

Foreword by MEG WHITMAN

•

# *Rebooting*

WORK

Transform How You Work in the  
AGE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

•

## Maynard Webb

AND CARLYE ADLER

# *Rebooting*

# WORK



Transform How You Work in the  
AGE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Maynard Webb  
and Carlye Adler

 **JOSSEY-BASS**  
A Wiley Imprint  
[www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)

Copyrighted material © 2013. All rights reserved.  
Published by Jossey-Bass, a Wiley imprint.

Copyright © 2013 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved.

Published by Jossey-Bass

A Wiley Imprint

One Montgomery Street, Suite 1200, San Francisco, CA 94104-4594

[www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)

Cover image copyright: Ilin Sergey

Cover design: Adrian Morgan

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc., 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400, fax 978-646-8600, or on the Web at [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com). Requests to the publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, 201-748-6011, fax 201-748-6008, or online at [www.wiley.com/go/permissions](http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions).

**Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty:** While the publisher and author have used their best efforts in preparing this book, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this book and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives or written sales materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation. You should consult with a professional where appropriate. Neither the publisher nor author shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Readers should be aware that Internet Web sites offered as citations and/or sources for further information may have changed or disappeared between the time this was written and when it is read.

Jossey-Bass books and products are available through most bookstores. To contact Jossey-Bass directly call our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 800-956-7739, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3986, or fax 317-572-4002.

Wiley publishes in a variety of print and electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that is not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <http://booksupport.wiley.com>. For more information about Wiley products, visit [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com).

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Webb, Maynard, 1955–

Rebooting work : transform how you work in the age of entrepreneurship / Maynard Webb and Carlye Adler.—1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-118-22615-5 (cloth); ISBN 978-1-118-41952-6 (ebk);

ISBN 978-1-118-42124-6 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-43387-4 (ebk)

1. Career development. 2. Job satisfaction 3. Change (Psychology) 4. Organizational change. 5. Personnel management. I. Adler, Carlye. II. Title.

HF5381.W39 2013

650.1 —dc23

2012037635

Printed in the United States of America

FIRST EDITION

*HB Printing* 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Contents

Foreword: The Benchmark of Success	ix
<i>by Meg Whitman</i>	
Preface	xiii
Introduction	xxv
<b>Part 1 Why Work Isn't Working</b>	
1 Changing Work	3
2 Technology: Powering the Future of Work	11
<b>Part 2 Reframing How We Think About Work</b>	
3 The Framework	27
4 Frame 1: The Company Man or Woman	41
5 Frame 2: CEO of Your Own Destiny	61
6 Frame 3: The Disenchanted Employee	79
7 Frame 4: The Aspiring Entrepreneur	105
8 The Age of Entrepreneurship	123
Conclusion: Break New Snow	133

**Part 3 Getting Started**

Appendix A	The Worksheet	141
Appendix B	Worksheet Examples	147
Appendix C	Services You Should Know About	157
Notes		161
Acknowledgments		171
About the Authors		175
Index		177

# Foreword: The Benchmark of Success

*By Meg Whitman*

**T**here are people you encounter in life who stand out above all others—who teach you, challenge you, and inspire you. In my life, one of those people has been Maynard Webb.

I first met Maynard in 1999, shortly after I became the CEO of eBay. The company was growing very quickly, and it was an incredibly exciting time. But one of the challenges we had to contend with was the stability of the site. Our technology, built when we were a fledgling start-up, just couldn't keep up with the growing transaction volumes. The site was frequently breaking down and disappointing sellers and buyers in the process. One particularly severe outage lasted for twenty-two hours. It attracted enormous national news media attention and nearly cost us all of our customer data.

The outages required me to look for someone strong and smart enough to tackle the problems. We simply didn't have

the in-house talent to fix the site. We needed someone to come in and rapidly overhaul the technology while we continued to grow and do business. I described it as changing an airplane's engines in flight without losing altitude or crashing.

As I started my search for a great technologist, I began to hear about Maynard Webb. Maynard was the widely respected chief information officer (CIO) at PC maker Gateway and had previously been at Bay Networks, where he completed a notoriously challenging SAP implementation in a remarkable nine months. This sounded like the guy we needed, but unfortunately for eBay, Maynard wasn't looking for a new job.

