WORK PROFILES
&
PROJECT CREDITS

PROJECT CREDITS

A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.

**Jeff Bezos,
CEO of Amazon.com
(1964–)**

Many creative networkers have experienced problems with traditional job titles and career ladders. But names are necessary for communication and a sense of progress makes people happy. By publishing work profiles and project credits instead of focusing on official titles and office politics, people pay attention to actual services offered and reputations earned.

Many of us can now choose which roles we want to play and in which contexts.

Have you ever watched the closing credits at the end of a movie? This might be difficult, because, on TV, they are usually cut away in favor of "Don't miss what's next on X-Factor!" and, in the movie theatre, your view is most likely obscured by a slowly passing train of giant backsides. But *if* you were able to see the movie credits, you would surely be confronted with a long list of people, titles, and roles: Acting Coaches, Storyboard Artists, Assistant Directors, Food Stylists, Best Boys, Location Scouts, Set Decorators, Script Writers, Gaffers (what the hell are gaffers?), Stunt Coordinators, Costume Designers, and many more. Actors and Actresses will have their credits further subdivided by listing the specific roles people have played. Depending on the movie you've watched, Johnny Depp will be listed as either Captain Jack Sparrow, Edward Scissorhands, Sweeney Todd, Willy Wonka, or Gilbert Grape. And there seems to be no end to the number of movies Dolly Grip has had a part in.

The movie industry is a good metaphor for communities of work and social networks that people are contributing to. Granted, it is said an actor's loyalty in the Hollywood model only extends as far as the end of the movie project. [Taylor and LaBarre, *Mavericks at Work* loc:3435] That's why companies need to offer people more than merely a collection of unrelated projects. But as a metaphor

for career paths, the movie industry model matches quite well. As a member of the global Agile community, I have played various roles, such as Blog Author, Book Writer, Conference Organizer, Keynote Speaker, Session Facilitator, and Global Bumblebee. We must see companies as communities too. Employees play roles in them, they contribute to them, and they expect value from them. Hopefully, your company can provide people with enough challenging projects that they will want to hang around in your community for a long time, just as the people who work for Pixar Animation Studios want to stay there to work on several movie projects. [Taylor and LaBarre, *Mavericks at Work* loc:3439]

In the 21st century, it is a privilege and an achievement that many of us can now choose which roles we want to play and in which contexts. It hasn't always been like this. Not long ago, if you were born as the child of a peasant, you would likely *be* a peasant and die as the parent of a peasant. Likewise, if you were born in the house of a lord, you would die in the house of a lord. Regrettably, in some countries, traditional systems of aristocracy, royalty, castes, apartheid, or other forms of social segregation still exist, but the world is making progress! More and more people on earth are enjoying freedom of choice. They have options. Like Johnny Depp and Dolly Grip, they can *choose* the roles they want to play.

Reputation Management

The way people develop themselves and the way they integrate life and work have changed significantly in the last few decades. Not long ago, the only enviable position *after* your current job was the chair of your boss. The only way to make a career and move ahead in an organization was to go up.

Not anymore.

People are exposed to more options and businesses are exposed to more challenges. Innovation, globalization, democratization, specialization, diversification, and several other "ations" have given creative networkers more opportunities for career development. Technological and economic trends all point to a future where more and more people work either independently or in small project teams. The roles within these project teams will be filled by a combination of dynamic employees, contract workers, and freelancers. Hierarchies and lifetime employees are going the way of lords and peasants. Productivity and performance will depend more and more on a workforce that is diverse in terms of locations, contracts, backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. [Benko and Anderson, *The Corporate Lattice* loc:73] Nontraditional families, networked organizations, emancipation of minorities, younger generations, virtual workplaces, and multicultural workforces are all contributing to a new world of work. In the 21st century, it is much easier to do whatever you want to do and be whoever you want to be.

What this means is that organizations and workers will no longer assume having long-term relationships with each other. Instead of an exclusive dependency that will hopefully never "fail", the modern creative networker sees her relationship with an organization as something that should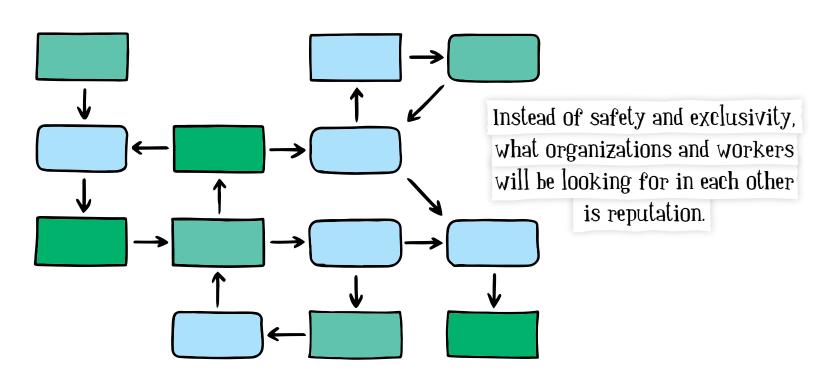 last for as long as the collaboration is good for her career and life. Instead of ownership of a human "resource", the organization should see its relationship with an employee as a valuable partnership that ends when it no longer generates value for its brands. Instead of safety and exclusivity, what organizations and workers will be looking for in each other is **reputation**.

