



Your passion today is helping others find their True Calling™. Did you grow up knowing what you wanted to do?

When I was really young, I thought being President of the United States would be the coolest thing in the world. Or at least Governor. You have a chance to make a very positive impact on a wide scale. I even interned with the Colorado State Legislature and served as a legislative aide in the House Leadership Office when I was in college. Being in the thick of things was a great experience, as was seeing how business and politics came together. But with few exceptions, at the state level you need another source of revenue to meet your living expenses. That sent me in a different direction where I can still have a potentially huge impact on the quality of people's lives, where the cause and the business are one.

How did you come to run your own international career development company?

My passion for helping others uncover their True Calling™ grew out of my own search for a fulfilling, energizing career. It wasn't a sprint; it was more like running the hurdles.

(If you want to jump directly to Nathan's career story, [click here.](#))

I grew up in Kremmling, Colorado, a small mountain town. My father was a veterinarian, my mother a teacher. When my parents divorced, I moved to Fort Collins with my father. Once I decided to make lemonade from lemons as the saying goes, this turned out to be one of the best things that could have happened.

The larger high school, Fort Collins High School , provided more opportunities and as an achiever, I thrived on the increased competition. I improved my GPA and lettered in several sports. I even received Ft. Collins High School 's Scholar - Athlete award in my senior year.

I particularly enjoyed my business courses, and I connected with the business teachers, but I didn't do any better in those classes than some of the other students. To my surprise, I received an award for Business Student of the Year. That honor opened my eyes to the fact that grades weren't the only success factor.

Did your business award play any part in selecting your college major?

Being Business Student of the Year made it an easy decision to major in Business. I attended Colorado State University (CSU). I minored in Political Science and studied abroad during my college years as well.

What triggered your interest in international studies?

Colorado sends two people overseas each year through a Department of Agriculture (USDA) foreign exchange program. Being from Kremmling, I had 10 years of 4H experience and an interest in adventure, and a thirst for international experience, so I applied.

I went to what was then West Germany and lived with German families in seven of the eleven West German states. I was able to see East Berlin before the wall came down. It was my first exposure to the world outside of the US, and it gave me a whole new perspective.

My experiences in Germany strongly influenced my future direction both personally and professionally. An underlying tenet of our methodology-that all our clients need to view their careers globally even if they work domestically - came directly from my international studies. When I met a woman from Switzerland in Washington DC years later, that time abroad allowed me to easily consider the possibility of a relationship. She later became my wife and one of the best things that ever happened to me.

You graduated with a major in General Business and went to work. Describe some of your corporate highs and lows.

After graduation, I took a job as a Sales Trainee for the Marine Corps of sales organizations: Beecham Products, now GlaxoSmithKline. Beecham introduced me to marketing and selling quality products and services and sent me to Colorado Springs and then quickly promoted me to Phoenix, Arizona as Territory Manager.

Phoenix is the headquarters of Penn Athletic Products, best known for their tennis products. A recruiter sold me on joining Penn's sales staff. Penn put me on the fast track with an early promotion to New England District Sales Manager. I moved across the country to Boston, Massachusetts where I was in charge of all area product sales, tournament sponsorships and promotions for 5 states (New England district).

Two years later Penn promptly laid me off. From fast track to fired - it was quite a shock! My first unexpected career "transition" led to some serious soul searching, but in hindsight it was the trigger that led to my first career breakthrough.

My path led to a great opportunity to turn around the Washington, D.C. office of Adecco, the world's largest personnel firm. My new position with Adecco introduced me to the service industry and one of my most fulfilling projects—designing and delivering the first ever Total Quality Management (TQM) hospitality teams to some of the Smithsonian museums like the National Gallery of Art, the Air and Space Museum and the new (at that time) Holocaust Museum.

