Jenny Blake Speaking Kit

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Jenny Blake Biography


While working at Google, Jenny completed training to be a life coach through the Coaches Training Institute in 2008, and finished her certification in 2010. She is a certified Myers-Briggs practitioner, and served on the Board of Governors for the International Association of Coaching in 2010. Jenny also completed yoga teacher training in 2010 through the White Lotus Foundation in Santa Barbara.

Prior to Google and halfway through her junior year at UCLA, Jenny took a leave of absence to help launch a political polling start-up company, Polimetrix (later acquired and renamed YouGov America), with her college professor and mentor. For two years she served as the office manager, marketing assistant, and webmaster. Jenny returned to finish at UCLA in the spring of 2005. She graduated in 3 years with degrees in political science and communications, and with several distinctions: Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, and College Honors.

After stumbling through the “real world” (and reading more than 150 business and personal development books), Jenny felt compelled to share her knowledge with other young professionals. The experience of leaving school before her friends and her love of teaching others inspired her to launch LifeAfterCollege.org, a website that provides simple, practical tips about life, work, money, happiness and personal growth.

Jenny’s goal is to help people focus on the BIG picture of their lives...not just the details. She lives in the SF Bay Area.
Keynote Speeches

Career in the Age of the App

The era of “climbing the ladder” as a method of managing your career is out. We are now in the age of the app. Everything you need is at your fingertips, fully customizable to your unique career aspirations.

Careers are not a linear process any more – no longer do we adhere to a ladder model of getting into a job, staying at the same company, and moving our way up through the vertical org chart. In today’s world, people are exploring, experimenting, building a foundation, moving horizontally within companies, job-hopping, and building their own businesses on the side. Rather than following a linear path, you will learn how to explore, experiment and build a strong foundation that suits your dynamic talents and goals.

In this keynote, I help people shift their paradigm around career advancement and learn how to design their own path. It will give graduates and 20-somethings encouragement that if they don’t find THE perfect job out of school, they can still find incredible value in their mix of education and experiences.

Stop Thinking and Start DOING

Too often people have big, scary dreams that they keep locked inside because they don’t believe they can succeed. Particularly for college graduates and twenty-somethings, life is in flux and they are still finding their place in this world.

Learn how to break through inner critics, ride out dips in momentum, and build a support network to stop thinking and start DOING.

In this keynote I share my own ups and downs and cover a step-by-step process for helping people achieve that one big dream – whether it’s finding a soul-stirring job, running a marathon, writing a book, or anything else people might be tip-toeing around.
Other Popular Speaking Topics

Busting the Entitlement Myth

Labeling Gen Y as "entitled" is holding people back and causing fear; people are dialing down what they truly want. Gen Y is afraid to dream "in this economy." While we certainly want to teach them to be responsible and realistic to an extent, many are torn between taking any job they can find and waiting until they see something more compelling. Entitlement is a dirty word - let's encourage people to pursue things they are interested in - companies and employees will be better for it.

I often hear from clients: "I know what I want to do, but I'm afraid its not 'realistic.'" Or, "My parents want me to get a job that seems soul crushing to me, but I'm afraid I have to take it. Thank you for reminding me that it's okay to dream." I want to encourage parents and 20-somethings to realize that there's a balance between finding work and taking time to explore the underlying values and passions that lead to fulfilling work. There are many things people can do to pursue things you are passionate while holding down a job -- and many times they will lead to that next job (for example: my experiences outside of Google: life coach, blogger, yoga instructor and author have all contributed to where I am today).

The 20-something Solopreneur - The New Worker in Today's Economy

People no longer have job security for the long-term, and they can't rely on a boss or company to be their sole provider forever. Many 20-somethings have adopted a "solopreneur" model where they start pursuing things they are passionate about in addition to their full time job.

In this speech I cover the following messages:

• You are your own boss; it's up to you to set a strategy, develop your skills, and pursue things you are excited about.
• Become the Creative Director of your own life. Put a brand together to put out there to the world.
• You are not your job. Learn how to find and create value outside of your day job (whether you love or hate it). I don't care what you do that pays the bills - there's more out there for you if you want it.
• Snowball effect of side gigs - you create and it just gets bigger and keeps expanding.
Plug and Play - How Being "Plugged In" Pays Off

Young people get a bad rap for constantly being plugged into their phones and computers. However, there is a real benefit to being plugged in, which is building real relationships with others across the globe. Many graduates are isolated after graduation - they miss the instant social networks of classes, clubs and sororities. I teach people how to leverage online resources can really help people build a huge network and feel a sense of community.

This speech covers relationship building in the new world, which goes beyond career, and extends to really enriching peoples lives. We will discuss the benefits of being plugged in by changing the definition of plugging in and networking with people through online connections. I will also share personal examples; for instance, during my book tour I will stay with people I have met on Twitter. Because of Twitter, I have friends in almost all 50 states, and in many countries across the world, from Australia to South Korea. Many friends and clients have found jobs and significant others through social media as well.