We can also conclude that as a result of these global developments there's an implied assumption that all business partnerships are *temporary*. There may not be an explicit end-date defined for our partnerships as companies and employees, but we do assume our collaboration won't last longer than a small number of years. More and more, we see organization-worker relationships as *tours of duty*. [Hoffman, Casnocha and Yeh, "Tours of Duty"] When partnerships become projects, there must also be *deliverables*. The result should be a tangible achievement for the organization, and a valuable reference for the creative networker. The employee becomes a corporate brand booster. And the company becomes a personal brand enhancer. The result of their collaboration should be something that both would happily list in the closing credits of the project. Like at the end of a movie.

Instead of safety and exclusivity, what organizations and workers will be looking for in each other is reputation.
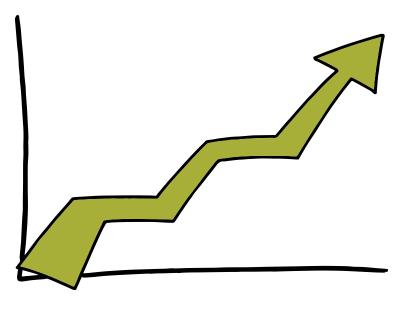
The Purpose of Names

Traditionally, when people and organizations start a working relationship, they give that relationship a name, often called a job title or project role. This name serves various purposes.

First, a title or role is a useful easy way to help people figure out who does what in an organization, and which person to call when the file system is on fire. [Horowitz, "Titles and Promotions"] Without having job titles and project roles to describe people's responsibilities, confusion runs rampant, and it takes longer to find the right people and to get things done. [Griffith, "Banish Job Title Hierarchy?"] Titles and roles give people a level of confidence in the abilities of workers they don't know personally because the names communicate what the work entails. [Sullivan, "Exciting Job Titles"]

Second, titles and roles can communicate the value of a brand to workers and customers. For example, at Apple's retail stores, the employees working in technical support are called Geniuses. This compelling name not only draws a lot of applicants to these jobs, either because they seek confirmation that they're geniuses or because they hope to become one, but it also signals that Apple thinks differently. [Sullivan, "Exciting Job Titles"] Unconventional job titles, particularly in the trendy world of start-ups, can serve as a reflection of a company's brand. [Swallow, "Should Your Job Title Be More Creative?"] It's no wonder that, in the last decade, we have seen a surge in peculiar job titles with names such as "Jedi", "Rock Star", "Guru", and "Wizard". (I made the last one up, but I hope it exists!)

Third, titles and roles enable people to earn status and make progress in their careers. This is usually why they want them to sound as impressive as possible. [Griffith, "Banish Job Title Hierarchy?"] Starbucks understood this by giving all its coffee servers the title of

"barista". Most of them probably can't tell the difference between a caffè latte and a café au lait, but that doesn't matter, because Starbucks makes only one of them. Recruiters know that many people can easily be convinced to take on a job with low pay as long as the job title is impressive. And for those already in a job, additional qualifiers such as "Senior", "Lead", and "Master" communicate a level of performance that employees feel they deserve. Research says that happiness is achieved when people make progress. [Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis* loc:1641] Nice titles help people feel they are making progress and help them feel happy.

Last, but certainly not least, names influence behaviors. Proper job titles and descriptions can reinforce the kind of behavior that is expected from people. A Call Center Agent might only feel responsible for handling phone calls, which is precisely what the job title suggests. The agent can just take one phone call after another, and at five o'clock the job is done for the day. But a Customer Happiness Specialist would sense an expectation to specialize in keeping customers happy. Taking customers' phone calls is then just a means to an end. It might be exactly the same job, but with an entirely different focus.

> Job titles and project roles can have a significant impact on the clarity, branding, status, and behavior of employees.

Functional Line Managers and Human Resource Professionals (who might better be called Business System Organizers and Employee Support Agents) must realize that job titles and project roles can have a significant impact on the clarity, branding, status, and behavior of employees. Not thinking carefully about these aspects of names can have serious consequences for the organization, as we will see now.

TheProblem(s)withJobTitles

The European Commission has, at the time of writing, a "team" of 28 Commissioners. One of them has the title of President, and no less than eight of the others have been bestowed with the title of Vice-President. (*Eight* Vice Presidents?) And then, there is the European Parliament with its own President and a European Council also with its own President. It's no wonder the European Union has trouble making decisions. It has as many heads as the Hydra.

Inflation is one of the biggest problems with job titles. Typical bureaucratic organizations are infested with Presidents, Chiefs, Seniors, Executives, Vices, and Directors. Employees in a hierarchy are always comparing themselves with the worst performers on the next higher level. As a result, there is a strong temptation for workers to demand better sounding titles, and for managers to give them. Some say fancy job titles are the easiest way to please employees and they cost nothing. The idea is, "If it makes people feel better, let them feel better." [Horowitz, "Titles and Promotions"]

> ## Inflation is one of the biggest problems with job titles.

