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"Dreams are
renewable.
No matter
what our age
or condition,
there are still
untapped
possibilities
within us and
new beauty
waiting to be
born."

- Dale E. Turner



*"Fairy tales can come true
It can happen to you,
If you're young at heart!"*

This month we bring you two articles from The Wall Street Journal's CareerJournal website. Both offer advice to help you make your dreams come true — a sentiment that we wish for you all!

BREAKING INTO YOUR DREAM INDUSTRY WHEN YOU LACK SUPERSTAR SKILLS

By Sarah E. Needleman

(Published in CareerJournal.com on May 22, 2007. Reprinted here with permission of The Wall Street Journal.)



Jeremy Atkins enjoys many of the benefits of a successful comic-book illustrator, though he doesn't have a shred of artistic talent.

Mr. Atkins, 30 years old and a collector of comics since childhood, gets free passes to trade shows, discounts on his favorite toys, and the chance to hobnob with such industry luminaries as Frank Miller, creator of Batman: The Dark Knight Returns. The perks come with his job as director of publicity for Dark Horse Comics Inc.

If you're passionate about a certain industry but lack the skills commonly associated with its most visible leaders, you can try to pursue a career working on the sidelines.

Being behind the scenes may offer more than just the opportunity to score freebies and gain exposure to your dream industry's superstars. The career choice may also help you enjoy what you do for a living as well as pay your bills.

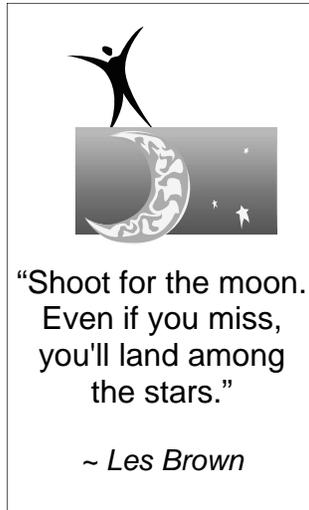
Eric Doyne says he originally abandoned his goal of working in sports after his attempts at becoming a professional athlete failed. "I really gave the [bicycle] racing thing a go in college," he says. "I won some races, but I realized I wasn't a Lance Armstrong." Mr. Doyne also studied journalism in school, and after graduating in 1999, he says he landed an entry-level public relations job at a large agency. In his fourth year there, a colleague enlisted his help on an account for a bike company, and "a light bulb turned on," he says. "My job went from being just any job to one that I felt incredibly passionate about."

Now, as the owner of a small public-relations firm called Dispatch, 31-year-old Mr. Doyne handles publicity for companies that sell biking and other sports products. He says he takes client meetings on ski lifts, helps run professional sporting events and often receives free gear and apparel. "I always have the latest and greatest stuff," he says.

Think broadly in terms of the types of employers to target within your favorite industry. For example, if you want to work in high fashion, look beyond the runway or design studio to jobs at clothing warehouses, licensing agencies and consulting firms, says Dan Lagani, president of

the Fairchild Fashion Group in New York. Magazine editors, he says, "literally have a front-row view of the world's greatest fashions six months before any consumer ever sees them."

It's important to demonstrate your passion for your dream industry in a professional manner -- and avoid coming



"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

~ Les Brown

across as a drooling wannabe. "Nobody is going to hire a groupie," says Flip Flippen, author of "The Flip Side: Break Free of the Behaviors That Hold You Back" (Springboard Press, 2007). "Employers aren't looking for fans; they're looking for producers."

Start by joining trade groups and attend the conferences, seminars and other events they host, says Alexandra

Levit, author of the upcoming book, "How to Score THAT Gig" (Random House, 2008). By citing your membership to these organizations on your resume, you'll also boost your credibility, she adds.

Networking is especially critical if you're pursuing a job at a high-profile company -- no matter what department it's in, adds Ms. Levit. "Everybody wants to work for them, so they don't need to try as hard to get qualified applicants," she says. "They'd rather have people who they know, people who come in through recommendations."

