas in my wheel of balance (career, financial, health & fitness, relationships, spirituality) and should be treated as such.

***Fast fact: Did you know that the average Italian worker averages forty-two vacation days per year?***

## **Trend 2: Our Workforce is Facing a Major Transformation:**

*Hum...The U.S. Department of Labor states that 50% of available jobs found over the next six years... have yet to be created!*

Looking back from the 1920’s to the mid 1980’s, large companies dominated the hiring market with the dream of most Americans being to get a job with a big company with good benefits and a pension. Training was plentiful as was internal promotion and upward mobility with the same employer. This all changed suddenly in the mid to late 1980’s. What happened? The simple answer is technology where mechanical enhancements began to rapidly displace the need for manual labor and innovations that used to take twenty five years to develop now took only three to four years and sometimes, even months. The net result is that approximately twenty million blue-collar workers were laid off. Obsolescence became a major concern to those who failed to keep up with the incredible pace of change. The paradigm shift of workers without enhanced (state of the art) skills becoming, “surplus” will continue.

**Job security is a thing of the past.** There I said it! Recall the words of General Douglas MacArthur, who said, *‘security is your ability to produce.’* Said another way,

the mantra today seems to be...we do not pay for effort but only pay for results! In my opinion, the only true security can be found in a complete and thorough understanding of who you are, what you want, what you do well, and where you can be compensated for performing these contributions. It is increasingly important to be able to articulate your competence, that is, your unique and compelling contributions. This is the secret to your long-term stability and success. Your strategy must focus on mastering the changes brought about by innovation and the ability to transform these changes to your benefit. Keep up or be discarded, sounds callous but some of you reading have personally experienced this harsh reality. More on this later...Here are the facts we must all accept before creating a game plan to live and work in the 21st Century Workplace:

- There are over 9 million un-employed Americans and at any given time; **it is estimated that at any given time, 40% of the working population is actively seeking a new job**
- Employers will soon face a critical labor shortage due to the impending baby boomer retirement development. Baby boomers (46-64 year olds) will exit the workforce at unprecedented rates.
- We are experiencing 20 years of documented decline in birthrate which creates a negative effect on supply of qualified workers
- Employers continue to out-source more functions to sub contractors and other less costly options than full time workers

*Fast Fact: At our company, Career TEAM, we have a motto..."Leaner, meaner, faster, smarter..."*

- Technology will create jobs for upward mobility of middle class. There will be fewer but better jobs available
- Employers strive to upgrade technology skills of low-wage workers to accommodate need. Training, education and awareness of technology is the centerpiece of this paradigm shift. *The number of native-born workers obtaining higher education degrees is declining. Due to the global economy, skilled immigrants (i.e. China & India) are finding quality positions in their home nations. A shortage is occurring as employers today seek more skilled workers...and cannot find them.*
- Self-promotion and marketing become mandatory skills as competition for jobs intensifies

This is the order of the day...time for each one of us to take control!

### **Trend 3: Taking Control Of Your Career Is Essential!**

*"Indecision is the greatest thief of opportunity."*  
Jim Rohn from his book *Facing the Enemies Within*

Considering these sobering developments, it is absolutely essential that you immediately take control of your career and become proactive in formulating a plan for long-term survival and prosperity. Think of yourself as a company for hire and not as an

employee looking for their next place to camp out until you are either laid off or the company folds. I strongly urge you to explore available personality type assessments and tests, which are often helpful in narrowing your focus and serve to identify your unique characteristics and values. Paul Tieger, author of the best selling book, *Do What You Are* (see appendix for referral sources) has done some excellent work in this regard. Here are some basic keys for taking control of your career:

**Think Service!** We are and will remain in a Service Economy. Focus on the value of your contributions and choose service over salary. Remember the words of Thomas Watson, Sr. (IBM) who said, “*Don’t worry about profits, worry about service.*” My personal belief is that customer service in this country has declined to the point of being downright embarrassing. Management guru Tom Peters, agrees...”Customer service in America stinks.” Want to get ahead? Commit yourself to being a service guru in whatever field or endeavor you choose and you will go far. Prove you have excellent customer relation skills and you have an immediate advantage, regardless of industry.

