



The Orange Line

A Woman's Guide to Integrating Career, Family & Life

PEER INSIGHT BY Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters and Kelly Watson



Why do women find work-life balance so hard? Why is having it all such an illusive quest? Why haven't women achieved equality yet in the leadership ranks? Authors Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters and Kelly Watson probe these questions and more in this highly anticipated new book: *The Orange Line: A Woman's Guide to Integrating Career, Family & Life*. Through interviews with 118 college-educated women, they document the varied career stories and day-to-day anecdotes in the ongoing work-life struggle. They also uncover a revolutionary new line of thinking: Women are holding themselves back with outdated ideals and rigid rules for how to act. Naming this limiting belief system The Feminine Filter™, the authors call on women to reframe their assumptions, shed their guilt and pursue their vocation with passion. The authors provide tools to help women remove this Filter so they can see more clearly to a new career path that includes work, family and themselves. It is the most radical call to arms for women in decades, but instead of asking governments and organizations to change, the authors inspire women to look inward to claim their power.



soundview

Executive Book Summaries®

The Orange Line

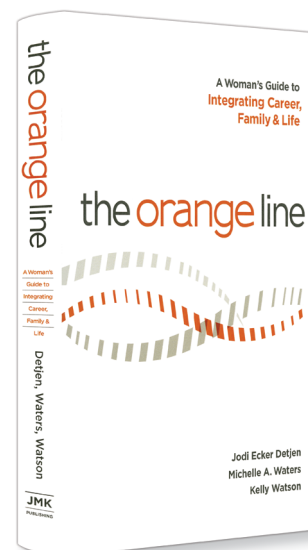
A Woman's Guide to Integrating Career, Family & Life

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Why do women find work-life balance so hard? Why is having it all such an illusive quest? Why haven't women achieved equality yet in the leadership ranks? Authors Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters and Kelly Watson probe these questions and more in this highly anticipated new book: *The Orange Line: A Woman's Guide to Integrating Career, Family & Life*. Through interviews with 118 college-educated women, they document the varied career stories and day-to-day anecdotes in the ongoing work-life struggle. They also uncover a revolutionary new line of thinking: Women are holding themselves back with outdated ideals and rigid rules for how to act. Naming this limiting belief system The Feminine Filter™, the authors call on women to reframe their assumptions, shed their guilt and pursue their vocation with passion. The authors provide tools to help women remove this Filter so they can see more clearly to a new career path that includes work, family and themselves. It is the most radical call to arms for women in decades, but instead of asking governments and organizations to change, the authors inspire women to look inward to claim their power.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- Core assumptions of the Feminine Filter that can limit women.
- Six core skills for counteracting the Feminine Filter and living an Orange Line life.
- The common stages of women's life/career trajectory.
- How to implement and live the Orange Line at each life/career stage.



by Jodi Ecker Detjen,
Michelle A. Waters
and Kelly Watson

CONTENTS

Part I: The Orange Line Philosophy

Page 2

Part II: How to Live The Orange Line in Your Life Stage

Page 3

Approaching Burnout

Page 4

Family Matters

Page 5

The Sabbatical

Page 6

Part III: Continuing to Live an Orange Line Life

Page 8

THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

by Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters and Kelly Watson

The authors: Jodi Detjen is a Professor of Management at Suffolk University, Boston and a principal partner of a boutique consulting firm, the Intrinsic Group. Michelle Waters is an experienced Senior Executive, consultant, integrated work/life/family facilitator and coach. Kelly Watson is a former marketing executive and now provides consulting services to a range of companies.

The Orange Line: A Woman's Guide to Integrating Career, Family & Life by Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters and Kelly Watson. Copyright © 2013 by Jodi Ecker Detjen, Michelle A. Waters, Kelly Watson. Summarized by permission of the publisher, JMK Publishing. 291 pages, \$14.99, ISBN 978-0-9892077-0-6. To purchase this book, go to www.amazon.com or www.bn.com. Summary Copyright © 2015 by Soundview, Inc.

