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“Reading this book is like unlocking a door. You open it, and when you’re through, you find yourself someplace new, full of opportunity and abundance.”

—David Osborn, *New York Times* Best-Selling Author

**THE WORK YOU LOVE
IS OUT THERE—AND YOUR
NEW JOB IS NOT TO GIVE
UP ON YOURSELF.**

Easy to read and simple to follow, *The Quitter’s Manifesto* is a call to freedom for anyone who’s waited too long to make a change.

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- Build a team to help find opportunities and navigate difficulties
- Dial in your financial situation to make quitting less risky
- Failure-proof your mind for the ups and downs of change

BUSINESS \$16.99 USD / \$21.99 CAD



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THE QUITTER’S MANIFESTO

TIM RHODE & PAT HIBAN



THE QUITTER’S MANIFESTO

**Quit a Job You Hate
for the Work You Love**

TIM RHODE AND PAT HIBAN

New York Times, *Washington Post*, and *USA Today* best-sellers



**A life-affirming guide
for every employee
who feels stuck,
The Quitter’s Manifesto
is an inspiring guide
to leaving a job
that doesn’t fulfill you
in order to find work
that does.**

Though quitting is about action, it’s far more about why you *aren’t* taking action. If you’ve felt trapped in your job but can’t quite seem to take the next step, this book will give you the game plan you need to deal with uncertainty. *The Quitter’s Manifesto* was written by two successful Quitters and features the inspiring stories of many more; they will help you create a plan that will make leaving a job seem less daunting.

Easy to read and simple to follow, *The Quitter’s Manifesto* is a call to freedom for anyone who’s waited too long to make a change. The work you love is out there—and your new job is not to give up on yourself.

THE QUITTER'S MANIFESTO

**Quit a Job
You Hate for
the Work You Love**

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BiggerPockets®
PUBLISHING
Denver, Colorado

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The Quitter's Manifesto: Quit a Job You Hate for the Work You Love

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Published by BiggerPockets Publishing LLC, Denver, CO

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Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Rhode, Tim, author. | Hiban, Pat, author.

Title: The quitter's manifesto : quit a job you hate for the work you love / By Tim Rhode and Pat Hiban.

Description: Denver, CO: BiggerPockets Publishing, 2022.

Identifiers: LCCN: 2021950317 | ISBN: 9781947200678 (hardcover) | 9781947200685 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH Vocational guidance. | Job satisfaction. | Self-employed. | Business enterprises. | Entrepreneurship. | BISAC BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Careers / General | BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Entrepreneurship | BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Motivational | SELF-HELP / Self-Management / Time Management | SELF-HELP / Personal Growth / Happiness

Classification: LCC HF5381 .R46 2022 | DDC 650.1--dc23

Published and printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

WELCOME TO THE CLIFF

Imagine you're standing at the edge of a cliff. Looking out, you can see something beautiful on the other side of the enormous chasm in front of you. The gentle breeze feels nice, but it's a sheer drop, and just peeking over the edge is enough to make you a little queasy. You retreat.

The land on this side of the cliff is "now." It's safe. It's where your comfy routine is. Your steady job with the benefits and the familiar commute and the predictable paycheck. (That paycheck is never as big as you'd like, but it shows up like clockwork.)

Over on the other side of the cliff is what you want. What is that, exactly? If you already know the answer, good for you. If you don't, that's fine, because the more pressing question is: Why are you still here? If the other side is where you want to be, then why haven't you left already?

The answer is probably that big, scary cliff. The cliff is what makes change hard. Change isn't a real cliff, of course; it's a metaphorical one. You aren't going to die if you quit your job.



QUITTERS LIKE YOU

SEAN ADE

Owner, Roosevelt's Terrariums

I've never been a great W-2 employee.

As a twenty-year-old, I knew I wanted to be my own boss. I just didn't know how to get there. At twenty-three, in my first years as an inside-sales rep, I ranked No. 1 in a \$2 trillion company and was immediately moved to outside sales.

I reached my ceiling pretty quickly and then there was no way for me to grow further within the company. At first, I thought I'd hold onto the job and buy real estate. But after getting my Realtor license and juggling a W-2, being a Realtor just wasn't for me, and so I held onto my W-2 job.

For years I wanted to quit, but that steady paycheck and easy work-life balance made it so hard. I just kept hanging on. I always told myself an excuse for why I couldn't quit.

Then 2020 happened. I was furloughed and the world turned upside down.

I was talking with a friend who was adamant that this was the time to buy small businesses. I had never thought of buying

a small business before, only of starting one, but I decided this was my move.

And that is what I focused on every day for four months. Every day I told myself I was going to buy a business, but I didn't know what type. At first, I looked at what everyone else looked at: laundromats, car washes, landscaping, plumbing. But none of these was right because none of them interested me.

Then in the middle of July, as I was taking care of my plants, it struck me that I needed to own a plant store. My home is covered in houseplants. I just love them. They make my place look better, they calm me down, it's fun to repot them and propagate them. I love plants.

