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THE JOY OF STRATEGY

A Business Plan for Life

By Allison Rimm

“This is a wonderful and practical book based on the simple premise that work is only part of our life and that work and life should—make that must—be joyful. You'll find the book loaded with strategies on how to achieve this joy.”

– **Lawrence Fish, chairman of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Corporation**

“Allison Rimm helps the reader break free from inertia by choosing a mission that encompasses his or her interests and talents, envisioning what success is going to look like, getting past roadblocks, analyzing strengths and weaknesses, and making the most of our most precious commodity: time... the book makes change seem truly achievable. Readers who feel stuck in their lives will find Rimm’s optimism infectious.”

– ***Publishers Weekly***

The joy of a life well lived – our work well done, our cherished ones well loved, and our potential realized. Isn't that what we're all after? In a world where we put our true desires aside to meet the relentless demands coming at us from all directions, those visions of career success, familial harmony, and healthy spirit and mind can seem impossibly far off.

It's Allison Rimm's mission to help others transform their skills and aspirations into a fulfilling life. In **THE JOY OF STRATEGY: A Business Plan for Life** (bibliomotion books + media; hardcover; September 17, 2013), Rimm imparts an 8-Step Strategic Planning Program that merges conventional business techniques with unconventional wisdom.

“In its simplest form, strategic planning is the process of identifying your purpose and core values, setting goals, and developing the approach that is most likely to achieve them,” says Rimm. “But the crux of a *meaningful* strategic plan exists on the goal of attaining real fulfillment and joy – both in and outside of the workplace.”

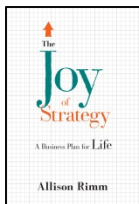
Rimm's specialized program is derived from over fifteen years' worth of experience at Massachusetts General Hospital, including her role as the former Senior Vice President of

Strategic Planning and Information Management. It was here, amidst a rapidly changing healthcare industry, that Rimm's soul-meets-strategy method first helped guide this complex organization through the process of identifying ways to thrive in the evolving environment. In the process, she fostered a company-wide devotion to achieving outstanding results that continues throughout the hospital today.

In **THE JOY OF STRATEGY**, Rimm drives home the importance of pursuing life goals and dreams. Keeping strategic soul-searching structured and simple, her 8-Step Strategic Planning Program calls on approaching one's own life as a business, ultimately addressing readers' particular needs in order to assemble a custom toolbox for achieving their goals.

1. Mission: Find Your Purpose
2. Vision: Imagine the Sweet Smell (Sound, Look, and Feel) of Success
3. Name Your Critical Success Factors: What You Need to Succeed
4. Find Your Sweet SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
5. Set Goals: What You Need to Do to Get the Results You Desire
6. Perform a Time and Emotion Study
7. Select Successful Strategies
8. Get Going! Your Simplementation Plan

Weaving proven practices with stories of success, including her own at Massachusetts General Hospital, a pair of artists who started a non-profit that provides art therapy for kids touched by cancer, and a disillusioned executive who left the soul-sapping corporate world to become an artisanal chocolatier, among others, Allison Rimm guides readers through the process of realizing their life's potential. With warmth, wit, and wisdom, Rimm presents an organized path to self-discovery in **THE JOY OF STRATEGY**.



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For more information, please visit: www.allisonrimm.com

ABOUT ALLISON RIMM



Allison Rimm is a strategic planning and management consultant, coach and award-winning educator who inspires individuals and organizational leaders to create breathtaking visions and plans to make them come to life. She is the former Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Information Management at Massachusetts General Hospital, a multi-billion dollar organization renowned for excellence and innovation. Her clients benefit from the leadership, governance and complex project management expertise she has developed in over 20 years as a senior executive and management consultant across a variety of industries.

Allison Rimm and Associates' consulting practice focuses on matching the needs of organizations with the skills, talents and passions of their workforce to drive extraordinary business performance and to create teams that are joyfully committed to their collective mission. Allison works with business leaders to find creative ways to engage the hearts and minds of their workforce to improve retention, build high-performing teams, and develop and implement successful strategic plans.

Allison has merged her passion for teaching and mentoring with her strong executive skills to create her professional development programs and the popular Business of Life™ workshops. She has found that focusing participants on a positive vision of their future transforms their ability to take action toward achieving the goals they once believed were beyond their reach. Teaching with warmth, wit and wisdom, Allison guides people on an organized path of self-discovery that trains them to find direction and move forward with purpose, confidence and optimism.

Allison is a sought-after speaker on a variety of topics related to strategic planning, personal branding, and professional development. She has a particular talent for designing innovative management retreats that inspire teams to engage enthusiastically in their organizations' most mission-critical initiatives.