**Keep Your Promises:** Build your integrity by establishing a reputation as a person who makes and keeps their promises. Background checks have become sophisticated to the point of being almost invasive. Employers are more leery about hiring candidates because the investment in their training can be significant. Never lie to a potential employer or business associate. I remember the story of a college football coach who after years of building his credentials, finally realized his lifelong dream to be the Head Coach of Notre Dame, only to be fired because he lied (or misstated the facts) on his resume about a relatively obscure position he once held several years ago. Sam Walton, founder of WalMart had this to say...”*Always remember, a promise we make is a promise we keep.*”

**Be Persistent:** We are in a global economy, which means that there is more competition today than ever before. To succeed, you must be persistent and never back down from adversity or quit in your pursuit of your calling. I love the quote from Josh Billings who said, “*Be like a postage stamp. Stick to something until you get there.*”

**Be Innovative:** Following the traditional path and doing what every one else is doing will get you...well, to be honest, what everybody else is getting (which based on the statistics I am sharing, is pretty discouraging). Seek a competitive edge to differentiate yourself from the competition. Remember to be clever but not obvious...

*There is the story of a man who attempted to cross the Canadian border on his motorcycle. He carried two saddlebags strapped across his seat. The border guards questioned, “What is in your saddle bags?” “Rocks,” the man replied. The guards proceeded to empty the bags and inspect them. Finding nothing but rocks, they let the man go ahead with bags full of rocks. A couple weeks later, the same situation occurred and continued for every two or three weeks for several months. The border patrol guards endured the cyclist’s entry over the border with saddlebags full of rocks. Finally, one day, the guards could no longer take it. “Listen, we know you are smuggling something across the border but every time we inspect your saddle bags, we find nothing but rocks. It is driving us crazy. Tell us what you are doing and we promise not to turn you in”. “It is simple really”, the man smiled, “I am smuggling motorcycles.”*

More trends I see that you should be following and responding to:

- The average job tenure is getting shorter, now only 3.2 years
- Average job seeker changes jobs 8 times in their career, 4 times before age 30
- Job seekers need to better understand their competitive edge as they transition not just from job to job, but from industry to industry
- The current job search averages 7 months with an industry rule of thumb that for the experienced job seeker, it takes 1 month for every \$10,000 in salary
- 80% of the U.S. population can be classified as being “underemployed”
- Over 40% of college students graduate without a job and many accept jobs not even related to their field of study or degree: because they are not properly advised
- 80% of all job vacancies are never advertised, they are filled through the hidden job market (more on this later)
- 66% of all current job vacancies exist with employers who have less than 100 employees...small business is where the majority of jobs are! (Remember, every large Fortune 500 Company was once a small company...)
- Job Posting (Internet) Boards list jobs, but often provide them in an impersonal way and offer no guidance on strategies to attain these positions. They are also increasingly acting as a screening tool through unreliable questionnaires or evaluations.

#### **Trend 4: Baby Boomers Are Taking Over!**

***One baby boomer is turning 50 years old every 8 seconds...more than 12,000 per day!***

Between 1946 and 1964, the baby boomer generation was born (no pun intended!) It was a post-war era and people returned home and well...got downright busy in the bedroom and expressed their affection! Today, this historic event represents eighty four million North Americans who comprise one third of the continents population. **The wants and needs of this massive generation should be a major concern for each of us, and will factor significantly in available employment opportunities.** Beginning this year in America, every eight seconds another boomer will turn sixty! That equates to four and a half million each year! You best believe that industry is aware of this paradigm shift and that your work life and future career options are effected every day by this development. What will they eat? What do they wear? Where do they live? What do they watch or read? What are their technology needs and capabilities? Where do they spend their money? What services are important to them? The informed career seeker sees this as opportunity to marry this need with their passion for service.