PART I: THE ORANGE LINE PHILOSOPHY

Introducing The Orange Line™

Rarely do you hear a man asked, “How do you do it all — you have a career *and* a family?” Yet people ask women this all the time, as if it is special to do it all, to live a robust whole life — something unheard of. It keeps reinforcing the same story, that men can supposedly have self-actualization but that if women want it, they either need to marry a stay-at-home husband, or they need to give up having a family.

There are three models for lifetime career trajectory choices for women. A Green Line to represent a career-focused track; A Red Line to represent a career trajectory curtailed when a woman “opts out” at some point; and The Orange Line to represent the possibility of a new approach, an integrated life path.

The Green Line: Career Focus Track

The Green Line represents a traditional, career-centric life, where education, intelligence, skills, plus a singular focus on career can lead to significant success. The path follows a steep career progression through the 20s and early 30s and a slightly flatter climb over time, but it is always moving forward and upwards.

There is often tremendous sacrifice to achieve the Green Line. Green liners rarely have time to explore other aspects of themselves. The Green Line approach usually requires someone else to pick up the slack at home, especially when it comes to family.

The Red Line: Opting Out

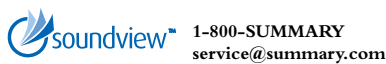
The Red Line represents a career track where someone, once on the Green Line, usually a woman, abandons her career at some point to shift focus to another aspect of her life. The key defining description for this path is that career takes a secondary role or disappears as the focus moves fully to life and/or family. While women on the Red Line may indeed ultimately rejoin their career, in most cases they end up paying a huge penalty for their time off.

The Red Line versus Green Line view of work can block alternate ways to manage a career. The tradeoff between work and life can seem black and white for women on the Red Line, and this is a narrow view.

The Orange Line: Integrated Life Track

There is a new career track opportunity called The Orange Line. Instead of a singular focus on work from the beginning, The Orange Line is a launching pad for a robust, whole life integrating work, family and self. The key difference with this path is that people place themselves, not work or family, at the center of their life choices.

The Orange Line worker does not need to choose between work and life; she chooses both and lives both fully. Instead of the seesaw, envision a rectangle with “me” as the foundational base. No matter what other elements with which a woman chooses to enrich her life, whether career, family or otherwise, she is in control, not at the fulcrum, trying to balance. ●



1-800-SUMMARY
service@summary.com

Published by Soundview Executive Book Summaries® (ISSN 0747-2196), 511 School House Road, Suite 300, Kennett Square, PA 19348 USA. Published monthly. Subscriptions starting at \$99 per year. Copyright © 2015 by Soundview, Inc. **Available formats:** Summaries are available in several digital formats. To subscribe, call us at 1-800-SUMMARY (240-912-7513 outside the United States), or order online at www.summary.com. Multiple-subscription discounts and corporate site licenses are also available.

Rebecca S. Clement, Publisher; Andrew Clancy, Editor in Chief; Ashleigh Imus, Senior Editor; Masiel Tejada, Graphic Designer; Barbara Behan, Contributing Editor

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

The Feminine Filter™

To fully live on The Orange Line, women need to recognize what is blocking them. The crucial problem is the Feminine Filter. This is a system of adopted beliefs and made-up rules that distract or prevent women from reaching their *métier*. The French word *métier* more broadly incorporates purpose and career.

The Feminine Filter operates on certain assumptions and associated bad habits.

Assumption 1. Because women assume that they are primarily responsible for home and family, they tend to acquiesce to the needs of everyone else and sacrifice their career ambitions and personal goals.

Assumption 2. Because women assume, “My commitment is measured by how much time I devote to it,” they tend to work harder, not smarter, focusing on the quantity of work over quality.

Assumption 3. Because women assume that “I need to be perfect in behavior and appearance at all times,” they tend to avoid risk and overcompensate to ensure they make no mistakes. When things don’t go perfectly, they may panic about it, making ill-formed decisions.

Assumption 4. Because women assume, “I am not good enough,” they tend to create a diversion to distract others, like “drama,” or seek external validation to avoid addressing an internal belief that they don’t look good.

Assumption 5. Because women assume tangible, material rewards are not supposed to be important, they tend to lower their career expectations.

Assumption 6. Because women assume, “If I follow the rules, good things will happen,” they tend to avoid asking for what they need or challenging the status quo. ●

The Feminine Filter Problem

When women continue to accept the assumptions and rules of the past, they support and reinforce existing rewards systems. Although virtually half of the workforce is women, the percentage with influence has barely changed in decades.