I went back to my journal and wrote, *I'm going to buy a plant store in Portland that is closing because of COVID and has a baby boomer as an owner.* I'd gotten crystal clear on what I wanted and it was exciting.

I looked at a few businesses over the next few months, but nothing was penciling out. I would send possibilities to a knowledgeable friend for consideration. Within thirty seconds, he'd reply, "No way. Find something else."

I started to get a little discouraged, and then another idea hit me. Why not reach out to my network? I was fairly active in a few Facebook groups about trading plants. (Gotta love Portland.) I typed up a thoughtful post about how I was looking to help small-business owners that are closing due to COVID, and asked that if anyone knew of one to please connect me with the owner.

Within hours, someone posted that Roosevelt's Terrariums had announced they were closing. The owner was sixty-eight years old, with no debt on the business, and was closing because of COVID. Exactly what I had written down!

I immediately called the owner and said, "Hey, my name is Sean. I heard you were closing. I wanted to see if you'd rather sell me your store."

He loved the idea and sent me his financials. He also said he needed me to buy within two weeks.

After reviewing the numbers with my friend, he negotiated the price down, with 100 percent owner financing. I ended up paying \$5,000.

The store had never sold anything online. Everything was brick-and-mortar. I opened up shipping, e-commerce, and virtual events, and the momentum started building. Within three months of owning the store, I paid myself my first owner's draw of \$24,000. It was the best, smartest, and boldest decision I've ever made.

THE LESSONS

Get clear about what you want.

Tell everyone.

Be bold; risk and reward are conjoined twins.

TOOL #3

ASK THE FAILURE QUESTIONS

If the world's greatest motivational speaker showed up at your house tomorrow morning, they might try to inspire you with "the question."

You know the one: "What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?"

It's not a bad question. In fact, you might want to answer it right now. You might find some insight there.

But that question breaks the rules of risk. It asks you what you want with no risk. In reality, you already know what you get by taking no risk: more of whatever situation you already have.

Perhaps it's time to add a follow-up to the famous failure question: What if you're *already* failing?

If you run a business that goes bankrupt, it's painful, but you call it a failure and move on. If your relationship fails, it's painful, but you move on.

Is what's happening right now a failure? Is your safe, unfulfilling situation a failure in and of itself? If so, it's time to get real and acknowledge that. It's time to declare a new kind of bankruptcy and move on.

Let's push our failure question set even further. What would you do if you knew you *would* fail?

Author Seth Godin asks this question in *The Practice*. It's a question designed to open your heart and mind to the thing that's worth doing even if it fails. That thing might not make money. But it might bring you riches in other forms. It might bring you clarity. It might save you from future regret, which is perhaps the highest form of success there is.

Go ahead and ask yourself the failure questions.

WORKSHEET

ASK THE FAILURE QUESTIONS

What would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?

Am I already failing in my current job?

What would I do if I knew I *would* fail?

TOOL #4

ACCEPT THE REALISTIC WORST- CASE SCENARIO

Andrew desperately wanted to quit his accounting job and start his own business. But every time he thought about making a change, his mind went into full-blown catastrophe mode. He imagined how his business would fail, and how then he'd lose his home and his wife would leave him and take the kids. Soon, he theorized, he'd be sleeping in his car. Then, he'd have to sell the car for food and he'd be homeless. After a few years of hard life on the street, he'd likely die of an infection.

This was the exact scenario that went through Andrew's mind. Starting a business meant he was going to *die*. It wasn't true, of course. But for Andrew's brain, it felt true, and that was enough to keep him stuck.

With some help, what Andrew eventually did was accept the *realistic* worst-case scenario. Death, he realized, wasn't a realistic worst-case scenario if he were to leave his accounting job. Andrew had great relationships at his firm. So great, in fact, that he could leave on good terms to start a business—and get his old job back if it didn't work out!

The realization was a game changer. Now the worst-case scenario was a measurable financial one. Andrew determined

how much he'd have to invest in his new business and how much time he'd need to get it going. Losing that money—the forfeited salary, plus his startup costs—was the realistic worst-case scenario.

Next, he asked himself if he could accept this new worst-case scenario. He also talked it over with his wife. The answer was a resounding yes, and he never looked back (or died).

MAKING PEACE WITH PLAN B

The worst-case scenario isn't the worst thing that could possibly happen. It's the worst *reasonable* thing that could happen connected to what you're trying to accomplish.

The worst-case scenario tool is about making peace with Plan B. It's there so that when things get uncertain (which they will) and you feel uneasy (which you will), you can remind yourself that you've already accepted that you can live with an unsuccessful outcome, should it occur. This will prevent your risk-predicting, fearful ancient brain from catastrophizing—then you can get on with your new life.

TOOL #5

FOLLOW THE FEAR

Here's what we've learned so far:

1. Quitting is about dealing with fear.
2. Fear is there because there's some risk involved, and your brain doesn't like that.
3. Risk, however, is connected to reward. There's no risk-free plan that will get you what you want.
4. Getting clear about that risk and accepting the realistic worst-case scenario can help you get past that hurdle.