Consider this: In 1800, the average life expectancy was less than 40 years. By 1900, this figure had improved, but only to 47 years. Today, the average life expectancy (for modernized nations) is 74 years (the U.S. life expectancy is 77 years). Where will it be by 2100? My guess is that it will rise significantly. What is my point? The point is we are not only living longer, we are enjoying ourselves more and are participating in more activities, previously reserved for younger individuals. Today, people are working longer but not necessarily in the same job or industry. Consider these examples:

- Warren Buffett: is still considered the world’s greatest investor into his seventh decade!

- Sean Connery: (in my opinion he is the real James Bond) was voted the sexiest man alive by People Magazine (1989); at 59 years of age!
- Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney are still rocking to sold-out stadiums at over 60!
- John Glenn went back into space when most people his age were reading their AARP magazines!
- Galileo created *Dialogue Concerning The Two New Sciences* at 74!
- Mahatma Ghandi: successfully completed negotiations with Britain for India's independence at 72!
- Groucho Marx (one of my favorite funny men) began his career as a TV host at age 69!
- Ichijirou Araya successfully climbed Mount Fiji at age 100!

The message: It is never too late to start! Opportunity is created not only for those who are boomers and choose to continue working or start a business later in life, but to entrepreneurial minded passion seekers who create or design solutions for this group. Want more info...As of this writing these folks are all about to be sexagenarians (age 60!):

- Cher (Her farewell concert tour grossed \$190 million)
- Connie Chung (CBS Evening News)
- Sally Field (Two time Oscar winner...)
- Goldie Hawn (Still ravishing)
- Tommie Lee Jones (Actor, former Al Gore college roommate)
- Barry Manilow (He writes the songs...)
- Bette Midler (Singer, actress...)
- Dolly Parton (Currently still touring...)
- Linda Ronstadt (Pop Star)
- Pat Sajak (Still spinning that wheel...)
- Diane Sawyer (Host of Good Morning America)
- Suzanne Sommers (Three's Company & the Thighmaster)
- Sylvester Stallone (Can it be possible? He looks 40!)
- Donald Trump (The tycoon)

Boomer Alert! *Beware of the Social Security Crisis...*With the impending Social security crisis, you would be smart to establish your own plan for retirement and prosperity versus hoping your employer or the US government will handle our golden years. Entrepreneurship often creates a self-sufficient strategy for ensuring you have enough money as we all live longer. Here is the challenge in a nutshell...

*The first Social Security check was made in the Depression era, when there were nearly forty-two workers for each Social Security beneficiary. As people began to live longer, due to advances in health and wellness, the system became taxed. Instead of 42 workers for every beneficiary as we had in 1940, today there are 3.4 workers. By 2050, this figure is expected to decline to 2 to 1. This will create an impossible burden on workers at today's benefit levels. In his book, *The Power Years* (a must read for all baby boomer!), author Ken Dychtwald, PH.D points out, "Beginning in 2008, the first boomers will be eligible for early retirement, and the following two decades will see a*

*rapid rise in the cost of delivering Social Security benefits, from about 11% of all taxable earnings to more than 17% when the final boomers reach normal retirement age in 2031.*

*To convert Social Security and run it like a traditional pension would require \$12 trillion, a staggering amount that exceeds America's total economic output for a year. It just won't happen." We must learn to fund our own retirement!*

Scared yet? A colleague recently informed me that:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics says that out of 100 people that start working at the age of 25, by the age of 65...

- Only 1 will be considered wealthy
- Only 4 will have enough money to retire
- 63 will depend on a shrinking Social Security system or require charity to get by
- 29 will be deceased
- 

What's disturbing about these statistics is that **...95% of people who live to age 65 cannot afford to retire ...many will be forced to work until they die!**

- 29 out of 100 people do not even live to 65 years old...stress kills and it has been proven that often stress can be traced back to financial reasons
- 63 out of every 100 people who are age 65 depend on social security and charity for food & shelter

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS TO THE "FEW" WHO ARE WILLING TO TAKE ACTION:

- 4 out of 100 people age 65 can fully support their retirement.
- 1 out of 100 people age 65 is wealthy.

