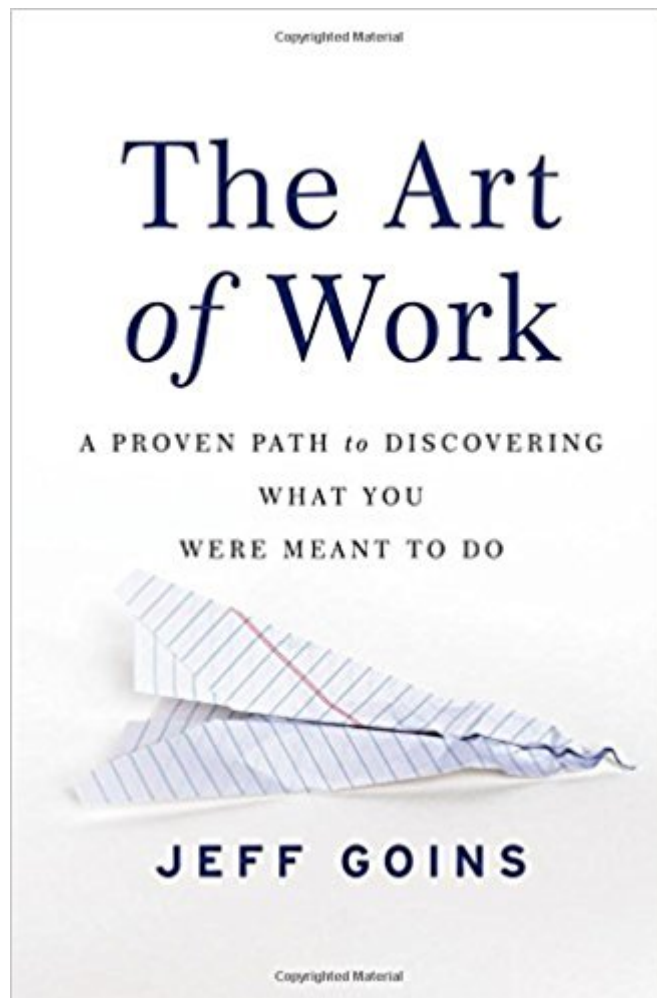




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# **The Art Of Work: A Proven Path To Discovering What You Were Meant To Do**



## Synopsis

USA TODAY, WASHINGTON POST, AND PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY BESTSELLER! Jeff Goins, a brilliant new voice counting Seth Godin and Jon Acuff among his fans, explains how to abandon the status quo and live a life that matters with true passion and purpose. The path to your life's work is difficult and risky, even scary, which is why few finish the journey. This is a book about discovering your life's work, that treasure of immeasurable worth we all long for. It's about the task you were born to do. As Jeff Goins explains, the search begins with passion but does not end there. Only when our interests connect with the needs of the world do we begin living for a larger purpose. Those who experience this intersection experience something exceptional and enviable. Though it is rare, such a life is attainable by anyone brave enough to try. Through personal experience, compelling case studies, and current research on the mysteries of motivation and talent, Jeff shows readers how to find their vocation and what to expect along the way.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This is one of the most honest, direct, and generous books about you and your life that you will read this year. It took guts to write and it will take guts to read. Leap." —Seth Godin, best-selling author of *What to Do When It's Your Turn* "The Art of Work will make you think differently about what you do and how you do it. Jeff Goins is a fresh young voice in a field full of copycats. He challenges us to approach our work the way we would a canvas--both delicately and with furious discipline. People will be reading this book, and profiting from it, for a long time." —Steven Pressfield,

best-selling author of *The War of Art*"Today, unlike any previous time in history, we have options about the work we do and the role it plays in our lives. But it is precisely here that so many of us get stuck. With so many choices, we struggle to figure out what we really want or where to start once we do. In *The Art of Work*, Jeff Goins provides a clear framework for discerning our calling, developing our mastery, and maximizing our impact. This is the plan we've been waiting for--from a guide we can trust."

• "Michael Hyatt, New York Times best-selling author and former CEO of Thomas Nelson Publishers"I used to think hating your job was just a normal part of every adult's life--that is until I discovered I could build a job I actually loved. Thank goodness for Jeff and thank goodness for this book. Here's to not waiting one more day to find, build, and engage in work you love!"

• "Allison Vesterfelt, author of *Packing Light*"This is the real stuff. *The Art of Work* is a powerful dive into what matters, how to connect with that inside yourself, and then how to bring it out into the world in a useful way. This book will push some buttons you want pushed, and from there, it will guide you toward a new level. Dig in."

• "Chris Brogan, New York Times best-selling author of *The Freaks Shall Inherit the Earth*"At times, *The Art of Work* felt like I was reading my diary. Jeff has such a knack for clearly articulating the thoughts we've all quietly wondered!

• "Jon Acuff, New York Times best-selling author of *Do over and Start*"How would it feel to go to work each day because you wanted to not because you had to? In *The Art of Work*, Jeff Goins shows you how. This is a real-life treasure map that can lead you to the life you were meant to live.

