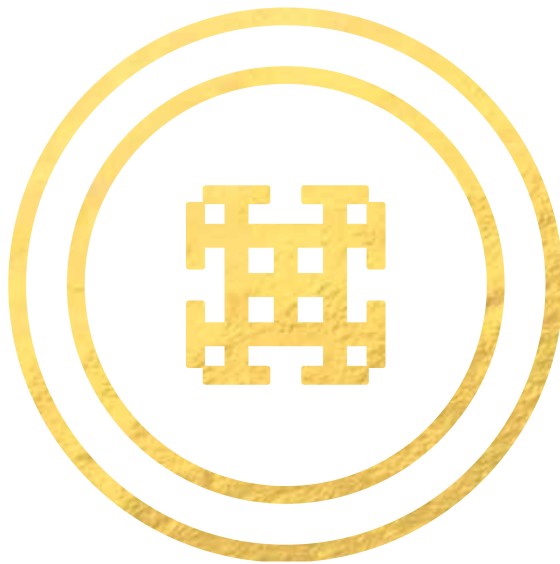




LIFE & LAW BLUEPRINT™

A Step-by-Step Guide to Creating
a Successful and Satisfying Career

Heather Joy Hubbard



© 2017 Heather Joy Hubbard. All rights reserved.

Life & Law Blueprint™ is for your personal, non-commercial use only. You may not copy, duplicate or share this e-book with anyone else. If you want to recommend that a friend or colleague read it (thank you!), please do so by sharing this page: www.HeatherJoyHubbard.com/Blueprint where they can download their own copy (which may be offered for free or available for purchase).

You are on notice that Life & Law Blueprint™ is protected by copyright, trademark, and other intellectual property laws. It is illegal and we will prosecute anyone that shares or uploads this e-book to any file-sharing sites, including law firm and company intranets, or otherwise infringes any intellectual property rights. That includes but is not limited to copying, posting, emailing, selling, distributing, or creating derivative works.

You're a lawyer – be honest, ethical, and respectful of the law and the intellectual property of others. If you want permission to republish any portion of this e-book, you must receive express written permission and a license in advance.

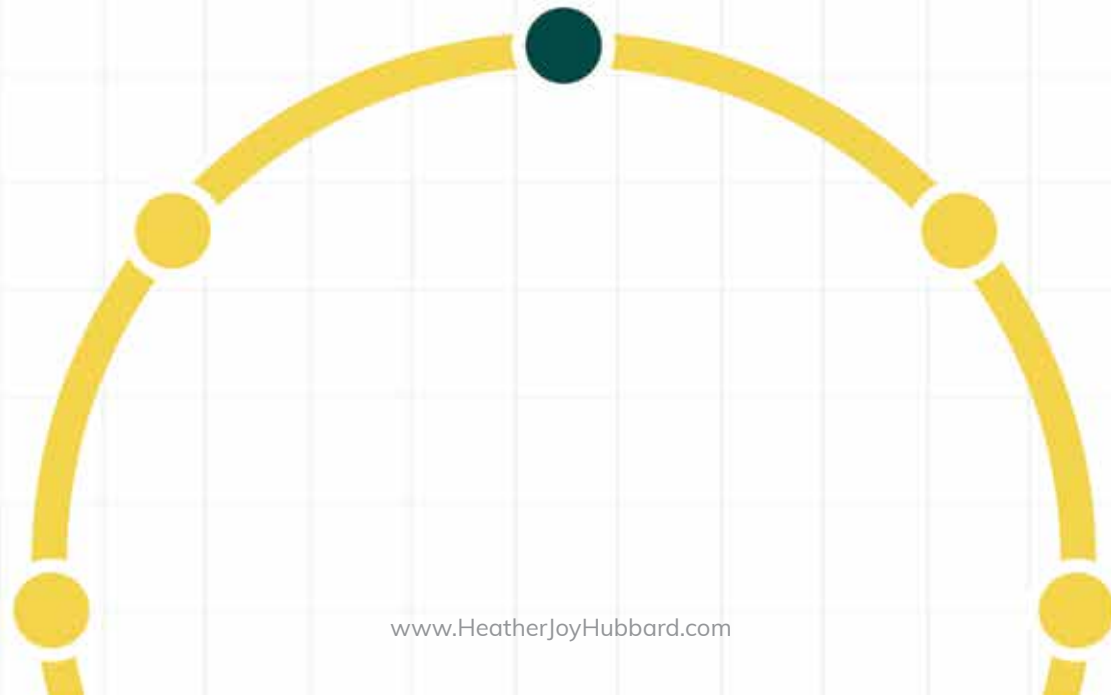


Overview

1. Mindset – Creating a New Reality
2. Clarity – Knowing What You Want
3. Inventory – Being Honest About Where You Are
4. Responsibility – Owning Your Power
5. Surrender – Letting Go of What's Holding You Back
6. Strategy – Taking Your Career to the Next Level
7. Action – Focusing on What Matters Most

Step 1. Mindset Creating a New Reality

Why Getting Your Mind Right
is the Key to Unlocking the Career
and Life You Really Want



We've all heard the phrase "you can't have it all." Or, "you can have it all but not all at once." These remind me of what my parents used to tell me as a kid – "life isn't fair" and "nothing worth having comes easy."

If you live by these mantras, you'll prove them right.

Our minds focus on what we want to see and what we believe is possible.

If we claim we want things to change, to be easier, to be more enjoyable, but deep down we believe it has to be difficult and hard, our minds will continue to focus on what's difficult and hard, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Our brains are structured so that we can limit the information we process. It's simply not possible to take in everything around us.

From early childhood, our brains begin to create neural pathways (or shortcuts) based on our experiences, thoughts, and beliefs. It's designed to help us make quick and efficient decisions, but it's sometimes based on false evidence and causes us to jump to conclusions, make assumptions, and get stuck in our ways.