### **Trend 5: Employers Will Change The Way They Manage Employees**

*Fast Fact: The prime age workforce (25-54), which grew by 54% between 1980-2000, is expected to grow by only 3% from 2000-2020...*

When considering your calling, become educated on how employers are adapting to changes in the economy, societal values and of course, baby boomers. Employers face a severe shortage of experienced, qualified workers as baby boomers exit the workforce in record numbers. The new Generation, called Generation X, does not have the knowledge, savvy or experience needed to effectively fill these key positions. As a result of these developments, employers are forced to adjust strategies for managing personnel. Many have begun establishing creative employment packages, benefits and even schedules designed to lessen this mass exodus and retain some of these critical skills. I was amazed to learn that currently, nearly 40% of all American employers not only allow employees to work from home, but in many cases, encourage this paradigm shift. This figure has doubled over the past five years and is expected to rise even further.

This paradigm shift is occurring not because working from home yields better performance, but because employers have no choice! I have friends and associates that work for established companies like Home Depot, Pitney-Bowes, Wal-Mart and IBM who report their firms are becoming more proactive in retaining older talent. Employees are often re-hired as consultants or allowed to create their own flexible hours plan to accommodate personal issues or family concerns. Job sharing, where multiple part-timers fill the role of a traditional full time position is also on the rise. Ever the optimist, I believe there is tremendous economic vitality among the countries businesses, and this should continue. Other trends include:

- Companies are reinvesting in their businesses and gaining appreciation for their most valued employees
- Regarding job creation, most employers remain cautiously optimistic but are less hopeful than in prior years
- Job creation is more prevalent for part time workers and consultants, than full time workers
- International trade continues to increase and businesses cite increases due to an ever-evolving global marketplace
- The loss of U.S jobs remains a concern to most employers
- Significant increases in health-benefit costs remain a major concern to most businesses

Bottom line...although employers are open minded to new styles of management and becoming more flexible to accommodate these changes, you have to become absolutely 100% responsible for managing your career and life choices. With the advent of newer and faster technology, many will see an increase in discretionary time. We will have more choices to make...which industry, which employer, entrepreneur, full time employee or subcontractor, what country, what city, home office or corporate office, benefits or monetary compensation and self managed retirement plans...if you are even offered one. If not, you will need to initiate a fiscal plan that will last you're your nineties and hopefully beyond...more choices (where to invest, who with, domestic or international, fixed income or growth?)

The list of choices will overwhelm us if we are not carefully prepared and have spent time on critical reflection: the practice of assessing and analyzing ones life and choices. Consider the following from one of our era's greatest business thinkers...

*"In a few hundred years, when the history of our time is written from a long-term perspective, it is likely that the most important event those historians will see is not technology, not the Internet, not e-commerce. It is an unprecedented change in the human condition. For the first time---literally---substantial and rapidly growing numbers of people have choices. For the first time they will have to manage themselves. And society is totally unprepared for it..."*

*--- Peter Drucker, Management Consultant*

## **Trend 6: Retired Americans Are Moving South**

*A ninety-year old man and woman who recently met decided to get married. Shortly after the ceremony, the elderly pair was getting ready for bed when the husband noticed his wife taking a pill and swallowing it down with water. "I wasn't aware you were taking medication," he said. "Oh, its not medication" said the wife, "it is just a pill I take every day which makes me feel more youthful in the morning when I wake up". Not wanting to have his wife appear more youthful looking than he, the husband waited until she went to sleep and proceeded to swallow half the entire bottle of pills before going to bed. The next morning the wife awoke and could not find her husband anywhere. Finally, after searching the house to no avail, she looked out the front window and spotted her husband sitting on the front curb, with his head buried in his hands. "What is the matter?" she questioned. The husband looked up with tears in his eyes and said... "I think I missed my school bus..."*