Developing a solid network can take several months, so don't quit your job while you're harvesting leads, warns Ms. Levit. "Start pecking away at the industry by

getting to know what the situation is before making that leap," she says.

Volunteer opportunities are also a way to make connections and learn the ropes, says Cynthia Shapiro, a career coach in Los Angeles. "You'll show that you are willing to give extra of yourself for the industry," she says. "That's what makes people sit up and notice."

Upon landing a job interview, be sure to express your enthusiasm and knowledge of the industry without going overboard. A candidate for a mid-level sales job at the McFarlane Toys was declined an offer after gushing about the manufacturer's founder, Todd McFarlane, creator of the comic book Spawn. "He knew everything about Todd -- every public appearance he's made, every comic he's had a hand in," says Melanie Simmons, executive director human resources, for the Tempe, Ariz.,-based firm. "It was almost stalker-like."

Upon landing a job in your dream industry, keep it cool or the stint might be short-lived. On his first day of work at McFarlane, a retail sales associate showed up with a stack of comics for Mr. McFarlane to sign, says Ms. Simmons. "He didn't last very long," she says.

Keep in mind that working in your favorite area could potentially sour your interest in it outside the office. Stanley Tang says he couldn't stand to watch a baseball game on TV after coming home from his former marketing-production job at MLB.com, the online home of the Major League Baseball Association in New York. "I got totally burnt out," says the 34-year-old. "I was surrounded by television screens that were showing 10 to 15 games a day." A longtime Yankees fan, Mr. Tang says he's happier now working for ESPN Inc. as a technical producer because he's assigned projects that pertain to a wide range of sports. "I deal with ones I've never even heard of like competitive eating," he says.

"You know a dream is like a river
Ever changin' as it flows
And a dreamer's just a vessel
That must follow where it goes
Trying to learn from what's behind you
And never knowing what's in store
Makes each day a constant battle
Just to stay between the shores...and

"I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry
Like a bird upon the wind
These waters are my sky
I'll never reach my destination
If I never try
So I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry

"Too many times we stand aside
And let the waters slip away
'Til what we put off 'til tomorrow
Has now become today
So don't you sit upon the shoreline
And say you're satisfied
Choose to chance the rapids
And dare to dance the tide...yes

"I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry
Like a bird upon the wind
These waters are my sky
I'll never reach my destination
If I never try
So I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry

"There's bound to be rough waters
And I know I'll take some falls
But with the good Lord as my captain
I can make it through them all...yes

"I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry
Like a bird upon the wind
These waters are my sky
I'll never reach my destination
If I never try
So I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry
Yes, I will sail my vessel
'Til the river runs dry
'Til the river runs dry"

"The River" by Garth Brooks

HOW TO EXPLORE ANOTHER CAREER IF YOU STARTED ON THE WRONG PATH

By Diana Ransom

(Published in *CareerJournal.com* on May 16, 2007.)

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Changing careers, even for those in their twenties, is a tall task. But if you think you've picked the wrong line of work, it's time to start scoping out other areas that interest you.

Reading a field's publications and blogs can clue you in on big issues and industry parlance. They may also contain listings for jobs that aren't widely publicized.

You might join an association or professional society. And attending seminars and conferences "is a really good way to build connections and network," says Pamela Mitchell, chief executive of the Reinvention Institute, a career-development firm in Miami.

Once you know what you're talking about, give someone who has the job you want a call and ask for some guidance. Ask questions such as: What kinds of people are generally successful in this job? What are things about the job people may not know? How did you get the job?

Be sure to ask about the job's negatives, says Brendan Courtney, a senior vice president of Spherion, a recruiting and staffing firm in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. "People get caught up in what they think a job is without knowing the nitty-gritty."