As lawyers, we're already stubborn know-it-alls. I can only imagine what our neural pathways look like!

But what if we're wrong?

What if law doesn't have to be as difficult as everyone seems to say it is? What if we can have thriving legal practices and lives? What if it can be easy and financially rewarding?

If right now you're thinking I'm crazy, that I'm just an idealist that has lost touch, guess what? Neuroscience says you'll prove me wrong and yourself right by only choosing to see a legal industry that is difficult and soul-sucking.

The good news is that these neural pathways are not permanent. You can train your brain to see things differently and, thus, begin to experience a new reality.

This isn't always easy for attorneys.

Assume that the typical brain needs 100 hours of training to rewire itself. I'm pretty sure a lawyer's brain would need 1000 hours. (Okay, I'm completely making this up – this is not a scientific example – but I'm fairly certain it's accurate.)

Let me explain...

I don't know if it's nurture or nature but most attorneys (myself included) tend to be highly judgmental, skeptical, and critical. That serves us well when we have our lawyer hats on but most of us never take that dang hat off.

First, it's rare for a lawyer to ever fully check-out and be off the clock.

Second, our lawyer brains are always on – we don't know how to shut them down when we leave the office. Perhaps this is why the divorce rate is higher for attorneys than the general population. We're always analyzing, dissecting, challenging, debating, and identifying all the things wrong with a person, idea, place, etc.

Not only can we be overbearing and annoying to our non-lawyer friends and families with our endless criticism and analysis, we're often our own worst enemies as well.

If a lawyer is judgmental and critical of the outside world, you can bet that they're highly judgmental and critical of themselves as well.

It's why studies show we have low resilience – we take things personally and internalize situations more than others. Of course, we may never show that to the outside world. We're notorious for claiming to have thick skin and be bulldogs, but deep down, on the inside, we're often very sensitive.

“

The significant problems
we face cannot be solved
by the same level of
thinking that created them.

— Albert Einstein

”

The first time I heard this it, I was angry. I challenged the career psychologist that told me I had low resilience by saying, “Are you kidding me? Do you know how much crap I’ve put up with and endured? Do you know how much of a fighter I am?!?!?!?” To which he calmly asked, “If you’re so resilient, why are you taking your low-resilience score so personally?”

Damn it.

I **hate** when I’m wrong.

And now I think I’m flawed. Fundamentally flawed. (Because, you know, as a lawyer, I have to lay blame somewhere and it might as well be on me.)

Are you starting to see why our brains might be a little too wired for finding fault in every idea, identifying every possible thing that could go wrong, constantly beating up ourselves and others, and assuming the worst?

Again, I’m pretty sure lawyer brains require more rewiring than others...

This is why mindset is THE most important step. I used to put this step towards the end of the process but it firmly belongs at the beginning. Without a clear and non-judgmental mind, the rest is meaningless.

If you don’t get out of your head, you’ll completely muck up the rest of the steps. Yes, you might be successful, but not as happy as you could be.

And that’s my mission – to help you be successful and happy. I believe it’s possible. Do you? If not, you might want to work on your mindset...

So how do you get started with this first step? How do you begin to change your busy, critical legal mind?

You create space.

Yep, space.

Don't worry, I'm not asking you to give it a break or turn it off. I fully understand how that thought might make you laugh hysterically or start to have a panic attack. So let's keep it simple to start.

You just need space.

What does that mean exactly?

Well, for starters, just try to become aware of when you're being judgmental or critical. You can't begin to make changes if you don't know when you're using your "lawyer brain" for the wrong reasons.

Consider getting help from others. Make it a game. Get your family, friends, colleagues, and assistant to join in (they'll love this!). Ask them to point out when you're being overly critical or analytical.

Think of it like a swear jar. You put a quarter in the jar for every time you cuss. (I've never participated in such nonsense although it would probably be a great retirement vehicle for me!). It could be a penny, quarter, marble, paperclip, whatever. The object doesn't matter – the act of starting to become aware is the purpose.

Now, once you start to become aware of how crazy your legal brain is, you're likely going to become judgmental and critical of yourself. Stop it! And then put another penny in the jar – self-judgment and self-criticism are overly critical thoughts.

It won't take long to notice all of your judgmental thinking patterns.

You can then begin to focus on catching any negative thinking. (And don't be judgmental of yourself when you realize you're the poster child of Debbie Downer!)

After a few weeks, you'll be an expert at noticing your judgmental, critical, and negative thoughts. Each time a new nasty thought or comment comes to surface, give it space. Recognize it (without judgment) and then decide whether it's an appropriate response or a subconscious reaction that isn't

helpful. Both are acceptable but situational awareness is key.

Do yourself, your kids, your spouse, the rest of the world a favor – take back your mind. Don't let law take it over and control it. Create space to recognize what is real and what is just a world viewed through a legal filter.

If you've ever taken a long vacation, sabbatical, or leave from work, you'll know what I'm talking about. Your law on brain is cloudy and crazy... When you give it space, you might even scare yourself with how you've allowed the law to completely high-jack your mind.

It's time to create some new neural pathways!

There is so much more to cover with mindset.

For example, a regular practice of mindfulness and meditation can literally change not only your neural pathways but your brain's grey matter and amygdala as well (Harvard neuroscientists say so!). It will reduce your stress level and anxiety (without changing any of the stressful and anxiety-inducing people and situations in your life), help you focus and be more productive and efficient, and improve your overall happiness and outlook on life. Who wouldn't benefit from that?

You can tackle advanced strategies like mindfulness and meditation later. But to get started with the first step of the Life & Law Blueprint™, it's critical to recognize that your brain on law is neither healthy nor manageable and it needs space to get clear.

