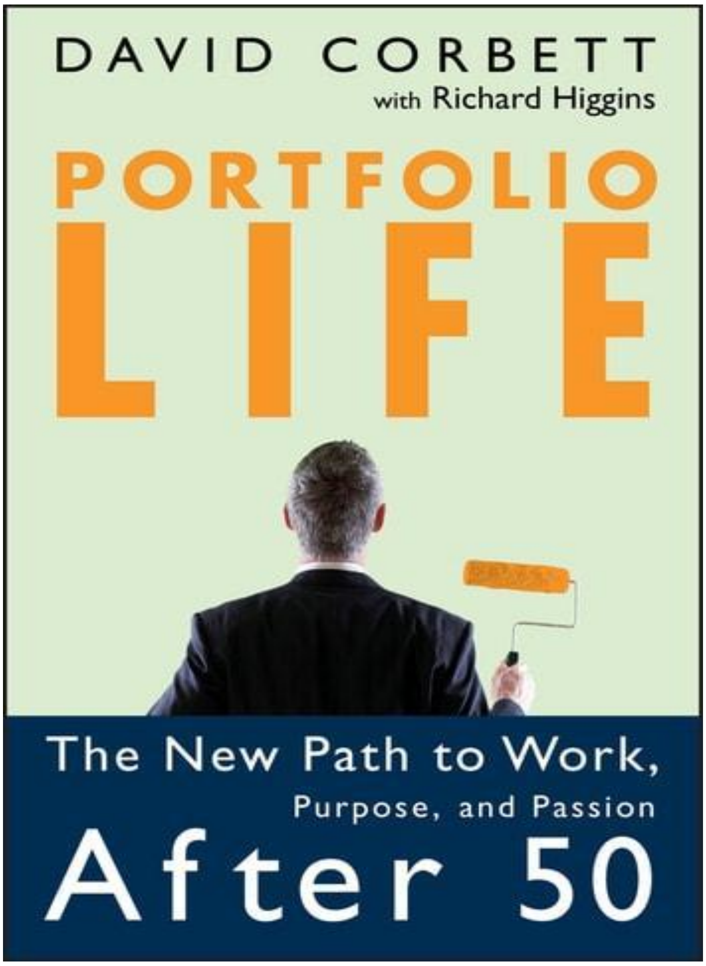
Crafting an Executive Portfolio Life –Purposeful "...Retyrement...vs Retirement"

In today's fast-paced world, many senior executives and professionals are seeking ways to live and lead with purpose. #LiveandLeadwithPurpose.

In 2011 when I exited my first tenure as Chairman of Eskom SOC Ltd, Johann Redelinghuys then Partner in the CEO & Board Practice at Heidrick & Struggles stretched my imagination when he recommended, I read David Corbett & Richard Higgins's Portfolio Life.

On a regular basis I have conversations with peers and senior executives asking me to help them as an Executive Coach. We normally get stuck when I ask them – what is your raison d'être? Many are on a quest for balance to live and lead with purpose - #liveandleadwithpurpose.

In this "...thinking aloud article..." I thought it might be useful to explore practical steps to build a life portfolio that combines work, learning, personal pursuits, recovering/clawing back lost quality family time and rekindling friendships and giving back; all which get easily lost when pursuing a 14-hour or longer Executive life in a full-time C-Suite role.

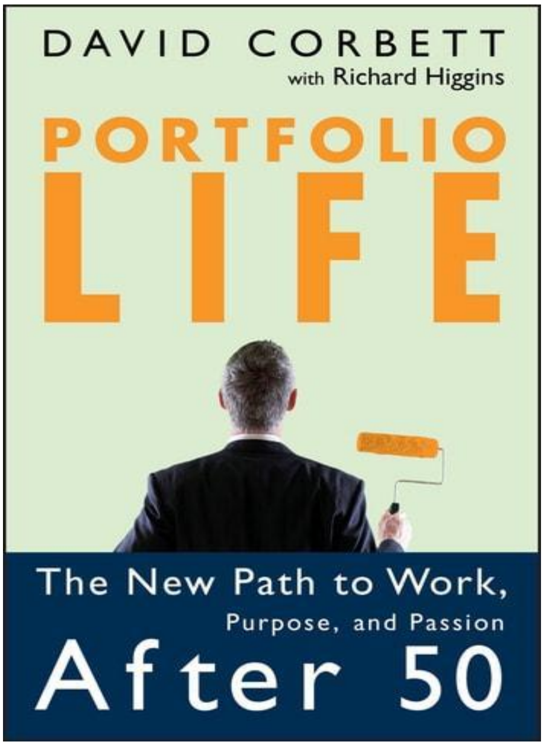


David Corbett, in his book "Portfolio Life: The New Path to Work, Purpose, and Passion After 50," outlines practical steps to build a life portfolio, which is a balanced combination of work, learning, personal pursuits, family and friends, and giving back. Here are some key practical steps based on his approach:

Here are some pointers towards Practical Steps to Building an Executive Life Portfolio – off course we all have different life paths, but these insights from the David Corbett's model have proven to be useful to me over the past 14 years of application**;**

1) **Challenge Your Mindset About working in the same organisation for decades and waiting for Retirement**:
   a) Investigate your assumptions about retirement and challenge them. This involves recognising that traditional retirement may not be the best option for everyone and being open to new possibilities.

