

## INSIDE BUSINESS

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Meet the motivator

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Philip Page Jr. faced unemployment for nearly a year in order to find his dream job, and now he is using his story to encourage unemployed people to do the same.

"I think my purpose in life is to empower people to prosper," he said.

Through his job as director of development at the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority and his consulting firm, Stater Co. LLC, Page said he is trying to do just that by using home-ownership and entrepreneurship as the tools.

He's put the lessons he learned from being unemployed into a book, "Getting Up Again: Surviving Unemployment and Pursuing Destiny," to motivate others in the same situation.

Seven years ago, Page was looking for a job after being laid off as a software developer, a job in which he didn't feel fulfilled, in Tulsa, Okla.

After a few months of searching for jobs there, Page and his wife decided to return to Virginia, where they both grew up.

Still, for about eight months after his return, there was no movement on the job front. Page said he tried "everything you could imagine" to find a job, but nothing was yielding results. Through trial and error, Page found the job search methods that worked best for him.

Ultimately, through one of his wife's connections, Page heard of a development coordinator position at the housing authority and got the job, which was the first opportunity that opened up for him in Hampton Roads.

Page said all of the jobs he has held have been obtained through knowing someone who referred him to the positions.

"The weird thing about being unemployed is that you don't want to talk to people about yourself," Page said, but that's how you make the connections you need to find a job.

In Hampton Roads especially, Page, who lives in Hampton, said there are a lot of networks and a federal government influence that need to be utilized.

"If you are in Hampton Roads and looking for a job, you need to open yourself up to government opportunities," he said.

He added, "You owe it to yourself if you're unemployed in Hampton Roads to know a military person or family to help find you a job."

One of the things Page learned while he searched for jobs was to choose one objective he wanted to do that could fit with numerous jobs and to stick to that.

"The best thing to keep in mind (while unemployed) is finding what makes you you, and not what you can do," he said.

Page said there are a lot of people who have the skill to do a job, but it's more important for unemployed people to find what makes them different and special and use it as a way to get jobs.

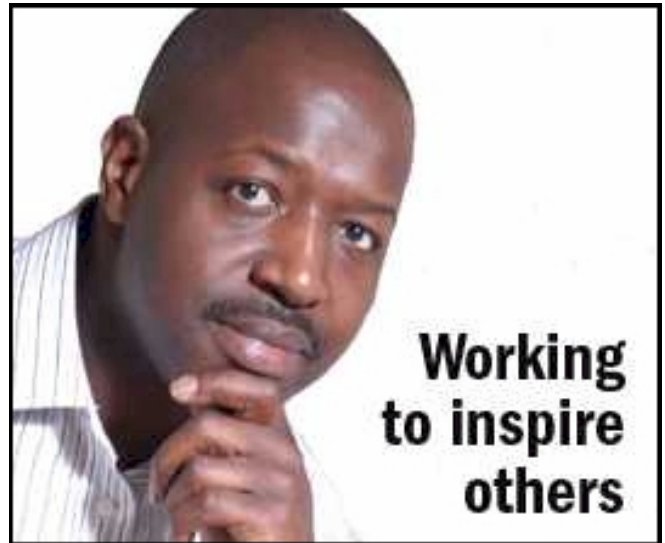
"Everyone has a skill set that can benefit others," he said.

In fact, the reason Page started Stater Co. was to help small business owners market themselves and their skills.

"I realized there was a need for someone who can help small service-based businesses market themselves," he said.

Owning a business is another excellent way to empower yourself, Page said.

Stater Co. focuses on marketing and Internet strategies, but Page said his goal is always to let the business owner take over those duties entirely.



He now has three active clients. In the past, he has worked with a car detailer who didn't have an interest in advertising; he just wanted to work on cars.

Page helped him with the business side of things, and now he is at the point where he can hire employees and take more of a management position, Page said.

"My goal is to place myself out of a job, to get them to be self-sufficient," he said.

Page said he believes everyone can be an entrepreneur and everyone should try it once in his or her life. Recently, he has been working with people who already have full-time jobs and are starting businesses using their hobbies or talents on the side for extra income.

With his love for empowering people and the lessons he learned in his own experience with unemployment, Page wrote "Getting Up Again" to encourage the unemployed.

Originally a journal he kept while he was unemployed, Page edited and compiled the entries into a book that tells his story and also teaches lessons he wishes he knew while he was unemployed.

Because the manuscript was so "raw," Page decided to use a professional publisher instead of self-publishing. His wife's company, Kingdom Living Day by Day, published "Getting Up Again" and set up distribution on Amazon.com.

Page said it required a connection with one of Amazon's printer partners, and the company had to review the book. Currently, he is working on getting it distributed through Barnes & Noble's Web site, bn.com.

Page said he has received positive feedback on the book, which was released May 29.

"Just to know it's been a benefit for unemployed people, it's great for me," he said.