A non-judgmental, clear mind will then allow you to create a new reality.

Remember how I told you earlier that your mind shows you what you want it to see?

That's true because science says so but I also know from personal experience.

When you detox your mind and start to shift to a more positive and optimistic outlook, you'll begin to see more opportunities and creative solutions, feel more gratitude for what you have, and just enjoy life more.

This is where it all begins – and it's about to get **really** good if you're ready and willing to start on your mindset.




Step 2. Clarity

Knowing What You Want

Getting Clear On What You Want
Is an Art, Not a Science

It could be that you're doing what you love, you just want more of it – more success, more leadership opportunities, more money. Go girl! As long as you're doing it for the right reasons, you're all set. Move on to Step 3. (How do you know if you're doing it for the right reasons? See the inset for a quick gut check.)



Gut Check: Ask yourself why you want what you want. For every answer, dig deeper and ask yourself again. Keep asking until you run out of explanations and get to the core motivator. If it's about feeling good and doing what you love, move on to Step 3. If you're trying to prove your worth, please others, or you're coming from a place of fear (in other words, it feels more negative or desperate than positive), keep reading Step 2.

If you're feeling stuck, frustrated, burned out, bored, or apathetic in your current career, have no fear – I'm here to help you come up with some ideas to get you out of your rut.

First, know that you're not alone. Lack of career (and life) clarity is the number one reason why attorneys reach out to me.

They're not happy. They're not satisfied. Or their firm or company isn't happy or satisfied. And yet they have NO idea where to begin. They've been spinning their wheels for far too long without any solution in sight.

Maybe going to law school was a bad idea...

If that sounds like you, let me give you a quick piece of advice. Take off your lawyer hat. You're being WAY too logical. You're overanalyzing and overthinking this. You're being judgmental and critical of your other options. You're trying to come up with the perfect solution. That doesn't exist.

It's already time to go back to Step 1. Give your legal brain some space. Breathe.

Welcome back to reality.

Guess what? Your future is bright. Very bright.

I believe you are here for greatness.

I believe you became an attorney for a reason.

Deep down you know that to be true as well.

It's time to start dwelling in the possibilities. Forget what you think you know.

Think back to when you were in law school and you thought anything was possible. Don't let your jaded legal mind say you were young and naïve. She actually knows something you don't – you're amazing and can do whatever you want. She believes in you. I believe in you. It's time for you to believe in you...

Try to suspend all judgment – don't immediately reject an idea. I know you... you're probably going to have an idea and then say, "I've tried that before, "that's not possible," "others have tried that and failed," or "that won't work for me."

If you're going to figure out what you really want, you can't allow these negative and critical thoughts to have a seat at the table. They will kill your career dreams every single time.

Okay, so now that you're being open-minded and brainstorming without judgment, consider what you would like more of in your life.

What would really light you up? What would make you ridiculously happy?

More freedom? More connection? More flexibility? More control? More recognition? More support?

Focus less on titles, roles, jobs, companies, and law and more on the day-to-day things that you love and hate.

It's really that simple.

What do you want more of and what do you want less of?

Start writing down a list of both. Your answers might surprise you!

Then prioritize your top 5 for both and start to think of ways you could start making changes in your current career and life to make those a reality.

Or, if you know you want a change, start to brainstorm and research opportunities that would be aligned with what you want more and less of in your life. Again, you have to be non-judgmental during this process for it to work.

Once you've followed this process, you should have a clearer idea of what you want.

Now...

I'm going to fill you in on a secret that is going to change your life...
You ready?

This decision is not permanent.

Seriously.

If you tell me this is your last move, your last opportunity, so you've got to get this perfect, I'm going to call bullshit on you (fine, I'll put a penny in jar).

You're taking yourself WAY too seriously.

Go back to Step 1.

Nothing is permanent.

You're a brilliant problem solver. You've bounced back from every mistake and bad decision you've ever made.

You've GOT this!

What feels good? What lights you up? Do more of that... and you'll be well on your way to gaining more clarity as to what you want.

“

Understand that
the right to choose
your own path is a
sacred privilege.
Use it. Dwell in
possibility.

— Oprah Winfrey

”



Step 3. Inventory Being Honest About Where You Are

How to Start Making Progress
Towards What You Want

Knowing what you want and going after it are two different things.

In the day-to-day craziness of life, it's often difficult to focus on your goals, let alone your dreams and desires. Big and small changes alike require time and energy and most attorneys have little left to give.

So how do you start making progress towards what you really want?

You have to be honest about where you are.

Having a destination to aim for is great but you can't create a roadmap or figure your way out of a dense forest if you don't know where you're starting from.

This may sound obvious but how often do you say you're going to change something just to find that you keep spinning your wheels, going around in circles, and never making forward progress. A week, a month, a year, a decade passes you by and you're still in the same place or feel even more lost than before.

The only way to ensure that you're making progress and improving your life is to take a regular inventory. In order to do that, you need to identify ways to measure your progress.

What you measure will be different than what someone else measures. Because what lights you up and fills your soul may do nothing for the next person. There is no cookie-cutter inventory form. You have to make it applicable to you and what you want.

If you just start measuring what your firm, company, family, or friends tell you is important, you won't get an accurate picture of your progress.

You can be an equity partner making a million dollars a year, be honored for the most prestigious awards, live in a mansion, and drive a fancy car, but if that's not what YOU want, it's just a societal scorecard, not a personal inventory.

Similarly, measuring where you are, without considering where you want to go, is a complete waste of time and energy. You don't have much of either, so let's not squander sacred resources. Measure only what you want to improve and measure it against your desired outcome.

I'm going to help you with this. Consider the categories in the inset. Which categories have meaning, bring you joy, make you feel guilty with obligation, or stir no feelings at all? Let this list guide you in coming up with the categories that have meaning in your life.