For true, long-term change, most women need to address their underlying assumptions and core belief system. So how do women make this change? By adopting a new belief system.

The Orange Line Skills

Women can replace the common bad habits by developing Orange Line Skills. The six skills for living on The Orange Line are

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. By developing this skill, you notice when the Feminine Filter shows up and affects your judgment of others or yourself.

2. Bring yourself into the equation. You can stop adapting yourself to the system and instead set clear boundaries and expectations.

3. Develop self-awareness. You can begin to ask for feedback to determine your strengths and challenges.

4. Build a support system. You determine what help you need and ask for it, deciding what you are willing to give up and what you need to delegate to your family or colleagues at work.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. You can start to accept that imperfection is a normal part of life and develop a muscle for ambiguity, flexibility and creativity.

6. Expand your universe. You experiment and take risks outside of your comfort zone, purposely exposing yourself to newness so that you can learn more.

You can learn how to live an Orange Line life. Every woman carves her Orange Line differently. Remember, big changes start with small steps. ●

PART II: HOW TO LIVE THE ORANGE LINE IN YOUR LIFE STAGE

The Green Start

Many women have a positive and energetic start to their careers. In the Green Start stage, you have launched your career, and the sky is the limit. You love work, and you like getting recognized for your talents and efforts. You likely believe that if you simply work hard, you can have it all.

But underneath all of the pride, ambition and excitement of this stage, there may be some problems that threaten to undermine women’s early success. Green Starters’ values may be out of sync with their organization. Work and working hard can become addictive. Some women may experience sexual stereotyping, behaviors and/or harassment in the workplace. Women may be working well below their capabilities and earning potential.

Skills for Living The Orange Line

Practicing these six skills at this early stage in your career means you won’t have to unlearn as many bad habits or shed years of more entrenched beliefs.

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. When Feminine Filter-inspired decision making is happening, it appears in your language, behaviors, choices and automated responses. You can listen for and recognize

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

Filter language in common phrases and messages. The next step is to become aware of guilt. You then need to observe your behavioral response. Finally, you can be more conscious in your choices and realize that you have an infinite number of options available to you.

2. Bring yourself into the equation. It is tempting to follow someone else's external vision for what you should want out of your career and life. It's important early on to develop your own vision and put yourself at the center of your life plan.

A major part of this is the ability to set boundaries and expectations. You need to get comfortable saying "no," especially when not doing so causes you harm, even on a small scale. Collaboration is an aptitude increasingly required in today's workplaces. Women need to ask for what they need.

3. Develop self-awareness. The power of the Green Start stage is that most women are still comfortable and open to learning new things. You can harness this to turn the microscope inward. By developing insights into yourself early in your career, you can more easily see and resist the Feminine Filter, enabling yourself to live The Orange Line across your career.

4. Build a support system. The most successful Orange Line women realize they cannot operate in a vacuum or do everything themselves. Building a support system enables you to focus your time and energy on the areas that are critical for your success and let go of those that don't serve you.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. When the Feminine Filter screams to women to look good and follow the rules to get their rewards, women somehow internalize this as a need to be perfect. Early in a woman's career, she may think there is a perfect job for her and she needs to find it.

But life usually doesn't work in a straight line, and you are not abnormal if you don't follow a preset path. Accepting the reality of imperfection enables you to become more comfortable experimenting and taking risks.

6. Expand your universe. Being conscious of how you build your community and expand your universe makes a difference. The first element is to seek out people who will challenge you and push you forward. The second is to think bigger, being open to possibilities. The third is to proactively expose yourself to new experiences and risks.

This stage is where you can set yourself up well for Orange Line living and tackle the Feminine Filter before you get too entrenched in its bad habits. At this stage in your career, it's your job to make your career and your *métier* important in your life. ●

Approaching Burnout

Many women have experienced one or more periods in their careers when they are approaching burnout. Efforts to rise in their careers at the expense of the other parts of their lives had started to take its toll. Stress levels are highly elevated.