For Managers: Bridge the Gap Between Generations in the Workplace

Generation Y wants to feel engaged and involved. Learn strategies for managing Gen Y effectively, which includes delivering feedback consistently, setting clear expectations, working collaboratively and holding frequent career conversations.

After many years of delivering manager training at Google, I share insights into how to listen more and talk less; how to bring out the best in employees through coaching rather than solely giving advice. I help managers “teach [employees] to fish to feed them for a lifetime” rather than just “giving them a fish to feed them for a day.”

For Parents & Recent Grads: The Nest Isn't Empty Any More: How to Cushion the Landing When You're College Grad Moves Home

More college graduates are moving home now than ever before as they find their footing in a tough job market. Soften the landing with five must-dos for every parent and graduating senior to ensure a smooth transition home after college.

For parents, I cover:

- Establish what bills you will now transfer to your graduate, set a deadline for when you will cut the financial cord (and/or ask them to move out), set ground rules for the house (ie chores, who cooks meals, etc), give your
graduate space - try not to bug them too much about where they're going and when they’ll be home (they're coming back from the freedom of college), and give them time to find a job on their own without meddling too much.

For college grads I cover:

- Simple budget system (incoming, outgoing - must have, outgoing - nice to have, allowance), set up a calendar and appointment reminder system, set up an automatic savings account, help out around the house (you are now a guest in someone else’s home), make an effort to get to know your parents - appreciate the time you have together and how hard they worked to raise you.

**Interactive Workshops**

These workshops typically last 1-4 hours, and are highly interactive. The goal is to teach people how to be the expert in their own lives, supported by exercises and time for reflection. People leave feeling empowered, inspired, and ready to take action.

**Stop Thinking and Start DOING**

Do you have a big goal that you are tip-toeing around? This session will help participants:

- Create a compelling vision for your goal that’s so juicy you can’t help but take action after we hang up
- Examine any limiting beliefs and turn down the volume on those obnoxious “I can’t” gremlins
- Free yourself from the “Tyranny of the How’s” – identify practical ways to move forward without worrying about how to fix or solve every part of the process
- Identify your immediate next steps and be held accountable for taking action

**Creating a Professional Development Strategy**

Feeling lost or unsatisfied in your career? Hoping to do some long-term career planning but don’t know where to start? This session will help participants:

- Identify where you want to be professionally (and in your life) in 3 months, 6 months, 1 year and 3 years. In the pre-work you will look at several facets, including what they want to be, do and have, as well as the impact or meaning they would like to create.
- Take an inventory of your current skills, experience and strengths, and identify how you would like to grow in each of those areas.
- Identify a “Board of Advisors” who can help guide and inspire you
- Set 1-2 major personal or professional goals with a few key milestones for each.

**Life – Big Picture Foundation**

In this session we will establish the fundamental building blocks for decision-making, reflection and goal-setting. Participants will:
- Learn a simple method for assessing and then improving every aspect of your life
- Create a compass to guide major decisions by identifying your personal values
- Learn from yourself five years from now through a guided “future self” visualization
- Identify your inner critics so that you can learn how to turn down the volume

**Personal Finance 101: Money Makeover**

Overwhelmed by your finances? Looking for a way to manager your saving and spending without going crazy over a 100-line budget? Money is a means not an end. In this session participants will:
- Identify values to create a compass that will guide you through sound financial planning and big-picture goal setting.
- Define financial goals & connect them to your values
- Remove financial concerns and current blocks to financial stability
- Control spending: Create both short- & long-term savings plans
- Use easy planning tools to manage your day-to-day finances
- Gain confidence to manage your money effectively
Praise for Jenny Blake’s Presentations

“Thank you so much for your help with the NSH MBA Career Reboot! I wanted to say your involvement as moderator was spectacular, and I really appreciate the support and help you gave in helping execute on making the event a success!”
—Juan E., Executive Vice President at National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSH MBA) – San Jose Chapter

“THANK YOU for your presentation today. You deserve to know how that my friend and I were greatly inspired by your talk, particularly by your ideas about breaking our current roles down into specific skills that we are learning, and how to deconstruct the career-as-ladder metaphor. We are going to make some mind-maps tonight! My friend and I just graduated in May, so we were particularly touched by the advice you were giving. In any case, I wanted to let you know that like the man you mentioned who is heading up GoogleServe, you are also changing the world.”
—Elizabeth O., Patent Administration, Google

“I just wanted to tell you how much your message resonated with us. It was the perfect thing for us to hear as we get into our new roles and delivered in a way that was so relatable (I loved the app analogy).”
—Lindsay R., Google event for recently hired college graduates

“Jenny - thanks for the thought-provoking breakout. I don't think it was just for folks thinking about next moves, it was great for just think about how to work better.”
—Reggie Henry, Chief Technology Officer, ASAE

