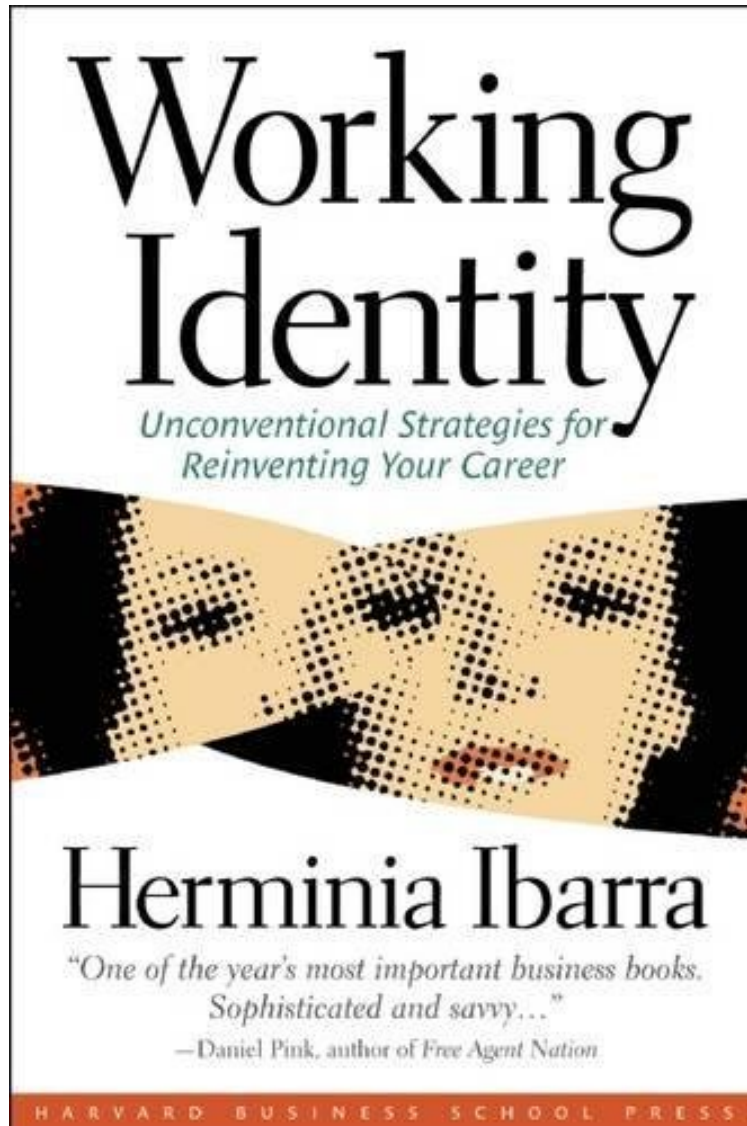


# Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career

Herminia Ibarra

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**Herminia Ibarra : Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Considering a career change - read this first By Kate Arms One of the best books on career change I have read. Ibarra does not set out a neat and tidy, step-by-step to do list because

everybody's path will be different. Instead, the reader is through the process of change with a variety of research subjects and given a theoretical model that explains why some of these subjects were satisfied after the change and why others failed to make a fulfilling shift. And then, the book ends with a few principles that will guide a search to a more fulfilling job or career. In a world where career advice is mostly still given based on the old model of understanding personality type as fixed and rational decision-making as infallible, this approach based on neuroplasticity, human development, and whole-self functioning is a welcome addition to the career change market.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. I wish I had found this book five years ago! Yet I wasn't ready for it then... By G. Johnson I am not sure that I would have been ready for Dr. Ibarra's book in 2005 when I finally paid attention to the signals in my own environment that I needed a massive career change. I'm not sure that I would have heard its message, which is part of the point of the book as well. It would have helped me, however, realize that what I was going through was "normal". This book shakes up the myths that you need to discover what you are good at and make an educated series of career research actions and decisions. For most of us who have done the seemingly random walk through career and life transitions, she provides a backdrop of case studies to show patterns of uncertainties that happen to many other people as well. She illustrates well how the people around you signal and reinforce both change and drag factors, how the narratives develop over time in your new life, and how the new stories of your new life only start to make sense toward the END of the transition. I found the academic connections and endnotes refreshing, attaching this work to research and core theories in major thinkers. The examples were easy to relate to and memorable. I have recommended this book so far to a dozen friends over 40 who are trying to understand the smoke signals of change in their own lives, struggling through long transitions (exacerbated by the economic malaise), or staring at the tensions between their current work environments and the ticking timeclock of their lives. I have taken personal notes throughout my Kindle version of this on my iPad and keep rereading and thinking through the document -- nice way to enjoy this book!