After some prodding from our recruiter, Maynard agreed to meet with me in California. True to his nature, Maynard thought the challenges eBay faced were "awesome." eBay was just the kind of job Maynard loved—a big, hairy problem no one else wanted, but that if solved, would make a huge impact.

About a week after our meeting, Maynard agreed to join eBay. For the next seven years, Maynard solved every problem we threw at him. Maynard rebuilt our technology infrastructure and took what was once a big liability and turned it into an area of strategic strength. Over time, he built a world-class technology team that has, as he likes to say, been "breaking new snow" ever since.

And what Maynard's team created was awe inspiring. The new ultrareliable infrastructure they engineered and the quality measures they put in place helped sustain the company's explosive growth. It enabled the site to scale to handle more than a billion transactions per day and store over two petabytes of data—two hundred times more data than contained in the Library of Congress.

Maynard architected much more than eBay's technology, though. Later, as eBay's COO, Maynard helped introduce the processes and day-to-day operating structures that moved us from

a business of 250 employees to a global company of more than 10,000 employees. In his seven-year tenure, Maynard enabled eBay to effectively grow revenue from \$140 million to more than \$5 billion by the time he left in mid-2006.

In working so closely with Maynard for so long, I noticed how much he enjoyed being a mentor. He always made time for anyone who wanted his advice—and there are many who sought him out. He hosted regular “fireside chats” in eBay’s offices, in which he shared his career experiences and insights with intimate groups of twenty people; they became very popular and allowed him to reach more employees.

At one of our annual Leaders’ Meetings, Maynard told a story I will never forget. He spoke about sitting on a park bench long after he retired. He was no longer the boss, had no budget, and could no longer hand out a job or a promotion. There was no ulterior motive to be nice to him. Maynard wondered if the people he encountered throughout his life would walk over to say hello or turn and walk away. He then stressed the value of conducting oneself in ways that draw people toward you.

When Maynard left eBay, we dedicated the park benches in our new courtyard to him. We inscribed a quote from Maynard on each one, a piece of wisdom from him that continues to guide us. And when Maynard comes back to visit and sits on one of his benches, I know no one will ever walk by without stopping to say hello.

Though I was sad when Maynard left eBay, I also understood. He had finished what he had come to do. It was time for new challenges.

As CEO of LiveOps, Maynard helped a new generation of workers prosper on their own terms. He also started investing in innovative companies that are leveraging technology to help workers find greater levels of achievement and personal

fulfillment. Maynard serves on the boards of salesforce.com and Yahoo!, companies he believes embody his focus on people, success, and a better future.

*Rebooting Work* takes on a big problem—the broken state of work—and reveals a solution, one that is better for employees and employers. As with every problem Maynard solves, he has ferreted out the answers and made certain that his solutions are easy to understand and possible to implement.

This book is the result of Maynard's journey through an exciting and varied career. It makes Maynard's knowledge and mentorship accessible to everyone. It will help people become the "CEOs of their own destiny" and live happier and more fulfilling lives. And it will help companies operate better as they move forward into the evolving landscape of work in the twenty-first century.

# Preface

**A**s the chairman of a cloud computing company that creates work opportunities for thousands of people (contractors and employees) each month, I see the world of work as very different from the one that's being reported in the headlines. I'm convinced that this is one of the most exciting times in the history of work—and one of the best times for anyone to enter the workforce. Just as the Industrial Revolution was defined by manufacturing that gave people jobs, today's IT revolution—defined by new technologies—is giving people more flexible and empowering opportunities for work than ever before.

When I started working, I had to leave my home in Florida and take a permanent job with IBM in Minnesota. I've moved nine times for a job, and I moved three times in less than two years. We all know that this model is steeped in the past, but two years ago, as I started to think about what was happening in the world of work—and about writing this book—I realized that even though those IBM days were long behind me, there were other outdated work models that I was perpetuating and that were not right for me or my family. My career was still defined by

the limits of working for a company. I was working with assigned teams that were static, and we worked from the same location. I spent set hours in an office building and not enough time with my wife and family.