What causes burnout? Some of the stressors that pose pressure are external; however, much of women's stress is actually *internal, self-imposed*, a product of their own making. The biggest problem with approaching burnout is the bad decisions women can make when they are wound up. Examples include ending important relationships, drastic reversals of policy, giving up ground on projects and quitting altogether.

Skills for Living The Orange Line

If women approach this stage applying Orange Line thinking and build the six skills previously highlighted, burnout can be prevented. Here's what those skills look like at this stage:

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. First, listen for and recognize Filter language behind widely used and accepted statements. For example, if you hear someone say, "You can't take a vacation now! We can't finish our project if you are gone!" Initially you may feel flattered that you are needed. But in reality, this assumption suggests that you are responsible for taking care of everything. Observing the assumptions underneath these statements helps women realize their potential negative impact and reframe them.

2. Bring yourself into the equation. When you are approaching burnout, bringing yourself into the equation seems like the last thing you have time to do. But it's not about being selfish; it's about having a strong sense of self.

Setting boundaries in this stage means valuing your time and setting realistic expectations. You can ask for what you need by getting something in return every time someone asks you for something.

3. Develop self-awareness. At this stage, developing self-awareness requires first that you recognize that you are approaching burnout.

Conducting a self-assessment could mean admitting when the problem is with you. Some people create a constant state of "overwhelmedness" because they like the sensation of being crazy. There's something about feeling busy, needed and liked that fuels adrenalin. Ask yourself if the sensation is worth the downside, and check yourself every time you say you are "busy."

4. Build a support system. In this stage, getting support may feel impossible. But building a support system will enable you to work through your burnout.

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

As women age, the ability to delegate becomes even more important. You will likely want to leverage your skills, experience and wisdom to accomplish more with less. Having a strong network can come in handy when it's time to figure out to whom you can delegate. Asking for help, making sure it's exactly the help you need and managing that help gets you through these intense periods.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. Especially when you're approaching burnout, your need for perfection adds to your workload and threatens to overwhelm you. Embracing imperfection means trying something even though it might very well fail, and being ready to admit the failure. Recognize that imperfection is there, and plan for it. If you tell others up front that a particular result is going to be less than perfect, people can be surprisingly accepting.

6. Expand your universe. Seeking out people who challenge you and push you forward could include seeking people who support you with positive messages and safely let you know when you are burned out. During this phase, it may be difficult to expand your network or community by meeting new people. Instead, you may want to focus on pruning out people who don't move you forward.

Exposing yourself to something new is another way to help you out of your burnout. This may mean being open to new ways of doing things. ●

Family Matters

Many women enter a phase where family matters consume them so they have to find a way to integrate this with their work. For most, it's marriage or parenthood, but even single women can have situations where work takes a back seat to family.

Skills for Living The Orange Line

Instead of getting bogged down by the extra demands of this phase, practice Orange Line skills to give yourself more options.

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. The Feminine Filter is often loudest when you have family responsibilities. Because women have accepted that women need to take care of home and family, when they attempt to include career as well, the pressure to implement the Feminine Filter increases both internally and externally.

For example, you might hear, "It's best for children when their mother is at home with them." You could reframe this to say something like, "My career is important as well as my family, and they are not mutually exclusive. Men do it consistently, and it's feasible for me as well."

2. Bring yourself into the equation. With a growing family, learning to bring you into the equation is both harder and more essential. But when women are comfortable setting boundaries and not worrying about being judged, they can accomplish many things.

At this stage, the first impulse in asking for what you need is often to ask for some kind of work-flexibility program. Usually this results in a cut back in pay or advancement. Instead, you might need to remove some less important projects from your plate or find flexibility between the lines at your job.

3. Develop self-awareness. Once women have children or care for a parent, a new layer of who they are appears. Women often have to reset and learn a lot of new aspects of who they are and what they find important.

One way to get perspective is to solicit feedback. We are not talking about feedback concerning your parenting style but feedback about how parenting has changed you.

You may also want to experiment with the traditional spoils of motherhood. You may actually be looking forward to baking cupcakes, and if anyone tries to make you believe those things are bad, you can push back. The key is to make space so you can enjoy these activities and not fall into the "ideal" mother trap.