However, I agree with others who say the glamorization of job titles definitely comes with a cost. A ladder of titles reinforces the corporate hierarchy, which can seriously hurt innovation in the long term. [Haden, "Why There Are No Job Titles at My Company"] What you want is for the best ideas to grow from the bottom of the organization, perhaps offered by the Director of First Impressions (or Receptionist), the Underwater Ceramic Technician (or Dishwasher), and the Media Publications Administrator (or Paperboy). [BBC, "25 of Readers' Inflated Job Titles"]

It hardly needs pointing out that the glamorization of titles can backfire. The reputations of both workers and organizations can be hurt by the devaluation and dilution of titles. (I mean, seriously, *eight* Vice-Presidents among 28 Commissioners?) Creative names can also cause a problem for people's future careers. Hiring managers and HR professionals usually search for familiar titles. If the official job title of your previous job was "Code Ninja" instead of "Software Developer", you might find it harder to be discovered by recruiters through applicant tracking systems.
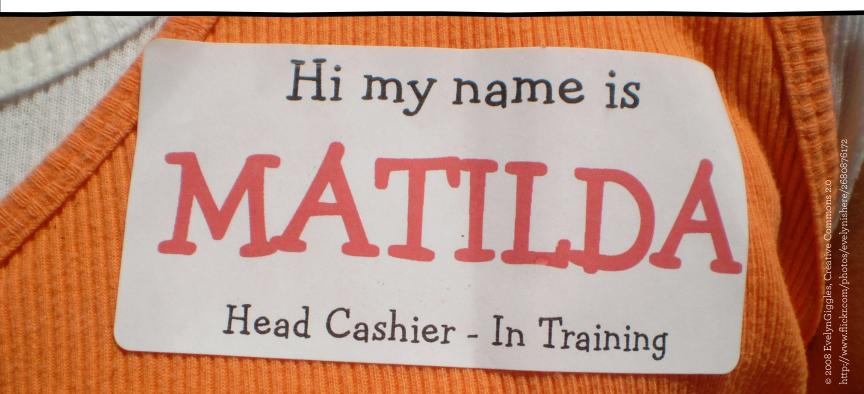
A second problem with job titles is that they have a tendency to pigeon-hole people into narrow job descriptions. In one big organization where I worked, many years ago, it didn't matter at all that I had talents for writing, speaking, teaching, and organizing. All that mattered to the company was the part of me that could be squeezed neatly into the open position of .NET Software Developer. The large chunks of me that didn't exactly fit into the available slot begged for attention and cultivation, but were diligently ignored.

> **The whole notion of a title puts you in a box, and worse, it puts you in a position where you can assume you have authority to command others in the organization.**
>
> **Hamel, *What Matters Now* loc:3505**

A third problem with job titles is that there is seldom any standardization of what they mean. An interaction designer in one company could be responsible for very different things compared to an interaction designer in another company just around the corner. The CEO of Happy Melly can hardly be compared with the CEO of Google. And, despite the existence of an international Project Management Institute (PMI), an extensive body of knowledge (PMBoK), and an international project management method (PRINCE2), several project managers have told me they have no idea what people with the title of Project Manager are doing in other organizations.
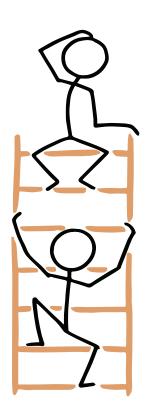
A fourth problem is the prejudice that often goes hand-in-hand with job titles. The CEO is usually male, while the Office Manager is expected to be female. The Receptionist is white and the Janitor is black. The Board Member is old, and the Trainee is young. The Public Speaker is an extrovert, and the Book Writer is an introvert. (The Vice-Presidents in the European Commission are, I suspect, overpaid and over-titled.) Many job titles, or at least the ones that come with assumptions, have a tendency to put people in boxes.

I think it is time we reconsider our use of titles, but not before we've discussed another problem area.

Hi my name is
MATILDA
Head Cashier - In Training

The Problem(s) with Career Ladders

I once had a small disagreement with the HR manager of an organization where I worked. She showed me the suggested career paths that software developers could have in our organization. To my horror, I saw, if I remember correctly, that Software Testers could become Software Developers (the other way around was not expected), Software Developers might become Project Managers (not the other way around), and Project Managers could become Business Unit Managers (again, not the other way around). And, as could be expected from a hierarchically oriented organization, all the roads ultimately led to the Pope in Rome, or, in our case, to one top management position, which was theoretically possible, but practically unavailable.

Management bias is the main problem of traditional career ladders. 🏛 The only meaningful opportunity to gain status and earn better wages in many organizations is to be promoted into management. Engaging people, improving work, and delighting clients takes a backseat in people's minds when payment is not related to any of these and is instead tied to the career ladder. In such situations, people's primary concern becomes climbing the corporate ladder instead of doing a great job! For anyone familiar with the movie business, this makes little sense. What could be the next step for Julianne Moore? To be promoted to a position of Lead Actress? Actress Manager? Vice-President of Acting? Certainly, some actors become directors. But most don't. And successful directors have sometimes been unsuccessful actors, and vice versa. Most importantly, whether people want to be an actor or a director is *their own free choice*. They don't wait to get "promoted" to an available position by anyone else. They *choose* their career steps, present themselves as candidates, and get picked for new projects based on their reputation. Or not.

The **Peter Principle** is the second problem with traditional career ladders. It says that workers in hierarchies get promoted until they reach a level at which they are no longer competent. And then they stay there, not able to get any further promotions. [Peter and Hull, *The Peter Principle*] The Peter Principle virtually guarantees that the upper levels of hierarchical organizations are full of incompetent people, who are unable to move further up their ladders. (Please note that this is a universal problem; it does not apply only to managers named Peter.)

