

Resume for Fred Gratzon

I graduated from Rutgers University in 1968 “*sine laude et cuticula dentium*” (without praise and by the skin of teeth).

I’m lazy, anti-authoritarian, and devoid of marketable skills. I may well be the most unemployable man on earth. I’ve never held a job for longer than two months. And, as impossible as this may sound, I’ve even been fired from a civil service job.

My youth, however, is not bereft of meritorious achievement. In 1968, I set the world’s record (one which stands today) for the shortest draft physical in the history of United States Army. I was sent home after five minutes. (That alone shows how unemployable I am.)

So with zero employment options, I had little choice—I could either starve or I could start a business. So in 1979, with no money, no business experience, and absolutely no clue how to make ice cream, I started The Great Midwestern Ice Cream Company. You may laugh, but five years later, when *People Magazine* held a national ice cream competition, my ice cream was judged to be the best in America, (even better than Häagen-Dazs and Ben & Jerry’s). *Playboy* made the same declaration in 1986.

My ice cream, by the way, was the first packaged ice cream sold in Bloomingdales. It was served to first class passengers on United Airlines. The US Olympic Basketball Teams in 1984 (Michael Jordan and Pat Ewing) and 1988 (David Robinson and Danny Manning) requested the ice cream during their training camps. And when Nancy Reagan tasted the ice cream in 1987, she insisted it be served at White House functions.

Alas, I was unceremoniously ousted from my company in 1988. And because I had signed a non-compete agreement with my investors, I was prohibited from doing anything in the ice cream industry.

So I had to start from scratch again. To complicate matters, I now had a wife, a one month old son, a mortgage, and no savings or income.

Again with no money, experience or knowledge of telecommunications, I founded a rinky-dink telecom company. Over the next nine years, that company (Telegroup) grew from just me into an international long distance carrier with 250,000 customers in over 100 countries, employing 1100 worldwide, and grossing over \$300 million in annual sales.

I took the company public in 1997 and retired in 1998.

I’ve written two books. My first book, **The Lazy Way to Success: How to Do Nothing and Accomplish Everything**, has been published in 11 languages. My second book is titled **The Mentally Quiet Athlete** and while it contains a paradigm-shifting approach to sports, it has so far been a commercial dud.

So what does all this have to do with musical theater? Not a goddamn thing! But in the spirit of fearlessly jumping into the fray even though I know absolutely nothing about anything, I’ve written the

book and lyrics for a musical titled Hammock. (It's based on my "Lazy Way" tome.) As a result, I'm having the time of my life. In fact, it is so much fun, I actually go to bed giddy every night.