4. Build a support system. This is probably the most difficult, yet most necessary, skill once the family arrives. As in other stages, first acknowledge that you need help. Help is an investment. The more time and creative energy you free up now to spend pursuing career interests and/or enjoying your family, the better off you will be in the long term.

At home, anything that doesn't result in direct, engaged interaction with family members or rejuvenates your energy could be considered for outsourcing or, at least, shared with others. Outsourcing is not just about hiring help. It's about getting help you need. Joining a local Mom's Club or church group can expose you to other people in your same circumstances who can share tasks.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. Work is messy. Kids are messy. Life is messy. Knowing life is messy and unbalanced helps you realize you didn't do anything wrong to make it that way.

Often as parents, women assume they must be perfect so their children turn out perfectly. But what message are they sending their children with this? By allowing imperfection, they give their children the space to be imperfect as well. And by allowing themselves to be imperfect, women can also learn to accept imperfection in others.

6. Expand your universe. When you have children or are caring for a parent, the world can get very small quickly. Seek out people you want as role models. If you

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

expand your thinking, you can use your skills at work and home to improve your life on both fronts.

No matter how you define family, this stage may be the most disruptive to your *métier*. The key is to know yourself, take risks and step outside of your comfort zone. By staying flexible and broadening your options, you can get the support you need to embrace family, career and life on The Orange Line. ●

The Sabbatical

Many women make a conscious decision to take a break from work for an extended period of time.

Life on sabbatical is very different from the hectic pace of working life. Women have the time to go inward to find their joy and affirm their values and aspirations long-term. Reasons for taking a sabbatical include motherhood, care of other family members, a less-than-perfect work situation, layoff, a spouse's relocation or just for fun.

Skills for Living The Orange Line

A sabbatical can potentially have negative financial or emotional impacts. However, you can use the Orange Line skills during this stage to ensure you're making the most of your sabbatical and that you'll be prepared to return to work when you're ready.

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. Even when you take a sabbatical, the Feminine Filter can work its magic to tell you how you "should live." For example, the Feminine Filter assumption that "I'm never good enough" could manifest as "I feel guilty about not working. I really shouldn't be taking a sabbatical."

Reframing this kind of thinking could sound like, "I chose to take an Orange Line Sabbatical for a reason. As long as this reason is still valid, then what I chose is important."

2. Bring yourself into the equation. When you're not working, there's a temptation to absorb other people's needs and priorities. It helps to keep articulating, out loud, why you're taking a sabbatical and what your goals are during this period. Setting clear expectations about what you're willing to do in this stage is critical. Try looking at it as if you were being paid. If you hired someone for this job, you'd set clear boundaries and expectations of the job.

As you practice bringing yourself into the equation, you show others and yourself: I am important, too.

3. Develop self-awareness. Taking a sabbatical provides a unique opportunity to foster self-awareness. You can use the extra time and space to build your professional expertise as well as essential life skills that will keep you living the Orange Line.

Self-assessment at this stage can take the form of questioning yourself: Which aspects of your work, personal and family life do you enjoy? Which do you dislike? What are you really good at? Tools like a continuing education course or a transition firm that provides guidance during a layoff can also help.

4. Build a support system. Being on sabbatical does not mean you do not need help. When you're not working, your first line of support is usually friends and family. Other parents can share in carpools. In you're in school, other students might share team tasks. These relationships can be reciprocal.

It's during sabbatical that women seem to have the most trouble paying for help from anyone, so reframe this. By staying focused, leveraging free help whenever possible and using paid help to keep you focused on your long-term goals, you set yourself up for a stronger re-entry.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. Just like there are no perfect jobs, there is no perfect sabbatical. You may have some initial vision of how things will be. But in reality, things won't always go perfectly.

The first step in living with imperfection is accepting it. Sometimes, you have to accept what life has thrown you. Maybe you've been forced into a sabbatical because your spouse is ill. Or a layoff completely surprises you. Accepting imperfection means that while you may hate the position you've been put in, you will get through it eventually.

6. Expand your universe. One way to expand your universe on sabbatical is to maintain your network of work contacts while you're gone. If at all possible, by being available when they call, even if only to do a small project, you can maintain the connection. Sabbatical is also a time to try new things or take a big risk toward personal growth.