Once I became involved with LiveOps and became inspired by the twenty thousand independent agents who were truly working on their own, I realized that there was a better model for working. They were paid for performance, but they worked on their own terms and were happy with their freedom. It was great for them and great for our company. It was a win-win for workers and management like nothing I had experienced before. I bought into it so much that I decided that I needed to walk the talk myself. I gave up formal operating roles and began to reframe the way I thought about my career.

---

In many ways, I've been very blessed—I am married to the love of my life; I have wonderful children and grandchildren. I've enjoyed a career in technology that has inspired me and provided for my family beyond my wildest imagination. I've also had some body blows. The times I've been thrown a curve ball or knocked down have been just as influential—perhaps more influential—in determining the ultimate outcome of my life.

Over my career, I have had the good fortune of being in the right place at the right time in several industries. I was thus able to witness and participate in significant transformations in technology, which gave me good strategic insights into where the world was going. I worked at IBM during the PC revolution, focusing on computer security long before it was “cool” or even possible to be a hacker. During the PC heyday, I was transferred to Boca Raton and put in charge of financial systems integrity, which at the time was in a shambles. I worked at Thomas-Conrad

as “networking” began taking off, and at Bay Networks as the Internet exploded. I was at the epicenter of Internet commerce at eBay and in the middle of the revolution in work at LiveOps. My extracurricular activities as a board member at Gartner and at visionary companies including salesforce.com and AdMob allowed me to see such technology trends as cloud computing and mobile long before they were hot.

With the insight that comes from hindsight, I now realize that the most interesting parts of my career happened when there was something that urgently needed fixing, and it was also in an area of nascent strategic importance. I was never interested in just doing something that anyone could do; I was always fascinated by aiming high—shooting for something that would be truly marvelous.

---

As lucky as my story is, it is also in many ways an unlikely one. I grew up in West Palm Beach, Florida, the third of five kids, and my family was considered upper-middle class. My father was a real estate appraiser and the president of his own company. My mother was a stay-at-home mom who took care of the kids and my father’s mother, who lived with us. Life was good: playing outdoors, figuring out ways to finagle out of piano lessons. Then, everything changed dramatically when my father died suddenly from a stroke ten days before my seventh birthday.

My father held no life insurance, and our small savings account quickly ran out. Growing up with little money, we learned to make sacrifices. For several months, we lived without hot water. For a couple of years, we lived without a TV. I couldn’t join the Cub Scouts because it required my mom to serve as a den mother, which she didn’t have time to do because she was working. Of course, the biggest loss was not getting to live with—or really know—my father.

My mom had a college education and went back to teaching to support the family, first as a boys' physical education teacher, the only opening at the time, then as a science teacher. Two years after my dad died, she decided to pursue her master's degree so that she could make more money. I was nine at the time. That summer, Mom enrolled at San Jose State in California, and with her five children moved into the dorms. There, our after-school fun involved learning to play poker from the other grad students. My mom was incredibly strong, and also industrious. After that summer in California, we moved back to Florida, where she would eventually run the Jupiter Marine Science Center and was voted Teacher of the Year for the State of Florida, one of many accolades she would receive. I had so much love and admiration for her, but was troubled by the position in which my father had left us.

I promised myself then that when I had kids, I would not leave them unprotected as we had been. I also became convinced that I would die at a young age, as my father had. That drove me; I expected life to be short, so I needed to get going at achieving all that I wanted.

---

I always wanted to work, and when I was ten, I secured a route selling TV guides. (It was small; I had three customers.) By the time I was twelve, I took on a paper route. My mom would wake me before dawn to get to the local gas station and fold the papers before delivering them. I was so exhausted by the end of the day that I'd fall asleep on the floor of the living room.

The thing I loved the most about being a paperboy was the tips I earned around Christmas. One year, I used these funds to buy a Ping-Pong table for my family. I worked several jobs over the next several years: at a gas station, cleaning toilets at

Mister Donut, busing tables at the Pancake House, working at an outdoor store, and doing the night shift at a mattress factory.

These were small jobs, but I dreamed big. As a kid, that meant a career as a Major League Baseball player. When I was nine, I was told I shouldn't try out for Little League, as the rest of the new kids were ten. I wanted to anyway. I had my brother's hand-me-down glove, and because he was left-handed, I struggled to catch well as a righty, but I practiced relentlessly and ultimately made the team. I played sports throughout school; our Babe Ruth All-Star team even won a state championship. My athletic career culminated in being recruited for football to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis.

