

Kasey's Early-Career Advice for Graduates (2024)

1. Location > Company/Role

Geography sets the constraints of and biases who you will meet, what opportunities will be available, and generally whether you will enjoy the wind of a growing economy at your back, therefore:

Do whatever you can to get to the right city for your career as soon as possible, including taking a less desirable job to pay rent.

2. Careers are built on networks

Great work is rarely found by blasting out resumes to job postings, because people want more trust than that. Trust happens through referrals from trusted acquaintances, but networking to actively find work will backfire, therefore:

Be interested and interesting. Always be meeting new people, ask good questions, and actively listen. Work on interesting side projects. Let interesting people find you by writing online.

3. Learning sucks — and has compounding returns

*Growth doesn't happen when you're comfortable. It happens when you push yourself and constantly prove *to yourself* what you're capable of, therefore:*

When choosing between two or more options and it isn't clear which is superior, always choose the option that will be harder or make you more uncomfortable.

4. Your career isn't a ladder, it's a jungle gym

You become a stronger and more adaptable thinker by diversifying your experience. It creates more opportunities for intellectual arbitrage. You can transfer skills from less desirable roles to more desirable roles, therefore:

Do a lot of things. Don't worry about the fake boundaries set up between roles or "staying in your lane". Be opportunistic. However...

5. Legibility is a shortcut to trust

Trust is a scarce resource. So is time. Nobody has time to figure out if you're trustworthy or good at what you do, so they look for quick demarcations of quality, therefore:

Get very good at telling your story, then get good at adapting it depending on the audience so they immediately see your value. Acquire credentials when the cost isn't too high.

6. Well-connected people connect people

The phrase "you should meet my friend" is the renewable energy that makes the professional world go 'round. The village provides, but you must nurture the village, therefore:

Create spaces for interesting people to gather. Host parties. Create study groups. When you meet great people, bring them into the fold.

7. The future belongs to humans who leverage AI

If AI continues to progress—and I think it will—the successful careers of the future won't be built inside companies but by entrepreneurial individuals that know how to create value out of intelligence, therefore:

Start building now. Understand how to systematically identify latent needs and how to leverage new tools to create solutions with limited resources.