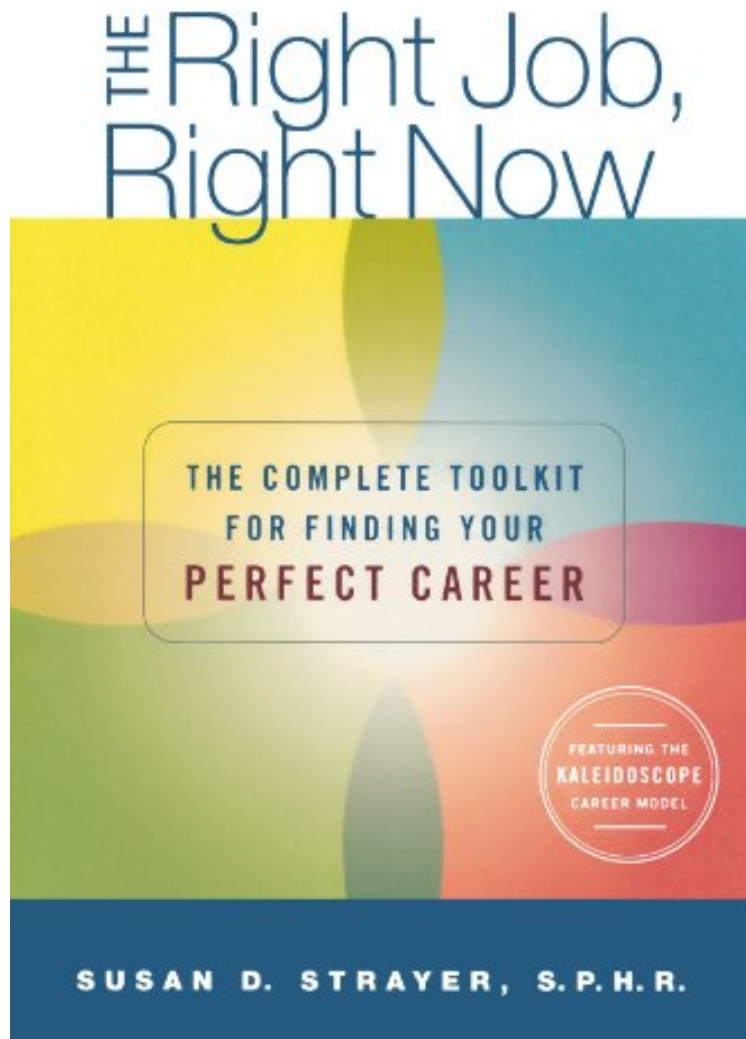


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The Right Job, Right Now: The Complete Toolkit for Finding Your Perfect Career

Susan D. Strayer

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The Right Job, Right Now effectively bridges the gap between "What do I want to do?" and "How do I do it?" by presenting a complete step-by-step plan for long-term career satisfaction using self-assessment, self-marketing, and a comprehensive job search and career development strategy. Based on the author's Kaleidoscope Career Model, this book shows you how to take charge of your career and takes you, step-by-step, through the complete job search process including: Career assessment - what do you have to offer and what do you want in return? Taking action - searching for a new job, interviewing, and accepting offers. On-the-job issues answers to common questions from dealing with a bad boss to performance management Using her unique and straightforward approach you will learn how to align your skills and abilities with your compensation and benefit needs and company culture preferences to find your career sweet spot the qualities of a job that will allow you to perform to the best of your abilities and be rewarded accordingly. Your career sweet spot becomes the basis of targeting a job search, writing resumes, taking advantage of technology, interviewing effectively, and landing the perfect job. Susan D. Strayer, SPHR, is a human resources professional, career development expert and freelance writer. As the founder of University and Career Decisions Susan works with individuals, companies and universities in career management and development; human resources and recruiting strategy and employment brand. Visit her website at www.susanstrayer.com.

From the Back Cover "Susan Strayer's smart strategies on finding the best-fit job can put any busy professional on the right path." -Tory Johnson, CEO, Women For Hire "The Right Job, Right Now is the first of its kind: a straightforward, no nonsense guide and reference tool for those who understand that work should be fulfilling and not just the source of a paycheck. Read it from cover-to-cover or flip right to the sections that are most important to you. If your career is important to you then so will be this great new resource." - Steven Rothberg, President and Founder, CollegeRecruiter.com "This book should be dubbed, "The Jobseeker's Guide to the Universe." It is rich with practical advice, thought provoking exercises, and a common sense approach to find the right job, right now. I encourage you to break out the highlighter, write in the columns, and tab important pages so that you can use this as a touchstone throughout your professional career to find your true destiny." -Bill Gaul, President/CEO Landmark Destiny Group "The Right Job Right Now is the most comprehensive career book on the market. No other book covers all of you bases in a one-stop-shop. Susan is the consummate career professional and provides clear, honest advice for today's busy professional who has already wasted too much time trying to find the right job or career." -Peter Veruki, Business Week Top-Ten Author About the Author Susan D. Strayer, SPHR, is a human resources professional, career development expert and freelance writer. As the founder of University and Career Decisions Susan works with individuals, companies and universities in career management and development; human resources and recruiting strategy and employment brand. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter One Getting Started Ready, Set, Go Jason is a thirty-year-old working professional.* His dad's birthday is tomorrow and Jason, total slacker that he is, hasn't bought him a gift yet. His time is limited so he heads over to the local mall on his lunch hour. He wants to get a great gift but he has no idea what to buy. He hasn't talked to his sister to see what she is buying, he hasn't called his mom to ask for suggestions, and he hasn't done any online research for any ideas. Like many men, Jason dreads shopping, so he's not familiar with the shops in the mall. When he gets there, he walks in and starts wandering. He assumes he knows his dad well enough to find something he will like. Jason rambles from store to store looking for the perfect gift. Time passes quickly and before Jason knows it, he has ten minutes left on his lunch hour and no gift. Finding himself in the department store, he settles for a shirt and tie. He pays quickly and walks out disappointed. He has a gift that he knows his dad will use, but it's not what he wanted. He also knows he didn't get to half the stores in the mall. There is a way Jason could have made his search for a present much easier. You know those

