

The 4 Things I Wish I Knew at 22.

Four research-backed workouts (mindwork) to build a career that actually sticks.

Here's something the research is annoyingly consistent about: the people who build careers they actually like don't do it by being smart or lucky. They do it by getting deliberate about four specific things – what energizes them (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, Yale + Michigan), what skills they're building (Dweck, Stanford), who they stay connected to (Granovetter, Harvard), and what they actually value (Hayes, Nevada).

I didn't know any of this at 22. So I optimized for what I was good at, kept getting rewarded for, and burned out at 28 with a strawberry donut habit and a deep grudge against project plans 😬

These four exercises take 10–20 minutes each. Do them in any order. Just actually do them—reading about your career is not the same as building one. So let's get you to it!

INSIDE THIS WORKBOOK

- 01 The Energy Audit**
Know what lights you up.
- 02 Your 2-Year Skills Map**
Know where you're going.
- 03 Weak Ties List**
Find the people who'll get you there.
- 04 Group Chat Values**
Know what you stand for.

I can't wait to see what you do with this (and your career!). If you want more support along the way, reach out, join a monthly Mind Moment, or do this with your friend group. The work matters – but accountability and community are what make it stick 🤝🧠

EXERCISE 01

The Energy Audit

Know what lights you up.

For five days, track what you actually do at work. At the end of each day, mark each task as energizing (+), neutral (o), or draining (-). Don't overthink it. Trust your gut. You can print your calendar or track things the sheet below. **Remember: Your energy is data.**

DAY	TASKS	+ / o / -	NOTES
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			

End-of-week reflection

What did you learn?

What's the pattern in your (+) tasks? What do they have in common?

What would one less (-) hour per week unlock for you?

EXERCISE 02

2-Year Skills Map

Know where you're going.

Write down three skills you want to genuinely *own* in two years. Be specific. Not “communication” – think: “present to 50 people without my voice shaking.” Not “strategy” – think: “build a business case including financial models from scratch.”

Titles and compensation reset every time you change jobs. Skills come with you everywhere.

SKILL 01

The skill	
Where I am now?	
Where is my gap?	
What is 1 way to practice this?	

SKILL 02

The skill	
Where I am now?	
Where is my gap?	
What is 1 way to practice this?	

SKILL 03

The skill	
Where I am now?	
Where is my gap?	
What is 1 way to practice this?	

EXERCISE 03

Weak Ties

Find the people who will help you get you there.

Write down ten people you haven't talked to in the last six months. Old colleagues, former classmates, the person you always meant to grab coffee with and never did.

Your next career move is probably one (of these people or) "weak tie" away.

01	
02	
03	
04	
05	
06	
07	
08	
09	
10	

This week: pick two of them and reach out.

Not to ask for anything. Just to reconnect.

REACH OUT #1

Name:

Message draft:

Hey _____, It's been too long! I've been thinking about your work in _____.

Would love to catch up for a quick call to learn more about what you've been up to! I'm in learning mode and am very interested in _____. Happy to work around your schedule!

REACH OUT #2

Name:

Message draft:

Hi _____, Hope that all is going great for you and _____. I'm starting to explore

_____ and would love to hear about your experience with it. Might you have a few minutes to chat in the coming weeks? Hope to hear from you soon!

EXERCISE 04

Group Chat Values

Know what you stand for.

I'd like you to think about your values via what your colleagues observe (not what you think you care about, but what you actually care about based on what you do). **You can't find the right job for YOU if you don't know what you care about in the first place.**

What do you want the group chat to say about you?

Not your title. Not your output. Your character.

Reverse engineer it

How do you want people to feel after working with you? What problems do you want to be the person who solves? What do you want to be known for that isn't your title?

What are your top 3-5 Values? (Can use a list [here](#) or [here](#))

Does your current role let you be that person?

If no, that's not a small thing... That's data.

	YES	NO
Does my role let me behave the way I actually want to behave?		
Does it reward the things I care about?		
Does it align with what I want the group chat to say?		

EXERCISE 05

Now what?

One page. One commitment.

You've done four exercises. You know what lights you up, where you're going, who can help you get there, and what you stand for. The career that sticks isn't built in a workbook – it's built in the next move you make.

The synthesis

What's the biggest disconnect you noticed between where you are and where you want to be?

If a friend looked at your four pages, what would they tell you to do first?

Make a commitment

What is one specific thing that you'll do this week? Not someday...

This week, I will...

By when:

Who I'll tell so I actually do it:

The career that sticks isn't the one with the best title.

It's the one built on what you care about.

As always, with heart,

Lissy