• "Chris Guillebeau, New York Times best-selling author of *The Happiness of Pursuit* and *The \$100 Startup*"Our hearts crave connection to a meaningful calling. *The Art of Work* shares the process for hearing that calling and then doing the work that feels like slipping into an old pair of shoes. A must-read for anyone wanting to live a life that matters fully alive.

• "Dan Miller, New York Times best-selling author of *48 Days To The Work You Love*"The *Art of Work* accomplishes the next to impossible, providing clear, relevant, useful guidance on finding your calling while being enormously enjoyable to read. It is required reading for anyone who is asking, "What should I do with my life?"

• "Pamela Slim, author of *Body of Work*

"What's happened to you is rare," my friend Mark said to me just before I made one of the most important decisions of my life--the decision to quit my job and become a full-time writer. My last day at work also happened to be my thirtieth birthday, which made it a milestone in many respects. The truth, though, is the day itself was less significant than the process it took to get there. When asked how I got to this point, I struggle to give an intelligent answer. The experience of finding your calling can be both mysterious and practical. It takes effort but also seems to happen to

you at times. What I've come to understand is that finding your purpose is more of a path than a plan: it involves twists and turns that you never expected. Ultimately these surprises lead you to your destiny. And once you arrive at what you thought was the destination, you realize it's only another leg in the journey. This book is a description of that path, as well as the steps it takes to navigate it. Everyone, it seems, is searching for a purpose, for something to satisfy their deepest desires. I believe that "something" is a calling. What is a calling? You will hear me use the word interchangeably with the terms vocation and life's work, but quite simply, it is the reason you were born. When I began working on this project, I thought I knew what the process of pursuing a dream looked like, but what I found surprised me. Discovering your calling, it turns out, isn't quite so simple. The journey looks different for each person, but there are common themes that consistently emerge. If we look at those themes, we can identify a pattern that will help us understand our own vocations a little better. What if what happened to me wasn't so rare? What if everyone has a calling? That was the question that sent me on my journey. The people whose stories appear in this book, many of whom I personally interviewed, are not extraordinary, in the sense that you've heard their stories before. They are not typical case studies for success, and that was intentional. In these seemingly ordinary accounts, I think we understand our own stories, which often feel far too ordinary for our liking, a little better. Some readers might be disappointed with the subjectivity of such a book. But this is the way we live our lives--not as research projects and book reports--but as anecdotes and emotions. And in each experience, we find certain truths we might otherwise miss. My hope is these stories connect with you in ways that plain facts cannot, and in reading them, you too are changed. The Art of Work was not the book I intended to write but ended up being the one I was supposed to write. A calling is like that too, I suppose. It is the thing that you never thought would be, the twist in the plot that makes everything else come together, and somehow in the end you cannot imagine otherwise. Writing this book illuminated my own understanding of how purpose and vocation work together, and I hope it does the same for you.

I first encountered Jeff Goins through his website while researching ways to generate an income online. My first impression was that he was another web "Guru" looking to sell me something. I wasn't impressed initially as I scanned over his website. I saw an "artsy" type who I didn't seem to connect to right away. I am a scientist and tend to be more analytical in my thinking. I didn't dig too deep during that first web site visit. I did see that he was giving away his book for the price of shipping and handling. As an ardent bibliophile, as many of you likely are, this caught my attention.

Being the jaded soul that I am I figured that he would jack up the shipping and handling to cover the production costs of his book. So I ambled on over to [Amazon](#) and saw that it looked to be a legitimate book and that it wouldn't be released for another month. I figured that I could part with the \$6.95 without any true sacrifice and went ahead and ordered it. I thought that was that, and I would see it in the mail in a month or so. Boy was I ever wrong! So here it is 33 days later and I must say that I completely misjudged Jeff. I had my blinders on and would have missed some real personal growth had Jeff not knocked them off my face. So what changed my mind, you ask? Well the first thing was that I received an email from Jeff the same day that I ordered the book with a link to a full version of the book in PDF format. So I wouldn't have to wait a month after all to start reading it. That was nice. I also received a link to a writing challenge called My 500 Words. Jeff challenges you to write at least 500 words a day for 31 days, and he emails you a prompt each morning to get you going. These aren't namby-pamby prompts, but ones that make you think and push you out of your comfort zone every day. As a scientist I write and review reports every day, but these are technical reports. Would I be able to keep up with 500 words a day on topics more concerned with the human element than chemical elements? Only one way to find out - start writing. Well I finished the challenge two days ago and my total word count was over 41,000 in thirty-two separate entries. As it turns out I guess I do have a lot to say. If you haven't tried the challenge do yourself a favor and start it today. If you are not careful the last day of the challenge may be the first day of your new writing career. I now own four of Jeff's books and my mind is opened even further each time I read some of his work. Jeff is a real inspiration as well are those he featured in *The Art of Work*. I have read the PDF version and have been inspired in so many ways by all of those who Jeff writes about. I think that we have all experienced each some of the trials that many of these people have gone through in the seven stages of discovery. For me the book really did a great job of identifying those stages, and then making them relevant to me through real world experiences of everyday people like myself. Jeff managed to somehow break through that armor I keep around me, and to get me thinking and feeling outside of the box. He managed to do this with a series of e-mails that truly challenged me to be a better person. I have never met Jeff, but I am really glad that I tripped into his website that day over a month ago. Get this book and begin a new journey towards your true lot in life.

