

# careerfluencer

FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT - CAREERFLUENCER PODCAST



## 110: Choosing to Carve Your Own Path with Galicia Gordon

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Welcome to the Careerfluencer podcast - This is Galicia Gordon, I am a founder of a nonprofit called Leading Learners based out of Vancouver, Canada.

I think I have many mentors. Every time we take a big step, I try to find someone who's specialized in that area before or who knows most about it to be able to gain their expertise and get to know their insight. So I would recommend getting mentors really along as many steps as you possibly can, especially when you are taking a big leap.

I remember growing up, I came from a really diverse background, some people in my family would speak completely Spanish, some French and like no English at all. So my parents had put me in a lot of tutoring classes just to be able to adapt to my circumstances. And I remember we had to spend lots and lots of money for all these different services.

And so I didn't want other students to go through that just people to adapt to their bare minimum really, for circumstances. Um, and then entering the depths of high school, I feel like there is two types of students, you know, the really ambitious students who were headfirst ready to go into the game. And there were students like me, who entered high school with really zero idea of what do they want to do after high school.

I think for me, I just looked up to my mom and I had thought, I'll go into medicine, because that's what my mom had done. But I really didn't find much of a passion for it. And so I really wanted to find another way to get out there and find my opportunities and resources around me. And so from that point, I thought it would just be so great to have a one stop platform where students could go to have everything they could possibly need during their academic years.

I remember seeing lots of tech professionals and researching how they got into position they were in. And I remember being so fascinated by their stories, and how they went a different route than what their parents had had for them in mind. And it really inspired me to take that leap and explore what else there is out there. Besides the standard stem that I believed I would have to go into immediately.

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There was one specific story that I always reflect back on because it was really the pivotal moment when I just said, Let's do this. Let's just get it started. So I was with my friend who was in grade 12. And there was there were just a few months before graduation, and she had told me that she had zero hours of volunteer or work service. And because for graduation, we needed 30 hours, she had asked me, you know, how do you get involved in the community? How do you find that confidence? How do you really take action? And I realized it wasn't only her who felt that way.

I began getting a group of friends, we asked students all around the hallways, and then different universities, different high schools, asking counselors, their kids and different educators. If students felt prepared for their life, after high school, I realized there was really a trend of students who had no idea what they want to do after high school. And I often tell students about like a constant loop of just completing assignments, and not really knowing where all this work went to. And seeing that trend, it really inspired me to just say, let's do this.

I always find myself more much more interested in these exploratory courses where students are able to, you know, find their own roots. And really, it's self-driven. And I found that these courses on these different exploratory programs I was in that many students, they felt like it was a certain path they had to go down. But I always found myself being so immersed in these programs. And it really does inspire me and motivate me when I am doing my own thing sort of and being able to put my passion into a project is really, really enhanced that self-driven self I would say I adopted early on.

So something that was a little bit difficult for us as a completely student led team was having a professional front. And we always felt like because we were so young, that it was kind of hard to get the opinions from different parents, educators and counselors to be able to understand what we're doing, because they've lived twice or even triple our lifetime. And that was sort of a barrier for us. So my friend and I and our entire team, we really tried our best to establish our brand have meaning behind what we're doing, establish a strong mission statement and have packages

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and responses ready for any of the questions we were presented to that really helped us continue going.

And the first being feedback. So something we had established from the very beginning was a feedback box, a feedback box where students, parents, educators, counselors, were able to give any input or advice or anything they would like to see on the platform. So we really take that to heart. And it really does motivate us to represent as many students as we possibly can. And of course students stories once I realized that that was not only my friend who was really uncomfortable with the post academic life. I really was able to realize there are 1000s of students who are in my shoes were in my friend shoes who are so unsure of what they want to do in their post academic life.

If I could give one piece of advice, I think, really the biggest piece of advice that continues on today is to focus on your target audience rather than the potential outcomes. So like I mentioned, of course, we could control how many students we reach, but we couldn't really control the opinions of other people on how they took our platform.

So I would say that, it's important to imagine your ideal consumer, your ideal target person, your customer persona, if you will. So take into account all their issues, all their struggles, and then take them through your platform, your project, your different initiative, and how they would be able to find solutions to any of their problems. Because you had provided a great solution for them.

Something that makes me really excited is just to see how we can provide a solution or build a bridge for a different group of people. So if in my future that isn't students, if it's more so youth or younger adults, I think it's really great to be able to see how much I can impact the target audience and I really do look forward to that in my future, whether that be towards students or younger adults. I think seeing that bridge that you're closing because you're providing a solution for them is really awesome to see.