Ideas to get you started (this is not an exhaustive list): Family, Health, Friends, Spirituality, Education, Community, Hobbies, Finances, Career, Leadership, Self-Care, Politics.

CAUTION: Do not focus on a category just because you think you should – that's a sure fire sign that you're doing something for the wrong reason. Odds are you won't stick with it or follow through anyway so just let it go. Now that you've identified the categories that are most aligned with what you want, begin to outline the activities, projects, or goals that would accurately measure how you're doing in this area.

For example, if in Step 2 you identified that you want to spend more time with your family, think about what that means to you. It might look like this:

Family

- Eat dinner with family 4-5x per week
- Weekend getaway with spouse 1x per quarter
- 2-week family vacation each year
- 1 hour of 1-on-1 time with each kid every week

As you can see, every category and desire is vague until you fill in the details of what it means to you. When you write down in detail what would really bring you happiness, you can then track your actions against your intentions.

If you're not regularly taking an honest inventory of where you're spending your time, energy, money, and focus, I can guarantee you that it will not be on what you say you want it to be.

We need guidelines and posts to measure our progress. Otherwise, we'll just stay on the hamster wheel claiming we want changes but not actually making them.

Be honest.

Where are you compared to where you want to be?

What are you doing to start living the life you want? If you don't document and track it (at least annually, but preferably monthly), you'll stay stuck where you are.

And now is the best time to begin.

Imagine how far you can go in just a few short years (or months for that matter) if you just take the time to regularly check-in to make sure you're not veering off the path of your dreams.

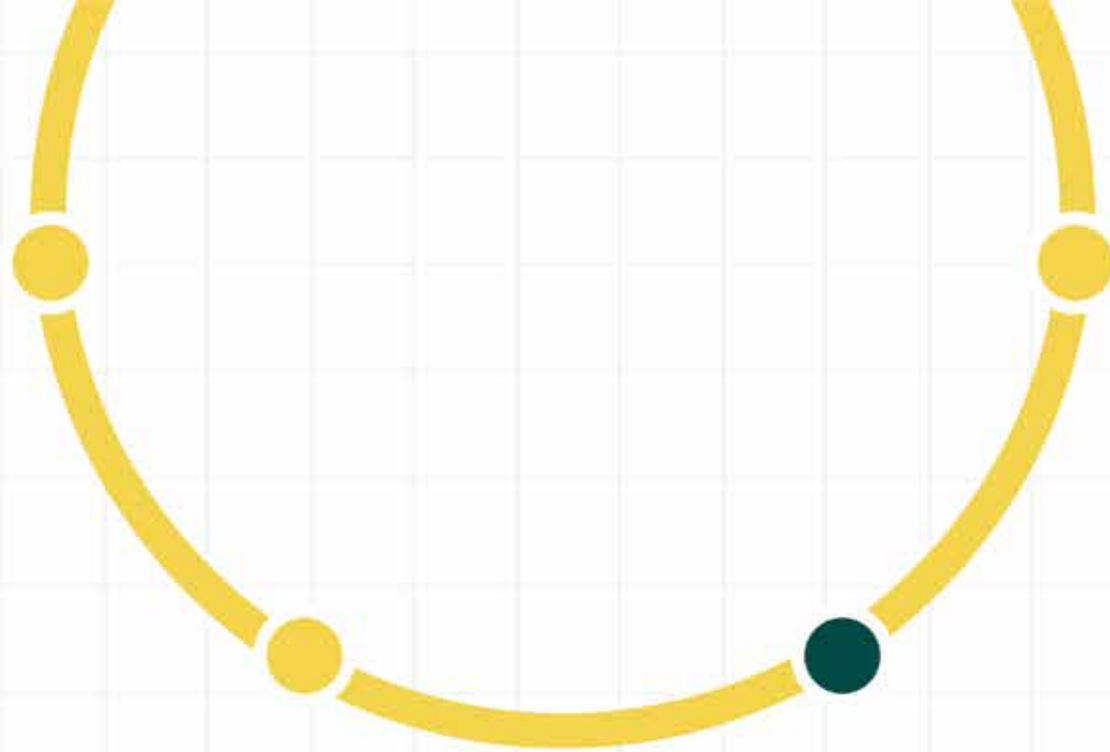
If not now, when?

“

Our lives only improve
when we take chances –
and the first and most
difficult risk we can take is
to be honest with ourselves.

— Walter Anderson

”



Step 4. Responsibility Owning Your Power

Taking Back Your Power Starts
with Owning Your Decisions

I don't know too many irresponsible attorneys.

Every attorney I know seems to have super human powers, especially female attorneys. You can juggle a toddler, egotistical colleague, demanding judge, irrational opposing counsel, grocery list, and a cup of coffee – in heels. Very stylish heels.

So when I talk about taking personal responsibility in Step 4, I want to make clear that I'm not in any way suggesting that you're lazy, you're not trying hard enough, or that you're not amazing in every way.

Responsibility is about taking ownership of decisions so that you can take back your power.

Many attorneys complain that they can't do what they want or even work towards what they want because of a million different reasons.

These are excuses.

They are.

I'm not judging you – I do it, too.

But it takes away our power. We're not victims. We're not being forced to do anything. We're not stuck because there is no way out.

We're just not willing to make changes.

Because that's scary! Like standing in front of court naked scary. (We've all had that dream, right?)

It's easy to complain about how all firms and companies are the same. It's easy to say that in order to have flexibility, we have to trade off a 9-5 schedule. Or that in order to have a life, we have to take a pay cut without advancement opportunities.

We make our problems about other people or the legal industry in general.

“

If you don't like
something,
change it.
If you can't
change it,
change your
attitude.

— Maya Angelou

”

As if we don't have a choice in the matter.