2) **Wean Away from Old Ideas**:
   a) Let go of rigid ideas and contacts that no longer serve you. This allows for a fresh start and the ability to explore new interests and opportunities.
   b) You are more than any one role or opportunity, many a Babyboomer and GenXer were raised to fulfil one role for decades and accumulate a good pension often even at the expense of their own sense of happiness and fulfilment.



3) **Take the Call and Explore New Opportunities**:
   a) Consider volunteering, lifelong learning, and community service. These activities can help you reconnect with your passions and find new purpose.
   b) Diversification of experience will help you develop a sense of expansive leadership nouse, boardroom versatility, as well navigate change and mitigate uncertainty.

4) **Develop a Balanced Portfolio**:
   a) Include five key elements in your portfolio:
      i) **Working in a Form You Want**: This could be part-time work, consulting, or starting a new business.
      ii) **Learning and Self-Development**: Engage in activities that promote personal growth and learning.
      iii) **Personal Pursuits and Recreation**: Make time for hobbies and activities that bring joy.

iv) **Enjoying Family and Friends**: Nurture relationships that are important to you.

v) **Giving Back to Society**: Use your skills and resources to contribute to your community.

5) **Set Short- and Long-Term Goals**:

a) Create a strategic plan with both short-term and long-term goals. This helps keep you focused and motivated as you build your life portfolio.

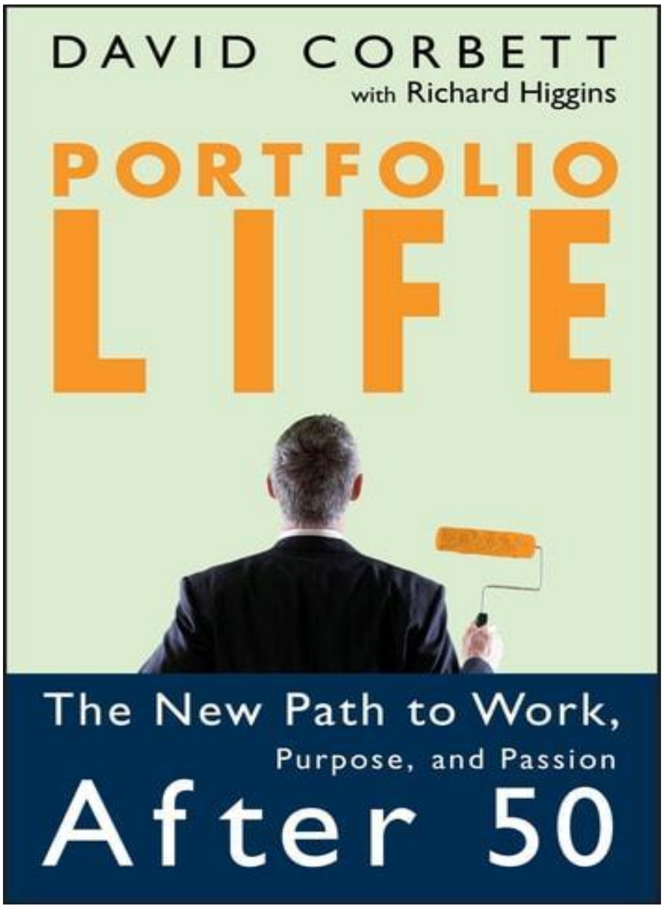
6) **Embrace Curiosity and Risk**:

a) Keep a sense of curiosity and be willing to try new things. This mindset helps you stay engaged and find new opportunities for growth and fulfilment.

7) **Plan for Success**:

a) Use tools and strategies to assess your progress and adjust your portfolio as needed. This might involve regular reflection and planning sessions to ensure your life portfolio remains aligned with your goals and values.

By following these steps, experienced individuals can create a fulfilling life portfolio that aligns with their passions, values, and goals, leading to a more purposeful and engaging life after 50.



"…"Portfolio Life is on target in stressing lifelong learning and continual self-discovery. As our students know, these habits help people succeed in all aspects of life. This book offers an excellent way to invest in yourself."
— Dipak C. Jain, dean, Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management…"

"…"We are so conditioned to 'bop till you drop' that a life of rich balance, of giving, earning, striving, learning, and loving, is alien to many healthy

and talented people.... I ...became a client, and have been learning about possibility since then! Portfolio Life is a wonderful resource to tap this new paradigm." — Fred Reid, CEO, Virgin America..."

8) Further references

- **a)** https://pocketbook.de/de_de/downloadable/download/sample/sample_id/8086853/
- **b)** https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/view/22228/portfolio-life
- **c)** https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/life-portfolio-projects-don-osborn-04htc
- **d)** https://www.hcplive.com/view/5098
- **e)** https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/22229
- f) https://s3.amazonaws.com/external_clips/875260/Portfolio_Life.pdf?1412371479

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I hope you find these pointers useful. Join us at one of our cross-generational roundtables for more enriching engagements on #livingandleadingwithpurpose -

Mpho Makwana is Chair of AxentuateMe trading as Epitome Archetypes (Pty) Limited. He is a past Chair of Nedbank Group, Nedbank Limited, ArcelorMittal South Africa Limited, SAFCOL SOC Limited and Eskom SOC Limited