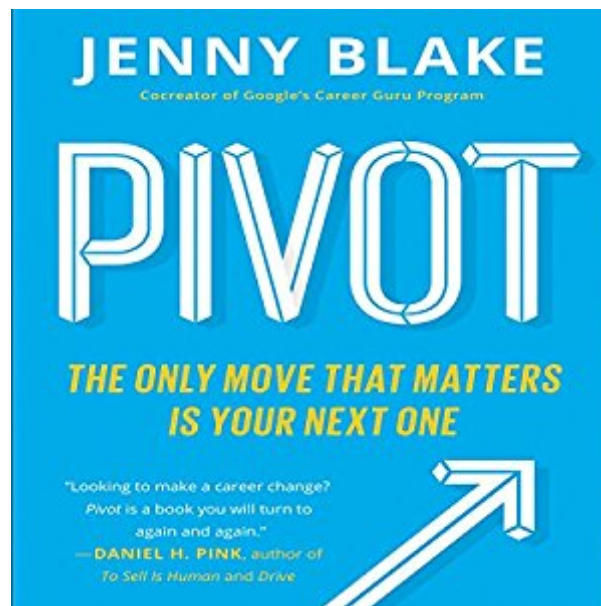




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# Pivot: The Only Move That Matters Is Your Next One



## Synopsis

Jenny Blake, author of *Life After College* and former career development program manager at Google, reveals how to methodically make your next career move by doubling down on what is already working. Careers are not linear, predictable ladders any longer; they are fluid trajectories. No matter our age, life stage, bank account balance, or seniority, we are all being asked to navigate career changes much more frequently than in years past. The average employee tenure in America is just four to five years, and even those roles change dramatically within that time. Our economy now demands that we create businesses and careers based on creativity, growth, and impact. In this dynamic world of work, the only move that matters is your next one. Drawing from her own experiences and those of other successful pivoters, Jenny Blake has created a four-stage process that teaches anyone how to seamlessly and continually: Double down on existing strengths, interests, and experiences Find new opportunities and identify skills to develop without falling prey to analysis paralysis and compare and despair Run small experiments to determine next steps Take smart risks to launch with confidence in a new direction This book is for anyone searching for an answer to the question "what's next?" Whether you have hit a plateau in your perfect-on-paper job, are considering taking on a new role in your current job, are thinking about starting your own business, or want to move into a new industry altogether, one thing remains clear: Your career success depends on your ability to determine your next best move. If change is the only constant, let's get better at it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

At the outset, let me clarify that I think Ms. Blake is a very impressive individual and I'd be thrilled to be as accomplished as she is even at my age (mid 40s). This book has fantastic and very practical content in terms of 1) taking stock of your strengths and clarifying your vision 2) scanning the environment for suitable opportunities 3) piloting low risk experiments and then 4) launching when you have found your "it". I won't expand further on the detail other than to say the content is incisive, sharp, practical and very, very useful. Then why the 3 stars? I think the book misses the boat on one very critical element, which is the emotional and self-identity changes involved in making a successful career transition. My perception is that these tend to be very gut wrenching if you are older and also if the change is more drastic than not, and these two factors certainly compound the effect of each other. She skims lightly if at all over these aspects, whereas in my experience, dealing with the implications of these over 6 years of a still ongoing transition into entrepreneurship from very well paying corporate job with a family and bills to pay, these are monumental. Working identity, by Herminia Ibarra, and very surprisingly (for me) Pivot, by Adam Markel ended up being much stronger on these dimensions. A transition is not at all linear and the author just tips her hat to this fact. The light treatment given in the book to the enormous real life implications of the mess of iteration does the aspiring career changer a disservice

For some context, I've spent all of my professional life navigating my career at a handful of large companies here in NYC. Grateful that I've always been gainfully employed, though not without a few bumps in the road. I'll give Pivot five stars. It offers an excellent and well-organized set of tools and systems for self-assessment. It also provides plenty of guidance for thoughtfully evaluating potential opportunities and building or extending a network along the way. Most critical for me is that many of these tools were immediately actionable with my tight schedule. If you're running out the door on a Monday morning and looking at a week crushed with meetings and deadlines, work through one of the plant exercises during your commute or lunch break. If you already have a few thoughts around what you might want to explore, jot down a few reminders to look up experts or organizations to learn more about. This not only gave me a jump start, but it helped me move toward thinking about future change with whatever time I had at the moment. Of course, it makes the most sense to work through the process as outlined in the book. I did that as well when I could, but committing to a few exercises where time allowed gave me some momentum. The additional resources – podcasts, interviews, readings, references etc., offered by the author offer more perspective or a deeper dive on specific topics. While many recent career development

books offer similar resources, the collection on Pivot's site is particularly robust and addresses professional challenges along with personal enrichment. In case it's helpful, I'd like to acknowledge one of the three star reviews because I totally understand that reviewer's perspective. If you're approaching change with a particularly complex (or thorny) professional or personal backstory, you may need a reset. That may include exploring a variety of resources that speak to your particular situation as you ready yourself for a big change. In my experience, it makes sense to explore and embrace a variety of material - whatever collectively makes sense for your own development. The author actually provides a reference list at the end of the book and on her site. Your starting point and path will be your own, wherever this (or any other resource) finds you. That said, Pivot is incredibly comprehensive. Many of the exercises immediately focused my thinking and adjusted my perspective. They addressed professional challenges with practical ideas and offered personal assessments for a holistic approach. I think they would be equally helpful to anyone whether you're on auto-pilot or in the weeds professionally (or personally) for long periods of time, or would benefit from taking stock and moving forward in a very practical and action-oriented way.

I really enjoyed this book by Jenny Blake. Her exercises and ideas are interesting and constructive, and the examples she provides are strong. If you are thinking of making a career or other life change this book provides a great process to follow that is also realistic. The only thing I could have wished for in the book (and does not detract from my review because maybe it is content that should be in a different book altogether) was more information for people who have struggled to feel really successful or powerful in any recent career - i.e. people who have done work more out of a "default" situation (i.e. underemployment due to economy, or needing a family flexible job) and how to pivot back up from that. A lot of the examples referenced people already in successful situations. I would also highly recommend Jenny's pivot podcast. She comes across as very sincere, informative and happy. I look forward to it.

I've been studying, teaching about, and coaching people through the process of career choice and change for over a decade and I've always struggled to find one succinct reference point to send my college students and private coaching clients to on the topic. Instead I've provided them with dozens of links to articles and a chapter here and there from various books - but no more! PIVOT is the go-to overview on all things career decision-making, from the initial post-college choice to the

inevitable (and enthralling, when seen through Jenny Blake's eyes) process of picking "what's next" over and over, this book really covers everything from the deeply practical to the thoughtfully philosophical. I dog-eared more pages than I can count and my copy is marked up intensely. I'll be reading it many times over!

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