“Jenny was a fantastic facilitator….her energy and passion is inspiring! She was particularly good at involving all participants in discussion and not “feeding us the answers.” She was a subject matter expert and excelled at responding to some tough challenging questions. Great workshop! I learned tools & practices to apply every day in my role.”
—John C., Google Manager

“Jenny is a brilliant trainer and facilitator. She has an engaging style and great energy in the classroom.”
—Jackie R., Google trainee
Recent Speaking Engagements

- **Webinars**
  Led four *People-On-the-Go Lunch and Learn* webinars with Pierre Khawand, each with ~100 attendees (*Gen Y in the Workplace, Twitter 101, 4 Social Media Tools You Don’t Want to Live Without*)
  Co-created and co-emceed the day-long *iThrive Weekend Experience* workshop with Jenny Ferry; delivered (live and via webinar) the portion on “How to Rock Your Personal Finances (mp3)” and “Busting the Work/Life Balance Myth (mp3)”

- **Podcasts/Online Radio Interviews**
  Lindsay Pollak – *Modern Day Moonlighting* (15 minutes)
  ChaChanna Simpson – *Moving up the Corporate Ladder: Tips on Promotions* (45 minutes)

- **In-Person Workshops/Events**
  Google – New Graduate Reception (100 attendees)
  *Best Buy Women’s Leadership group* (4 custom 1.5 hour workshops; first one in April 2010; topics include: work/life balance, values, long-term career planning, values-based money management tools)
  *The Center for Association Leadership* (1.5 hour break-out session for young professionals – August 2010)
  *ASAE Leadership Academy* – 1 hour Career Development workshop
About the Book – Life After College: The Complete Guide to Getting What You Want


There is no need for a highlighter – this book is the highlights: a compilation of tips, quotes and exercises trimmed to the essence, divided into chapters for every major life area. Chapter categories include life (values & goals), work, money, organization, home, friends & family, dating & relationships, health, fun & relaxation, and personal growth.

*Life After College* is an essential manual for every graduating college student and twenty-something looking for direction. It provides practical, actionable advice and helps you focus on the big picture of your life – on your values and aspirations – all in a rapid-fire format.

An avid reader and information gopher, I have read over 150 business and personal development books, and have distilled their wisdom in a way that will leave you feeling inspired and ready to take action toward creating the life you really want. Instead of spending your money buying numerous books about setting goals, managing your finances and navigating your career, I offer a “one stop shop” book, with short but powerful advice and exercises for every area of your life after college. If you can’t afford a life coach, you’ll get a portable coach in this book.
My Story: Why I Started Life After College

During the first quarter of my junior year at UCLA I got the opportunity of a lifetime. My political science professor and mentor suggested a possible job opportunity for me at a startup company in Palo Alto. I grew up there and was ahead in school, so I told her and the founder I would move home to work full time if it meant I could help start the company.

I anticipated filing papers . . . I was wrong.

I had tremendous opportunities and responsibilities, but I hadn’t anticipated what it would be like to be in the real world – to work full time, to save money, to spend so much money, to be so far from my friends. As much as I loved the confidence I got from working so hard and learning so much every day, at times I felt incredibly lonely and confused.

There is no manual for the real world.
In high school and college we have guidance counselors, course requirements and teachers. But the minute we graduate into adulthood, it seems we are immediately expected to understand where to go, what to do, and how to get wherever we’re going next.

Once we do land a decent job, we’re expected to know how to do whatever it is our boss asks us to do. Once the first paycheck comes, we’re supposed to know about taxes and healthcare and direct deposits and investing and saving for retirement. We go from being surrounded by our friends all the time in college to being surrounded by a scattered few once we graduate.

A year after I started at Polimetrix I went back to UCLA for one last quarter to finish school, and another year later I changed companies and got a job as a Training Specialist at Google. While working at Google, I started a web design & consulting business teaching people HTML, CSS and Dreamweaver, and completed training to be a professional Life Coach. I believe life after college is amazing. And I learned a lot in the year I spent at home, when people wondered if I’d dropped out of school for good, when my friends were still writing papers and going to parties. I read books, scrounged websites, and sought advice – and now
I’m passing as much as I possibly can onto other twenty-somethings to help them thrive after graduation.

Live big! That’s my motto, and I’m here to help other twenty-somethings do the same.

My passion is helping others bust through their upper limits and get clarity on their lives, no matter what the focus area – career, money, health, relationships, happiness, overall fulfillment. I am an advocate to help people dream bigger and do more, while still enjoying their life and loving themselves exactly as they are.

I can help because I’ve been there. I know what it’s like to wrestle with inner critics and struggle with the anxiety of wanting to make a change but not knowing where to start. I know what it’s like to whisper big goals instead of shouting from the rooftops because it’s almost impossible to believe they can actually happen.

I inspire others through writing and speaking by asking powerful questions, helping people articulate their big dreams, helping them identify their values, and by providing encouragement and practical tips and templates around next steps.