That was 1974, and I had grown long hair and decided I didn't want to go to Annapolis. My mom was very disappointed, as my dad had been a naval officer, and she felt that I was throwing away an opportunity for a great (and paid for) education. I found myself on a different path, though. I went to college in Florida and studied criminal justice. I worked throughout school, even creating a retail business at a local wholesale nursery, and I interned at IBM during my senior year.

Upon graduation, I was offered a full-time job as an entry-level security guard at IBM in Minnesota. Considering my thirty-five-year career in the technology industry, some people assume I mean computer security, but at the time, computer security was in its infancy. (It was a mainframe and minicomputer world.) I worked in physical security, protecting the buildings and its employees.

Every day brought something different. I worked in the lobby of the office building. I also toured through the halls, ensuring that the building was safe and that people got to where they needed to go. No job was too small or too big. I took the flag down at night,

assisted with first aid, and one time had to handle a situation where an employee murdered his wife and then killed himself.

Within a year, I was offered a chance to move to a new facility in North Carolina, and shortly thereafter was promoted to become a supervisor of security guards. The physical security work segued into product security—I was in charge of securely administering the most confidential documents at our location and also checking up on how our vendors secured our information.

Then, within five years, as technology evolved, I moved into computer security. Both computer and physical security were becoming hot topics, as we had experienced attacks on our physical premises and had concerns about computer espionage. Although I transitioned from blue collar to white collar, I never gave up my blue-collar approach to work. I continued to understand the value of heavy lifting, and perhaps my willingness to do heavy lifting became my greatest strength.

## **BREAKING SYSTEMS**

I love new technology, and I'm obsessed with how it makes our lives better, but my role in the technology industry has never been that of the dreamer. I've always been the doer. I've been fortunate enough to work for companies that allowed me to witness the birth of new groundbreaking technologies, but in every company in which I worked, I was brought in because there was a difficulty on the path to growth or advancement. In each job there was a problem, a big issue that seemed insurmountable. While others seemed turned off by these types of challenges, I was really excited by the opportunity to fix something—the chance to make a difference.

Sometimes my job also meant that in trying to fix something, I had to figure out how to break it. At IBM, one of my early jobs in

computer security was indeed breaking systems. That was a very cool job. I would be sent to a location, given general access to the systems, and told, “See what you can do.” With that mandate, I was able to confiscate highly confidential documents, take over operating systems, and once even cut a check for a significant amount of money. (I returned it.) It was fun breaking systems, and it gave me insight into how to fix them. Determining what is wrong with something and trying to find a solution has been the thread that has tied my career together.

The truth is, I was unqualified for many of my career roles when I was assigned to them. However, no one else was willing to do them, so I volunteered. Some people called me insane, but in every opportunity that I signed up for, I was very confident that I could do the job well, and tackled the challenges with gusto and no fear. Several times this led to approaches that weren’t considered normal practice, but to me they made common sense, and I’ve always allowed common sense to lead.

For example, when I was doing product security at IBM, vendor security was taken very seriously—vendors were required to log visitors, physically lock documents, and track the removal of files. Amazingly, though, no one thought to lock up the files on the computers. There was no security system in place to protect the digital versions. That was a big gap. The product and security guys had to learn to become more computer literate, and I helped lead that charge. At first this idea was seen as unconventional, but soon, as everything went digital, it became an everyday imperative.

Later, when I was working as a network director at Quantum, a disk drive manufacturer, we had a pressing deadline to get long-distance circuits and technology infrastructure into new factories that were coming on line. Not one telecom vendor said it could

meet this deadline. This was not a good outcome; it would delay everything, thus costing us a considerable amount of money. I called a meeting with all the vendor representatives together to address the situation. I explained that the suppliers who were willing to find a way to work with us would build a long and profitable partnership with our company. I then challenged them to find a way to help us. All it took was for one rep to raise his hand and say he could do it. The others followed, all committing to find a way to make an exception. We delivered the project on time.

I went from Quantum to Bay Networks as CIO. The CIO role was very new and was just beginning to be elevated to the executive table. It is actually the only job in my career that I have done multiple times. It is very strategic, very hard, and very risky; at the time, most people said CIO stood for “Career Is Over.” I loved the role and the challenges that came with it.