> **People's primary concern becomes climbing the corporate ladder instead of doing a great job.**

The third problem with traditional career ladders is that new economic and technological developments scream for more variety in possible career paths. Linearity is out and non-linearity is in. Maybe a project manager wants to try her hand at account management and work mainly from her home. Maybe a recruiter would like to be an HR manager for just a year. Maybe a designer and animator get married and want to share a job and a child. Maybe an office manager wants to work part-time for a while, launching his own web shop for second-hand office supplies. Career paths do not only go up. They can also go sideways, forward, and even backward sometimes. [Peters, "The Brand Called You"] Modern businesses in the 21st century must learn how to accommodate all of this and more.

Finally, I have a vision that one day, far into the future, nobody will ever insult any worker with the infamous words, "I want to talk with your superior." Because there won't be any subordinates and superiors. Just people, working together.

Separation of Concerns

It is clear to me what we *don't* want or need. What we don't want is job title inflation, ridiculous names, lack of standardization, and prejudice and false assumptions. Neither do we want management bias, the Peter Principle, lack of career path variety, nor an outdated division of superiors versus subordinates.

But we *do* need names for work. Sure, it's fine for a start-up or small company to ditch all roles and job titles, but this doesn't scale up. When you're working with 150 people or more, you're going to need abstractions. [Griffith, "Banish Job Title Hierarchy?"] We want names, not only because they help people to understand each other's *responsibilities*, but also because they are a reflection of the *brands* people are representing. We want names that allow people to have a sense of *progress*. And we want names to influence people's *behaviors* in a positive way.

Can we do this? I think we can, or else I would be a fiction writer, not a business writer.

We can solve these problems with a *separation of concerns*. Organizations have to learn that people are not the same as job

> We treat employees as people with work profiles that are a reflection of their personal brands.

titles. And job titles are not the same as project roles. By understanding the triad **Profile – Title – Role**, we can easily separate our expectations, and enjoy the benefits of names, without suffering from the drawbacks I listed earlier. Well, at least not all of the drawbacks.

A separation of concerns means that, first of all, we treat employees as people with *work profiles* that are a reflection of their personal brands. Second, we ask these people to adopt *job titles* that add value to their brands while, at the same time, they generate results for the organization. Both within and outside the organization people can then be involved in one or more projects where they are asked to fulfill certain *project roles*, which again should add value to their personal brands. In short, we need to see work relationships from three perspectives. It's a bit like a movie in 3D.
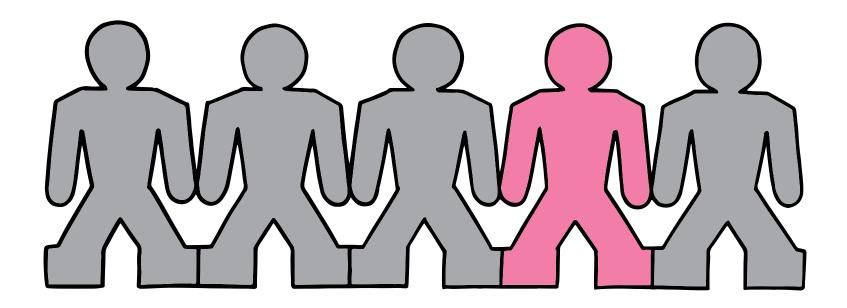
Work Profiles and Personal Brands

I call myself a *Creative Networker*. It is the most accurate and succinct description I could think of that covers all the projects I am involved in. My business cards and personal website explain that I'm a writer, speaker, trainer, entrepreneur, illustrator, manager, blogger, reader, dreamer, leader, and freethinker. (I seem to have forgotten bragger in that list.) We can refer to the total package as a primitive version of my **work profile**. It is a brief description of what I do and what I have to offer, and, similar to the About page on my website, I am the only person who is allowed to update my work profile. Work profiles are the perfect replacement for traditional job descriptions because they move ownership from the human resources department to the employee. [Heathfield, "Forget HR Job Descriptions"] They also enable organizations to grow work around people, instead of force-fitting people into narrow job descriptions. They do this at Cirque du Soleil, the entertainment company in Canada. The company builds its shows around the unique talents of its people rather than slotting them into predefined jobs. [Taylor and LaBarre, *Mavericks at Work* loc:3333]

A person's work profile is a reflection of her personal brand. If I had to summarize my own personal brand 👥 with three words, I would choose *creative, smart,* and *funny.* But I would readily agree that brands are better defined by their observers, not by their owners. My readers might prefer to describe me as *weird, blunt,* and *smug.* It is all in the eye of the beholder.

Just as commercial brands describe the relationships between people and products or businesses, personal brands describe the relationships between people and... other people. Employers, employees, customers, and other stakeholders develop perceptions, opinions, and feelings about each other. Brands, whether commercial or personal, find themselves somewhere between intention and reception. [Gardner, "The 'Personal Brand' Myth"] I can choose to be *creative* (intention), but I can be *perceived* as just weird (reception). The more effort we put into learning how to grow, shape, and communicate our personal brands, the less we leave gray areas for others to fill in. If we don't develop our own personal brands, others will do it for us. [Suster, "If You Don't Define Your Personal Brand"] And this is important, because personal brands apply to **the context of a lifetime** and beyond! Your work profile may change from employer to employer, but you always bring your personal brand wherever you go!

