



Go For It.

We sure are facing uncertain and challenging times. Here's a real story of a young adult, with a background similar to many of you; building her skills, discovering her career vision, mobilizing her energy and values, accepting the risks and Going For It.

The destination is a vision, but fuzzy at best. Polina designed her journey to create alternatives and, as Yogi Berra once said, she came to a fork in the road and took it.

March 20, 2020

Dear Term Sheet readers,

What an immense pleasure it's been. After five incredible years, today is my last day at *Fortune*. I'm leaving to build my weekly newsletter The Profile into a standalone business. Right now, it features a compilation of longform profiles on interesting people and companies, but I believe it can grow to be much more.

I was barely 23 years old when I stepped into *Fortune's* offices for the first time in 2014. One of my goals for that first year was to read Term Sheet (then authored by Dan Primack) and understand 10% of its contents. I'm not joking when I tell you I barely knew what a venture capitalist did, how deals were structured, or even what a term sheet was.

At that point in time, I had only written a few general news stories and worked on *Fortune's* social media strategy. There was no fire in me to learn about the crazy, complex world that is Silicon Valley. Until 2017.

That was the year I grew beyond what I thought possible. I had been helping my predecessor Erin Griffith compile the deals in Term Sheet, but when she left *Fortune*, I was presented with a fork in the road: Do I raise my hand to take over this beast of a newsletter or do I lay low and continue life as a person who never had to wake up before 7 a.m.?

I decided to go for it. And I'm lucky to have worked in a place with colleagues who not only encouraged me to do it, but cheered me on every step of the way.

In the early days of Term Sheet, I would wake up at 4:30 a.m. with the crippling daily anxiety of not knowing what to write about. I would look up the definitions of more VC jargon than I care to admit. "WTF is 'dry powder?'" was a memorable one.

I'm a highly anxious person, but perhaps my greatest strength is that I'm even more stubborn. And if I feel insecure about a certain topic, I research, obsess, and ask dumb questions until I gain a basic understanding of it. Maybe that's why working on Term

Sheet was a good fit for me ... and maybe that's why I've decided to start from zero yet again.

Fortune has been my home for the last five years. It's the place where I grew up, both personally and professionally. I owe a massive thank you to the people who helped me reach this point: [Heather Muse](#) and [Alan Murray](#) for hiring me and seeing potential in my work, [Pattie Sellers](#) for giving me the chance to write an article when that wasn't my job, [Adam Lashinsky](#) for patiently editing my first magazine feature, and [Andrew Nusca](#) for encouraging me to always aim higher. And of course, this newsletter wouldn't be possible without [Lucinda Shen](#) and [Karen Yuan](#), who meticulously make sure that Term Sheet arrives in your inbox every morning.

I'm proud of the work I've done here — from the [Kleiner Perkins feature](#) to the profile on investor [Jeff Jordan](#) to the dozens of interviews conducted with dealmakers in the tech world. All in all, I've written a total of 1,300 articles in my five years at *Fortune*.

But I'm most proud of the amazing community that Term Sheet has built. This newsletter has never felt like a one-way channel of communication because none of you were shy about hitting the “reply” button on a daily basis, letting me know your opinions, criticisms, and constructive feedback (including when I committed “[an egregious written abuse](#)” of the English language). I'll miss this.

Who will take over this newsletter? My colleague [Lucinda](#), whose voice you already know from the numerous times she's written Term Sheet. Lucinda's smart, curious, enthusiastic, and a relentlessly hard worker. I hope you'll extend her a warm and kind welcome because I'm certain she'll do an excellent job. You can reach her at lucinda.shen@fortune.com.

I've had some of the most thought-provoking, memorable conversations with you all, and I hope they continue. You can [sign up for The Profile](#) and reach me at polina@readtheprofile.com. Thank you again, and I'll talk to you soon :)

Polina Marinova

ZF asked Polina for permission to share her story and if she had advice for students and coaches. She replied:

Thank you so much! Yes, of course -- feel free to share the story!

If there's some advice I could give them it would be that I genuinely believe that persistence and curiosity beat out raw talent and natural intelligence any day. If you care about improving and stay genuinely curious about the world, then you'll never get complacent about learning new things. The Profile is a resource to learn from other people's journeys — their successes, their mistakes, and their decisions. And no one's career has been linear ... there's all sorts of turns along the way. The key is to learn from every experience before moving on to the next one.

Thanks, Polina and we wish you great success and happiness. - ZF