At Bay Networks we faced very serious issues. We were merging two companies, SynOptics and Wellfleet, onto a common architecture and platform. I agreed to do an aggressive enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementation worldwide, which had been tried several times before and met with failure. I committed to do the implementation in twelve months, and the first step was to ensure that everyone was playing on the same team. I created a mandate that enforced timely decisions (within twenty-four hours) and key executive involvement. I created an untraditional bonus structure that was collaborative with our vendors. For example, our consultants at Accenture were on the same bonus plan as our executive stakeholders, which created a win-win environment. Nobody could go home on Friday unless the week’s open issues were rectified. And there were consequences: one factory wouldn’t go fast enough, so we pulled it out of the scope. We completed the effort in nine months—at the time it was one of

the fastest ERP implementations in the world. We even received a Computerworld Smithsonian IT nomination for the project.

I left Bay Networks after about four years to join Gateway Computers, which was facing many growth challenges. I was hired to significantly improve its web capability, but was surprised to learn upon arrival that although the year 2000 was only two years away, the company was not Y2K ready on its legacy systems. I led a major project to address that, as well as developed a radically different systems architecture.

In 1999, I was heavily recruited by eBay to become its president of technology. The company had some very sizeable technology issues, including one twenty-two-hour outage of its whole service. It was a very public debacle, and unfortunately the site had become the poster child for instability. I found that a crucial part of the solution involved taking a collaborative approach. I encouraged our partners to work with us in a way that they had not in the past. For example, we were using Sun servers, and as a way to motivate our vendor to be a real partner, I suggested that it carry our availability as a metric for executives' bonus plans. This had never been done before, but it worked for both parties, and later Sun adopted this model with its top customers.

The team was fabulous; we worked extremely hard and turned things around. We were growing so fast that we outgrew being able to use one big back-end database server to run our site. We either had to transition to a mainframe system or implement a dramatically different approach. We chose to implement a distributed architecture (what we called a small soldiers approach), which enabled us to achieve scale and stability much more quickly by distributing the database traffic across many different servers as opposed to one. We became world class at innovating on time and at a high velocity without impacting

site availability. It was at the time unprecedented to be able to fix the site and keep it running while simultaneously adding new features, functions, and capabilities.

I stayed at eBay for seven years, the last four as chief operating officer. As COO, I helped codify and establish the company's culture, implement decision-making models, and oversee the budget process and corporate initiatives, along with managing all my functional areas (trust and safety, customer support, HR, billing, technology, and product management). I was charged with managing executive staff and helping to administrate the board. I did the same thing for the company that I had done for the technology: implement processes that would ensure that it could scale while facing hyper growth.

Early on in my career, a very seasoned technology veteran at IBM once told me, “What’s beautiful about working with you, Maynard, is you haven’t been trained on why this is impossible.”

It’s true: my training happened on the job, so I didn’t know what was deemed unprecedented or insurmountable. I’m grateful for the fresh perspective that inexperience provided; it not only gave me the confidence that I could get the job done but also afforded the most interesting and most rewarding opportunities. I began to become recognized for my willingness to do the jobs no one wanted, and top technology leaders began to rely on me to solve daunting problems. That’s how I became known by some as Mr. Fix-It.

---

Although this book is not my memoir, in some instances my personal experiences can help illustrate some of the big ideas here—on how we can transform the way we work in a shifting global workforce. The one thing my career has taught me is that

instead of fearing change, you must be willing to embrace it is key. With this attitude, in addition to a passion for understanding technological breakthroughs, you can often be the first to new markets and new opportunities.

In addition to using examples from companies where I have worked and companies of which I am a board member, I will mention companies I have invested in, as those are the ones I know the most about and can give detailed examples for.

If I did it—an underdog with a humble beginning and no special connections, raised by a single mother with five kids; someone who didn't go to the best schools, get an engineering degree, or earn a master's degree; someone who started his career as a security guard and never had the “executive look”—then, without a doubt, you can do it too. Sometimes it just takes the right attitude and the confidence to know that the old way isn't necessarily the right way—and the belief that better days are always ahead.