This is a cute story but on some level, it is probably fair to say that we all seek to reclaim our youth or delay the aging process. While there is certainly nothing wrong with seeking strategies to increase vigor and energy, I perceive my golden years as a phase in my life to be filled with reflection, wisdom and the opportunity to share the value of my collective experience with others. I have no plans to slow down, neither should you! Retirement has often been positioned as the final chapter in life where an individual has, "paid their dues" and can "lapse into a meaningless routine of waiting to die". On this subject, I suggest that we never adopt the belief system where we hope to stop working, stop contributing so we can fade off into a meaningless retirement mode. Contribution, often achieved through ones work, does not have to stop at sixty-five or even ninety-five...contribution should continue to the day we meet our maker. The best is yet to come!

For many, the period of retirement means choices...specifically the opportunity to select the ideal climate in which to live. When considering opportunities to fulfill your passion and purpose, do not overlook the trend as to where the US population, particularly retired Americans, is migrating. It is obvious to anyone who has recently traveled to Southern cities and been stuck in traffic due to major congestion, that people want warm weather and are packing up and heading south. To support this claim, a Del Webb survey indicated that nearly 60% of all retirees relocate after leaving their career. Here are the top-five choices of retirement relocation in the U.S.:

1. Florida (21%)
2. Arizona (18%)
3. North Carolina (10%)
4. South Carolina (10%)
5. Tennessee (9%)

***Florida is hot!!!! According to the U.S Census, there is a net migration of more than 1,000 people arriving daily! This does not include the one million snowbirds, part timers who head south every winter. Florida is on target to exceed New York's population by the year 2010 and by 2050, will house 32 million residents!***

This trend should provide insight into what goods and services that these baby boomers will require, and where they will require them. Also, "Theme Communities"

appear to be a hot trend as developers create vast complexes for people with common interests complete with schools, libraries, entertainment, malls, etc. Convenience and companionship are the primary benefits of this growing trend in housing. This information is valuable to you as a career seeker who has a passion for warm weather and may decide to fulfill your dream job in a warmer climate. Don't forget your sun block!

### **Trend 7: Where The Future Jobs Are**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 17.5 million new jobs will be created over the next five years. Serviceproducing industries will grow at an amazing 30% and account for virtually all job growth with service and retail industries accounting for 14.8 million of these new jobs. The population is aging and we are living longer. An increase in baby boomers (46-64 year olds) will mean an increase in services needed. **Health services, social services, business services, engineering, management and other related services are projected to account for nearly one of every two, salary worker (wage) jobs.** It is no surprise that nine out of the ten fastest-growing industries can be found in one of these groupings. That being said, there is tremendous value in looking to those industries (and job titles), which present exciting future opportunities and which can be married to your passions. For your benefit, here is an overview of the 21st Century Workplace and what experts predict will be in most demand in the future.

#### **Ten Industries With The Highest Projected Growth Rate:**

- Computer & Data Processing 108%
- Health Services 68%
- Management & Public Relations 60%
- Transportation Services 60%
- Residential Care 59%
- Personnel Supply Services 53%
- Water & Sanitation 51%
- Social Services 50%
- Offices of Health Practitioners 47%
- Amusement & recreation Services 41%

#### **Ten Fastest Growing Occupations:**

- Computer Engineers 109%
- Systems Analysts 103%
- Personal & Home Care Aides 85%
- Physical & Corrective Therapy 79%
- Home Health Aides 77%
- Medical Assistants 74%
- Physical Therapists 71%
- Occupational Therapists/Assistants 69%
- Paralegal Personnel 68%
- Special Education Teachers 59%

Regarding the development of technology, the fastest growing occupations between 1998-2006 (Bureau of Labor Statistics-*Monthly Labor Review*, “Occupational Employment Projections to 2006”) are database administrators, computer specialists, computer engineers and system analysts. The Internet is here to stay (duh...) and design, research and web management remain strong.

