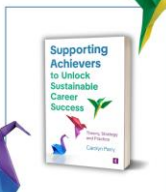




## WELCOME TO THE LAUNCH OF



**Supporting Achievers to Unlock Sustainable Career Success**



With author  
**Carolyn Parry, FRSA, FHEA, FCDI**



Hosted by  
**Associate Professor Deirdre Hughes, OBE, PhD, FCDI**

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## TODAY'S AGENDA

- Why this book and why now?
- What is an achiever, and what challenges do they face anyway?
- Introducing the Seven Career Thieves
- Origami coaching activity
- The Seven Protection Principles, aka the Guardians
- Introducing the Sustainable Career Success Profile tool
- How to get your copy

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## WHY THIS BOOK – THE BACK STORY

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |                                  |  |  |
| Own nature<br>Parental expectations  | Stuck in the hamster wheel<br>of success  | Repeated cycles of burnout<br>due to lack of meaning                                | Finally, I found career<br>coaching, aged 39  |
|  |                                  |  |  |
| From HE trainee<br>careers adviser in 2001<br>to Director in 2013                  | Career Alchemy in 2015<br>Awards and TEDx talk<br>First Book – 'Change Your Story'<br>CDI President ended Dec. 2023 | <a href="#">LinkedIn</a><br><small>Shelley Hutchinson</small>                       | "My clients are achievers"<br>"I AM ... AN ACHIEVER!"                               |

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## WHY THIS BOOK – THE BACK STORY



I fell in love with book writing!  
Shout out to my fellow CWA and SoA members.



Available on Amazon



Pearson

As one door closed on RENEWAL...



... a better one opened!




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## WHY NOW



Increased disillusionment with the achievement trap, and growing achievement culture

### One in six employers expect job losses from AI, CIPD finds

Employers expect AI to displace jobs, with one in six expecting to lose more than 10% of their workforce by 2025, according to a new survey by the CIPD.



Source: CIPD

Professionals who never expected or prepared for risk are experiencing it more than ever before.

Many professionals are achievers.

So are entrepreneurs, elite athletes, and experts.

One in five gifted pupils fail to meet expectations (Reis and McCoach)

So, we need to understand them and prevent talent from being lost.

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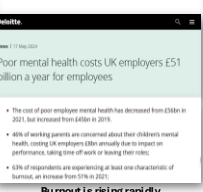
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## WHY IT MATTERS




Lost working days cost UK £48.9M



Poor mental health costs UK employers £51 billion a year for employees

- The cost of poor employee mental health has increased from £38bn in 2017, but increased from £48bn in 2019.
- 40% of working parents are concerned about their children's mental health, costing UK employers £1bn annually due to impact on performance, taking time off work or leaving their roles.
- 43% of respondents are experiencing at least one characteristic of burnout, an increase from 31% in 2021.

Burnout is rising rapidly



State of the Global Workplace 2025

If we support professionals, productivity could rise by £7.5 trillion

UK success at work:  
Stars = less than 1 in 10  
Sleepwalkers = around 7 in 10  
Saboteurs – just over 2 in 10

We assume they can sort themselves out, so resources get allocated elsewhere – but they still need help.  
When professionals who like to achieve become lost, it affects us all.

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## RECOGNISING ACHIEVERS



Achievers generally:

Thrive on challenge and forward momentum - driven by progress, not just recognition, though it is important.

High achievers:

Deliver consistently high results, powered by both purpose and rewards - and can sustain it.

Overachievers:

Chase "enough" that never arrives - self-worth is always on the line, standards sky-high, balance is sacrificed.

Underachievers:

Capable of more than they're showing - held back by fit, barriers, wellbeing, or fear; with the right support, they can rise fast.




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## ACHIEVER CHALLENGES



- Achievement culture  
Turns worth into a scoreboard for achievers.

- Work is unstable and demanding  
Pivots, hybrid, AI, constant adaptation doesn't sit well with underlying achiever fears about worth and success.

- Context can still cap potential  
Challenges arise from culture, available opportunities, discrimination, disadvantage, and organisational fit.

- Achievers are uniquely vulnerable  
High drive + high standards + "perform through it" expectations = significant internal pressure and stress.

- Success can hide misalignment  
Meaning and belonging are often lost because of the success-happiness gap.

- The cost shows up in wellbeing issues  
Achievers often suffer from chronic stress and are at high risk of burnout.

- The need for support often goes totally unrecognised  
Leaders, managers and peers assume they can cope, and achievers think they should be able to as well.




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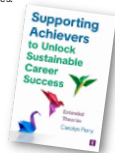
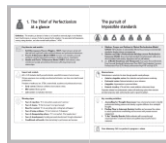
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## SO, WHAT'S IN THE BOOK?



- **Introduction**
- **Seven chapters**, each with a thematic client story, topic definition, contextual domain insights (workplace, education, age and career stage, gender, NE, socio-economic, cultural ethnicity, entrepreneurship, sectors and career lifespan), neuroscience, case study, theory-based analysis and three activities, plus a summary sheet.
- **Eighth chapter** on strategy
- In all, **seven stories and accompanying summary sheets, 37 theories and 21 activities**.
- Plus free resources: Extended Theories book and separate activities.




