

A Blueprint for Starting Where You Are

Most everybody comes into this process with some inkling of what excites them and what they want to do. Even if you think that's not you, I assure you, even if it's buried, there are some clues floating around and we're going to grab what's available. I've found this works best if you get right at it by doing a quick and dirty download on what's flying around in your head.

Below is an excerpt from the book *Choose on Purpose for Twentysomethings*. First, you'll find the steps below for this activity. Then you'll find the blueprint on page five (references to additional help can be found in the book). It may help to print it out and handwrite your answers. Go ahead, use several sheets of paper!

Don't be fooled by how simple the blueprint is. As my mentor, Pamela, constantly reminds me, *simple is profound*. After all, don't you want this to be simple? The more complex we make it, the harder the choosing becomes.

So imagine we're sitting down in a coffee house together. As we begin the conversation, we talk about what fires you up when you think about making your next opportunity happen. What do you enjoy? What are your skills? Interests? Expertise? Start thinking about things you've done—work, hobby, watching someone else do something interesting—that have struck you as work you see yourself doing work that feels fun to you and powerful. Let's tap in to that right now.

Activity 3



The Coffee House Blueprint (Spill Your Thoughts)

GO

Imagine yourself meeting up with me in a coffee shop. I'm the person sitting against the wall, medium height and build, chin length brown hair, black turtleneck, jeans, sipping a latte, and I'll have a yellow note pad open — looking around for you.



We start chatting, getting to know each other a bit. Then we turn our attention to a sheet of yellow legal paper. I turn it long-ways and draw three columns on it. Then I ask you to name three things you'd like to do. These things could be types of work, job titles, industries — or any combination of these. Don't restrict yourself — just think about what kind of work you'd love to do.

Next, you'll work your way through the steps outlined below. I suggest you draw it out on your own sheet of yellow paper. Make it your first working document that you want at your fingertips. The first three steps below match the three numbered activities on the sheet that follows these instructions.

STEPS

- 1. Work your way quickly** across the page and identify three areas of work that sound meaningful. Write it down without worrying about exact terms—remember, this is about tapping into what you know right now.

If you're having trouble picturing a job area, check the *Resource Center* under *Picture Work You Love*. But, please, only do that if you are really struggling. I believe you have seen or experienced a taste of what you want to do somewhere in your life. Draw on that real experience.

- 2. Write a few words** about why this sounds like an interesting match for you right now under each idea. Don't linger too long over this.
- 3. Write down names** of people you know who are familiar with this area—this could be someone who does the job, knows people who do it, or works in similar areas. Among those names, identify someone in your family or among family friends that you would feel comfortable talking to now.

If you can't think of anyone, make a note to talk to your parents or other close family members or friends to find someone. For this person (and others you may think of) jot down notes and contact information for people you might be able to meet with.

- 4. Describe how you're feeling** and what you're thinking as you complete this. Jot down a summary of what you talked about with your coffee shop friend below. If you're frustrated, say so and either get help from a friend who can be supportive and encouraging (not someone else who will bemoan with you how tough it is) or go to the *Resource Center* at *Frustration 101*.

This activity is important—I have personally seen it reveal ideas that become a future job, a true calling. And clues show up here that can become important parts of your life in other ways—hobbies

and pastimes that provide both recreation and contribution to the community. *Avoid the temptation to fret and stew—or worse—to skip this!* Get something down here. Then keep moving. If you're psyched—great! Move on . . .

5. This step 5 may look small—but it is a BIG DEAL. This is your moment to declare to someone (and the world) that you are searching for a new opportunity in your life. Now you have something to show this person when you talk to him.

Use this *Coffee House Blueprint* to describe what you have started and explain that you are taking action. Choose someone who will be supportive—a parent, brother or sister, close family member or friend, including your friend from the coffee shop.

6. This *Blueprint* is as good as your ability to take it “on the road”—that is, to start networking with it. As you finish this activity I want you to start thinking about who you can talk to. In the next activity I'll help you get that started.



The Coffee House Blueprint A Design of Future Possibilities

1. Name Three Job Areas:

Three

2. State Why They're Meaningful

Two

3. Identify People You Know
(possible connections)

One

4. What's on your mind
as you complete this?

5. Share your results with
a second person after your
"coffee shop" work session & chat.

6. Next step: Prepare to seek out others who may be able to help you with contacts.