*November 2012*

Maynard Webb  
*Silicon Valley*

# Introduction

**I**n my last corporate job, as the CEO of cloud-based call center LiveOps, I was hired to scale a start-up company to become a mature, fast-growing, operationally excellent technology company, but something else unexpected happened. I began to see how big of a problem work has become for most of us, and how much we could change to make it better. I learned about how many people were unhappy and unfulfilled and was eager for an alternative way that would give them more control over their lives.

This dissatisfaction was widespread—and alarming. One survey found that less than half of Americans (just 47 percent) are satisfied with their work.<sup>1</sup> (When the Conference Board’s first survey was conducted in 1987, most workers—61 percent—said they were happy in their job.)

As an employer, I know that this decline in job satisfaction is unacceptable and dangerous. Another survey by consulting firm Mercer found that the most discontented are young employees; 44 percent of those ages sixteen to twenty-four and 40 percent of the twenty-five- to thirty-four-year-olds say they “seriously are considering leaving” their jobs.<sup>2</sup>

That too is a big problem. Working adults spend more of their waking hours at work than anywhere else. Work should be a place of inspiration and innovation; it should not—it cannot—be unfulfilling. But for all too many, it is. The degree to which work adversely affects our lives, and how much we come to regret it later, is disconcerting. Bronnie Ware, an Australian palliative care nurse, who worked with patients in the last twelve weeks of their lives, shared their thoughts in a blog called *Inspiration and Chai*, which she later turned into a book called *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*. She found common themes in what people regretted and what we could learn from them. The top two lessons: “I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me,” and “I wish I hadn’t worked so hard.”<sup>3</sup> When people realize that their life is almost over and look back on it, they see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even a half of their dreams due to choices they had or had not made.

That’s upsetting, but what gets me most agitated is that it does not have to be this way. The things that people don’t like about work—toiling away so many hours in office buildings, spending too much time in cars commuting to work, and ceding control to a company—no longer have to be facts of work life. Technology has evolved to the point that many of our practices and methods around work could change radically. Advances in cloud services, Internet telephony, wireless technology, and mobile computing can be applied to change work and make it better pretty quickly, and pretty easily. Social technologies, which enable us to know exactly what our long-lost friends are doing in their spare time, can help us better understand what is happening in our businesses. As an investor in start-up companies and someone who meets young, gifted entrepreneurs who dream about the future every

day, I gain insight and access into other new technologies that can help us revolutionize work even further. There are so many new services and apps and ideas that make work easier, more engaging, and more rewarding. There are so many ways to take out the pain points and allow the soul food to be put back in.

Although technology is a path to a better and brighter future, it is only an enabler. After all, *technology* is a word that describes the concepts, techniques, and methods having to do with how to accomplish a task. Before we implement methods and plans and action items, though, we need to take a step back. We need to change the way we think about work. If we want to change it, we need to look back and study how we got here, then determine how we can forge ahead.

I wrote this book to investigate how the current work crisis came about, and to help individuals understand that it is within their power to end it and move on to careers that can provide both fulfillment and financial security. In addition to advocating for the personal joy that comes with being fulfilled, I also come at this with the perspective of an executive and manager and strongly believe that companies achieve far more with motivated and happy people.

*Rebooting Work* explores the emerging technologies and techniques that can enable every individual to make this shift to take charge of his or her own career. It's not just a better way—it's essential for the new era we live in, which is defined by an entrepreneurial spirit. The old ways of working, which may have led previous generations to success, no longer guarantee the same results. We are seeing new trends increasingly change work. Online freelance job postings have skyrocketed over the last few years, and companies increasingly outsource work. The shift under way to an information economy is as important as the

last great shift, when we transitioned from an agricultural to an industrial economy nearly one hundred years ago.<sup>4</sup>

## **MERITOCRACY VERSUS ENTITLEMENT AND THE AGE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Each year more than 1.1 million American high school students play football. The best of them, the star quarterbacks, running backs, linebackers, and linemen, dream of scoring scholarships to play college ball, but only twenty thousand—just 6 percent of seniors on the team—will play their freshman year of college. By their final year, that number dwindles to fifteen thousand athletes. Only 255 of those elite players are drafted to the NFL. The chance of making it to the pros if you play in high school? A very small number: a mere 0.08 percent.<sup>5</sup>

And if you think that once players make it to the pros they can take a rest, think again. Every player in the NFL must get revoted on to the team every year. No one can buy his way on to the team. It's a model of ruthless efficiency that ensures that every player brings his A-game every time he steps onto the field. It's a system that makes football an incredible game to watch.

