

ONE PERSON/MULTIPLE CAREERS by Marci Alboher

Updated Introduction for Digital Readers

The world has changed dramatically since 2007 when *One Person/Multiple Careers* was first published. But the book and the ideas in it are more relevant than ever.

Less than two years after the book was released, the economy took its historic nose-dive and slashing became even more prevalent -- but it had a new dimension to it as many were adding a [slash by necessity](#) not by choice. The book had a revival as people sought out its lessons as a survival handbook for this new world we found ourselves in. So I'm releasing this e-book after countless demands for a digital version.

We are now fully entrenched in what Tina Brown famously named the "[gig economy](#)" – and it's affecting everyone from young people fresh out of school eager to start their careers to baby boomers who need to work longer because their retirement savings have been decimated.

The explosion of social networking has accelerated the pace at which people can access their networks, spread the word about new ventures, and create an online presence.

Slashing has also taken hold overseas. In recent months Australian Vogue, Le Monde in France, Visao in Portugal, and CHIC in Sweden have interviewed me about the slashing phenomenon as the same factors that helped it bloom in the US have taken hold other places.

There's still no one tracking the slash workforce. Freelancers Union puts the number of independent workers "lots working in more than one way" at 41 percent of the US population— all those are potential or actual slashes. But I've long believed that the slash story isn't in data and numbers, it's in individual experiences. In five years, I've heard from hundreds of slashers, such as the acupuncturist from Spain who wrote to me a few months ago, telling me how much the slash approach helped him when he found himself living in New York and unable to do the work he was trained to do. He explained in an email:

"I started doing the only thing I could do: teaching Spanish. I loved it from the beginning, but then there was a problem when I tried to explain to people what I was doing. What's a licensed acupuncturist doing working as a Spanish tutor?" he wrote, adding "Your book helped me to clear those doubts and taught me how it is possible to balance a life with different paths."

The economic cycle may eventually spring back, but we will likely never return to the high- flying and spending ways that got us all here. We have a new passion for sustainability, both for ourselves and for the planet. And slashing fits right in with that new mindset.

Over time, I've seen the slash model applied in scores of new ways to reflect the new world order. Yet slashing always boils down to one of these five models:

- Money gig/Passion project (Financial analyst/sculptor; Entrepreneur/activist)
- Left brain/right brain (Engineer/museum curator)
- Mind/body (Professor/massage therapist)
- Writing/teaching/speaking/consulting (These four slashes go with anything)
- Many hats, one job (Most small business owners fall into this category, but employees playing more than one role show up here as well.)

A couple of other things have changed since 2007. I caved into the term slasher, which I initially resisted because I thought it sounded too much like those horror films. It's likely that many of the people you'll read about on the coming pages have rejiggered their slash-filled lives since I initially told their stories. That's how it goes with slashers.

And after more than a decade as an indie worker, I took a job -- one with colleagues, benefits and vacation time. I'm helping to advance a new big idea around work – [encore careers with social impact](#). Even with a full-time job, I'm still slashing. When people ask me what I do, my answer depends on the situation. Sometimes I say I work for a nonprofit, sometimes I'm an evangelist for new ways of working – or sometimes I say I'm a writer, a speaker, an educator... even a former lawyer. The point is that I'm definitely not one thing. I've got options. And so do you.

I hope this book helps you to think about slashing in some new ways, and that you turn to it whenever it's time to shake things up.

- February 2012