

Leap: Why It's Time to Let Go to Get Ahead in Your Career

Jessica Galica

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Leap is a rigorous, compassionate career guide for women who are looking to navigate the particular challenges of complicated contemporary corporate workplaces.

Business consultant Jessica Galica's inspiring book *Leap* is a narrative, research-based guide for women who, stymied by traditional corporate environments, seek the tools and support to change their careers.

Arguing that contemporary career trajectories are more complex and fluid than ever before, this book notes that "today's careers meander" like rivers instead of being climbable like ladders—and that, on average, white-collar workers have twelve or more jobs over the course of their working lives. It also highlights the particular strains that women face in this new reality, ranging from the competing responsibilities created by motherhood to the sexist and male-centric ethos of most large corporations.

The book emphasizes narrative learning, emotion, and lived experience in a compelling manner across its three-part structure, asserting that dissatisfaction, guilt, and fear are often rooted in unfulfilling jobs and unhealthy cultural expectations. It advocates for replacing the popular encouragement to "follow your passion" with the mantra "Go where you want to contribute." And in addition to the statistics it references, it draws on numerous interviews with professional women, as well as on Galica's personal experiences with career changes, to make its case. There are examples of women who overcame risk aversion, reluctance to leave their comfort zones, and guilt for pursuing personal satisfaction over financial security.

However, the book's examples focus on corporate workers and incentive structures, limiting its scope, as the included subjects reflect an uncommon degree of financial and career success. While the book defends this choice by arguing that if those in privileged careers are unsatisfied, those in less privileged spheres will be unsatisfied as well, this explanation is less than convincing. More compelling is the idea of building an "authenticity muscle," or training oneself to become aware of authentic feelings and interests and then to act on them. Indeed, the book models means of identifying opportunities for change and realizing them well, and its final section enumerates the prospective benefits of aligning one's personal interests with one's career choices in an intriguing way. And throughout the book, each chapter is followed by practical exercises for internalizing and harnessing the shared information; practical exercises for creating an individual path toward career change are reserved for the book's appendix.

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WILLEM MARX (November 30, 2023)

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