That leads to bitterness. And, oh my goodness, how bitterness seems to run rampant in the legal industry!

Yes, the legal industry can be super frustrating. Demanding hours, the good-old-boy culture, unappreciative bosses and clients, constant "emergencies," implicit bias, the expectation of face time, the list goes on and on.

But you do have a choice.

You don't have to be a practicing attorney (even if you have student loans). You don't have to work for that asshole partner or client (sorry—another penny in the jar). You don't have to live in a particular city, send your kids to private schools, or have a mansion in the fanciest part of town. You are choosing all of those things.

If that means that you need a certain salary, then stop complaining and be grateful that you have a career that supports what matters most to you. And if those things don't actually matter to you, then why are you killing yourself to please others?

That may sound harsh but I can't empower you with kindness and lies.

It's your life. You can change most anything. You simply choose not to.

When you start to own your decisions, you take back your power.

Consider which is more powerful:

I hate my job but I'm bound by golden handcuffs. I can't make this much money doing anything else and my kids are used to a certain lifestyle. I don't have any choice in the matter. I'm stuck, at least until the kids graduate from college. By then it will probably be too late to make any moves. I'll then be too close to retirement. Being a lawyer sucks but I'm too far in to change anything now. I'll just warn every young person I know not to go to law school. It ruins your life.

OR

I love providing my kids with a certain lifestyle. They get to go to the best schools, travel to some of the most interesting places in the world, drive some of the safest cars on the market, and grow up in a beautiful neighborhood. I'm so grateful that I have the opportunity to make the kind of money that I do. I may consider doing something more personally fulfilling when the kids graduate, but this is my priority right now and I'm so happy that my career and law degree allow me this luxury.

Can you see how one is disempowering and one is empowering?

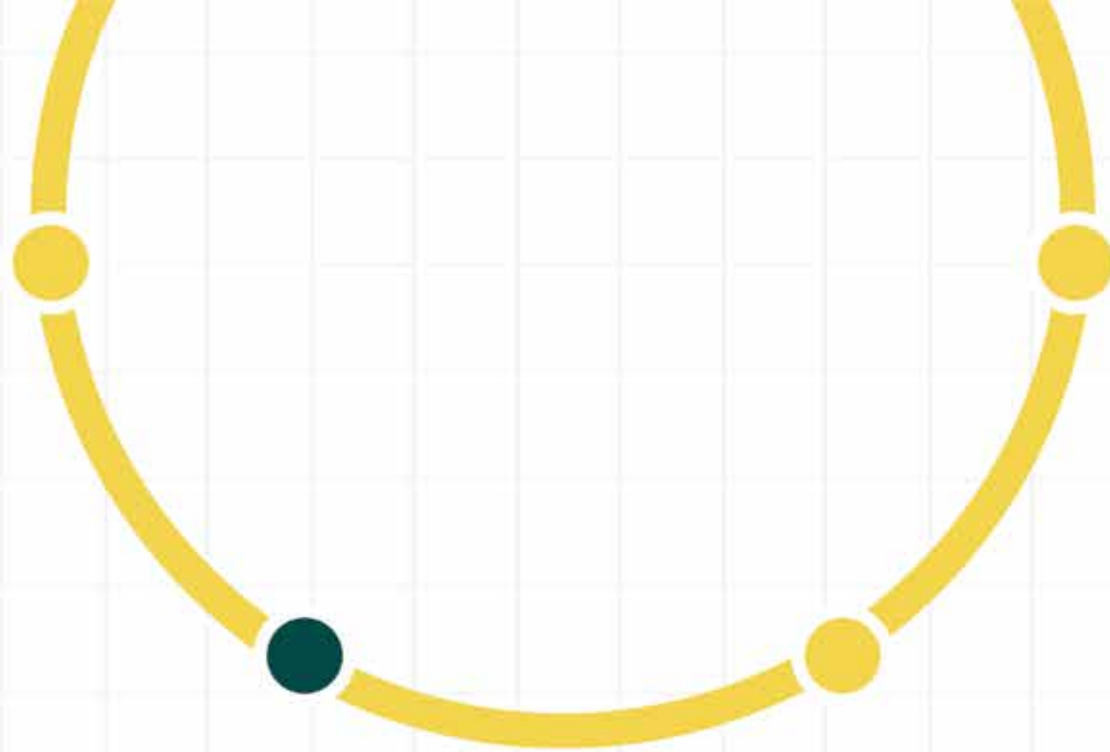
The situation is the same but in the former the attorney is a victim – in the latter the attorney is in control of her destiny.

Taking responsibility for your choices also allows you to recognize when you're doing things for the wrong reasons.

If you can't rewrite the script in a way that feels positive and authentic, then it may be time to face your fears and be honest about why you're scared of making a different decision. (Hint: it probably relates to people-pleasing or codependency).

This step is huge. It's empowering, enlightening, and can instantly shift your perspective and capacity to enjoy the life you've made for yourself.

You **ARE** powerful beyond measure.



Step 5. Surrender Letting Go of What's Holding You Back

You Can't Move Forward If You Don't Let Go

“

I don't focus on what I'm up against. I focus on my goals and I try to ignore the rest.

— Venus Williams

”

In the last step, we covered how you're in control of most everything in your life – at least every decision you make.

There are some things, of course, that we can't control. Ironically, it's these things that we tend to focus on the most and try the hardest to manipulate and change.

Perhaps it's easier to focus on trying to change someone else than changing yourself?

(I'm hiding in the corner sheepishly raising my hand.)

Seriously, though...

Have you ever tried to change a family member, friend, colleague, boss, teacher or anyone else?

Others just don't do things the way you want them to and clearly your way is the right way. If they would just change, it would make your life easier and more enjoyable.

(Come on, raise your hand. Don't make me out to be the only bad guy in the room.)

