A GUIDED WORKBOOK

THE CLARITY BREW

5 INNER REFLECTIONS BEFORE
YOUR NEXT CAREER MOVE

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

You don't need another checklist right now.

I've spent nearly 20 years on the other side of the hiring table as a talent acquisition leader at Lazada, Mondelez, Honeywell, and Momentive. I've assessed thousands of profiles, sat in on hundreds of debrief conversations, and watched brilliant professionals lose opportunities not because they lacked skills, but because they lacked clarity about who they were and what they genuinely wanted.

They were applying for the next role instead of the right role. And wondered why they were not successful in receiving interviews and offers.

The professionals who stood out are the ones hiring managers remembered. The ones who negotiated from strength and had done this inner work first. They walked in knowing their values, their impact patterns, their non-negotiables. They had a story, and it was uniquely theirs.

This guide gives you a structured space to brew that clarity. Five reflections, each grounded in positive psychology, each accompanied by what I've learned from the hiring side. It's not a quick fix. It's a beginning.

Take your time. Brew slowly.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1

Set aside 30–45 minutes of uninterrupted time. Don't rush these.

2

Write your responses even if they're rough and unpolished. The act of writing creates clarity that thinking alone cannot.

3

Come back to each reflection a second time if you can. Notice what shifts.

4

You don't need to answer every question all at once. Notice which ones catch your breath and make you pause.

REFLECTION ONE

THE VALUES PAUSE

When was the last time you stopped and asked: What actually matters to me right now?

Not what mattered five years ago. Not what your family or the industry expects. What matters to **you**, today, at this point in your life and career.

Values drift without us realising. You take a promotion because it's the logical next step. You stay in a role because the salary is comfortable. And then one Tuesday morning, you sit at your desk and feel an unexplainable flatness, not burnout exactly. More like a misalignment. The work isn't wrong. But it doesn't feel like yours either.

That feeling is often your values trying to speak.

REFLECT
From the list below, circle or note the 5 values that feel most alive for you right now:

AUTONOMY	IMPACT	RECOGNITION	GROWTH	SECURITY
COMMUNITY	CREATIVITY	LEADERSHIP	MEANING	STABILITY
CHALLENGE	BALANCE	EXCELLENCE	INTEGRITY	SERVICE
ADVENTURE	LEARNING	COLLABORATION	INFLUENCE	WELLBEING

Now look at your top 5. Of those, which 2 are truly non-negotiable? The ones that, if absent, make even a good-looking role feel empty?

My Two Non-Negotiable Values

Non-negotiable #1:

Write your answer here

Non-negotiable #2:

Write your answer here

Evidence — Where have I seen these values at play in work that felt right?

Write your answer here

THE INSIDER LENS · From 20 years on the hiring side

Misalignment between personal values and the culture of a role is the single biggest driver of early-tenure exits. Candidates who can articulate their values clearly don't just interview better. They self-select with more precision. They stop wasting applications on roles that look impressive but wouldn't sustain them. They also signal to hiring managers something rare: self-awareness. That is a leadership quality.

REFLECTION TWO

THE STRENGTHS AUDIT

There's a difference between what you're *competent* at and what you're genuinely great at.

Competencies are skills you've built over time, often because your role required them. Strengths are something else. They're the things that, when you use them, you feel energized rather than depleted. You lose track of time. You look up and it's been three hours and you're not tired. You're more alive.

Most professionals undersell their strengths because they've mistaken ease for ordinariness. What feels natural to you is not ordinary. It's your edge.

REFLECT
Think about a piece of work in the last 2 years that you're genuinely proud of. It doesn't have to be the biggest project or the most impressive outcome. It just needs to be one where you thought: 'That felt like me.'

1. Describe the work briefly.
2. What specific actions did you take that made the difference?
3. What internal qualities were you drawing on? (e.g. persistence, creativity, calm, strategy, connection)
4. What do others consistently come to you for? What do colleagues or managers trust you with?

What others consistently rely on me for:

Write your answer here

In that piece of work, I was drawing on:

Write your answer here

The strength I underestimate most in myself:

Write your answer here

THE INSIDER LENS · From 20 years on the hiring side
In interviews, hiring managers don't remember the job descriptions. They remember impact patterns. The candidates who leave an impression can say: 'Here's how I create results, here's what I consistently bring, and here's why that matters to your context.'

That clarity comes from knowing your strengths and not just listing them, but understanding how and when they show up. When you can name your own pattern of impact, you stop sounding like everyone else in the room.

REFLECTION THREE

THE STORY YOU'RE TELLING

Every career is a narrative. The question is whether you're **the author** or just a character reacting to what happens next.

Many mid-career professionals carry a story that no longer serves them. It might sound like: 'I've been in this industry too long to pivot now.' Or: 'I don't have the right background for that level.' Or the quieter one: 'People like me don't usually get those roles.'

These aren't facts. They're interpretations. And interpretations can always be rewritten.

REFLECT
Write your current career story in 3 sentences as if you were explaining your trajectory to a stranger at a networking event, unfiltered.