ALLISON RIMM'S 8-STEP STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM

Step One: MISSION – Find Your Purpose

Every great strategic plan starts with a declaration of an entity's purpose that expresses why it exists, what its members value, and what these people intend to accomplish. Your mission is nothing short of your purpose here on earth, and you'll start your personal plan by spelling it out.

Step Two: VISION – Imagine the Sweet Smell (Sound, Look and Feel) of Success

Paint a verbal picture of what life looks like when you are using your gifts fully, doing what you love most, and accomplishing what you set out to do. You can't figure out what stands between where you are and where you want to be and how you'll travel the distance until you can clearly see your destination. It's your personal definition of success.

Step Three: NAME YOUR CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Examine the elements that set your vision aglow and list everything you need to bring it to life. If your goal were to be a concert pianist, you would need access to a piano, knowledge of music theory, etc. By writing it all down, you are taking a tangible step toward making real progress.

Step Four: FIND YOUR SWEET S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Use your S.W.O.T. to size up what you have to work with – or work around – as you move into action on your project. This is the point in the strategic planning process where we finish looking at who we are and prepare to think about what we do.

Step Five: SET GOALS – Your Steps to Success

Determine what you need to *do* to make real, steady progress toward living your envisioned ideal. That includes finding pleasure in each day while you work on getting "there." To do that, you will set some goals. Accomplishing them will give you an energy boost and keep you moving forward.

Step Six: PERFORM A TIME AND EMOTION STUDY

A strategic plan for your life requires being mindful about what you want to achieve in your heart of hearts and deliberately using your limited resources (time, money, energy, and attention) to get the results you want. It's as simple as taking a hard look at your calendar to see how you are currently investing your time compared to what you'd be doing if you were living in perfect harmony with the goals and priorities you just identified.

Step Seven: SELECT SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES – Tools to Set You on a Productive Path

Select the strategies that best serve your priorities and are most likely to bring your glowing vision to life. Get very specific about how you will accomplish those objectives. Sift through your potential strategies and choose those that are most likely to get you the results you desire.

Step Eight: GET GOING! – Your Implementation Plan

The time to act has arrived. You will take one small step at a time until you build up some momentum and become an unstoppable force moving toward your vision. Just get moving.

Adapted from **THE JOY OF STRATEGY** by Allison Rimm; *bibliomotion* books + media;
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AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLISON RIMM

Author of *THE JOY OF THE STRATEGY*

Q: What is a strategic plan and why do you need one?

A: A strategic plan starts with the definition of your purpose – *what* you want to accomplish – and the development of the specific actions you will take to achieve your goals. *The Joy of Strategy* presents the steps that will make you more successful (in/at) managing any project whether it's a complex undertaking at work or the business of your life.

Your life is serious business, so you need a business plan for your life.

Since we are talking about you, *The Joy of Strategy* goes one essential step further than the traditional planning process. Following this program, you will factor in how to bring joy, pleasure and balance into everyday life so you can enjoy yourself as you work toward fulfilling your dearest desires.

Q: What is your purpose in writing this book?

A: If you don't know where you're going, it's hard to get there. You'll get somewhere alright, but you may not like it. I want to teach others about what I've learned in business and in life so people can take my tools, tips and techniques to deliberately create the life they want.

My 8 steps help people identify their purpose, create a vision of what success looks like for them, and define the specific steps that will take them in the right direction. I will help them factor in those things that may affect their progress so they can make strategies to take advantage of the things that help and mitigate those that might hinder their progress.

Q: Why is work/life balance so hard to achieve?

A: I just Googled the term "work/life balance" and it returned over 45 million hits. That's a problem! To begin with, I hate the term – it implies that you're not alive when you're at work. We spend so much time working that that notion is simply not acceptable. Second, I think we define things too narrowly. With technology blurring the lines between work and the rest of our activities, it's virtually impossible to allocate the "right" amount of time to work vs. the rest of what we want to do. I believe the key to feeling some semblance of balance is to do whatever we can to make sure we are acting in accordance with our core values and our highest priorities whether we are working or pursuing other interests. That way, we can feel good about what we're doing, whatever that may be.

Q: If you could offer some quick 1-minute life-hacks (tips) to better achieve goals and enjoy the process what would they be?

A:

- Set your intention for the day. What are the two or three big things you want to achieve that day? How do you want to *feel* throughout the day? Make a plan to accomplish the big items and commit to completing those before allowing all the little interruptions seep in and steal your time.
- Be present. Focus on the task at hand and see it through. Don't fool yourself into believing you can multi-task.
- Manage electronic interruptions!

Q: Are people spending enough time reflecting on the quality of their lives?

A: Many of us are so busy running from task to task that we're lucky to get through the day. Let alone enjoy it. When you're running to keep up, it's hard to set aside time to think about the quality of your life, let alone how to improve it. Also, many people wouldn't know how to go about evaluating their lives in a systematic way or how to make a specific plan to improve it even if they could find the time.