Laurel Touby, the founder of mediabistro.com, a New York-based media-job site, warns career switchers to "never ask for a job" during such an informational interview.

You might also consider an adult internship or volunteering, suggests Ms. Mitchell. "There are a lot of small but growing companies that could always use more manpower," she says, and some unpaid work in a new field could help build your credibility.

Shadowing someone on the job may also be an option. VocationVacations in Portland, Ore., arranges one- to three-day "test drives" of dozens of different careers (see vocationvacations.com).

If you need additional academic training for a new field, you may want to look into online options as well as local programs.



EDITOR'S NOTES

OBTAINING THE SUPERSTAR SKILLS



The October 26, 2006 issue of *U.S. News & World Report* included an article by Emily Brandon entitled "Tips on Paying for College as a Retiree." (http://www.usnews.com/usnews/biztech/articles/061026/26retireescollege_print.htm)

According to Brandon, there are special scholarships for seniors as well as other financial aid for adults of any age. Some universities, colleges, and community colleges offer senior discounts and others, especially "public" or state universities, will waive tuition entirely for senior citizens. States which offer a tuition waiver to senior citizens in their state schools include Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, Vermont, and Virginia.

If a degree is not important to you, then you can take advantage of free auditing privileges for seniors offered by many colleges and universities. And, when you audit, you don't have to take the exams! Georgetown University has a Senior Citizen Auditor Program.

Many universities offer non-credit courses especially for seniors and/or other local residents. Sometimes these are called continuing education courses. The Arlington Institute for Learning in Retirement.

These senior perks are seldom well publicized, so don't be afraid to ask. You will need to do some research by calling the school admissions office, perusing the

school catalog, or visiting the school website. To find a school with the curriculum you want, here are two internet tools you can use:

www.CareersandColleges.com
www.CollegeBoard.com

Beware of other related expenses that can really take a bite out of your budget: application fees, activity fees, textbooks, computer time, transportation to and from school, and parking fees can really add up. Try shopping for the textbooks online where you might find a used copy. Check the bulletin boards at school for car pooling opportunities.



"Take a look around now
Change the direction
Adjust the tuning
Try a new translation
Don't look at your man
in the same old way
Take a new picture
Just because you don't see
shooting stars
Doesn't mean it isn't perfect
can't you see..."

"It's the stuff that dreams are made of
It's the slow and steady fire
It's the stuff that dreams are made of
It's your heart and soul's desire
It's the stuff that dreams are made of"

"The Stuff That Dreams Are Made Of"
by Carly Simon

INTERNET TUTORIALS

I'm sure you all had at least two secretaries assigned to you during your USG career (you wish!), so you may need to refresh your computer skills now that the secretaries aren't at your beck and call. Although your local community college, public school system, and library probably offer some excellent courses for adults at very reasonable prices, you can also do a little study online.

Mouserobics —

<http://www.ckls.org/~crippel/computerlab/tutorials/mouse/page1.html>

Mousing Around —

<http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/>

Internet 101 —

<http://www.internet101.org/>

Advanced Internet—<http://www.learnthenet.com/>

Web Search Strategies—<http://learnwebskills.com/search/main.html>

FreeSkills—<http://www.freeskills.com/>



In addition to computers, there are other educational opportunities on the internet. Here are a few recommended by the Arlington Public Library:

Barnes & Noble University -

<http://www.barnesandnobleuniversity.com/>

Free Education—<http://www.free-ed.net/>

Learthat.com—<http://www.learnthat.com/courses/>

“There's no need to find a reason for your dreams for there is always more to dreaming than there seems to be.”



*“No Reason For Your Dreams”
by Don McLean*

MORE ON RETIRING OVERSEAS

We received another response from a client who has retired overseas and share it with you here.

After retiring from State Department in 2006, Timothy Smith and his family moved to Bogota, Colombia. Tim's wife was born in Colombia and still has family there. They had little problem obtaining resident visas.

