

The Hell No List

The boundary-setting exercise for a clear starting point
for your career transition



YOUR CAREER *homecoming*

Why Start Here?

When I talk with a new career change client and say, “Hey, paint me the picture. What would meaningful work look like for you? Forget about job titles, forget about business ideas. Let’s think about the DNA of the thing. What might meaningful work consist of for you?”

Sometimes they draw a total blank and say, “Laura, I don’t even know where to start. It’s a blank slate up here. I’ve got nothing.”

And that’s common. If you have been doing work that’s out of alignment with your wants and needs, you can lose the ability to dream and think of other possibilities. Your imagination atrophies. Your hope dwindles. And you have no other option but to resort to coping mechanisms like “I guess this is as good as it gets” and “work is called work for a reason.”

Those are coping mechanisms to allow you to just keep plodding on without questioning your current situation. It’s survival mode. And when I ask, “What might meaningful work consist of for you?” there’s nothing there because you have become so guarded against disappointment and getting your hopes up that you just can’t even think that way anymore.

Questioning is vulnerable. Hoping is vulnerable. Imagining a new future is vulnerable. Because it means you mean you might not get what is in your heart.

So instead, part of you just shuts it down. Have you experienced this? The good news is, we can get your imagination going again. We can start to take some of the armor off your heart and let you hope again.

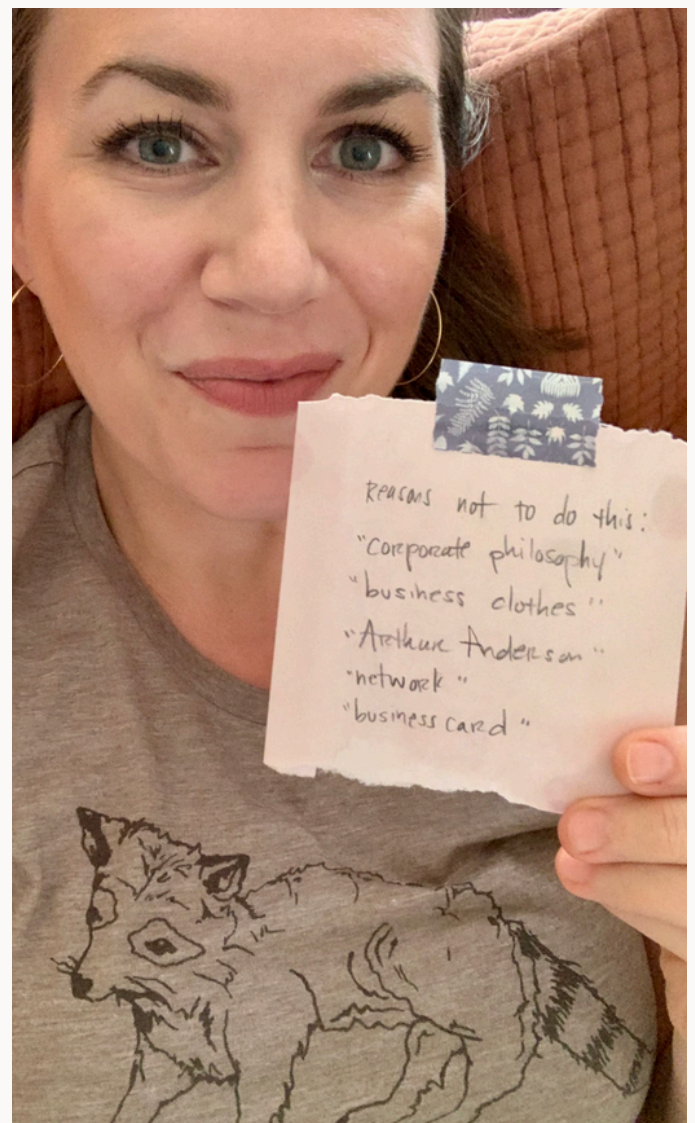
My First Step

In the fall of my senior year of college, I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life. I was about to graduate with a history degree and I didn't want to teach, work in a museum, or go to law school. I didn't know WHAT I wanted to do.

The career center at my college was offering some kind of workshop about how to get your resume in front of companies that were hiring. I did NOT want to attend this thing, but I went so that my mother, no doubt wracked with parental panic about my future, would quit nagging me about it.

It was one of the most valuable workshops I ever attended. Not because I polished my resume, learned how to get a job, or even figured out what I wanted to do.

It was valuable because I got very clear on what I did NOT want. I took notes:



I knew that the world of work they were trying to sell me on was NOT for me.

I did not, would not, EVER belong to the club they wanted me to scrape and bow and contort myself into.

I left it very clear that I would be making my own way. I didn't know what that would look like, only that it would be mine and that I would feel like myself in it.

I keep this scrap of paper, 22 years later, as a reminder of my very own "I don't know what I want to do, but I know it's not THIS!" moment. Because rejection is better than a blank slate. Friction is better than a blank slate

My invitation to you is to create your very own reasons not to do this list. Or what I have my clients create: **A Hell No List.**

Instructions

This simple exercise is designed to give you a starting point for your career change other than a completely blank slate. It's time to draw some boundaries around what you won't ever accept from work again.

We still start with what you don't want to do: your Hell No List. Because you have a history, and there's no use repeating the janky parts.

And then we'll create your Hell Yes List. Sometimes your brain is so invested in the idea that you will never have a career you love that it literally cannot begin to imagine what that kind of career would look like. So we trick it and look at the opposite, first: what it won't look like. From there we can start to reverse engineer what it could look like.

Feeling nervous about setting some boundaries? Keep in mind that this is an exercise on paper. You can do whatever you need to for your survival needs. This is about raising the bar for your Homecoming Career. What are you ready to be DONE with? Write it down.

The Hell No List

Hell no, I will never do this again for money:

Hell no, I will never work in that environment again:

Hell no, I will never tolerate that treatment again:

Hell no, I will never deny myself this again:

Hell no, I will never agree to these conditions again:

Hell no, hell no, hell no, it will never be like this again!

The Hell Yes List

Flip it.

What would the opposite of your hell no's look like? (Let this be easy.)

What's your hell yes?

Hell yes, I will do these things for money:

Hell yes, I will work in these environments:

Hell yes, I will expect to be treated like:

Hell yes, I will honor myself by:

Hell yes, I deserve and will protect these conditions:

Hell yes, hell yes, hell yes, I can create it like I want it!