As lawyers, we're good at negotiating and coaxing (ahem, manipulating) people to get the outcome we want. But this approach only creates a false sense of security because we're not really in control. We just think we are.

Here's the thing... when your happiness and sense of peace depends on someone else, you're going to be let down time and time again. Never ever give away your power to someone else.

I'm not saying don't use boundaries. Just because you can't change someone doesn't mean you should let them walk all over you.

What I am suggesting is that you: (1) accept and embrace people for who they are, (2) set firm and clear boundaries for how you expect to be treated, and (3) walk away (sometimes in the moment, sometimes permanently) from those who won't respect you.

But don't focus your time and energy on trying to change others. Focus on yourself instead. That will lead to far greater satisfaction.

Letting go doesn't just relate to people. Sometimes we try to control situations and that, too, is a losing proposition.

For example, maybe you've set your sights on something super specific like becoming General Counsel of a certain Fortune 500 company. No matter how strategic you are, no matter how many connections you have, there is no guarantee you'll ever get the position. When you put all of your hopes and dreams in a single title, position, company, or anything else, you're setting yourself up for disappointment.

If you cannot genuinely control something, it's important to surrender the outcome in order to maintain a positive outlook and enjoy the blessings all around you.

This is why I encourage you to stay focused on how you want to feel as opposed to specific situations such as jobs, marriage, children, cities, etc.

I will tell you that my biggest challenge with Step 5 often relates to reaching the goals I've set for myself.

Like you, I'm really, really good at achieving most anything I set my mind to. But I'm not God. I'm not actually in control. When I become so attached to an outcome over which I have no ultimate control and things go wrong, it can completely take me out. I'm so focused on trying to push and force that I lose myself (and what I really want) in the process.

Surrendering is a lesson I continue to learn. The more I surrender, the happier I am.

Notice I didn't say the more I surrender, the more successful I am. Surrendering doesn't mean things always turn out the way you want them to – it simply means you're reclaiming your peace of mind as opposed to banging your head against the wall.

Surrender is also required when it comes to some of the biggest hurdles you might face in your career – sexism, racism, implicit bias, etc.

How do you care deeply about issues without being consumed by them? How do you focus on changing and improving situations without letting them take you out?

It's a careful balance of Steps 4 and 5 – changing what you can while surrendering what you can't (think of the Serenity Prayer).

You don't want to bury your head in the sand and turn a blind eye. But you if you allow the things you can't change to consume you, the only person that loses is you.

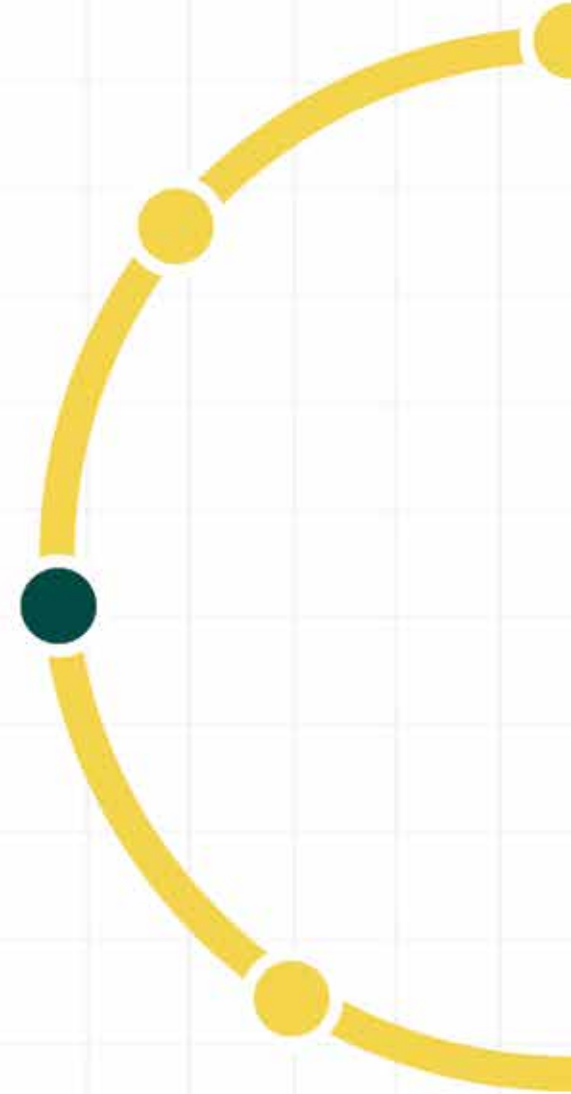
And I want you to win.

I want you to rise.

The only way you can show up as your best self is if you start surrendering the things you can't change so you can focus your time and energy on what you can.

Step 6. Strategy Taking Your Career to the Next Level

Without Strategy and Support,
You'll Never Be Able to Achieve Your Vision



I truly believe that most women go to law school because they're ambitious, wicked smart and want to help others. They enjoy intellectually challenging work, developing killer strategies and solving high-stakes problems. Most of all, they find it deeply rewarding when they can score a win for a client.

Attorneys are problem-solvers by their very nature. They are good at gamesmanship. They are excellent advocates.

Yet attorneys often stumble when it comes to focusing on their own problems, navigating their own careers, and advocating on their own behalves.

I have a few ideas as to why this may be the case.

First, we're so busy helping others that we just don't take the time to focus on ourselves.

Second, even though we're tough as nails on the outside, we're often unsure and have low self-esteem on the inside. It's harder to advocate for yourself if you don't believe in yourself.

Last, we assume that if we just work hard enough we'll be rewarded for doing so. (I mean, isn't that why we went to law school? We worked hard, made good grades, and were told we could do anything if we kept up the good work.)

Here's the thing...

Hard work isn't enough.

Maybe initially but not in the long term.

