



*Live the Juggle Life*



*Ian Sanders*



# Work.

We are all obsessed by it.

That 4-letter word.

We spend our lives doing it, thinking about it, talking about it.

So, if you're not doing it right or you don't like it, then you have a problem.

Too many people get stuck in a rut in their careers and work lives. They get embedded in a “this is how things *should* be done” culture, where they are slaves to the corporation, where they leave their personality at the office door, and the Work You is a million miles away from the Real You. People forget they can change things—just like that. They forget that the status quo is not mandatory.

After all, the world of business and work is changing, often and rapidly, “just like that.” In this *scrambled up world of work*, everything's changing in ways we could never have anticipated. Wall Street banks crash overnight, airlines go out of business in a flash, and long established institutions suddenly fade from the business landscape. Technology revolutionizes how we do business, and trading barriers have crumbled as we face competition not just from the next zip code, but from the other side of the planet. Long established global corporations face threats from young start-ups. The only certainty (of course) is that everything's changing.

Increasingly, we are ideas-rich, yet time-poor. Our lives are full of growing to-do lists, of jobs to do, ideas to develop, but not enough hours in the day. We don't want to be slaves to our bosses or our *BlackBerries*; we want to be in control of our destiny.

In this *scrambled up world of work* there are no rules and few walls. And that means the key to business success is totally up for negotiation.

It's time to rethink the best skills to have in any executive or entrepreneur's toolbox. Forget an MBA from a flash business school, a talent for spreadsheets, or an aptitude for social networking. Think Juggle!

It's time to bust a few myths about work and business. Success today does not need to be confined to a singular talent as a specialist; you can mix up your skills and know-how as a generalist. Generalists have the scope to look across borders, to connect different disciplines, thereby offering more value in the marketplace. They offer employers and clients added value. Also, success does not need to be restricted to a job title—it can be the by-product of who you really are, where the Work You becomes The Real You. And forget Work/Life balance, this is about Work/Play integration where the boundaries between work and play are more blurred than ever. That can be challenging but also offers some great opportunities. Being a Juggler is about carving out a unique work life which wraps up your passions and talents, where you focus on all you are good at free of any imposed limits.

## Success can be the by-product of who you really are, where the Work You becomes The Real You.

When I took the leap to go it alone back in 2000, one of my mentors congratulated me and said, "Well done, you've gone plural." And he was right: plurality of ideas, clients, disciplines and business activities is what going it alone is all about. Now everyone seems to have gone plural: mixing work and play, business and family, roles and projects; executives carving out roles

where multiple projects and responsibilities vie for attention. We have had no option but to embrace plurality.

But Juggling is not just about doing more than one thing. It's about being multi-dimensional, in letting our passions inform and shape our work identities. When you become a Juggler, you are driven by instinct and curiosity, where your best plan is a non-plan. How can you attempt a five year personal career plan or similar business plan in this current climate? You need to stay open-minded, forget a traditional career ladder, evaluate opportunities on a hunch and become an 'accidental executive.'

Taking the Juggle route can be an exit from the boredom of your job, an escape from your corporate mediocrity. It's not a question of quitting your job, but reframing it so that work is not a chore, but a reflection of who you are. That has an enormous benefit to your quality of life, as you feel reinvigorated and stimulated by the variety of a mixed-up portfolio. There's no room for boredom when you mix everything up.

Plurality of disciplines and hats is not just good for your health; it also can be good for your wealth. In our radically changing world, with increasingly unpredictable trading conditions, survival is about flexibility and resilience. Sticking to one business model, to one product, to one market is limiting. You have to embrace that plurality.

And if you put more in, you can get more out. You can choose to become a Juggler, to throw the rules out of the window, to create a life where you mix stuff you do for love and stuff you do for money. A life where you re-define success, not by a salary package alone, but by more important currency like freedom, enjoyment, flexibility and lifestyle. Isn't that what we all aspire to, where we can have freedom of choice about what we do, how we do it and where we do it? Where work is an extension of You, it can reflect your personality, your talents and desires. The reality is that you can juggle different projects to be stimulated as well as to earn a living. Work is no longer just a

means to an end, a way of earning some money to live. Turn it on its head. It's carving out a working life that gives you what you want and reflects what you are good at. So take that job title or job spec and re-invent it, carve out a unique role or portfolio that meets those personal desires and objectives.

Remember, our DNA is multi-faceted—we are all unique, and our work life can reflect that. And, in this age of abundance, workers have to be more multi-faceted to stand out—and also to survive.

## Take that job title or job spec and re-invent it, carve out a unique role or portfolio that meets those personal desires and objectives.

That multi-faceted DNA has always been at the heart of my work life. Through my career I have always strived to avoid being pigeonholed as I've carved out a unique role as a juggler. Even when I was Managing Director of a radio studio business, I still managed other non-related projects for the group because I didn't want to be defined by one thing. I broke the mould, mixing up disparate disciplines. The only other members of staff at the company with such breadth were the CEO and the receptionist. I took that one stage further when I became self-employed. My business and marketing consultancy OHM London is a virtual business with no limits that enables me to juggle an eclectic project mix—working for clients from a Fortune 500 company to a one-person start up. That makes for an enterprising business mix, and by selecting what projects I work on, I stay personally stimulated. On some projects I am a project manager, on others a marketing consultant. There are no rules. Sometimes I choose to work on projects on a pro bono basis.