As someone who has already been functioning in what seemed to be "my calling" for over two decades, I wondered if Jeff Goins' latest book would have anything much to offer me. Not because I'm a know-it-all but because I wondered if I had passed my prime or peak. Believe me when I say it

had plenty to offer. Not only did this book rip to shreds some erroneous notions that were long standing in my life, it presented what I believe is a better view of life, work, purpose and most important of all legacy. Sometimes I fall for the mistaken notion that doing is more important than becoming. After reading *The Art of Work* I've been reminded that who I am becoming, through both the good times and bad, is what matters most. It is also what people will remember. The same is true of you as this book clearly brings to light. I believe that the takeaway from *The Art of Work* will be unique to each individual who reads it. At first, I thought it might be for people in their 20's and 30's but, as I read along further, I realized that since it was speaking to me that was not the case. Here is the table of contents for those who might be interested:

Introduction: The Cancer That Couldn't Stop the Triathlete  
Part One: Preparation  
1. Listen to Your Life: The Call to Something Old Not New  
2. Accidental Apprenticeships: The Teacher Appears When The Student Least Expects  
3. Painful Practice: When Trying Isn't Good Enough  
Part Two: Action  
4. Building Bridges: The Leap That Wasn't a Leap  
5. Pivot Points: Why Failure Is Your Friend  
6. The Portfolio Life: A New Kind of Mastery  
Part Three: Completion  
7. Your Magnum Opus: What Legacy Looks Like  
Conclusion: The Work is Never Done  
Acknowledgements  
Appendix: Your First Steps Down the Path  
Notes

I found each one of the stories used in this book to be touching and inspiring. They were all well told by the author. And, what I liked is that they didn't detract from the central message of the book. They weren't fillers but instead used to help with making essential points which I appreciated. My favorite chapters, during my first reading of the book (and there will be more) include: Pivot Points, The Portfolio Life, Your Magnum Opus, and the conclusion. I think I related most to the final story of the book. A successful man, in the eyes of the world, upon retiring discovers yet another purpose. When asked what his most meaningful work was it was not that which brought him the most money but rather that which brought him the most fulfillment and had the greatest impact on other lives. I want to be like that man. This is the second time that I've read one of Goins' books on the brink of what felt like "retirement." Darn that guy. He keeps derailing my plans to chill out and become a beach bum for the next twenty plus years. Secretly (or not since I've now shared it with the world) I am thankful for the ways this young writer, who continually matures with each book that he writes, challenges me to view life a little differently and re-access things. His book *Wrecked* really turned my life upside down. I've never recovered to be honest. *The Art of Work* has caused a great stirring as well. It has helped me to reframe much of my life, up until this point, in ways I had not before considered. It has also pretty much caused me to ditch the "live like a hermit" retirement plans. Although uncertain what the next pivot point will be, I now know what to look for and am continuing to build my portfolio in the meantime. If you hate your job, feel unfilled in life, wonder what your

purpose is or if you even have one, this book will be a great help to you. And if, like me, you have wondered if your greatest days are behind you it also will help answer that question as well. Just be prepared to do some work if you want to discover your "calling" or "purpose" because anything of value requires a little elbow grease!

This book addresses a number of issues around your calling or purpose. First, do you even have one and if you don't think so it tells you why you're wrong. You do have a calling. Second, how do you find that calling? Goins recommends that you think through the stories in your life and find the common threads. Out of these threads you'll start to see your calling. Third, how do you work in to that calling as your vocation. We don't have apprenticeships anymore and it's hard to find a single long term mentor. So how do you recognize and utilize the mentors that crop up in your life. Even more you need to stick with it for not just 10,000 hours but 10k hours of actual good practice at it. Not 5,000 hours of twiddle around time and 5,000 hours of real work. That's just 5,000 hours not 10k. Fourth he introduces the 'portfolio' life. This life is not just the work you do, but how you deal with home, play, work, and your purpose. They need to be in proper balance (I always like thinking of this as tension more because tension is strong balance is precarious) to have a life worth living. Fifth and finally, how will the legacy of your calling work as you move on from it. While it may be death that makes you move on it may also be a season in your life that ends and you have to leave the rest of the work to someone else. Overall this is a great book to read on your journey to find your purpose. Goins uses stories of people he's met to illustrate the points he's trying to make which helps put a face on the issues and bring them in to the realm of the real out of the realm of the theoretical.

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