### **Trend 8: Entrepreneurship Will Continue To Flourish**

*Fast Fact: According to the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), a business venture can now be found in 60% of American homes...this number is growing.*

Another paradigm shift is the dramatic increase in entrepreneurship and people who begin their own consulting business based on training obtained from previous employers. This occurs for four key reasons:

1. A desire to pursue their calling and establish their independence from corporate America
2. The increase in the number of Baby boomers who may have accumulated funds to start their own business or who are going through a mid-life crisis
3. Corporate downsizing and the need to cut costs by reducing or eliminating employee benefits
4. Modern day technology and Internet access makes it easier than ever before to start your own venture

Have a great idea? Do not be afraid to pursue it! You never know! Everett M. Rogers is quoted as saying “when 5% of society accepts an idea, it becomes imbedded in the population. When 20% aggress, it is unstoppable.” Despite this philosophy, starting a successful venture will always have its critics. Consider these comments...

*“Watches without hands? You’re crazy!”*

*“You can’t put music on a roll of tape.”*

*“Mr. Bell, please remove this silly toy from my office. There is no room in the market for a telephone.”*

*“You cannot put a crocodile on a shirt to replace the pocket. Nobody will buy them!”*

*“People will never accept a zipper on the front of their pants, they prefer buttons.”*

One last comment...I remember the great Warren Avis, the great businessman and rental car mogul, who when asked about the secret to entrepreneurial success had this to say. “*Anyone who thinks that earning five million dollars is enough... is not the kind of person who can earn five million dollars in the first place.*” The message is that the pursuit of autonomy and individuality through entrepreneurship means constant and never ending improvement. Work is not a means to an end, but rather, an opportunity to contribute through a product or service. From, his philosophy, greatness is achieved!

***Speaking of millionaires... In 1980 there were only 1.5 million millionaires in America. By the year 2000, this number increased to 7 million. By the year 2020, this figure is expected to become a whopping 50 million! Today, every 4 minutes someone in America becomes a millionaire. Maybe you will join this elite group, chances are***

*most of them are individuals who have found their calling, see work as play and are leaving their dream!*

### **Trend 9: Franchising Remains A Great Calling Option**

Is it my imagination or is there a Starbucks on every corner? Starting your own business is at best a difficult undertaking and we all know the failure rate for startups. Franchising can often reduce this challenge by providing proven systems and support for products and services that have demonstrated consistent sales. It can give you a chance to do something different, but with guidance and support from an established entity.

Franchising is also on the rise. There are approximately 4 million Americans between the ages of 40 and 60 who are deemed “dislocated workers”, a term designated for middle managers who have lost their positions in typically larger employers. Because it is often difficult to replace their significant salary level, many are turning towards franchising. Many today and in the future will trade conventional work paths for a chance to be their own boss. There are more than 600,000 franchise units in the U.S., which accounts for \$800 billion in annual sales, over 40% of all retail sales. Which franchise to choose is an important question? It is estimated that less than twenty organizations have franchised as many as 5,000 units. The challenge is that the more established a franchise is (i.e. McDonalds, Blockbuster, Starbucks) the larger the investment required to purchase that franchise. Research indicates that as of this writing, the minimum investment to open a McDonalds franchise is \$540,000.00! Got \$50,000.00 in spare cash lying around, why not invest in your own Hilton Hotels Resort? Most people do not have that kind of capital so they settle for a \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00 franchise, which involves greater risk as the parent company may have less to invest in nationally advertising, brand building and innovation.

In any event, do your homework and talk to owners who were both successful and others who were not. Often, you will get better perspective from those who failed or sold their franchise. Franchising can represent an opportunity to own your own business and realize your passions while serving others. My strong suggestion is not to select a franchise solely on the financial potential, but rather to explore if the nature of the work will provide purpose and passion. Over site of a franchise means you are leasing an established brand and the true boss is the trademarked entity, not you. If you are a person with a lot of creative ideas and do not like to follow procedure or established systems, then franchising may not be for you.

Bottom line: Consumer demand and convenience will continue to make this an attractive career option.

If you want more information on franchising, I would suggest that you start your search with a review of [www.franchise.com](http://www.franchise.com) and [www.franchisehandbook.com/index.asp](http://www.franchisehandbook.com/index.asp).)

