

Your Plucky Path

career planning for 2018

by Jen Dary

www.beplucky.com/pluckypath

Dear working human,

You're driving right now. You are driving a car. The name of the car is [YOUR NAME'S] CAREER PATH. Hopefully this is not huge news and you are at least in the front passenger seat. But maybe you haven't even realized that you're in a car. You're on your phone in the backseat, liking your friends' photos, leaning your head against the door, complaining about traffic.

Every moment that you are **not** focused on driving your own car, someone else is driving it for you. Society. Your manager. The pile of work that no one else wants to do.

The wheels are moving. If you are alive, your car is not parked. It's in motion.

So:

What

Are

You

Going

To

Do

About

This

Car?

Downloading this career planning guide is a good first step. Filling it out gets you up to the front seat. Starting to name what you're hungry for, having hard conversations, becoming aware of the ways you are actively or passively making things happen... buckle up. These are the actions drivers take.

Use the pages of this guide to inspire the construction of your path in 2018. Our workplaces are huge centers for learning - and NOT JUST learning about your industry. At work we learn about humans, relationships, money, leadership, stress, balancing, failure and infinite other topics.

So stop letting work happen to you. It's time to start HAPPENING to WORK.

Welcome to the road, friend. It is good to see you here.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Xo' followed by a flourish.

Goodnight, 2017.

Before you get to planning for 2018, it's time to put 2017 to bed. Be honest. Be proud. Be grounded and pretend no one else will ever see these answers (because they won't!).

A little advice: these are the sorts of questions that you should go through slowly. Set aside an hour, find a mug of something to nurse and let it out.

Moments

You got more than half a million minutes in 2017. But what were the memorable ones? We tend to remember moments that are important, powerful or out-of-the-ordinary... and they usually indicate the celebrating or bruising of a core value. Think it out:

Theme	Describe the moment	What core value was celebrated or bruised?
Ex. <i>Pride</i>	Ex. <i>My boss recognized my efforts (staying late, doing the jobs of 10 people, etc) in front of the staff.</i>	Ex. <i>I felt like my work ethic was celebrated – and that's not very common at work. I was proud of what I did, but it was awesome to be called out for it, too.</i>
Pride		
Disappointment		
Collaboration		
Leadership		

2017 Conflicts

Phew, 2017. You were FULL OF CONFLICT! (If this wasn't true for you, you can just go take a nap while the rest of us work on this page.) Conflict is hard on the soul, hard on the calendar and hard on the humans.

I invite you to dump all words that represented 2017 conflict in this giant trash receptacle. This might include people, projects, budgets, mistakes and misunderstandings:



Yes. Good work. Now I'm going to trick you. THAT WAS A RECYCLING CAN! What can you pull out of that can and reuse, leverage, build on, never do again / always do forever? *What did this mountain of conflict teach you about yourself, your work, the world?*

2017 Gratitudes

Who made a difference to your work in 2017? How?

Pro tip: write them an email to thank them.

And that is that. 2017 is all done. Don't waste energy trying to go backwards or change a thing... because you are going to need everything possible in the year ahead.

2018 Hard Conversations

Alright, so 12 months are going to pass and while I can't predict the future, I can tell you one thing: *you can either let 2018 tell you what to do or you can influence what is about to unfold.*

"But Jen, I don't have control over my salary!" "But Jen, I can't promote myself into my dream job!" "But Jen, the lay-offs are coming!"

And my response to this? Stop focusing your predictions on what you don't control. Every morning you control how you walk into the office. Every time someone helps you, collaborates well, sticks their neck out or does you a solid, you control how you thank them. When the Uncontrollable threatens (truly, no matter what it is), you have control over how you react to it.

Are you ready to stop letting Uncontrollable elements own your path? Then let's do this.

List 3 things that you want to be true about your work by December 2018:

**December
2018 Truth**

What can you do to make this happen?

Who can help?

*Ex. I have
a different
job.*

Ex. I stopped bullshitting myself and avoiding what I really want to do with my work life. I have coffee with people who work in my field to brainstorm. I apply to jobs / invent my own job. I get it done.

Ex. My roommate's mom (who works in my dream field). The friend who makes me excited about life. My former boss/ professor. Inspirational books, blogs, podcasts, speakers.

1.

2.

3.

2018 Hard Conversations

There will be a moment (if not many!) when you will wish you had a secret coach sitting on your shoulder. If we have a session on the calendar, fantastic – you can tell me all about it and we can find a way forward. But maybe I’m not your coach... or maybe it’s 2am on a Tuesday... or maybe you aren’t even sure what the problem is. In that case, this exercise might help. (Photocopy this page as often as you need to... it’s definitely not designed for one-time use.)

Step 1:

First up, what’s going on? Lay out the situation for me:

Ex. My boss changes priorities all the time. I get up and running in one direction and suddenly the needs change. I am so tired of feeling inefficient and bored of this constant whiplash.