I've always been inspired by sports, and throughout my career have taken the lessons I learned playing football and baseball growing up, as well as what I've witnessed through following professional sports, into the work world. Team dynamics and the importance of learning to win—and lose—gracefully were invaluable lessons to me in building my career. Further, the need to get voted on to the team every day inspired me to demand the most from myself and my teams. I have found that being transparent about performance—a tactic learned from studying

baseball stats—let people know where they stood and inspired a continuous quest for improvement.

What I'm talking about is meritocracy: a system that rewards individuals based on performance and results. It's an idea that carries weight for employees in the workplace. There also are benefits for companies that operate on this principle by committing to being open and transparent about their performance. (For example, a website should publish real-time information about its availability and system performance time, as eBay does with its announcement board or as salesforce.com does with its Trust Site.)

But what I've also found is that although we have some great examples of companies that are transparent about their performance, overall, most corporations don't follow these tenets when it comes to how they evaluate or treat their employees. In fact, traditional company culture is quite the opposite of a performance-based meritocracy. Historically—meaning in the past fifty or so years—loyalty was given higher priority than achievements and results. Outside of sales organizations, goals, and ways to measure goals, were not always clear. How an individual was performing and how she stacked up against others were not often transparent.

Although one would expect the rules of the ball park to be different from the rules of the office park, I found that by ignoring what made sports so great—essentially its functioning as a meritocracy—we were missing out on an opportunity to make work *work* better. The desire for security trumped the drive to be spectacular. Everyone played it too safe. And this has stymied both employees and employers.

How come as a society we support a model that embraces meritocracy—in which the best athletes, those with the best

skills, are known and rise to the top—but we don't demand a similar model at work? Generally speaking, we accept this system in school, where grades are based on performance against one's peers, not just on showing up to class. How is it that at work we fear systems that allow us to see how we are doing compared to others, that motivate us to do better work every day, and that reward us for our meaningful contributions instead of our blind commitment? Why are both employees and employers so afraid of operating in a meritocracy, which rewards them for how well they perform, not for how long they've been performing?

At work, both employees and employers often fall into an entitlement mentality. For example, some employers do everything they can to keep the talent inside their walls hidden from everyone else, lest they be "poached." They feel as though they know what is best for the employee and must make sure that the employee knows how to be successful in their company. Employees who leave are often shunned as being disloyal. For employees, there's an expectation that they will be given a job, and as long as they are doing okay, they expect to keep it. By keeping their head down, doing a mediocre job, and not being a problem, they believe they will be rewarded.

I have always been amazed by how managers seldom actually want to have truthful discussions about how someone is performing, even when that individual is doing great. As a manager, I have often implemented informal weekly and formal quarterly check-ins in an effort to force a dialogue and prevent a big disconnect at the end of the year for many employees, when they find out they were not doing as well as their perception led them to believe. Think of all the wasted time and productivity when we give performance feedback only on a yearly basis. The world doesn't operate on this type of clock anymore. When everything

is happening in real time, even my formal quarterly meetings seem grossly inadequate. As a board member of a well-known technology company, I witnessed a once well-respected CEO lose the trust of his board and employees in less than ten days. In the current business environment, the idea of an annual review is so antiquated, it's comical. We live in a world in which countries have been toppled in months, or even days, but certainly not years. It's a world in which much is decided instantaneously, and the workplace must adapt.

Yet we are very far from this kind of culture. How can work be so out of touch with the way the rest of the world is headed?

I'm a strong proponent of meritocracy, of the value of hard work over entitlement, of talent over tenure, and of transparency over closed systems, probably because of where I came from—and because of where I am today. I believe that many executives hold these beliefs. I have gained significant freedom by embracing a mind-set of meritocracy. I've seen what it can inspire, unlock, and unleash, and I've also seen how the opposite—an organization that supports entitlement over results—can limit growth and opportunity.