Growing a personal brand is crucial if you want some level of control over the development of your career. The way the market perceives you will affect which jobs you get, which work profiles you can write, which projects you will work on, and which opportunities will be passed on to you. Forget about traditional resumes. From now on, you will be judged primarily by what people can find out about you online, the people you are connected to, and the projects and organizations you are associated with. Think Ashton Kutcher. Think Lady Gaga. Social media, including LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Klout, and your personal blog or site (and in the case of George Clooney: movie end credits and IMDb.com) will be your new resume and business card. Like work profiles, your social media profile will also be a reflection of your personal brand. It will reflect your reputation. You must think of yourself as the CEO of your own company: Me Inc. [Peters, "The Brand Called You"; Schawbel, *Me 2.0*]

A well-communicated personal brand can work like a magnet, attracting similar-minded people and organizations with cultures that fit your personality like a glove. It also attracts Personal Branding Gurus, Social Media Experts, and other nasty parasites. Nobody said work life is without dangers!

Work Profiles and Job Titles

I recommend that employees create their own work profiles, briefly describing what they do and what kind of work they can be asked to do. But how do work profiles relate to job titles?

My job title at Happy Melly is CEO. The title I gave myself at my one-person company is Owner. The first title in my previous job was Development Manager, followed by Chief Information Officer. Before that, I've been a Technical Director, Software Developer, Trainer, and Failed Founder, in no particular order. Sometimes I picked those titles myself, sometimes they were assigned to me by the employer, but I *always* took charge of my work profile at each company.

Using a work profile, a person can briefly describe his *set of services* within **the context of an organization**. We can ask people to create work profiles and adopt job titles that add value to their personal brands. At the same time, people create value for the brands of the organization.

Ideally, people can pick their job titles themselves and write their own work profiles. In other situations, people will be handed a pre-existing job title, but they should still take responsibility for writing their own work profile!

> Using a work profile, a person can briefly describe his set of services within the context of an organization.

When offering people job titles, there are several important considerations to take into account:

1. Make official job titles as "wide" as possible. Titles have a tendency to multiply like rabbits. Resist any temptation to end up with a list of titles containing Creative Directors, Front-end Designers, Interaction Designers, Interaction Directors, Lead Creative Designers, etc. Instead, give everyone the title Designer, and allow people to have different roles in different projects to satisfy their desire to distinguish themselves. Keep job titles general and aim for the titles to be descriptive across all roles—from today until three years from now. This keeps people and the organization flexible. If you can make your job titles so wide that *everyone's* employment contract merely states Creative Networker or Esteemed Employee, all the better.

2. Do *not* inflate official job titles with predicates such as Senior, Head, President, Lead, Director, Vice, and Master. There should be no Senior Vice President of Office Management. As a job title, Office Manager is good enough. It is said that Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, intentionally deploys titles that are lower than industry standard without all the useless embellishments. [Horowitz, "Titles and Promotions"] Likewise, instead of Lead Software Architect, the official job title Programmer should do nicely. [Haden, "Why There Are No Job Titles at My Company"] The benefit of this approach is that you attract creative people who are drawn more by the work and the responsibilities than by status.

3. Avoid glamorous job titles, such as Eviction Technician (instead of Bouncer) or Transparent-Wall Maintenance Engineer (Window Cleaner) [BBC, "25 of Readers' Inflated Job Titles"] *unless* you have a compelling reason to do so from the perspective of branding your organization. There's nothing wrong with the job title Social Media Guru *if* you want your company to be seen as technically pretentious and socially awkward. Stick to standardized titles as much as possible and leave the fancy names for project roles. (We'll discuss project roles in the next section.)

Some people prefer to get rid of job titles completely. It's an understandable objective, but ultimately, it may not scale up to bigger organizations. Granted, job titles at an Internet start-up of 10 people can easily be ditched (and please do so if you can); howeve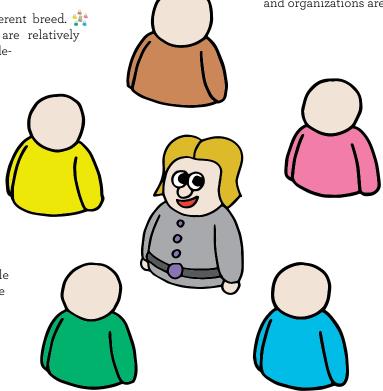r, a business of 100,000 people will probably need job titles, or else people won't be able to find each other. Listing 100,000 work profiles, without titles, may not be helpful to most colleagues. (Unfortunately, that does *not* mean that the mere existence of job titles and work profiles will magically make people communicate better.)

Project Roles

I am not only the Writer of this book. I am also an Author Coach for several other writers. For the Management 3.0 brand, I am a Courseware Creator and Licensor. At the same time, I am sometimes invited as a Keynote Speaker at conferences, and occasionally, I have the role of Co-Facilitator of Management 3.0 workshops.

Project roles are an entirely different breed. 💅 While titles and work profiles are relatively static, roles can be created and destroyed on-the-fly. Think Meryl Streep (personal brand), working as an Actress (job title), playing the part of Margaret Thatcher (project role). Titles are important for employees because they end up in contracts, but roles are important because they have a significant effect on people's personal brands. Many people in Hollywood call themselves Actors, and they might have a work profile published on their personal website describing the talents they have and the jobs they can do. But only Angelina Jolie was Evelyn Salt, Jane Smith, and Lara Croft. That's what she is recognized and credited for.

You have much more freedom with project roles than with job titles. Roles define responsibilities and desired behaviors of workers, but without the rigidity that so often comes with job titles. We use roles because not only can they help people understand each other's responsibilities within **the context of a project** but also, such names can be a reflection of the brands people and organizations are representing.