By practicing the skills outlined in this chapter, you can maximize your Orange Line Sabbatical. Because your intention is to return to work, your break needs to include progression both personally and professionally. ●

Re-Entry

For many women, the time for re-entry after a sabbatical is exciting and stressful at the same time.

Because it's a change, women will face challenges during this phase. Knowing what you want, feeling grounded and confident with your decision, despite some apprehension, helps. The re-entry process is a transition, and Orange Line skills can help you adjust.

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

Skills for Living The Orange Line

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. In re-entry, because you are prioritizing your career again, you may get pushback as others have to adapt. The pushback usually comes in the form of language to move you back into Feminine Filter behavior.

When you start noticing this language from others, you can decide whether you agree and avoid becoming part of someone else's belief system. Remember that you can't change anyone else: You only need to live your own truth.

2. Bring yourself into the equation. After being out of work, you have probably developed routines and filled your time with activities. You will now need to stop doing many of these to devote your time and energy to work again.

Setting expectations up front can be very helpful. While family members might have been excited about the re-entry, they may not have fully appreciated how their world could change. By having direct conversations about your intentions and expected changes, you can get the support you need.

3. Develop self-awareness. Self-awareness is a critical skill during the re-entry phase to help you clear the slate and position yourself for long-term success. Because it can be an emotional transition, you have many opportunities to get to know yourself more deeply.

You can use feedback from others and personal insight to create your own unique self-development plan. At this stage, it can incorporate re-entry or even become a full career plan. This can help you determine which jobs to consider upon re-entry and give you better ways of dealing with stressful situations.

4. Build a support system. Building a support system now means creating the net that supports you in the re-entry process. You need to figure out what you need and how to get it, including resume help, coaching, domestic support, schooling and whatever else you need for your transition.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. Because re-entering is a transition process, accepting and embracing imperfection will make the change easier. You can give yourself permission to make mistakes or have suboptimal days.

You can expect, initially, to act in ways that are incongruous with organizational norms. You can embrace imperfection by showing your ability to learn as you gradually understand the organizational culture, as well as adapting to changes at home.

6. Expand your universe. In this stage, you have spent time away from your career. By leveraging what you've learned during that time off, you can decide how

to expand your universe of options and be even more creative in the future.

Re-entry after a sabbatical is something many women will do. To transition effectively, you have to expect and respect the noise from others and know what you want. You also need to accept that the first year after re-entering is likely to involve considerable skill development and negotiation at work and at home. ●

The Mid-Career Transition

It sounds cliché, but many women reach a point where they suddenly feel the need to switch career direction midstream. Whether a milestone birthday prompts a realization that you haven't done things the way you wanted to, or an inner voice tells you you're not fulfilled, it's never too late to break free of stale routines.

Underneath the opportunities and self-discovery of this period may be problems that can affect your long-term career and personal life. For example, it can be hard to figure out what you really want to do.

Skills for Living The Orange Line

Getting a job in a new field can be difficult, or you may have to start at the bottom. Orange Line skills enable you to be successful in your new trajectory.

1. Recognize when the Feminine Filter is at work. When you begin to realize that something needs to change in your career, you need to be able to figure out whether and how the Feminine Filter is influencing your thinking.

2. Bring yourself into the equation. There may be a lot of pressure now to do what other people think is best for you. You may feel pressured to change jobs or "follow your passion" before you even know what that means for you. It's important to become comfortable pushing back and saying "no" to this external pressure.

It's also important to ask for what you need at this stage. If it's time and space, ask for it. You must also ensure your career is on the right track by practicing self-promotion and self-care. It's your responsibility to learn and understand the value that you bring to the table.

3. Develop self-awareness. Understanding who you have become in your life and career to date can help you make better decisions at this stage. It's crucial to be familiar with your true likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses.

Armed with more awareness, you're ready to create your own unique self-development plan. You may find you don't need to change fields completely. You may need to upgrade your education. At this stage, you have the opportunity to launch yourself in a completely new

SUMMARY: THE ORANGE LINE

direction or derail yourself. Understanding yourself can positively influence your outcomes.

4. Build a support system. When you embark on a major career shift, you will surely need support. A career transition is a big deal. At this stage, it's time to reconsider your attitudes toward securing the help that transitions most often require.