Unlike the past when you got news and information from only one or two sources and a couple of times a day, today you get information in real time and from multiple sources. There is no place to hide. You can hope to keep problems in-house, but you're unlikely to succeed. Problems do not get better with time; they get far worse. They spin out of control faster today than ever before. The only way to deal with this is to be open and transparent. If you have a problem, admit it, apologize, and fix it. No one expects perfection, but they do expect honesty. Now, meritocracy over entitlement is the only way. We are in a new age—one that is more transparent thanks to the Internet and one

that is being defined by a new generation of workers who grew up with more technology and a more entrepreneurial mind-set.

---

My background is really in operations. I see systems not working, I am called in when they are failing, and I must determine how to fix them. Whether it's an e-commerce start-up with an unreliable website, a public company trying to implement a new systems architecture, or a legacy company trying to carve a path for the future with new leadership, I find that by asking the right questions, you can get to the root of the problem and come up with a solution. With work it's no different, and I have created a model, a framework, to impart everything you need to know about how to operate in a new world of work. This model, which we'll explore in detail in Part Two, is designed to help individuals become accountable for their own success. With that accountability comes a new and refreshing freedom—it puts you back in charge of your life, shifting control from your boss to yourself. Essentially, it allows you to become the CEO of your own destiny and to be the one in charge of your career—and your life.

The framework in this book is the culmination of years of experience in managing and mentoring, and, I hope, will serve as a template for you as you begin to rework how you think about work. It identifies four different philosophies around work: Company Man or Woman, CEO of Your Own Destiny, Disenchanted Employee, and the Aspiring Entrepreneur. It distinguishes between those who are self-motivated and those who are waiting to be discovered, those who are happy and those who are unfulfilled. It aims to give you the tools to become more self-aware and happier and to find more meaning in your career. Ultimately, it is my hope that it inspires you to aggressively chase your dreams.

Part Three allows you to take the ideas of this book and make them your own. There is a worksheet to get you started (1) assessing where you are in your career and (2) understanding the actions you need to take to make a change. I've also included my personal worksheets, which I have filled out for different stages of my life and career, to show how goals and objectives can change over time. These completed worksheets are included in Appendix C.

# About the Authors

**M**aynard Webb is a thirty-year veteran of the technology industry. An active leader in the technology and business community, Webb serves as a board member, investor, philanthropist, and mentor to young entrepreneurs.

As the founder of the Webb Investment Network (WIN), a seed investment firm dedicated to nurturing entrepreneurs, Maynard brings his experience developing and leading high-growth companies. WIN provides its portfolio companies with mentorship and on-demand access to an affiliate network of more than eighty industry experts.

Webb is the chairman (and was formerly the CEO) of LiveOps, a cloud-based call center with a community of twenty thousand agents, and is a board member at both salesforce.com and Yahoo! Previously, he was the COO of eBay, where he created organizational processes and day-to-day structures that enabled eBay to grow from \$140 million in revenue to more than \$6 billion in 2006. Webb has also served on several public and private boards, including Gartner (NYSE: IT), Niku (NASDAQ: NIKU), Extensity (NASDAQ: EXTN), Hyperion (NASDAQ: HYSL),

Peribit (acquired by Juniper Networks), Baynote, and AdMob (acquired by Google), where he was also one of the first investors.

In 2004, Maynard and his wife created the Webb Family Foundation, which provides underprivileged, motivated young individuals access to quality education.

Webb lives in Silicon Valley with his wife, Irene. For more information, please visit [www.rebootingwork.com](http://www.rebootingwork.com).

---

**C**arlye Adler is an award-winning journalist and bestselling author. Her writing has been published in *Fast Company*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *Wired* and has been anthologized in *The Best Business Stories of the Year*. She is the coauthor of two books with salesforce.com chairman and CEO Marc Benioff: the national bestseller *Behind the Cloud* and *The Business of Changing the World*. She is also a coauthor with Jennifer Aaker and Andy Smith of *The Dragonfly Effect: Quick, Effective, and Powerful Ways to Use Social Media to Drive Social Change*. Her books have been translated into Chinese, Greek, Korean, Indonesian, Japanese, Russian, and Vietnamese. She lives in New York. For more information, please visit [www.carlyeadler.com](http://www.carlyeadler.com).