You don't grow a book of business just by trying hard. You can go to every networking event and conference in your industry, write articles and speak, and do great work. That may have been enough twenty or thirty years ago but rarely is that enough in today's crowded legal market.

“

Plan your work
for today and
every day, then
work your plan.

— Margaret Thatcher

”

And it's not just for law firm attorneys. Trying to move up the ranks in a company or in politics? There is fierce competition and the victor is not always the hardest worker.

Hard work may have gotten you here, but it won't get you there. If you want to uplevel your career, you need to be strategic and in ways you weren't taught in law school.

You have to advocate for your salary and leadership positions, even if that's not expected or customary in your firm or company. You have to ask for what you need – you can't expect that others will take care of you. (Hint: they're really busy and exhausted too; they don't have time to take care of themselves as well as you, even if they are your supervisor or manager).

You have to focus on your priorities and what will advance your career. No one is going to carve that time out for you. No one is going to tell you to stop focusing on them, saving them, doing all the work for them.

You have to become the CEO of your career as opposed to an employee of someone else's.

How do you do that?

By following a tried and true system.

It starts with vision. Lucky for you, you've already completed Step 2 and you know what you want.

Next, you need a strategy – and a good one.

What would happen if you took your career as seriously as a client case or deal? How would you approach things differently? You'd likely take the desired outcome, review all the facts and law, and then come up with your best strategy to accomplish that outcome.

Follow the same process.

Take your vision. Be honest about where you are compared to where you want to be. Consider all available opportunities and possibilities. Suspend judgment. Then come up with some solid good moves to help you achieve what you want.

Like in law, there is rarely any certainty in achieving your vision or goals. But you can assess the odds, consider different approaches, and predict which might be the most effective. Just as you wouldn't put forth every argument in a brief because it dilutes the strength of your best points and makes you look desperate, you don't need to use every strategy under the sun.

Analyze your options, apply them to your specific situation, make your best educated guess, and then believe in it with conviction.

You can't get this perfect. There's no such thing.

I need to repeat this because attorneys often get hung up and stuck here.

You can't guarantee the outcome.

That's okay. This is what you do every single day – you operate in an area without certainty or guarantees. And you're pretty good at what you do, right?

That said, if you're not good with business or career strategy (or you just don't enjoy it), hire an expert. This is where you do want to think like a lawyer. If you had a case and were in over your head, you'd bring in a consultant, co-counsel, or an expert. Your career is no different. Seek out help when you need it.

Okay, now that you've picked a strategy, you want to map out your goals.

If your strategy is to build a book of business by becoming the go-to expert in a new and growing area of law, then your goals might be: (1) get published in 5 leading journals on this specific area of law, (2) get interviewed on 10 podcasts, news shows, or other media outlets about this specific area of law, and (3) get 5 new matters in this area of the law.

Just as there are hundreds (if not thousands) of possible strategies to achieve your vision, there are just as many possible goals to focus on to support your strategy.

Write down as many ideas as possible for goals that are aligned with your strategy.

Then look at them again. Assuming each passes the logical (and ethical) test, take off your lawyer hat. Put it in the closet. Close the closet door.

Now...

What does your gut say? What lights you up and gets you excited? What plays to your natural strengths (as in it sounds too good to be true because it's super easy for you)? What feels really good?

Make those your goals!

A word of caution. You shouldn't have more than 3 goals at one time. Why? Because you won't reach them. You'll just dilute your efforts, which will dilute your results.

I get SO much push back on this.

Yet my clients prove me right over and over again. When they insist on having more than 3 goals (because they can't NOT work towards certain things), they often fail to meet even 1 goal.

They're busy doing lots of things but don't have enough momentum to get anything across the finish line.

It's counterintuitive. I get it.

It's hard to say you're not going to focus on something, especially when you care about it or your firm or company says you have to. But having lots of goals on paper simply makes you feel good – it doesn't produce results.

Be honest for a minute.

Do you really focus on and reach all of your goals each year? Or do you write a business plan or come up with resolutions a mile long, only to find you made little progress or ended up focusing your time in totally different areas?

There are lots of shiny objects and opportunities that pop up that can easily distract you. When you have laser focus, it allows you to more confidently say no to those opportunities that aren't aligned with your vision, strategy, and goals.

If you want to actually reach a goal, do yourself a favor and only identify 1-3 goals. If you meet them, you can always add more later. (P.S. I've yet to see that happen. You're busier than you think and your best-made intentions are often put on the back burner when you're busy and overwhelmed).

Once you have your goals, you next want to focus on project management.

How will you try to reach your goals? If you don't have a clear plan with timelines and assignments, you'll get inundated with the day-to-day chaos of your life and never do the work needed to move the ball forward.

I prefer to brainstorm projects when I first identify my goals because my creative juices are flowing at that time. I then like to focus on tasks when I'm planning out my weeks and days because I'm more realistic and logical. Do whatever works for you.

But if you try to map out everything at once at the very beginning, you're likely to get overwhelmed and give up and never come back to it. Read this sentence again if it didn't sink in. This is super important.

Okay, let's break down the project management piece.

Projects are the overarching, big picture things that need to get done to support your goals. Tasks are the smaller, more detailed things that need to get done to support your projects.

For example, let's take the goal of getting published in 5 major publications.

You might have 3 main projects to support that goal:

- (1) pitch to publications
- (2) write and edit articles
- (3) promote articles post-publication

Assuming you decide to tackle the first project (pitch to publications) one day, your tasks might include the following:

- (1) delegate to assistant or marketing department to create an Excel sheet that identifies possible publications, publication schedules, scheduled themes/topics, submission guidelines, and contact information
(helpful hint: delegate as much as you can; efficiency is queen!)
- (2) start outlining topic ideas with short descriptions.

You need a simple and strategic plan.