After a grueling 18 months, and a successful turn-around, I was spending so much time on the business end that I didn't have the time I wanted to work on the people end. Migraines, shingles and other physical symptoms were strong signals that this was not my True Calling™. It was at this point that I realized the difference between a job and a career: *a job is a task; a career is a vocation*. I was still in a job.

With urging and support from Adecco's largest DC client, I got involved with my first start-up, HR Management Services, as Vice President of East Coast Operations. This move put me one step closer to my True Calling™. That client became the first client of our new firm.

Our second big account, ISL Worldwide, charged us with hiring and managing the hospitality staff for the 1994 FIFA World Cup. This was the first time ever this international competition of the world's strongest national football (that's soccer to us Americans) teams was to be held in the U.S., and we were a key part of it!

As a start-up we had our hands full. We hired and set-up over 1300 people throughout the country to host the month-long tournament with its 52 games in nine venues from East to West coast and a record 3 ½ million spectators. We pulled it off successfully, though the highlight of the experience for me was meeting a woman from Switzerland who would later become my wife.

I moved to Switzerland for the international experience and consulted with ISL. For the next two years I became involved in the intricacies of European job search and placement, and created ISL's *International Selection and Hiring Policies Manual*.

During this time I continued the search for what I now know as my True Calling™. I traveled frequently to the U.S. to visit highly regarded and expensive career consultants in search of answers, but none were forthcoming. I was beginning to think I was the problem.

When we moved back to the States, I took my last bridge job. In 1998 I left that corporate position, my wife and I had our first child, and I teamed up with a partner to start my own

consulting company. Four months later my partner and I parted ways. Good friend, wrong partner, compromised vision.

By now I had the entrepreneurial bug. I knew I was meant to start a unique high impact company in my True Calling that would help people from all backgrounds discover and fulfill their True Calling. The company had to be all the good I had experienced in my search, and more importantly, it had to be everything that I did not find that I knew was needed.

I was making big and risky life decisions on a tight budget with no income, with a wife and newborn child at home.

Shortly thereafter, I founded Dynimus (then known as the Center for Career Advancement) and created the True Calling™ methodology and concept. In the process, I confirmed my own True Calling™, and began my life's work with a passion.

A True Calling™ is the foundation of a successful career and, for that matter, a successful, fulfilled and balanced life. Every day I wake up looking forward to the privilege of helping people advance their careers and improve their lives. I've worked with over 750 clients, both individuals and companies. Executives, athletes, entrepreneurs, students, and corporate employees of all types - what's important is that they're motivated to advance their careers. The knowledge that our clients leave our programs with the confidence that comes from knowing who they really are and what they should be doing reinforces my belief in my own True Calling™.

(For more about the Dynimus Story, [click here.](#))

You've dealt with a fair number of career counselors and mental health professionals on your way to your True Calling™. Did you learn anything from those experiences?

I learned that it pays to select your career counselor(s) wisely. Most of the career counselors and self help professionals I worked with couldn't help me fulfill my needs because they had jobs rather than working in their True Calling™.

Many of the career counselors I saw were very good. But when I'd sit down with them, I'd realize that in certain respects I intuitively knew more than they did. When they would tell me to do something, I knew from my own experience it wouldn't work. So then I started to doubt everything, and I probably missed some good advice because of it.

There's this thing we call the *validity principle* - I like to describe it as having a pilot's license before you teach someone else to fly. I didn't see that displayed very often.

I spent a lot of time and money during my own career transition, but there were very few career counselors that I even wanted to go back and visit once their programs ended - sometimes even during the program. I'm not in touch with any of them today. And that's not good. A career coach should be like a good doctor, accountant or attorney whom you'd go back to whenever you need advice.

That's something important about our program: For us it's important to build a solid foundation and be effective. We want clients who respect and find value in what we're doing. We want lifetime clients. Not that we want them in here all the time, but if they have a hiccup down the road, or their company gets acquired, they can come in to us for a tune up. We already have their profiles and their assessments, so we can quickly help them get back on track.

Why career development?