10 of 0 people found the following review helpful. the ideas are somewhat simple and may seem like common sense but by providing a clear reason behind ... By cwest I thought this was one of the most well-written and thoughtful books on career change I have ever read. Of course it does not have an audience for every single person at every stage of this consideration in mind - but I felt that it articulates so many questions, thoughts, ideas, and concerns the 'typical' person who is considering career change may have. The insightful structure and illustrations of case stories also helped to cement ideas. Yes, the ideas are somewhat simple and may seem like common sense but by providing a clear reason behind them, cautionary advice of what not to do, and encouraging aspects of how change is possible, I felt that it gave me confidence and clarity on moving forward. I would highly recommend this book.

**How Successful Career Changers Turn Fantasy into Reality** Whether as a daydream or a spoken desire, nearly all of us have entertained the notion of reinventing ourselves. Feeling unfulfilled, burned out, or just plain unhappy with what we were doing, we long to make that leap into the unknown. But we also hold on, white-knuckled, to the years of time and effort we've invested in our current profession. In this powerful book, Herminia Ibarra presents a new model for career reinvention that flies in the face of everything we've learned from "career experts." While common wisdom holds that we must first know what we want to do before we can act, Ibarra argues that this advice is backward. Knowing, she says, is the result of doing and experimenting. Career transition is not a straight path toward some predetermined identity, but a crooked journey along which we try on a host of "possible selves" we might become. Based on her in-depth research on professionals and managers in transition, Ibarra outlines an active process of career reinvention that leverages three ways of "working identity": experimenting with new professional activities, interacting in new networks of people, and making sense of what is happening to us in light of emerging possibilities. Through engrossing stories from a literature professor turned stockbroker to an investment banker turned novelist Ibarra reveals a set of guidelines that all successful reinventions share. She explores specific ways that hopeful career changers of any background can:

- Explore possible selves
- Craft and execute "identity experiments"
- Create "small wins" that keep momentum going
- Survive the rocky period between career identities
- Connect with role models and mentors who can ease the transition
- Make time for reflection without missing out on windows of opportunity
- Decide when to abandon the old path in order to follow the new
- Arrange new events into a coherent story of who we are becoming.

A call to the dreamer in each of us, *Working Identity* explores the process for crafting a more fulfilling future. Where we end up may surprise us.

From Publishers Weekly Aimed at mid-career professionals who have invested much in careers that may no longer fully satisfy, Ibarra's book challenges the traditional belief that a meticulous assessment of one's skills and interests will automatically lead one to discover the right job. In reality, she argues, "doing comes first, knowing second." This is not to say that a marketing director should abruptly resign to become a modern dancer; instead, defining the arc of the future is a "never-ending process of putting ourselves through a set of knowable steps that creates and reveals our possible selves." Most people will navigate a career shift at some point in their lives, and in this smart, positive guide, organizational behavior professor Ibarra shares the stories of 23 people who did it successfully. It's no 10-point plan

for figuring it all out, Ibarra says, but rather a well-reasoned guide to making the decision of whether or not to stay in a career or move on. Readers who study the stories and their accompanying analyses will take away some valuable lessons on changing their way of thinking and being, going out on a limb, and building in a much-needed "transition period" during a career shift. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist

Recent changes in the economy have left a large segment of the workforce at odds with their careers, with downsizing and disillusionment causing many to rethink their place in the corporate world or even consider abandoning a profession they no longer find fulfilling. Ibarra believes that, contrary to conventional thought, there is no "one perfect job" for each individual. We each experiment and find our way through trial and error, hopefully on the path of becoming who we really are. This book is designed to help those who are on that path but feel stuck because they feel they should be doing something completely different but don't know what it is yet. Rather than giving glib advice, Ibarra illustrates how to make radical transitions one day at a time through the examples of 23 people who have successfully made the plunge from just a career to a whole new lifestyle. This is about a transition to something more personal, more creative or spiritual, but always liberating. David Siegfried Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved From the Inside Flap

"Herminia Ibarra has written one of the years most important business books. Sophisticated and savvy, it challenges much of the conventional wisdom about how and why people change careers and illuminates the experimentation, struggle, and joy that are essential to the process. For professionals contemplating a career change, *Working Identity* is essential reading." Daniel H. Pink, author of *Free Agent Nation* "Through countless stories that inspire because they come so close to our own, Ibarra provides a world-shifting breakthrough in how we can go about refining our lives and changing our careers. She has given us long-awaited, enormously practical, and deeply insightful wisdom about the improvisational nature of our selves and our professional development." Ronald A. Heifetz, Co-founder, The Center for Public Leadership, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government and coauthor of *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* "Career and life transitions are as certain as death and taxes, and we are prone to face them with the same fear and anxiety. *Working Identity* affords us the courage of common sense. Ibarra's in-depth research and sharp insights show that successful transitions occur one step at a time, by trial and error, experimentation, and incremental experience." Randy Komisar, Virtual CEO and author of *The Monk and the Riddle* "Working Identity is one of those rare and wonderful books that combines deep knowledge drawn from careful research with practical ideas that can be put to immediate use. The book's message of hope and possibility that it is possible to reinvent careers and lives should be embraced by everyone thinking about transitions in today's turbulent world." Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School, author of *World Class* and *Evolve: Succeeding in the Digital Culture of Tomorrow*