Bogota is a big city with nearly 8 million people and lots of traffic, but the Smiths enjoy their quiet residential neighborhood in the middle of the city. Tim says it feels like they are living in a suburb or a small town instead of a big city. They followed advice from colleagues in the Job Search Program and waited six months before they bought a home. Their new home is larger, older, and fancier than homes they owned or rented in the U.S. Tim notes that it's a good thing that household help is more affordable there as it takes more work to maintain! He is currently working as a Personal Services Contractor in Iraq and, after one year there, plans to pay off his new house completely.

The Smiths also enjoy many cultural and educational opportunities in Bogota. And

Tim claims that the restaurants compare favorably with those in Miami or other large U.S. cities.

Another advantage to living in Colombia is that they can afford excellent private schools for their children, ages 15 and 12. Tim believes that, although the children's future SAT scores may suffer by not attending an American school, they are maintaining their Spanish and French at advanced levels. The Smiths also plan their vacation travels to supplement their children's education. The kids do admit that they miss playing American football and baseball in school.

Although he last lived in Colombia thirty years ago, Tim found it very easy to regain his 4/4 Spanish. As a gringo, he occasionally does feel like an outsider but it has given him a whole new appreciation for his Colombian-born wife's experience living in the U.S.

Before his departure to Iraq, Tim worked sporadically. There are opportunities for employment with the U.S. Government and with USG contractors. On the local economy, there are teaching positions at all levels including university graduate schools, but they do not pay as well as the U.S. based employers.

The Smiths have found it easy to keep in touch with family and friends in the U.S. They have a U.S. telephone number through broadband cable internet connections and, because Bogota shares a time zone with the U.S., calling home is no problem. Tim is also very pleased that he can watch all Miami Dolphin and Florida Marlin games in real time. They also have a post office box in Florida that can reliably forward orders from Amazon and

elsewhere to them in Colombia.

Regarding their future in Bogota, Tim writes, "Bogota is at an altitude of 2,750 meters – too high for folks in their late sixties and seventies. I jog here and enjoy the cool and often rainy weather, but God made Florida for retirees and we have a house there for when my youngest child heads to the States for [college]. That is a long time from now, and many things may change, including the political situation here, our economic circumstances, and where our children eventually settle."



"Let's drink a toast
to what might have been
To all that we were,
but can't be again
And let's just be thankful
we parted as friends

Here's to the past, let the future begin

"Oh, and here's to your wildest
dreams

And here's to your everything
May your life be blessed
with sweet happiness
Baby, here's to your wildest dreams"

"Wildest Dreams" by Dolly Parton

**ATTENTION,
JSP GRADS!**



AUGUST JOB FAIR

Our next job fair will be held on Tuesday, August 28, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. in the gymnasium of Building D (aka the Field House) at FSI in Arlington, Virginia. Be

sure to bring a photo ID — and, if you have one, your Retiree ID. A few employers will leave early, try to arrive before 3:00 pm.

“Dreams are illustrations...from the book your soul is writing about you.”

- Marsha Norman



“It takes a lot of courage to show your dreams to someone else.”

- Erma Bombeck



PHOTOS

A thousand thank you's to those who have sent us photos of your new lives!! They are **absolutely FABULOUS!** Everything from Yak Wrangling in Mongolia to Dissertation Writing buried in a basement full of books, boxes, and paper. We will use these photos in our Career Transition Center presentations.

If you want to help us prove that there is Life Beyond USG Service, e-mail to us (pittsa@state.gov) an “action” shot of you in “retirement.”

SEPTEMBER FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

All JSP graduates of the August 2007 and previous classes are invited to attend two follow-up meetings in Room E-2118 to discuss progress on the job search, share experiences and advice, and enjoy each other's company. The dates are:

Tuesday, September 11, 10:00 am
Tuesday, September 25, 10:00 am



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Also available on the internet at
<http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c6958.htm>