For one thing, I'm hard-wired that way. My personal profile (something our program develops for every client using three world class assessments along with the coaching process) indicates that my top interest is career development. And I get a great deal of energy from working with people whether in a one-on-one coaching situations or with large groups.

If you think about the impact of career on society, I think it's underestimated. Not just here in the U.S. but around the world. Most of us spend the majority of our waking hours at our careers.

Think about the impact a bad career can have on someone's life. If you look at divorce rates, medication rates, alcoholism and drug addiction - go straight down the list - I would bet that a bad boss or a bad career choice or something related to career impacts those societal ills.

Your personal profile shows that you're hard-wired for career development. What does that mean, and how do you use it?

The personal profile is something we prepare for every client.

My personal profile is very much black & white. My Myers-Briggs type is ENFP. That means I'm at my best when I'm caught up in the enthusiasm of a project, sparking others to see its benefits.

My strengths are all totally, completely evident. Ideation, Strategy, Futuristic (Strengthsfinder terms) are all about vision which is the "N" (iNtuition) of ENFP. The Myers-Briggs "Feeling" is all about helping people, serving people. The Maximizer is all about making people better

and better. As an Extrovert, I get my energy from people. So you can see how all these pieces fit directly with what I do.

One of the ways we use our personal profiles is to match our clients with coaches based on Myers Briggs type, so we don't waste their time - they almost chemically click. They don't have to spend a lot of time getting to know each other.

How can people tell if they're in their true vocations or just in jobs?

Energy is a tell-tale sign. If you're playing to your big muscles - your strengths and passions - you're going to be gaining energy. 60% of us spend the bulk of our time using our small muscles, leading to an estimated \$300 million per year in lost productivity because people aren't engaged in their jobs.

If you come home from work the majority of the time with a lot of energy, that's a good sign. You should be at least in your 80/20 - 20% of what you do in your work should play to your passions and strengths and lead to at least 80% of what you generate. Most people are 20/80.

Besides low energy, physical symptoms and illness can signal a mismatch. I personally experienced migraines and shingles at one job that was not my True Calling™.

You refer to professional athletes frequently. Any sports in your background?

Nothing professional, but I work out, I run and I golf. I also love the outdoors, camping and horseback riding. I've had some exposure to professional athletes, though. I knew a number of professional tennis players through my work at Penn, and we have a number of professional athletes as clients.

Think what you will about professional sports today, but professional athletes and the franchises really get it. Here is what I mean by that. They deal with people who are the very best at what they do. They are incredibly talented. They've worked very hard to get where they are. Yet they still go through a battery of tests before they join a team. And they still have coaches even though they're the best at what they do.

It's the same thing at Dymimus - we put everyone who comes to us through a battery of assessments. We can't assume we know what's right for someone else, or give them any valid advice without this key information. We help our clients interpret the results of their assessments and then provide the coaching from talented coaches to bring out the best in them.

There's something else professional sports gets right. They let the athletes focus on what they do best; they play to their big muscles. If they're a sprinter, they don't also run the mile and do the high jump. It wouldn't make sense.

Baseball is a prime example. The players all have a position. And some of them are even more focused. A pitcher isn't just a pitcher. He has a specialty: starter, reliever, closer. This is how people need to address their own careers-an inch wide and a mile deep. Focus pays better and is much more satisfying because you can excel at what you do.

Are there any special requirements or certifications for your work?

Like we tell our clients, just by finding and working in your True Calling™, you're in the top 25% of people in your industry from a competence and competitive standpoint. From a practical standpoint, in addition to my hands-on experience, I've studied and obtained certifications in a variety of useful tools, some of which have become a part of our methodology.

