

Abstract

At the end of year one, Kit is starting to understand that you can really like your company but also be really tired from work at the same time. That this is being written 11 PM on 5.21.2018 – the Monday of 2018 Commencement Week – might have something to do with it.

//

Letter to the shareholders:

There are three points that I want to make about real life, and I'll make them short and sweet. They are:

1. I'm pretty lucky
2. Work is *really* hard
3. Life without structure is really hard to live

So I'm pretty lucky.

Back in the summer after 2017 Commencement, I was working at a startup called Apptimize. 50 people, Series B, fine place to be at. I was interning, since I tried to apply for full-time but didn't end up with the position. I thought I'd be better off working for a summer first instead of settling for a full-time role at a company I didn't really like.

Bet paid off. I'm working at Oscar Health now, a health tech company which is doing some really cool stuff in New York. But just as easily, that bet could have *not* paid off. I'm thankful that it ended up the way it did.

I moved over in October. I already spent a satisfying final summer with the family at home, and on my 22nd (8/20) I took a road trip up to Seattle with a couple of SF buddies and saw the total eclipse in Oregon. Camped out on Emily Chen's (Kirkland '15) couch for the week of 10/9. Floated around in an Airbnb for a month in the East Village. Signed a lease the week before Thanksgiving. William Greenlaw (Pfoho '17) ended up being the best of roommates, and the other roommate we have is alright.

So I'm in a good place by the end of the year. Compared to Commencement Week, I am:

- Actually employed
- Doing meaningful work¹ at said company
- Leasing at a good location at a *really* good rate
- Among good roommates and coworkers

That's a pretty good base. In terms of POs – the most vital parts of life – I was in good standing, and I visited Kirkland during the holidays to celebrate. It'd say it was a fine celebration.

But work is pretty hard.

Like, *really* time consuming. I'm working at a tech company, but the specific team I'm on – Network (like, networks of hospitals and providers) – works from 9 to 6, and I end up with a 9 hour work day. I KNOW. NOT THAT BAD. But compared with university, it's obviously unprecedented.

The projects I've had to do are longer than the projects in school, and I'm held to a higher standard. Look, I was a B student in university. You can't turn in B level work here – you've got to be perfectionist with your work, and I wasn't used to that. Receiving a B+ grade was a fine tradeoff for the opportunity to do house

¹ As an aside, the decision to work for a company like Oscar instead of pursuing something more akin to media is heavily rooted in the type of things I want to do. I had a great time doing the Kirkland thing, but at the end of the day, I don't want to just record and capture the people who are doing important things – I want to *be* the person who's doing the important work.

photography and IM crew and all the other good things that came with House Life. You can't have that tradeoff here. My performance suffered in Q1 for that and I had to climb my way up out of that hole.

I don't think I've had something dominate my life so completely before. The only other equivalent was sophomore spring, when I was determined to redeem myself after crashing towards the end of CS50 by gunning for an A in CS171. I worked on the biweekly pssets like, 7 days out of 10 and ended up with a *very* satisfying A. But similar to that semester, the weeks seem to pass by incredibly quickly and the weekends all feel like a blur.

I think to myself sometimes that I truly would be tired and questioning my priorities in life were I not working for such an interesting company. I don't know how the bankers and consultants do this – I can't live that life. Work is hard. Boy, do the new grads have a surprise in store for them.

It's hard finding structure in all this.

Back in school, it was all too easy to think about the milestones – in sophomore year, you're living house life for the first time. In junior year, you're past the halfway point. Opening ceremonies mark the beginning of the year and commencement, of course, the end. Just by merely existing you hit these milestones and they all culminate toward an ending. But in real life there is no structure. All your weeks just continuously move past you.

Sans structure, I've had times when I didn't know what to look forward to. Looking forward to "the summer" in the abstract is nothing like looking towards a commencement. You don't get melancholy about the last move in or the move out in real life – people are moving all the time and a single move is so much less significant. People are harder to see when you can't just walk in a dhall and say hello.

I know this is all necessary. All good times must come to an end, and because Verena agreed with that statement in December 2017, it must be true. I try my best to adjust to this new life. I'll be doing a triathlon a day before I turn 23 in August (the actual thought was *how badass would it be if I did my first triathlon a day before my birthday?*). Will and I have been hosting low-key dinners every two weeks, and soon we'll host a high-key ones. We've seen in our past dinners Cindy Guan (Kirkland '15) + Emily Chen (Kirkland '15) + Kate Buellesbach (Kirkland '16, now in Seattle) + Lily Gentner (Kirkland '16, now in Denver) + many other old friends who I've always wanted to have over for dinner. Emily Johansen is running the New York Marathon. I'm visiting DC and Boston every once in a while. So on and so on.

I gave myself one year to adjust to the post-Kirkland life. I give myself the liberty to not feel completely satisfied, as after all this is the freshman year of the practical age. I can't possibly peak at 22. If I peak at this early of an age, I'd be hitting a quarter-life crisis *real soon*.

But you know, I'm pretty lucky. Family's doing well. I've got the fundamentals down. I'm not having the time of my life, but I'm also performing at a high level and not getting *too* stressed on the daily. That's a lot to smile about.