The freedom you have with project roles enables you to reduce prejudice and false assumptions that are attached to certain job titles. When a Secretary in your organization is male (which can be a surprise for some people), you could decide to use that official title only in his employment contract, and instead let him be known as the "Management Facilitator" or "Office Master", depending on the context. This project context can be tied to a location, a product, a service, or a customer. Some very creative networkers told me the story of how they printed custom business cards per client. "Does the customer like the name Product Owner? OK, then I will be his Product Owner. Do they prefer Project Managers? Alright, let's print ourselves a Project Manager!"

> **At Semco, we tell people to put anything they want on their business cards. [...] The function of the card is to give the customers what they want.**
>
> Semler, *The Seven-Day Weekend* loc:2480

A project role also allows you to define work around a person instead of force-fitting a person into an available job slot. When we want to focus on individuals and interactions instead of processes and tools, it makes sense to also value personal brands over project roles. Therefore, if one of these two has to adapt to match the other, my choice would be to change the role, not the person.

> **In real life, human beings aren't plugged into machines, but they're often plugged into roles that don't suit them and jobs that don't fulfill them. Usually, it is the individual who must conform to the institution rather than the other way around.**
>
> Hamel, *What Matters Now* loc:2780

By using a combination of (wide) standardized job titles, individually maintained work profiles, and (narrow) flexible project roles, you should be able to dissolve any implied hierarchy. Instead of focusing on their place in a hierarchy, employees will focus on adding value to different projects by assuming a variety of roles. And these roles can easily flip too. In one project, Janet can coordinate the work of Lisa, while in another project, these roles could be reversed. [Haden, "Why There Are No Job Titles at My Company"] If you change people's perception of the organization's structure, you change their attitude and behaviors too. And the Peter Principle would fly out the window as if it were Peter Pan himself.
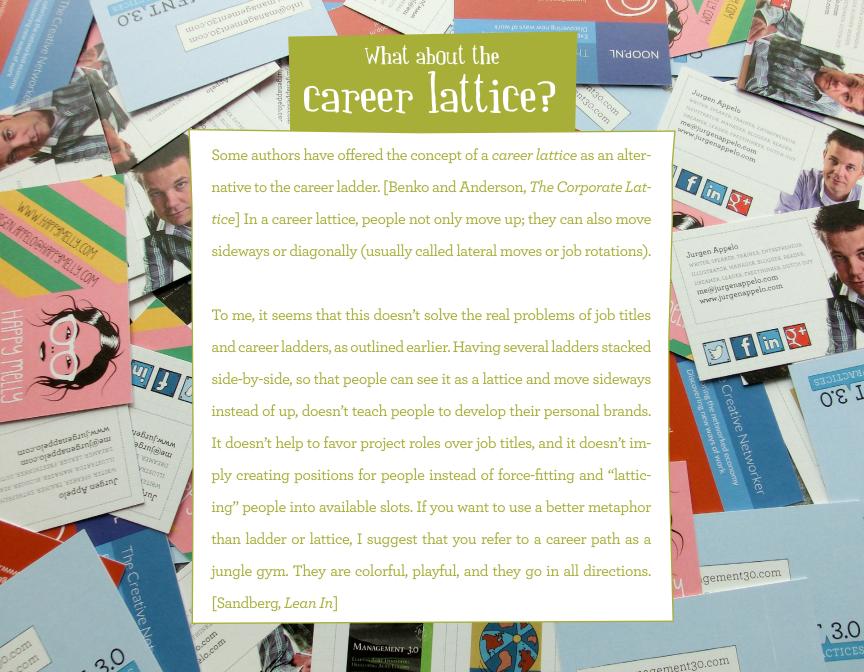
Career Paths

So far, in this chapter, I have been successful at ignoring any form of hierarchy. With the triad of work profiles, job titles, and project roles, people can be anything they want, and they can grow their skills in any direction. This should prevent people from asking, "Does the job Actor come *before* or *after* the role of Director?" and "Should an Associate Producer earn *more* or *less* than the Stunt Coordinator?" Obviously, in the movie industry these questions don't make much sense. People can earn plenty of money with almost any kind of job, as long as their **reputation** deserves it. Why should it be any different in other industries?

However, I do understand that many workers would like to feel a sense of progress and status in their work. People feel happiest when they feel they're moving forward, or upward, in terms of competence, capabilities, experiences, and influence. Therefore, I believe the qualifiers Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master (or Junior, Medior, and Senior) can be meaningful to distinguish levels of seniority *per discipline*. These names should be treated like badges of honor, which have to be earned in a measurable way based on reputation. This is similar to the way Klout measures the influence of people on social networks.

When badges of seniority are based on reputation, people can earn them *and* lose them. A person who is a Senior Project Manager in one context could, at the same time, be a Junior Account Manager in another context. An Academy Award-winning Actor would be a novice when trying his hand at being a Director. With a focus on becoming a better Account Manager (learning a new discipline) a person might lose his seniority as a Project Manager (not having time to keep up with his former discipline). How can I become a *Senior* Book Writer? By writing and selling more books than other writers!

A system like this promotes reputation over politics and allows for a rich variety of career paths in many different directions. At the same time, this system gets rid of the traditional superior-subordinate division. At Wooga, a games company in Berlin, I was told that management shares a similar vision. At this company, there are no career paths defined by a sequence of job titles. Career advancement is measured in the form of status and recognition—which games people have worked on, the bigger projects they are asked to contribute to, and the expertise people build over time. Has anyone ever noticed the title Team Leader on a movie's closing credits? I haven't.

