

Kentucky Man Declares War



Walk into his office, and you will see the war zone. Books and papers in piles. A dried, half-eaten donut on the conference table. Stacks and stacks of articles with obscure statistics circled. Files scattered about the floor aching to be placed away. At the far end of the office, behind the piles, a man in business attire sits hunched over a keyboard.

"I know it's a mess," says James Hale, without being prompted for an explanation. "You see, it's a war zone. We have to move fast. The cleaning will have to wait."

James is founder of a local business called Path Choices. He says that he is at war—a war against meaningless work.

"The Preamble of the U.S. Constitution challenges us to form a more perfect union, establish justice, and ensure domestic tranquility. The way we approach work in the U.S. today isn't that tranquil, so I declared war--a war with the mindset that work robs us of freedom."

"Let me explain," he continues. "I hate seeing people in a cold sweat because their company just gave them bad news about downsizing. I hate meeting employed people and sensing the unspoken fear about job security before they even shake my hand. I hate seeing people who are at work, but their minds are somewhere else. You ask them how they're doing and they respond, 'I'll be doing a lot better when I get out of here.' "

"I hate it, but it happens every day. I won't have it any more. Life is too short. We have to stop being miserable because we have a job or scared because we don't. I'm going to stop this for once and for all."

When you meet him for the first time, he's likely to introduce himself by shaking your hand and saying, "Hi, I'm James, and I'm an arsonist (dramatic pause) ... I ignite careers." He loves the shock value of the word "arsonist."

James has taken it upon himself to help people with career development. He has authored two books on the subject—"Getting Seen—The Ultimate Guide to Creating the Most Important Document of Your Life—Your Resume" and "Quiet Spaces: Hearing God's Call in a Noisy World." Both of his books are available at Poor Richard's Books in Frankfort. He's got three other books in the works—one on

acing the job interviewing, another on money mastery, and a third on job search strategies for today's job market.

"I had to start my own business because I don't really fit in anywhere. I am a poor match for businesses offering trite and unproven career guidance, and I am not a head hunter databasing millions of hopefuls while businesses try to locate a select few. And I don't put much stock in the traditional approach of posting resumes on the web and using job search techniques taken from well-intentioned, but uninformed, family and friends—plus maybe a Google search for an extra edge."

"These strategies are unproven, age-old myths, or just speculation that seems to make sense but doesn't hold up when fully scrutinized. But we really think we will pick up life changing wisdom from these sources. At best, these myths force people into jobs that leave them miserable. At worst, the myths leave people under- or unemployed. This advice was used to create career paths for today's American workforce, which is largely unhappy and unfulfilled."

"No, I'm a little weird. I study trends and then based my techniques on reality. I help people get on their own two feet—they climb the ladder of success themselves. I just show them where to step and how to keep their balance. I'm an eclectic breed of teacher, counselor, storyteller, and research scientist," he claims. A geologist by education and training, he has been teaching people about career development for over 11 years. He has taught classes around the country for churches, small businesses, large businesses, non-profits, and just about any other type of group you can think of, even NASA.

"It's crazy. Work can be a very rewarding experience and no one is teaching us how to reach that level. Our guides for this journey are the uninformed. Mind blowing. I won't let this happen anymore. Not on my watch. It has to stop, and it has to stop now."

Check out James' resources at www.PathChoices.com.