### **Trend 10: Innovation and Technology Will Continue To Expand At An Incredible Pace**

*“There is nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come” – Victor Hugo  
Show graph of the transition from hunters, industrial, etc....*

Things are moving so fast it is almost overwhelming. I recently made the honest mistake of informing my sixteen year old nephew that he, “sounded like a broken record”. His puzzled reply...”Uncle Chris, what is a broken record?” (Perhaps I should have said he sounded like a mini-DV!)

Consider these once remarkable advances that today we take for granted...

- *Today, in nearly every country on earth, you can casually walk up to an automated machine, insert a plastic card, type in four simple digits, have this mysterious machine validate your identity, establish your credit balance, deduct money and even have it translated into the correct currency, rebalance your account and even tell you to have a nice day...all in eleven seconds!*
- *You can send an important package overnight anywhere in the free world and be able to access a worldwide Internet system and determine at any given moment, precisely where your package is en route to its final destination. You can learn which country, city, truck number, etc. that your precious cargo currently resides with a few keystrokes. You can literally monitor the step-by-step delivery of a pair of socks to your cousin overseas and feel confident it will arrive as promised.*
- *You can now purchase telephones, cell phones, radios and even televisions that via smart acoustic systems; have the ability to customize signals to match your unique auditory range. Watching a sporting event, you now have the ability to select which camera angle you want to watch the game from.*
- *We now have anti-aging spas, therapeutically cloned livers, kidneys, hearts, lungs and bones for replacement and high-tech exercise equipment which can be customized and programmed to your individual body type and chemistry. These advances are available to make use stronger, healthier and more youthful.*

I believe we are living in the greatest time in history because the list of incredible inventions, innovations and advances creating unique career opportunities is endless and can be brought to market at lightening speed. Who is behind these inventions? People just like you and I. The reality is that someone is going to find their career niche, their calling, and it's not always going to be the most academically gifted person or the individual who has the best credentials. It all starts with a big idea and we all have at least one. Here are some other inventions creating more opportunities to pursue a calling...

- *Ever have a flat tire 5 miles from home? Bicycle wheels now exist without inflatable tires*
- *Tired of pesky stickers on your fruit? Distributors are now experimenting with natural light labeling or fruit tattoos, which include expiration date*
- *Want taste without the calories? Flavor sprays with no fat or carbohydrates are in development which mimic the taste of BBQ, chocolate, and even bacon and can quell your desire for these foods, resulting in weight loss*
- *Japanese scientists are developing a robotic exoskeleton, which can learn to duplicate ones walking pattern to help the disabled or elderly walk better as bioelectric sensors actually pick up brain signals to the muscles*
- *Want to knock 10 strokes off your golf game? Nike has unveiled a new line of sport shades...contact lenses that for golfers provide an edge by enhancing the dips and curves of a putting green. Of course they also filter ultraviolet rays...*

- *Overtired in the morning? A new alarm clock which doubles as a watch actually is equipped with a built in motion detector which measures your sleep patterns and will wake you up when you are in a light sleep*
- *Fond of animals? Cloning continues with sheep, dogs ... (I must admit I have mixed feelings on this subject!)*
- *Two left feet? A robot is in production which not only teaches you how to dance but has the technology to sense your foot patterns to predict your next steps*

The list of innovations is endless and creating fascinating career opportunities. Keep up with these trends as they affect your life and could represent your calling. In summary, I am not suggesting that you have to invent the next hot product or even invent anything at all, but you should be aware that this energy, this pursuit of progress and the incredible power of the human mind is alive and well and creating opportunities for exciting careers like never before in the history of our planet. More realities...

