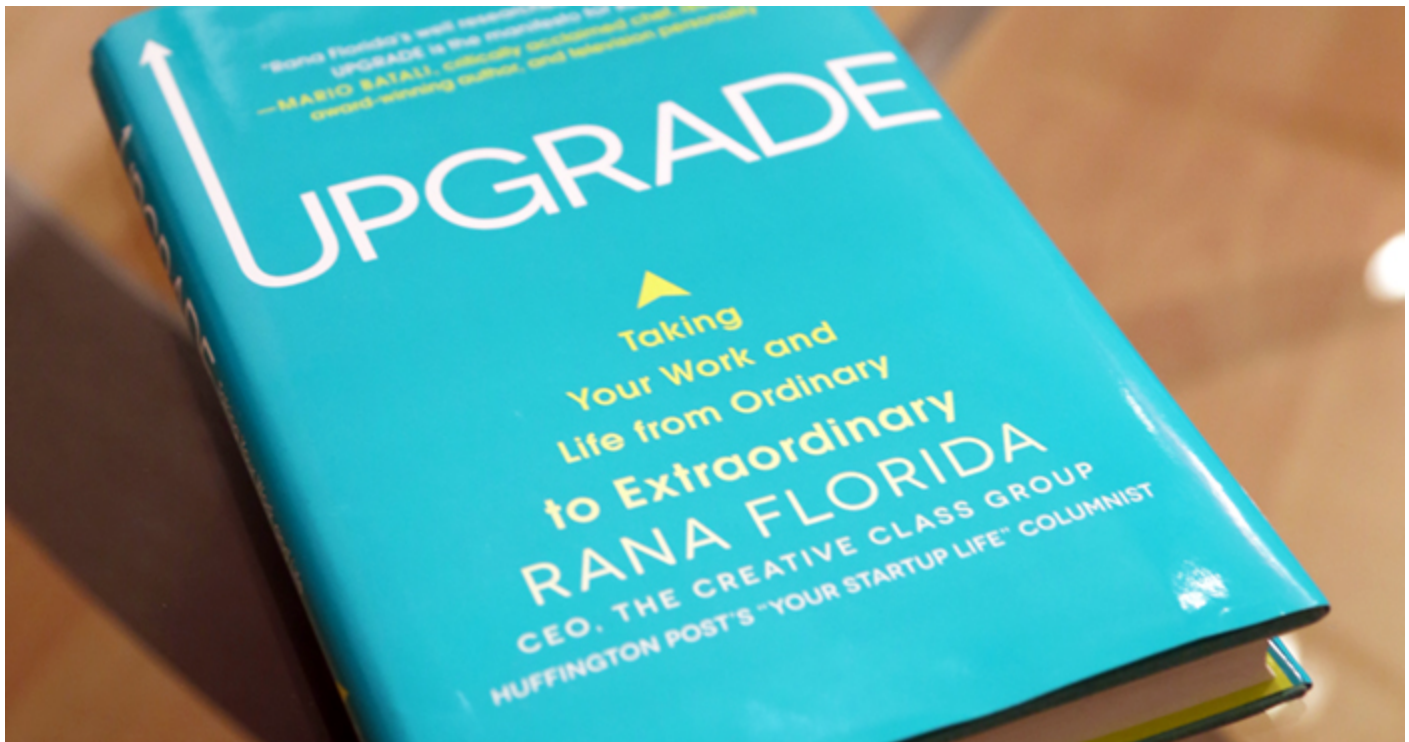




Upgrade – Taking Your Work And Life From Ordinary To Extraordinary



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The idea of incorporating the most effective, innovative ideas in work and life can often seem like a struggle too much to bear. For Creative Class Group CEO Rana Florida, advice for a successful, managed and fearless career seems to come naturally.

In her recent book *Upgrade*, Florida tackles the future of our careers and how individuals can utilize their experience and expertise, leading them to a fulfilled, confident and involved future. With a laundry list of prominent sources that includes tennis star Andre Agassi, ONE co-founder Jamie Drummond, singer Nelly Furtado, and fashion designer Tory Burch, Florida seamlessly covers all bases with advice, listing the successes (and failures) from business moguls who have experienced ups and downs throughout their careers, and how they've benefited from them.

In an exclusive interview with Deep Body, Florida draws from her experience as a CEO, her career prior to her current position, and how she applies this awareness to her own life.

“When I had the opportunity to become CEO of the Creative Class Group, I took the leap and went into full on startup mode,” said Florida. “I risked a cushy job with steady paycheck but gained control over my time and schedule. In my new role, I’ve toured pioneering global companies as a consultant. I’ve observed their environments, workspaces, and policies with a keen eye; I’ve studied the ways they work and collaborate, consuming every fine detail. And I’ve been an insider in the brave new world of creativity.”

After launching into the work force, Florida admitted that after successfully completing graduate school and landing a high paying corporate job, she found that the American dream was a “sham,” spending hours stuck in traffic, dealing with “crackpot bosses” and leading a miserable life.

But it’s with this experience that she leads readers into incorporating what they want for their future, and how to craft it. By envisioning our opportunities, Florida stresses the importance of defining what our lives should include, emphasizing that it be more than a vague idea—and making it happen, refusing to allow barriers to materialize. She very cleverly creates a system eliminating the “time wasters” in our lives, assigning our relationships a negative (-), a zero (o) or a positive (+), refusing to allow strenuous, insignificant people drain our lives of value and only incorporating those whose positive energy and presence helps us move forward.

Florida also acknowledges the working mom, addressing the struggles they face in the work force balancing their work life and family life, materializing the distinction between those who have it all and those who are struggling with all of it.

“I think stay at home moms are the most underutilized resource in our economy,” Florida emphasized. “Employers need to realize that stay at home parents are willing to forgo monetary rewards and compensation for freedom, flexibility and the ability to manage their own schedules. A newborn doesn’t march to the drumbeat of the nine to five schedule. The children we raise today will be tomorrow’s leaders. It’s essential for our businesses and communities to adjust.”

In the realm of those who inspire her, Florida lists her mom, who moved to a new country and raised six children; her sisters, who are working mothers juggling the work/life balance; and Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, paving the way for women to be global leaders. It’s these role models that seem to have led Florida to her drive and persistence, hoping to reach out to readers who seem far too hesitant to live up to their potential.

“It is never too late to envision an entirely different future—or to actively upgrade your life,” said Florida. “Anyone can do it, young or old, single or married. You don’t have to be a 20-something single person with nothing to lose to start living the life you want to live today. It’s not about more money and more time. Your first step on the road to change starts when you envision your future.”

If what Florida says is true, then her life's big risks have definitely harvested big rewards.