Few take the time to do it or ever follow through. If you do, you'll be far ahead of the pack.

And that's where I want you.

Leading, having fun, and feeling confident about your future.

If you follow this process and start tackling bite-sized tasks on a regular basis that support your goals (and you need to make this a habit if you really want to take your career to the next level), you'll quickly start making major progress towards what you want.

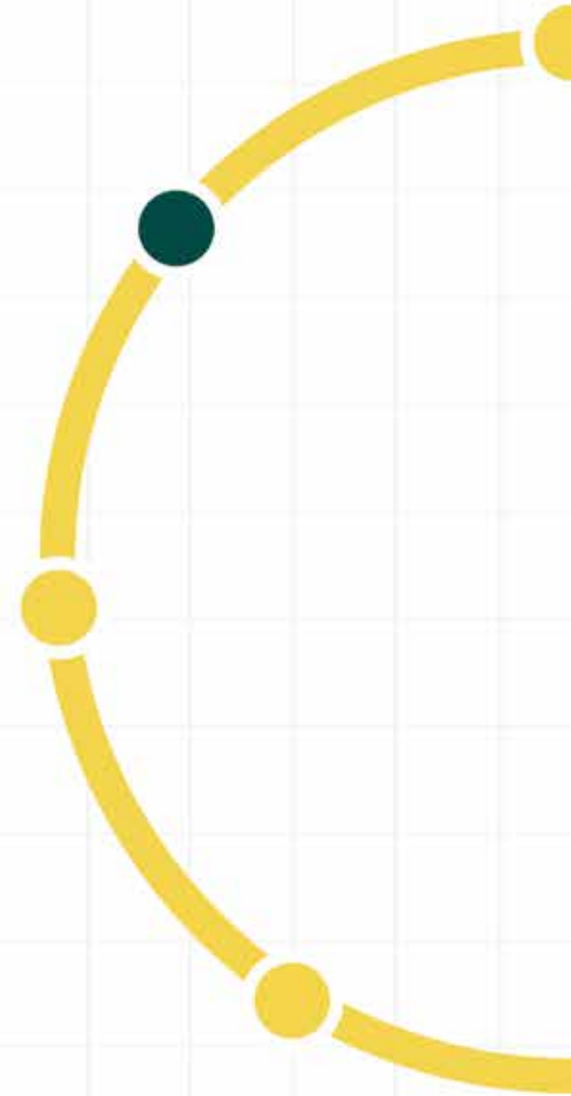
If, on the other hand, you stay stuck at the task level (without paying attention to your goals), you'll be exhausted, running on a hamster wheel, and frustrated with your lack of results.

You need focus that is connected to the larger picture.

Planting seeds here there and everywhere without a clear plan is a recipe for burnout and frustration.

Step 7. Action Focusing on What Matters Most

Taking Daily Inspired Action
Will Skyrocket Your Success



“

Success doesn't come from what you do occasionally, it comes from what you do consistently.

—Marie Forleo

”

The last step isn't something you do annually, quarterly, monthly, or even weekly.

It requires commitment and consistency. Every. Single. Day.

But this isn't just work.

This is your life's work.

This is the work that is getting you one step closer to what you really want.

Whenever you feel as though you're too busy, you don't have time, you're too overwhelmed, or you're too tired, I want you to think about your vision.

Is it really worth putting off any longer?

Start small if you tend to quit things after a few days or weeks.

Spend just 15 minutes each day on your Life & Law Plan™ (this is the plan from Step 6; I've created a specific process for clients but any process will do for now) and then build up your time.

Eventually, you'll find yourself spending 30 minutes, then 45 minutes, then an hour, or maybe more.

If you're wondering where you'll find extra time to do the work, check out Episode 3 of my Hustle & Flow Podcast – How to Take Back Your Day. (link: www.hustleandflowpodcast.com/3)

By learning to focus on the most important issues, allowing others to do things for themselves, and by delegating more effectively, you can create time to focus on what matters most to you.

Remember, it's not about how busy you are, it's about how focused and efficient you are.

Spend more time...

- Trusting your gut
- Saying yes to what matters
- Saying no to what's a distraction
- Outsourcing
- Standing firm
- Taking chances
- Planning
- Asking for help
- Staying focused on your vision and goals
- Self-care

Spend less time on...

- Fake emergencies
- Non-billable time
- E-mails and social media
- Internal meetings
- Activities you can delegate
- People-pleasing
- Caring about what others think
- Fear of rejection or failure
- Endless and aimless to-do lists
- Drifting (i.e., veering off your path)

Work smarter, not harder.

Taking daily inspired and aligned action is where the magic happens. It's what allows your dreams to come true.

Make time for it because your dreams matter.

YOU MATTER!

And, for the record, I do believe you can have it all and all at once.

I just don't think you need (or actually want) it all and you certainly don't need to do it all. Just what matters...

and you get to decide what that is!

Thank you for spending your time with me in this e-book. I know your time is precious and I hope you have found great value in this step-by-step guide.

Life & Law Blueprint™ is a simple but powerful tool.

If you work through the steps over and over again, you'll be amazed at how much you can accomplish. More importantly, you'll feel the confidence of knowing that it's a life and legal career designed just for you.

These principles are the foundation of everything I teach because I believe in this system so deeply. It changes lives and produces results and I'm humbled and honored to share them with you.

When you're ready to go deeper and really uplevel every area of your career and life, I'd love to personally work with you and support you.

You can learn more about my Retreats, Masterminds, and other programs at my website.

In closing:

I believe you are here for greatness.

I believe you went to law school for a reason.

I believe you can have the life and legal career you really want.

Don't buy into the legal industry's story that law has to be difficult in order to be profitable. That you have to choose between success and happiness.

It's time to write a new story. One that's all your own.

To your rise,

Heather