Some of the most relevant include:

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Qualified Practitioner
- Mountain States Employers Council (MSEC) courses: "Train the Trainer," "Facilitating," and "Designing Training Courses"
- Graduate of the Center for Applications of Psychological Type's (CAPT) "Using Personality Type in Careers" course
- Graduate of Association for Psychological Type's (APT) "The MBTI Instrument and the Enneagram" course
- Strengthfinder Practitioner
- Campbell Interest and Skills Survey Facilitator
- Graduate of "Group Dynamics" course by Michael Grinder, National Director of the Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) in Education

From a personal standpoint, I'm always looking to expand my knowledge. I could give you a list of 60 or 70 books that are just great. My latest energy book is *The Power of Full Engagement* (Loehr and Schwartz).

Do you have time for anything outside of work?

Absolutely. I see my life as a whole - fluid and interconnected. Family is very important to me. I'm still married to the same great woman from Switzerland. We now have three

wonderful children (ages eight, six and four). I make time for friends and take care of my physical and spiritual health through exercise and meditation.

Besides family and career, I'm passionate about friends, fitness, reading, continuous learning and self-improvement and traveling. My passions, interests, preferences and strengths all work together in the lifestyle I desire since I've found my True Calling™. Don't get me wrong, it isn't easy to keep it all balanced, I actually work on that a lot, but as we get busier and busier I am constantly learning from my own successes and mistakes.

What career advice will give to your kids when they get older?

Live your dreams. Do what you love doing. Really figure out what you want to do and do it. Your life's work is to find your life's work and then do it. Base it upon your strengths and your passions, and you're literally halfway there. Then add into this equation the type of lifestyle you desire and you have it. I tell my kids in the morning I'm going off to play. I want my kids to love what they do, too. I want them to be spiritually connected and have a supportive family along with their play.

These are the same things I tell our clients.

Along with everything else, you volunteer. How do you find the time?

I make time. It's important to me that I give back to the community. In the past I have been involved with a number of organizations including the Denver Education and Workforce Development Councils with CACI and SEBP. I was also a District Delegate for the Highlands Ranch Recreation Advisory Board and an organizing member of the Inner City Youth Work Program in Washington, D.C. when I lived there. We always have a certain amount of our time going to individuals who are motivated to discover their True Calling but do not have the financial means to pay for the program. Several years ago I was asked to work with the Lost Boys from Sudan. It was a remarkable and eye opening experience.

Favorite movie?

The Rookie and *October Sky* are both great real life examples of people who pursue their dreams.

How about books? Any favorites?

A few that come immediately to mind are *The Alchemist*, *The 80/20 Individual*, *The Millionaire Mind* and *Blue Ocean Strategy*.

What people have inspired you along the journey to your True Calling™?

A lot of authors: Thomas Stanley (*The Millionaire Mind*), Jim Collins (*Good to Great*), Paulo Coelho (*The Alchemist*), Richard Koch (*The 80/20 Individual*).

I love reading biographies of people working in their True Callings. Warren Buffet, Michael Dell, Bill Gates, Howard Schultz to name a few.

I have a deep respect for bootstrappers like Richard Branson. One of the three major tenets of the Virgin corporate culture is fun. They also have a great business model.

Any dreams you haven't fulfilled?

There's always a primary interest in anyone's career. For me, it **is** career. I see myself one way or another always tied in to careers-it's my True Calling™. Without a doubt, I see myself playing in this field until I can't breathe anymore.

There's so much in the career area - it's huge. From branding to performance coaching to synthesizing the methodology to integrating software with the methodology, there are so many possibilities. When you start thinking internationally, there are even more.

Then all my secondary and tertiary interests will eventually fit in around my primaries. Maybe making a film - they are much more affordable to make these days with the independent movement - or getting into politics. I believe you can have it all. You may not have it all in excess, but I think you can have it if you keep things in balance. All the parts really hum and you can have a rich, full life.

You're very inspiring when you talk. You clearly bring a lot of energy to what you do.

Thank you. That's something I want to do more of: getting the word out through speaking and writing. I want to let the world know about us and what we offer because when you think about it, every single person out there is a potential client. When you see clients come out of the program and know that it made a difference in their lives, it's tremendously gratifying and energizing.