Kevin Roberts is CEO Worldwide of Saatchi and Saatchi, one of the world's largest creative organizations; he is proof of the benefits of the Juggle Life. He juggles a variety of balls, encompassing other business interests alongside the CEO role. He's a director of a telecoms company, chairman of USA Rugby, the inaugural CEO in Residence at Cambridge University's Judge Business School, the author of several books and gets involved in a load of other businesses. How on earth does he have time to juggle all this? By focusing on what he enjoys, by playing where he plays best, in a business portfolio with no limits.

Gary Vaynerchuk is another example of a Juggler. Gary is co-owner and Director of Operations at Wine Library, a \$50m wine retail business. He also presents Wine Library TV, a daily wine-tasting video blog, and has become known for his talents outside the wine world as a commentator on Web 2.0, social networking and personal branding. He is a keen advocate of avoiding pigeon holing, instead celebrating his breadth of passions and talents. For Gary it's about "*executing against your DNA.*" Enjoying that plurality is at the heart of being a Juggler, but you do need to communicate your breadth to the market effectively, whether that is internally to the organization or externally to clients. It's crucial to unite the seemingly disparate elements of your portfolio via a single personal brand. So, across all you do, develop a brand equity that conveys your value and purpose.

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disparate elements of your portfolio via  
a single personal brand.

# Let me introduce the Juggler's Manifesto.

These tenets are at the heart of my personal and professional DNA.

- 1 **Forget Specialism**, discover the value of being across more than one discipline. Sticking to just one thing limits your potential, Place no limits on what you do and become more fulfilled.
- 2 **Be passionate** about all you do. Let your passions and desires inform and shape your work life.
- 3 **Be adept at gear-shifting**, from segueing from the huge to the tiny, from work to play.
- 4 **Make time for play**. Being a successful juggler is about working hard but also mixing up work and play, and using playtime as your inspiration and stimulation.
- 5 **Be a chameleon, flexible and adaptable**. Re-think all you do, be happy to change the rules again and again. Don't stay entrenched in rigid ideas of how things should be done.
- 6 **The best plan is a non-plan**. Success in the knowledge economy is about making it up as you go along. Be The Accidental Executive or The Accidental Entrepreneur.
- 7 **Use your instinct** (every time); in making decisions, in deciding what to do, and what not to do.
- 8 **Re-define personal success** not by a salary package alone but by more important currency, such as: did you get to see your kid's sports day, do you work with a decent bunch of people, did you take enough holiday this year?
- 9 **Go beyond a job title** and carve out a unique You-role. Take control, do it your way, be authentic.

- 10 **Develop a personal brand** to unite and communicate your strengths.
- 11 **Work hard, but work *smart*.** Whilst success relies on you working hard, it's also doing what you love; and when you do what you love, it doesn't feel so much like work.
- 12 **Have lots of self-belief and self-confidence.** You must have a positive outlook, be an optimist.
- 13 **Be a pioneer,** with no fear of the unknown. Be happy to learn new stuff and embrace new ideas.
- 14 **Have purpose in all you do.** Focus on making a difference and leaving a legacy.

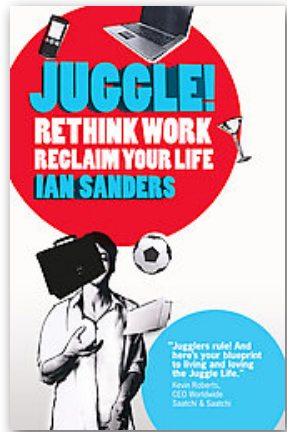
This is what I am and what I do. I'm a Juggler.

Remember, in this world, there is no right or wrong: you can live your story your way and stick to it. Those who eschew traditional career progression are the ones who have it all. They are the ones with the interesting stories. Living (and loving) the Juggle Life is about embracing a new mindset: it's a new way of thinking, but also a new way of doing. It's not about quitting the 9-5, but rather reframing your relationship with work. It's not about putting your dreams and passions on hold, but integrating them now.

And the good news is that if you rethink work and live the Juggle Life, you really can have it all. 🧩

*“Do not get trapped into the business of doing business,  
the bureaucracy, or the way things were done before.  
This is a new century, a new world. Jugglers rule!  
We’re the ones that will find fulfilment.”*

Kevin Roberts, CEO Worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ian Sanders is a UK-based entrepreneur, project manager, ideas-producer, marketing consultant and writer who has been juggling for 20 years. From a career with its foundations in radio and TV, Ian has always 'mixed it up', carving out unique roles wherever he worked. Since 2005 Ian has been running OHM London, a marketing and business consultancy that helps clients exploit their market potential. Ian is the author of *Leap! Ditch Your Job, Start Your Own Business & Set Yourself Free* (Capstone 2008). and *Juggle! Rethink Work, Reclaim Your Life*, published by Capstone in March 2009. Ian blogs at [www.planetjuggle.com](http://www.planetjuggle.com), and you can see video interviews with Gary Vaynerchuk [here](#) and Kevin Roberts [here](#).

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