Step 2:

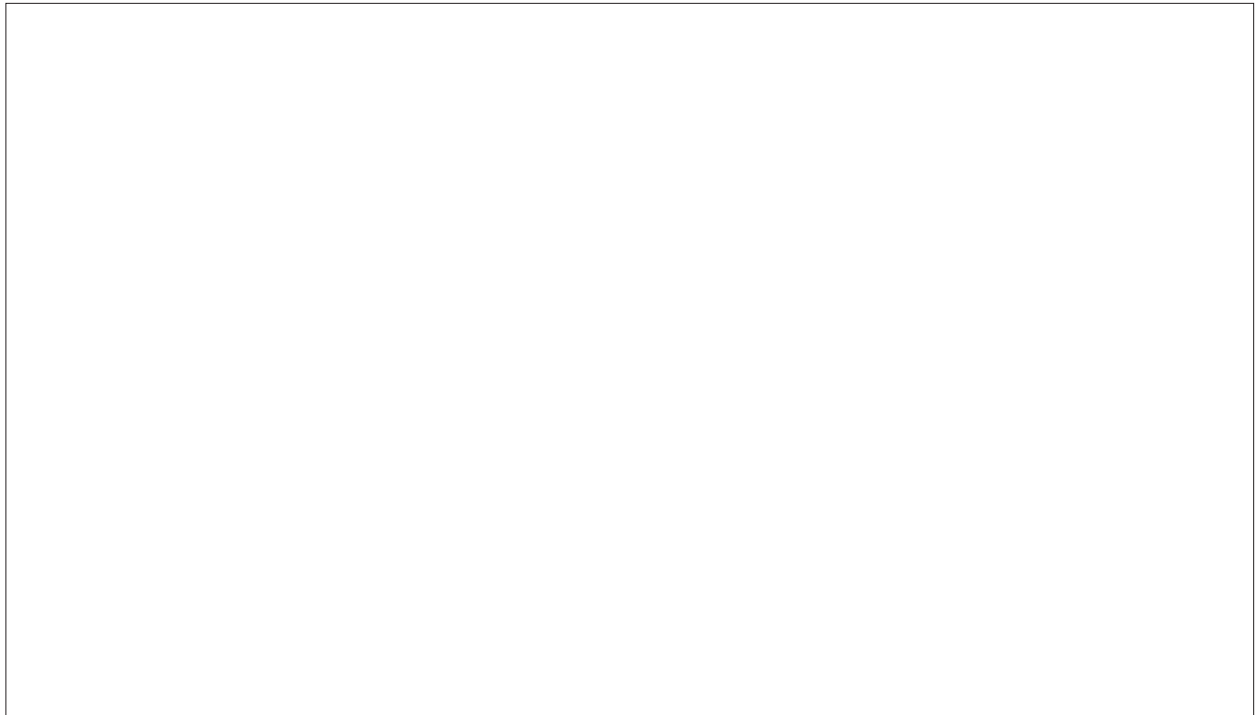
Why do you think this is happening? Trust your gut and tell me the most awkward, true, vulnerable answer.

Ex. His boss has ridiculous expectations of him; he is on the chopping block lately and isn’t good at prioritizing. He’s nervous and not thinking clearly.

Step 3:

Hard conversations are often the keys to moving through problems... but because we're scared of them, we don't allow them to happen. What hard conversation is trying to happen?

Ex. I could tell my boss exactly how I'm feeling. I could tell him that I suspect he's feeling pressure himself, but that I feel totally burned out on the constant moving targets.



Step 4:

Choose one:

- ☐ I am going to have a hard conversation.
- ☐ I am going to avoid a hard conversation and hope that someone else solves the problem. In the meantime, I'm going to be pissy and depressed about it because all the bad things always happen to me and no one loves me and damn the man. BRB, I have to go tweet passive-aggressive jabs at the world.

Step 5:

Have the hard conversation; move something forward. But if you still need a soothing voice to talk you through it, this short audio coaching track might help: www.beplucky.com/SOS

First Aid Kit

Because you're human... some periods in 2018 are going to tire you out. Get ready! Fill out this cheat sheet and then come back when you hit lows and need a reminder about how to support yourself.

These are easy recipes I can cook for dinner:

These are simple take-out options:

These activities help me relax:

“Text me something funny.” As-needed, I can text this to:

Here are a few secret places where I can be quiet for 30 minutes:

I can call these people to help with last minute kid/pet problems:

This TV show/book/movie/art is comforting:

P.S. In a pinch, I reach for this Eleanor Roosevelt quote to get me through something really difficult. Maybe it will help you, too:



Do the thing you think you cannot do.”

About

Jen Dary founded Plucky in 2013 after realizing that most organizations struggle with her biggest fascination (and bestest skillset!): people. From coaching leaders to teaching workshops to consulting with organizations about their talent strategies, she truly loves helping people find their way.

Jen lives in Berkeley, CA with her husband and two young sons.



Looking to inspire leadership and growth in your org in the upcoming year? Need help finding your way in 2018? Drop her a line.

hello@beplucky.com
@jenniferdary, @beplucky
www.beplucky.com

So Now You're a Manager Training



What does a successful day look like as a manager? What are the nuts and bolts of the job? And how are you supposed to get anything done when your calendar is booked solid with meetings? So Now You're a Manager is the leadership training you never had. Come for the support, stay for the sane peers and leave with tangibles that will change the way you steer your ship.

To join us at an upcoming training, visit www.beplucky.com/manager. Hope to see you there!