Now read it back. Ask yourself:
1. Is this story told from strength or from apology?
2. What words reveal a limiting belief: 'just', 'only', 'still', 'haven't yet'?
3. If a close friend with the same experience told this story, what would you want them to say instead?

Now rewrite your 3 sentences from strength. Same facts, different frame.

Current version (unfiltered):

Write your answer here

Rewritten from strength. Same story, owned differently:

Write your answer here

THE INSIDER LENS · From 20 years on the hiring side

Recruiters and hiring managers make emotional decisions before they make logical ones. A candidate who narrates their career from a place of agency: 'I chose this', 'I built this', 'I moved here because' is immediately more compelling than one who makes it sound like a series of things that happened to them. Your story doesn't need to be perfect. It needs to be owned. When you walk into a room with a coherent, confident narrative, you change the energy of the entire conversation.

REFLECTION FOUR

THE ENERGY MAP

Before you decide what to move toward, it's worth getting honest about what's been draining you.

Not every drain means the work is wrong. Some drains are situational: a difficult manager, a dysfunctional team, an organisation going through disruption. Some are structural: you've outgrown the role, the industry, the pace. And some are signals: that thing you keep dreading? It might not belong in your next chapter at all.

On the other side of the map are the gains. The moments in your work week even in a hard job, when something clicks, when you feel present, capable, and interested. These are breadcrumbs. Follow them.

REFLECT
Think about your current or most recent role. For each column, write freely:

- DRAINS — activities, environments, dynamics that leave you flat or depleted
- GAINS — activities, moments, types of work that leave you energised or more alive

Then ask: Which of my drains are situational (context-dependent)? Which are structural (a pattern across multiple roles)?

And: What do my gains have in common? What's the thread?

What Drains Me

Write your answer here

What Energises Me

Write your answer here

THE INSIDER LENS · From 20 years on the hiring side

When you know your non-negotiables on the energy side, your job search becomes more precise, and your conversations with hiring managers become stronger. Instead of saying 'I'm looking for growth' (which everyone says), you start saying: 'I do my best work in environments where I'm given ownership over a problem and the space to build.' That's specific. That's memorable. And it helps the interviewer help you find the right fit on both sides.

REFLECTION FIVE

THE MEANING QUESTION

This is the one most professionals skip, especially the high achievers.

You've spent your career building skills, hitting targets, and solving problems. You're good at what you do. But somewhere in the back of your mind, a question has been asking itself: is this what I really want?

Purpose doesn't have to be grand. It doesn't require founding an NGO or leaving corporate life for a cause. It can be as precise as: I want to be the person who builds teams that actually work. Or: I want my work to help people access opportunities they didn't think were available to them.

When you have that anchor, career decisions get cleaner. Opportunities either move you toward it or they don't.

REFLECT
Imagine it's two years from now and you've had the kind of career chapter you actually wanted.

- What kind of work were you doing? What were you building, contributing to, or changing?
- What would the people around you: colleagues, clients, your team say about you?
- What would you be proud of?

Now, in one sentence: what kind of contribution do you most want to make in your next career chapter?

In my next career chapter, I want to contribute:

Write your answer here

The type of impact that feels most meaningful to me:

Write your answer here

THE INSIDER LENS · From 20 years on the hiring side

Purpose-led professionals ask better questions in interviews and that signals leadership potential. They don't just ask about the role; they ask about what the team is building, what success looks like in two years, what the organisation is wrestling with. These are the questions of someone who is here to contribute, not just to collect a salary. Hiring managers at senior levels are specifically looking for this. And it's not something you can fake on the spot. It comes from having done this kind of reflection.

WHAT THESE REFLECTIONS ARE SHOWING YOU

You've just done something most job seekers rarely do.

Most people start their career search from the outside in: scanning job boards, updating their LinkedIn headline, asking friends if they've heard of any openings. Don’t get me wrong. There's nothing wrong with those steps. But without the inside work, they lead to the same patterns: another role that looks right but isn't quite, and another three months of feeling like something's missing.

What you've done here, naming your values, auditing your strengths, examining your story, mapping your energy, and identifying your contribution, this is the foundation for everything that comes next. The resume. The LinkedIn narrative. The interview. The negotiation.

IF YOUR REFLECTIONS REVEALED...

Clarity: You know what you want. The next step is strategic. Position yourself intentionally and navigate the market with precision.

Confusion: You're seeing competing priorities or you're not sure what the pattern means yet. That's a starting point. That's exactly what coaching is for.

A gap between where you are and where you want to be. That gap has a bridge. It's built from the right moves, in the right order, with the right support.

READY TO TURN THIS CLARITY INTO A STRATEGY?

I work with mid-career professionals and first-time leaders to navigate career transitions with clarity, confidence, and intention. If these reflections have opened something in you, or if you're sitting with more questions than answers, I'd love to have a conversation.

BOOK A FREE CLARITY CALL TODAY
THEBREWINGSPACE.COM

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"THE MOST IMPORTANT CAREER QUESTION ISN'T 'WHAT'S NEXT?' — IT'S 'WHO AM I BECOMING?'"

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