



a well-crafted life.

Q+A with Author Rana Florida

By Jen
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Last month, I was randomly seated at a birthday party next to one stunning lady — Rana Florida. As the CEO of the [Creative Class Group](#), she is leveraging her more than two decades of experience in corporate strategy, communications, marketing and branding to foster creativity, innovation and great thinking to clients including [Starwood](#), [IBM](#), [Philips](#), [Pinewood Studios](#), [Zappos](#), and [Johnson & Johnson](#). She's also been a guest on the [Today Show](#), and she writes a regular column for The Huffington Post called [Your Start-up Life](#). (Btw, her husband, [Richard](#), is no slouch either!)

What I immediately loved about Rana was her fiery spirit and ambitious attitude. When I read her book, [*Upgrade*](#), there were so many messages that resonated with me: **Take your life from ordinary to extraordinary. “Good enough” is not good enough. Live the life you always wanted to live....and there is so much more!**

As some of you may know already, the story behind how [BRIKA came to be](#) and what we stand for is one about pursuing your passion and getting creative!

This week, I sat with Rana for a quick interview to discuss her soon-to-be-released [book](#).

Pre-order Rana’s book [Upgrade: Taking Your Work and Life from Ordinary to Extraordinary](#) now + receive a special BRIKA gift!



Jen: What was your catalyst for writing the book?

Rana: I saw my friends and family slog through what I describe in the book as “managed dissatisfaction.” The little things that people get excited about (e.g. a holiday, a bonus) are great, but they only last a short little while. It’s too late to optimize and enjoy your life at retirement. You should be looking to upgrade your life now!

J: Your book is filled with anecdotes and interviews with so many fascinating individuals—from [Mario Batali](#) and [Tory Burch](#) to [Mark Cuban](#) and [Zaha Hadid](#). What was it like to interview them, and did anyone surprise you?

R: I had to throw away everything I learned in business school! I spoke not only with CEOs and business managers but also musicians, athletes, architects and fashion designers. I started interviewing people through my column [Your Start-up Life](#), and then I realized I wanted to keep interviewing interesting people who were paving new ways of thinking and working – their practices were creative, innovating and always fresh. After speaking with 20-30 people I began to see some real themes!

A person who really surprised me was [Andre Agassi](#). The thing that shocked me was that he admitted that he ultimately did not have true passion for the sport, and he made education his end goal [Andre Agassi currently runs the [Andre Agassi Foundation for Education](#) that has a mission to transform public education in the United States].

Another person who I admired was [Frank Toskan](#), the founder of [MAC Cosmetics](#). He truly pioneered innovating ways for corporate brands to establish themselves from lining up with cause-related marketing to adding diversity in ad campaigns. He was very courageous!

J: In your book, you suggest some really effective ways to “envision” what you want in your life. Can you speak a little bit more about that process?

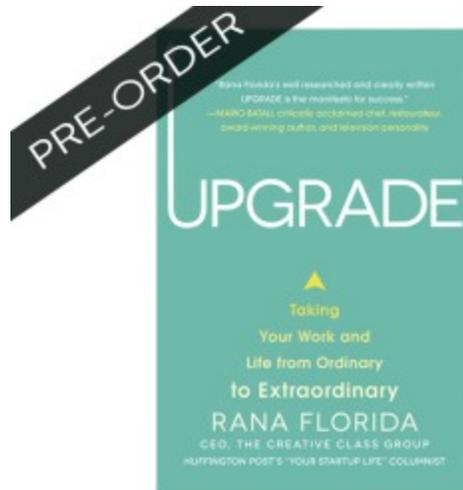
R: A lot of people don't put themselves first. They don't want to face what it is they are striving for. Instead of a big vision statement, ask yourself 5 key questions as the pillars (Who? What? When? Where? Why?). Then make it specific by adding more parameters.

J: We are all about celebrating creativity at [BRIKA](#)! Why do you believe creativity will rule the world?

R: If you rest and think your business is fine just the way it is, then you won't grow. If you are unleashing creativity, it will become a competitive advantage at work or at home. If you don't stay creative, then you die. There will be someone leaner, quicker and smarter who will beat you at your own game!

J: As someone who has a hard time saying ‘no’, you write a great chapter in your book on designing your time. What are some of your main tips?

R: Stop and think about how you're allocating your time. Instead of being all too rushed, the goal should be “time affluence.” Time is the one thing you can never give back. I think about my time and how I'm allocating it all the time. Try to be productive in life and in health, and look into more ways to give back.



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*The answer to why kids smile more than adults: **CREATIVITY!**

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