There will be times ahead, particularly when you start to take action toward what you really want, when things will be hard. You will feel nervous. You will be scared. Not only is this okay, it's also perfectly normal. Remember, fear is what got you and all your ancestors this far. If you didn't have it, you'd be (a) not human and (b) not here.

Embrace the fear. Call it what it is. But don't let it pilot the plane. Because although your brain might think that falling and failing are the same, *they are not*. One kills you. The other sets you free. Because fear can set you free, that means you need to follow it.

Don't worry, you don't need to throw yourself off the cliff.
Right now, all you need to do is burn this into your brain:

*Fear of quitting isn't a sign of danger.
It's a signpost pointing the way.*

In those moments when you feel uncertainty, your nerves get jangly, and the idea of change makes an anxious hollow in your stomach, know that your body is pointing at something important. Don't look away.

PART I CONCLUSION

A NOTE FROM TIM

By my late thirties, I felt like my career in sales had oxidated. I'd wake up each day feeling like my use-by date had passed. I was becoming old and sour before my time. I desperately wanted change. I had no idea what was next, but I knew my professional life no longer served me.

The problem was The Committee. The Committee made it almost impossible for me to change. Every time I'd start to even think about something new, The Committee would shut it down almost immediately. I felt like I had no control over my future.

It was a difficult time in my life. And it was made even more difficult by the fact that The Committee *was all in my head*.

The Committee had two main leaders. One was the mean, belittling Dickhead Boss (DHB) who would bark at me to prospect for new clients daily. The second leader was the Scared Kid who hated rejection and feared the DHB.

Each day, the DHB prodded the Scared Kid to get on the phones, screaming, "YOU SUCK. YOU HAVEN'T DONE SQUAT. GET ON THE PHONES NOW." Each day, the Scared

Kid in me would cower, feel ashamed, and wish for the courage to make a change.

Eventually, the Scared Kid did stand up to the DHB. But the first step was to realize that change is an inside job. There was really nothing in the outside world stopping me. The only obstacles were on the inside.

It's very tempting to believe that things on the outside—things like paychecks, nest eggs, benefits, and salaries—are the obstacles to moving forward. But those risks are usually small compared to the emotional risks. Things like the fear of failure. The fear of what others might think. The fear of being judged or dismissed. The fear of The Committee in your head.

You can try to avoid those fears by not taking emotional risks, but that's where the sweet stuff is. It's where you have to go. You move toward the discomfort of the new thing. You move toward the bees for the sweetness of the hive.

ASK YOUR FUTURE SELF

Time passes. There's no way around it. Every year you make a trip around the sun, and just like that, you're a year older.

A helpful way to start bolstering your courage to quit is to think of the Future You—you know, the one who's going to be standing where you are after that next trip around the sun.

What will Future You really wish you'd done this year?

Sometimes, that question can feel a little difficult to dig into. Here's another way to look at it. What, at this moment, do you really wish Past You had done last year?

If Past You had quit last year, how would you feel right now? What if Past You had started the side hustle? Opened that business? Written a few pages a day? What if you'd reached out to that person you met? What if you'd taken the improv class? Learned to code? What if Past You had decided that the risk was worth it?

No matter what, a year is going to pass. Your journey around the sun will continue. The only thing you can control is what you choose to do with the time.

MORE PIE

There's an old joke in legal circles that making partner at your law firm is like winning a pie-eating contest where first prize is more pie. There's some truth to this joke. Lawyers are notorious for working themselves to the bone to make partner, only to have to work even longer hours once they finally "arrive."

The lesson for you, the prospective Quitter, is to beware of getting more of what you already have. The cliff may be scary. Quitting the safe thing may feel daunting. But the reward you get without risk is more pie. More of the same. More of what you're sick of. Full of. Can't stand.

Rewards are almost always on the other side of something that's harder than we would like. Change begins with digesting that truth. Change, however, doesn't happen just by peering over the edge of the cliff and saying, "Yep. That's scary." Quitting, in the end, is an action.

In Part II of this book, we'll teach you how to build your own Quit Plan using two approaches: the trapeze and the net.

THE CLIFF

KEY INSIGHTS

TOOL #1

ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRUTH

Quitting is scary. For your brain, it's like standing at the edge of a steep cliff. That fear is the real thing keeping you stuck.

TOOL #2

UNDERSTAND RISK AND REWARD

Risk and reward are connected.
There's no risk-free quit.

TOOL #3

ASK THE FAILURE QUESTIONS

What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?

What if you're already failing?

What would you do if you knew you would fail?

TOOL #4

ACCEPT THE REALISTIC WORST-CASE SCENARIO

The realistic worst-case scenario is far less scary than you think. Can you accept it?

TOOL #5

FOLLOW THE FEAR

Fear is a sign of something important. Sometimes, you need to follow it.