What about the career lattice?

Some authors have offered the concept of a *career lattice* as an alternative to the career ladder. [Benko and Anderson, *The Corporate Lattice*] In a career lattice, people not only move up; they can also move sideways or diagonally (usually called lateral moves or job rotations).

To me, it seems that this doesn't solve the real problems of job titles and career ladders, as outlined earlier. Having several ladders stacked side-by-side, so that people can see it as a lattice and move sideways instead of up, doesn't teach people to develop their personal brands. It doesn't help to favor project roles over job titles, and it doesn't imply creating positions for people instead of force-fitting and "latticing" people into available slots. If you want to use a better metaphor than ladder or lattice, I suggest that you refer to a career path as a jungle gym. They are colorful, playful, and they go in all directions. [Sandberg, *Lean In*]
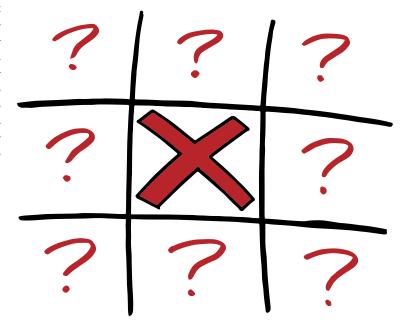
Options over Politics

From now on, you should see all work relationships as *personal brands with temporary assignments*. The new job you are giving someone? Assume it's a tour of duty that will end in two or three years. [Hoffman, Casnocha and Yeh, "Tours of Duty"] The work you're giving someone to do next week? Make sure it's a project that will last for months, not years. Every assignment should have an implied end. For every opening sequence, you will assume there will also be closing credits.

This creates a culture where people favor developing their own personal brands (which is the only thing that will last for decades or more) instead of becoming obsessed with titles and roles. Project roles can give flavor to job titles and work profiles should add value to personal brands. Too much attention and politics among employees around titles is a clear sign they are neglecting their personal brands. In such cases, it is no wonder people fear loss or devaluation of their titles because they fear losing their reputation. But does anyone really believe that playing the part of J. Edgar Hoover was bad for Leonardo DiCaprio's reputation? Of course not! Reputation clings to a person, not to a title or role. Reputation is earned by the *variety* of titles a person has assumed and the *progression* of roles a person has played.

It is all about creating **options** for people's careers. Customization of titles and roles, and the possible paths between them, creates *option value*. People value the option to make their own choices. [Benko and Anderson, *The Corporate Lattice* loc:193] In a world that is increasingly complex, options enable people to defer commitment and embrace uncertainty. [Maassen, Matts and Geary, *Commitment*] Every time a person is credited for a role well played, and a job well done, this adds value to her personal brand, and creates more options for her future career.

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People over Titles

It is important to credit people for their contributions on projects. As in the movie industry, people earn their reputations through the actual work they have done and the roles they have played in those projects. This is why I suggest that, from now on, you start publishing **project credits**. These are lists of people who have collaborated on some kind of outcome, with their job titles and organizations (optional), and the roles that they played on the project (mandatory). Consider the following example:

How to Change the World (book)

PROJECT CREDITS

Jurgen Appelo *(Owner at Jojo Ventures)*	Author
Linda Hirzmann *(Art Director at Bravebox)*	Cover and Interior Design
Mick Schouten *(Multimedia Designer at Bravebox)*	E-Book Development
Leopoldo Simini *(Sr. Technical Director at R/GA)*	Spanish translation
Vladimir Livshits *(Agile Coach at Luxoft)*	Russian translation
Eduart Kapllani *(Owner at EDTSEN)*	Italian translation
André Faria Gomes *(Partner at Bluesoft)*	Portuguese (BR) translation
Mikael Boman *(Delivery Manager at Swedavia)*	Swedish translation
Michał Parkoła *(Agile Coach at Fluid Circle)*	Polish translation
Yannick Grenzinger *(Sr. Software Consultant at Xebia)*	French translation
Michiaki Taniguchi *(Managing Director at Agilergo)*	Japanese translation

The idea of printing the names of individuals in bold letters is to emphasize that people's personal brands are the most important information. *A list of project credits is a list of people working on the same project and outcome.* Job titles and organizations can be mentioned (if available and relevant) because they help to communicate where to find these people. (If everyone is from the same organization, you can obviously leave that data out.) However, more important than the job titles are the project roles listed in the last column. The roles mentioned here translate to the credits that people earn on their reputation for a job well done. Who cares that Linda Hirzmann is an Art Director (whatever that means)? What's relevant is that she was responsible for the cover and interior design of a successful book. (Mine.)