- Between now and 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts 50 million new jobs, the challenge is that due to the incredible pace of change, they are unsure of what 50% of those will actually be
- 20 Million Americans are now telecommuting, that is, earning a living from a location other than the company headquarters
- Health care benefits are gradually being eliminated so an increasing number of Americans will need to keep working, solely to cover the ongoing cost of health care

## **Chart of the Pre 21st Century & Post 21st Century Workplace**

### **Pre 21st Century Post 21st Century**

Work Hard, Structure

Loyalty is Valued

Company Responsible For Training Individual

React to Company Directives

Gold Watch for 30 years valued service

Job Security

Career Confined To Single Industry

Long term employment

Retirement Benefits

Work at the plant or office

Full time employees

Clearly identified career path

Little or no home based businesses

Lucky To Have A Job

Working For The Money

Work Smart, Flexibility

Loyalty Less Prevalent

Responsible For Own Training

Proactive Gun For Hire

No Such Thing

No Job Security, Average Job Tenure 3.2 years

Career Involves Multiple Industries

15 jobs per person

Disappearing, Focus On Funding Own Retirement

60% telecommute, mobile workforce

Contract staff, consultants

Uncertain future, 50% of jobs not yet invented

60% of homes have a business

Work Resembles Play

Work Is A "Calling"... Would Do For Free

The bottom line... These trends should be factored into your plan for establishing and living your career calling. Information is power and the more educated you are on trends and the opportunities they create, the increase in the likelihood in your attaching your career objective with an opportunity. As the saying goes, when preparation meets opportunity, watch out!

Ok, now you are probably thinking, boy, that sure was a lot of information to absorb. I can see that the process of obtaining my calling is not as simple as spending an afternoon on line or in the library doing research. I told you that great accomplishments require an investment of time and energy but I promise you in the long run it will be worth it!

Is technology changing? Consider this... During my very first year as a communications consultant, I once traveled to Xerox Headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut in the early 80's to discuss recommendations for enhanced communications. I remember an entire floor dedicated to their computer system, which involved huge main frames, etc. Fast forward 25 years to my 4-year old son playing state of the art video learning games on his own desktop computer (next to his tiny bunk bed) which has more speed, power and functionality than the entire Xerox Corporation had when I first visited their site! Today, I watch my wife get ready for the gym with the *3rd Generation Ipod*, a credit card sized audio device that holds 10,000 songs! The speed of new and faster technology has accelerated to almost unfathomable proportions. My message...Keep up or else...

I hope you found these emerging trends both educational and informative. It is my wish that the enclosed will serve as the spark or impetus for you to make the unquestionable decision to take complete control of and responsibility for your career and understand, that from this day forward, it must be managed and nurtured with proper care and attention to detail.

It is no longer a question of doing so to make a few extra dollars or enjoy the work more, but rather as a matter of survival in the ever changing, constantly evolving 21st Century Workplace.

### **Checklist For The 21st Century Superstar**

With all the changes brought about by the emerging global economy, increasing frequency of career changes and mandate to control and manage ones own career, here are my thoughts regarding what makes a superstar in this new era.

1. Smart, educated and informed (21st century superstars understand you can have more degrees than a thermometer but if you do not remain informed on your industry, employer, department or product/solutions...)
2. Technologically proficient (21st century superstars save time by investing in their knowledge of technology and the incredible value provided by the Internet)
3. Articulate (21st century superstars practice or join groups (i.e. Toastmasters) to master the ability to speak in public, or at least to large groups)
4. The ability to be decisive and not afraid to make decisions (21st century superstars can be wrong more often than they are right, but they learn from each decision and keep swinging!)

5. A willingness to take risks (21st century superstars understand and live by the concept of no risk no reward!)
6. Act on conviction (21st century superstars establish moral and ethical principles and stick to them!)
7. Hard working and driven (there is no end game or finish line, 21st century superstars understand that continuous improvement is the critical competency!)
8. An abundance of physical, mental and emotional energy (21st century superstars schedule time each and every day to feed their body, mind and spirit with beneficial exercise, wisdom and enlightenment!)
9. A sincere and caring interest in people (technologies become obsolete, machinery breaks, patents expire but 21<sup>st</sup> century superstars understand that people will always be the common element to all business)
10. The ability to anticipate the future (21st century superstars always remain a step ahead!)