Once you accept that you need help, figure out exactly what help you need. Think of this transition phase as a job. As such, you need to reserve your time and creative energy for the job, rather than spending it on non-productive tasks. No one will take you seriously, including your family or prospective employers and clients, if you treat your search for work like a hobby.

5. Get comfortable operating in imperfection. Life isn't perfect, and there wasn't some perfect path you were supposed to have followed. Even if you're unhappy in your career right now or if you were laid off, you have not failed.

When you lose the idea that things have to be perfect, you open yourself to more creative options. You can embrace imperfection as an opportunity to try new things with the expectation that trying your best is the goal, not perfect results.

6. Expand your universe. When you are trying to figure out how to remake your career, you must look at your change from fresh vantage points. It may be helpful to associate with other people going through the same thing because you can empathize and work together.

This stage is sometimes about taking risks and stepping outside of your comfort zone. Especially in midlife, this can be extremely difficult to do. But once you get past your fears and perceived limitations, expanding your universe can open you to possibilities you never thought available.

Successfully navigating the transitions of midlife offers endless possibilities. Nonetheless, there are considerations, including being strategic about the process, exploring alternatives, flexibility, adaptability and mitigating the risk before you jump. ●

can then implement the three core principles of Orange Line living:

- **Do what's required.** You focus on tasks that add value to the organization, your family or yourself.
- **Do what's right.** You figure out what's right for you physically, emotionally and spiritually, while honoring and respecting others.
- **Be authentic.** You are aligned with your values and are not easily persuaded to behave in a way that feels contrary, is taxing or unrewarding.

You might find the Orange Line often does not yield external success as fast as the Green line, but if you have patience, the results will come.

How Do You Practice Orange Line Skills?

It's not possible for anyone to wake up one day and be an expert at The Orange Line skills. By making incremental changes, you can get comfortable with fears and move on to hope and building confidence.

Your new habits and skills enable an Orange Line life. By practicing them, you start to operate on new principles. You realize that you cannot control other people or "the system." You can control only yourself and your response. You learn it is only by changing yourself that you can eliminate the Feminine Filter's effects and change your destiny. You replace the bad habits and rules of the Feminine Filter with this new belief system:

I AM important. I AM allowed to achieve my métier.

If you implement this one belief, just this one, you will change everything. Change will occur, not by pushing and shoving the world's decision-making systems to change, but by women simply asking for and expecting their needs to be met. You are the change you seek.

By doing this collectively, women can finally break through to more powerful roles and change the system around them. And most importantly, they can live a full, integrated life. ●

PART III: CONTINUING TO LIVE AN ORANGE LINE LIFE

Living The Orange Line

Women consistently say they want to live an integrated, well-paced life. Women want to live on the Orange Line.


As we've shown, you can reframe your core assumptions across all the stages of your career. As you do so, you


RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *The Orange Line*, you'll also like:

1. **Break Your Own Rules** by Kathryn Heath, Mary Davis Holt and Jill Flynn. The authors distill the six faulty assumptions (or "rules") most women follow that get in the way, and provide new rules to clear the path.
2. **Make It Matter** by Scott Mautz. By making work matter, people become more committed to their jobs. Mautz offers tools and plans to create meaning in and at work.
3. **The 5 Choices** by Adam Merrill, Leena Rinne and Kory Kogon. Learn the 5 Choices that will empower individuals to make more selective, high-impact choices about where to invest their time, attention and energy.




 [linkedin.com/company/skillsoft](https://www.linkedin.com/company/skillsoft)

 [facebook.com/skillsoft](https://www.facebook.com/skillsoft)

 twitter.com/skillsoft

 [skillsoft.com](https://www.skillsoft.com)

 866-757-3177

ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft is the global leader in eLearning with a long history of innovation. We train more professionals than any other company in the world and are trusted by the world's leading organizations, including over 50% of the Fortune 500.

We currently serve over 6,700 customers and more than 45,000,000 learners worldwide and provide continuing, hands-on support to assist them in maximizing their ongoing success.

Skillsoft has grown rapidly, with 2,500 employees across multiple locations in North America, EMEA and APAC. For more information, visit www.skillsoft.com