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## THEMES: THE SEVEN CAREER THIEVES



1. Perfectionism



2. Comparison



3. Approval-Seeking



4. Overwhelm



5. Depletion



6. Disconnection



7. Burn out

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## THE SEVEN CAREER THIEVES - POLL

The Seven Career Thieves in Action

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## THE SEVEN CAREER THIEVES - POLL

Which of the seven career thieves do you see most in your clients?

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## THE SEVEN CAREER THIEVES - POLL

Which of the seven career thieves affects you most?

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## USING ORIGAMI TO COACH ACHIEVERS

What is it?  
Traditional Japanese paper-folding art, rooted in contemplative culture which includes Zen/Buddhist-influenced ideas of simplicity, patience and presence.

What benefits does origami offer?

- ✓ **Moving meditation** - gentle, repetitive steps that anchor attention and quiet the stress response,
- ✓ **Embodied learning** - hands-on focus helps people drop out of overthinking and into clarity,
- ✓ **Low-stakes practice** - paper can be unfolded and restarted, teaching iteration and "good enough" without catastrophic consequences, and
- ✓ **Psychological distance** - working with an object rather than discussing yourself directly allows patterns to surface without defensiveness.

Why use it with achievers?

- ✓ **Provides a live mirror for achievers:**  
Perfectionism, impatience, self-criticism and control show up in realtime (no longer seamless and), and
- ✓ **It creates a memorable metaphor:**  
A flat sheet becomes something that can lift - small shifts, repeated, create transformation.




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## USING ORIGAMI TO COACH ACHIEVERS



<https://amzn.to/4GubhXf>



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## SWAN MAKING 1: MAKE THE KITE BASE



1. Take a Post-it note (sticky side up) or any other square piece of paper.



2. Fold the paper in half diagonally to create a triangle. Then unfold.



3. Fold the sides into the centre crease to form a kite shape as above.

Now, turn the model over.

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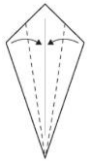
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## SWAN MAKING 2: DEVELOPING WINGS



4. Having turned the paper over, fold the 2 corners into the centre crease again.



5. Fold the kite in half, bringing the bottom of the tail up to meet the top.



6. Fold down the tip of the top layer to create the beak. Crease it so it stays in place.  
*Add an additional pleat to the head like you saw in the video if you want to.*

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## SWAN MAKING 3: COMING INTO BEING



7. Fold the entire shape in half along the centre crease.



8. Pull the neck and beak away from the body, pinching the fold to secure it.



9. Congratulations on creating your swan.

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## HOW DID YOU GET ON? LET'S SEE!

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## TIME TO REFLECT



As you worked through making the swan, what did you notice:

- How did your body feel?
- What emotions came to the surface?
- What did you hear your inner voice saying?

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## WHAT HAVE YOU DISCOVERED SO FAR?



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## USING THE SWAN TO ANCHOR AWARENESS



Now, thinking back to the thief most active in your life currently, write its name or draw its symbol on the top or inside of one wing.

Now you have a keepsake on your desk to anchor your awareness consciously.

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## THE SEVEN PROTECTION PRINCIPLES – aka THE SEVEN GUARDIANS



1. Sustainable  
Self-Care



2. Purpose &  
Belonging



3. Aligned  
Energy



4. Clarity of  
Focus



5. Authentic  
Self-Direction



6. Unique  
Contribution



7. Self-Compassionate  
Mastery

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## USING THE SWAN TO ANCHOR CHANGE



- Once a new Guardian-based strategy has been developed, write its name or symbol on or under the swan's other wing.
- This transforms the swan into a **physical anchor for change and intention**.
- It provides a visual reminder that growth does not require perfection to have value – it's the progress that counts.

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## A REFLECTIVE TOOL FOR PRACTITIONERS AND CLIENTS



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## IN SUMMARY



**'Supporting Achievers'** provides a practical, evidence-informed toolkit that helps to:

- **Build self-awareness and authentic confidence** by shifting unhelpful thinking, clarifying values, and strengthening identity
- **Reduce anxiety and overwhelm through flow**, perspective shifts, mental decluttering, and nervous-system regulation
- **Create sustainable success** by breaking free from comparison/approval-seeking, designing energy rhythms, and rebuilding purpose, connection and belonging
- Plus a link to the **new sustainable career success profile reflective tool**.



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## ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?





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## HOW TO BUY YOUR COPY



Direct from Trotman Publishing



<https://trotman.co.uk/products/supporting-achievers-to-unlock-sustainable-career-success>

From Amazon (paperback and Kindle)



<https://amzn.to/4s4UJEk>

Also available from all good bookshops.

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## KEEP IN TOUCH



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L: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/associate-professor-deirdre-hughes-0be28504911/>

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Also available from all good bookshops.

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