

# CAREER ROOKIE

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A COURSE FOR  
NEW GRADS AND  
CAREER NEWBIES  
WHO HAVE NO IDEA  
WHAT THE FUCK  
THEY'RE DOING



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**1 WHAT THE ACTUAL FUCK.**

**2 JUST GIMME A SIGN**

**3 BUT I CAN'T DO THAT!**

**4 MO' MONEY**

**5 YOU'RE HIRED**

**6 WERK**

**7 NEVER MIND**

**6 I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING**

**9 CALM YOURSELF**

**10 START**



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**WHAT  
THE  
ACTUAL  
FUCK.**

# What the actual fuck.

Hey there, newbie. Welcome to your career! Maybe you're still hung-over from graduation. Or maybe graduation was a few years ago but you're still feeling dazed and confused. Either way, I know what you're thinking...

*What the actual fuck. Why didn't anyone tell me it would be like this?*

- and -

*Jesus Christ, is this really all there is?! I busted my ass for the last two decades expecting some kind of payoff. #notworthit*

- and maybe even -

*What are the rules here? Do I really need to make a LinkedIn profile? Will I have to start washing my hair more often? Do I need to buy a FUCKING PANTSUIT?! Because that is literally my worst nightmare.*

You've heard a lot of shitty things about adulthood. Some of it is true — there are bills to pay and pants to wear. Luckily some of it is most definitely *not* true.

We're going to sort out what's true and what's complete and utter bullshit. Those things are tougher to tell apart than you'd think, especially when you're new here.

Let's start with this doozie...

## EVERYONE ELSE SEEMS TO HAVE THEIR SHIT TOGETHER

*Nope. Bullshit.*

*Total bullshit.*

And yet you probably feel like this is very true — that you're a gazillion years behind already because everyone else was given some secret manual for adulting while you weren't looking.

Not so.

Maybe you have a couple of friends who seem to have cool jobs. Maybe you know some people a few years older than you who actually paid off their student loans. Good for them. **But the truth is most people don't know what the fuck they're doing straight out of school. And most people feel sick about it because they don't even know what they want, let alone how to get it.**

## I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WANT

You know what you don't want. You don't want to settle but you don't want to chase some impossible pipe dream either. You don't want to go to some shit job every day that makes you feel bored or frustrated or burned out or like you're selling a little piece of your soul with each passing Monday. You know those people. It's your mom / dad / Uncle Jim / insert person who hates their job here.

In fact, before we figure out what you *do* want, let's go ahead and get crystal clear on exactly what you *don't* want and why. We'll do that by listing some of the people whose lives and careers you look at and say, *No way, man. Not in a million years.*

Here are some imaginary examples to get you started. You finish the list with your own:

**I don't want a career like:**

**Because:**

My Dad

He works all the fucking time. I hardly remember what he looks like.

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My friend Alex

He wanted to do something creative and ended up working in payroll. WTF?!

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My sister Melissa

She never took the time to figure out what she wanted and just did what my mom told her to do.

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Sometimes having a good clear picture of what you don't want keeps you from accidentally straying down the wrong path. The people you've listed here may be lovely people, and maybe one day they'll get it together and make a change so they can be happier in their work, but for right now let them serve as career cautionary tales.

## SO WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

Your Aunt Marg spots you at the family barbeque. You know exactly what's coming so you try to make a run for it, but she's too quick and she pins you between the lemonade and the dessert table. You haven't seen her since graduation and she wastes no time getting straight to the point. Less than 30 seconds into the (awkward) conversation she utters the four words most dreaded by twentysomethings everywhere: *So what's your plan?*

You mutter, "Oh, you know, just exploring some options." But what you really want to do is karate chop her in the neck and drown her in her own bean dip while screaming **I DON'T HAVE A PLAN! I CAN'T EVEN THINK FAR ENOUGH AHEAD TO MAKE A FUCKING GROCERY LIST! STOP PRESSURING ME ALREADY!!!** \*runs screaming through a brick wall like a cartoon character never to be seen again\*

*So what's your plan?*

*What's next?*

*How's the job hunt going?*

*Got anything lined up yet?*

Questions like this probably make you want to go on a weeklong bender. SO. MUCH. PRESSURE. And it's not like you're not putting enough pressure on yourself already. **You'd happily get your shit together career-wise if only you knew what you wanted.** But instead of having a vision and a plan for your career you've got food court daze.

## FOOD COURT DAZE

Food court daze is that unfocused, slack-jawed daze you fall into in food courts. Should I get a burrito or a burger? Chinese? A sandwich? Pizza? There are too many options and suddenly you're incapable of making good decisions. **You find yourself in line at Taco Bell and wonder where it all went wrong.**

Starting your career can feel like that too. There are just too many choices and things can get blurry and overwhelming very quickly. If you're feeling a bit of food court daze when it comes to your career it helps to write that shit down. You'll feel a little less dazed if your options are out of your head and on paper.

Write down all of the options you're thinking about for your career, even if you're not sure which one (if any) you should go for. Seriously, just write down anything you're even mildly considering. For example, sales gig, marketing internship, learn a trade, work for a startup, fuck it and go back to school, etc.

**Things I'm considering for my career:**



Good. Now, you don't have to choose *any* of those options if you don't want to. And we're not even close to having to pick something yet. The course just started, dude. We're just trying to bring some order to things so you feel less dazed by this career stuff.