Where do you publish these project credits? Well, that depends. When you're making a movie together, I suggest you show them at the end. It is a good practice, although it is not always performed very well. [Schwartz, "An Insider's Guide to Movie Credits"] When you're making software or a smartphone app, an *About* item somewhere in the menu sounds like a fine place to display the credits. When it's something less tangible, like a committee you're part of, or a sports team, or a scouting club, make sure the project credits are in any deliverables your team is responsible for, such as a report, a dossier, or your team's intranet or website.
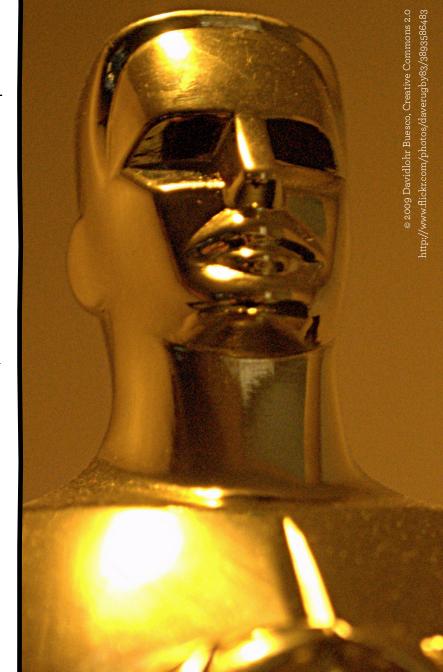
In any case, the project credits should be available for others to refer to on their CVs, on people's personal websites, or on their LinkedIn pages. By focusing on project credits instead of job titles and career ladders, you steer people's behaviors away from corporate politics and the titles they hold, toward concrete tangible outcomes they have actually contributed to. And who knows? Maybe someday their reputations might reach the eyes of Christopher Nolan, James Cameron, or Quentin Tarantino.

Movie trailer

To celebrate the latest release of our product, and to recognize the teams that contributed to it, I went around the office with my mobile phone and took pictures. With iMovie I put together a short movie trailer by adding the pictures and some informative texts. I played the movie during the release party of our product and the team members felt really proud! They wanted to have their own copies of the movie so they could show it to their family and friends. It was a maximum effect achieved with minimum effort!

Tomas Rybing, *Sweden*

My daughter is four years old and really likes to play with the iPad. It's amazing to see what she can do. One day we were playing with iMovie and, with just a little help, she was able to 'produce' movies that looked really professional. Inspired by this, I decided to use this at my workplace.
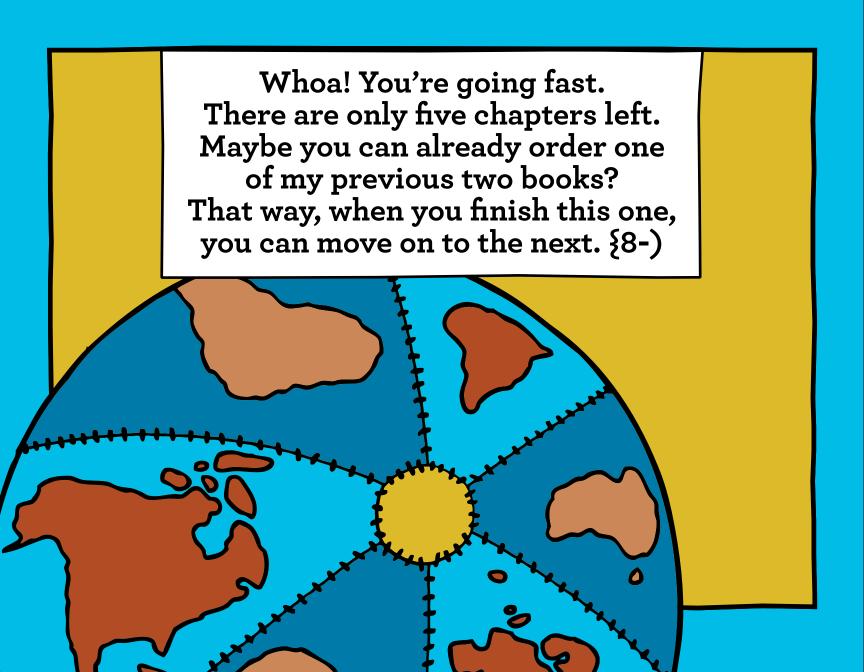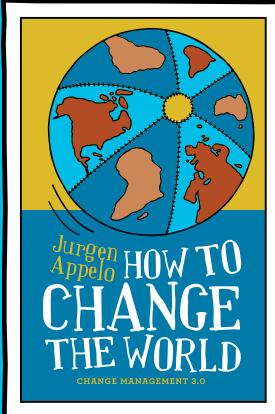
What Now?

This is what you can do:

1. Ask every employee to create and publish their own work profile. Think of it as an interface to the outside world. It says, "This is what you can ask of me and this is what I can offer." If possible, allow them to write their own job title above their work profiles.

2. Think of the last few projects you have participated in and the projects you are working on now. They can be anything, from making software to making presentations, from paid office activities to free charity work, from a close-knit team to a bunch of freelancers.

3. Make a list of the people involved in those projects including their personal names, job titles, organizations, and project roles. If you're unsure about titles or role names, ask the people themselves.

4. Find some place to publish this information, preferably online, so that team members can refer to it. If you don't know how/where to publish the credits, ask for suggestions from the others. I am sure they will be happy to help you credit them.

5. Link people's names and job titles on your project credits to the public work profiles that they, hopefully, have published somewhere.

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How To Change The World
Change Management 3.0
Jurgen Appelo

It is one of the questions we get most often: How do I deal with my crappy organization? I like my work but I don't like what our management is doing. How do I deal with it? Well, that's easy. You have three options: 1) Ignore it; 2) Quit your job; 3) Or learn about change management. This booklet for those who choose option 3.

Agile management is an often overlooked part of Agile. There are at least a hundred books for agile developers and project managers, but very few for agile managers and leaders. However, when organizations adopt agile software development, not only developers and project managers need to learn new practices. Development managers and team leaders must also learn a different approach to leading and managing organizations.