mall directories that have those big "You Are Here" signs on them? Had Jason thought to consult one, he could have figured out where he was in the mall and what choices were nearby. Or he could have looked at all the options, gotten a gift idea or two, and then determined the quickest route to his destination. Jason probably didn't have to settle. This story isn't about a man's unfamiliarity with the mall. It's about knowing what you're looking for (in this case a gift) but not knowing exactly where you're going or how to get there. You can't merely say you need a gift and expect to find the perfect one. You have to research what the recipient might like, look at your store options, and make a plan for the time you have available. In the same way you can't say you need a job and expect to land the perfect one. You have to examine your options, make a plan to narrow them down, and find the right one. Ready... The Right Job, Right Now involves hard work, commitment, and action. There's no such thing as a silver bullet that will deliver your dream job after you read a few hundred pages. If you are truly frustrated with your career and willing to take action, you will get results! The source of career frustration can be any number of annoyances or difficulties. For Brandon, it's that jerk of a boss who makes waking up every morning equivalent to a trip to the dentist. For Julia, the only passion at work is on the afternoon soap opera video streaming to her computer daily. For Kristine, it's the nature of the work she has to do; the cubicles around her are filled with intelligent, mutually respectful colleagues, but she'd rather socialize by the water cooler than make another cold call to yet another prospective client. Complaining to anyone who will listen doesn't help. Your mom doesn't really understand what you do. "What exactly do you consult on, dear?" Your friends are about to start a collection to send you to a therapist (or maybe a new therapist), and when you talk about your job dissatisfaction your spouse looks at you with a blank stare that says, "I look like I'm listening but, really, I'm drowning you out." Perhaps you're about to begin your career and afraid to graduate because you can't imagine finding a job you love. Maybe you've moved from one job to another trying to compensate for a bad boss or boring work assignments. Or you stay in the same lackluster position thinking it can't get any better or that you shouldn't cheat on faithful stability. Regardless of the reason, you are probably thinking career perfection is unattainable, that it doesn't exist. Keep in mind, however, that career perfection isn't about rising to the top of the corporate ladder or getting it all (whatever that means). It's about defining and getting what you want the most. And that is definitely attainable. You may want a boss who is a true mentor, four weeks of vacation, and a clear path for growth. Your colleague may want a flexible schedule, domestic-partner benefits, and that next plum client assignment. Hmm, now that you're thinking about it, that flexible schedule sounds great, but the travel that comes with the star client assignment isn't worth it. Everyone has different choices and options. This is where the kaleidoscope comes in. Kaleidoscopes are instruments of art. When you pick up a kaleidoscope, you're the artist in control of that set of colors. The slightest turn produces a new pattern, until you settle on one that pleases your eye. A career can be thought of in the same way; certain shapes and colors (that is, skills and rewards) create a pattern unique to the individual. No two career paths are identical. I'm going to ask you to create your own career kaleidoscope that will lead you to your perfect career. You don't have to be an artist by nature to make this work. You just need to know how to be creative with your kaleidoscope and make the best choices. Set... Before we begin, there are six rules you need to follow. One: Honesty Reigns Honesty is essential at all times. In order to create the Career Kaleidoscope that's the best reflection of yourself, you have to be perfectly honest. Honest with yourself, your partner, your spouse, your family, and your dog. Well, maybe not the dog, but you get the picture. What you think should be important, is irrelevant. It's what really matters to you that matters most. This is no time to beat around the bush. If you can't be honest, you can't play. Two: Determine Who Else Gets to Play Art is very personal and you're about to build what might be one of your most personal creations. Is it your career? Sure. Does it have an effect on everyone else around you? Absolutely. If you're in a committed relationship, you have to take that into consideration. Remember, you already agreed to be honest and you need to extend this honesty into a very candid conversation with your partner about your career. You may think you already know what role a career plays in your life, but what happens if and when you have kids? What if you change your mind about wanting to travel extensively for work? While you have to take charge and create the Career Kaleidoscope, you also need to share it with the people in your life who should have a say in how your job affects them. Should you ask your mom's permission before taking a job with an extensive travel schedule? Probably not. But if she's sick or elderly and requires your care, you should consider these factors and have a conversation with her and any other family members who are involved. Bottom line: Be prepared to involve others as you make your career decisions. Three: In the End, It's Your Choice You can do all the research you want, talk to family members, mentors, specialists in your field or industry, but at the end of the day, each decision about your career is yours to m