Another thing that will help you feel a little less dazed is getting honest about why you're feeling lost and what you're struggling with specifically.

## THE STRUGGLE IS REAL

There are a handful of reasons why people feel stuck at the beginning of their careers. **Check the one that feels most true for you.**

**I have no idea what I even like.**

**I want too many different things.**

**I know what I want, but it doesn't exactly pay the bills.**

**I know what I want, just not how to get it.**

**I kind of know what I want, but I'm scared shitless to admit it.**

No matter which box you checked we're going to cover that shit in this course.

Not sure what you like? We're going to do a **deep dive** and get you back in touch with your **desire**.

Want a lot of different things or something that doesn't pay the bills (yet)? We're going to talk about **collage careers** and **parallel tracks** so you can do what you want AND pay the rent.

Know what you want, but not how to get it? We're going to **do some research** and **make a plan, Stan**.

Know what you want, but you're scared shitless to admit it? We're going to **address your fear**. Because not *admitting* what you want isn't the same thing as not *knowing* what you want. Denial and uncertainty are two different things, my friend.

So you know what your main struggle is right now, but we're still a long way off from having a feel-good plan for your career. (Don't worry, we'll totally get there.)

Before we dive in, let's take a look at the one thing that is guaranteed to fuck things up before you even start...

## THE COMPARISON GAME

If you're like most other humans on the planet, you compare yourself to other people to see how you measure up — in school, fashion, fitness, relationships, career, you name it. And if you're like most other humans on the planet, doing this makes you super fucking miserable.

### *Why do we do this?!*

You know it's going to make you feel like shit, but you compare yourself to strangers on the internet. Or to your best friend who just bought a condo. Or to your cousin who scored a super sweet job with a super sweet salary to match.

It's tempting to play the comparison game. We just want to see if we measure up. But answer me this: **How's that working for ya?**

Not so good, right? Instead of helping you get your shit together, comparing yourself to everyone else just makes you want to up your anxiety meds. It's not productive. For a couple of reasons:

## 1. You're not working with real information.

You know how you take like 10 selfies before you post one? Your friend is like, "OMG you're so gorgeous!", but little does she know there were 9 other photos where you looked like Shrek. **When you're looking in from the outside you only see the good stuff.** For example, that guy who seems like a total baller on Instagram? His dad still pays his phone bill. And rent.

People only share the stories they *want* to share, whether it's on Snapchat or over brunch. This includes a collection of carefully curated highlights about their career. Believing that someone else's highlight reel is the unfiltered truth will give you an eye twitch for a month. At least.

## 2. Comparing takes your eye off the prize.

The prize is doing what you want in *your* life. Even if you don't know what you want yet, looking at what everyone else is doing doesn't help. It just makes you feel like you should do what *they're* doing. You are not a sheep. **A copycat life isn't good enough for you.** Or anybody, for that matter. You might be a lot closer to getting some answers if you weren't so busy looking at everyone else's test paper.

Tracking your progress against others almost always feels shitty. But since it's natural to be nosy about other people's lives, I'd like to invite you to make your nosiness more productive — by swapping out comparison for investigation.

*Huh?*

**Straight up comparing usually leads to a whiny pity party. *Investigating*, on the other hand, is about research and action. And that's something you can work with.**

For example, you could bitch and moan that your friend has a new condo and boo hoo you don't (comparing), or you could ask her how she did it and take note (investigating). Oh, she's been packing her lunch every day for five years and squirreling away her savings for a down payment? Maybe you should think about a budget.

Another example: You're super jealous because your cousin lucked out on a cool job and why the hell hasn't that happened to you? (That's comparing.) Instead you might ask him about his job search and find out that he applied for 10 jobs a week for two months. He got interviewed for some and passed over for several others before scoring this one. Oh, maybe the secret to landing a great gig is busting your ass and not crossing your fingers. Maybe you should get more serious about this.

**Your turn.** Make the switch from plain old bitchy comparing to *investigating*. List three people you're a little jealous of career-wise and then do some investigating to see what their secret sauce is. (E.g. — friend with the condo's secret sauce = saving a little over a long period of time; cousin with the great gig's secret sauce = apply and interview like a motherfucker until it pays off.)

## JELLY

1. I'm jealous of

because

## SECRET SAUCE

Upon investigation I learned he/  
she was successful because

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2. I'm jealous of

because

Upon investigation I learned he/  
she was successful because

## JELLY

3. I'm jealous of

because

## SECRET SAUCE

Upon investigation I learned he/  
she was successful because

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The comparison game is a game you'll never win. But investigating? That'll help you get closer to where you want to be.

So you're gonna ease up on the comparison thing. And you know what you don't want (i.e., a job that makes you want to walk off the edge of a tall building). And you have some vague inklings about what you might want, but honestly some of that shit just feels like a stab in the dark.

What you should do next is sit back and wait for a sign, right?

*Nope.*

Waiting for a sign is not an effective strategy. Oh, don't get me wrong, signs are great and they're totally out there, but if they haven't pointed you in the right direction yet you can't just keep waiting. (Because you'll have to pay off that student debt sometime and you need a J.O.B.)

Instead of waiting for the signs to show up in all of their neon, flashing glory, we're going to actively hunt those fuckers down.

Pack your sense of adventure. We move at dawn...