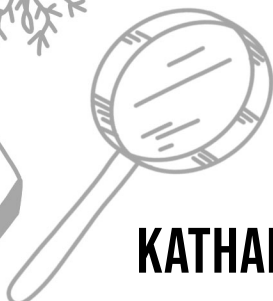
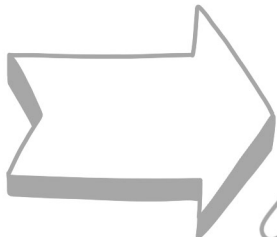


**VISUALIZE AND PLAN YOUR  
CAREER PATH**



**KATHARINE BROOKS & GRACE J. FOY**

*Illustrated by Emily Mills*

## In memory of the late John R. Loomis

This book could not have been produced without the generous donation of Mr. John R. Loomis and Mrs. Carol J. Loomis to the Career Center at Vanderbilt University. Mr. Loomis served on Vanderbilt University's Board of Trust from 2000-2002 as an Alumni Trustee.

We are grateful for their kindness and dedication to the careers and futures of our Vanderbilt students.

Picture Your Career Workbook v1.0

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Created by Katharine Brooks and Grace J. Foy

Design and illustrations by Emily Mills

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# PICTURE YOUR CAREER

VISUALIZE AND PLAN YOUR  
CAREER PATH

**KATHARINE BROOKS & GRACE J. FOY**

*Illustrated by Emily Mills*

## About the Authors



**Dr. Katharine (Kate) Brooks** has been studying and practicing visual thinking related to career exploration and development throughout her career. A board-certified coach and counselor, she is the Evans Family Executive Director of the Career Center at Vanderbilt University, and has directed career centers at Dickinson College, The University of Texas at Austin, and Wake Forest University. She has a doctorate in educational psychology and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. She is the author of *You Majored in What? Designing Your Path from College to Career* (Plume, 2017), of the forthcoming book *What Color Is Your Parachute for College* (Ten Speed Press, 2021), and is the second author (to Richard Bolles) of *What Color is Your Parachute?* 2021 (Ten Speed Press, 2020). She also writes a blog on Career Transitions for *Psychology Today*. Connect with Kate at [linkedin.com/in/katharinebrooks/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/katharinebrooks/)



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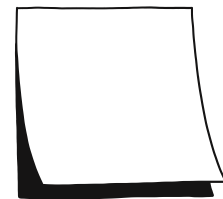
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# How To Use This Workbook

A blank piece of paper. Some pens and pencils. A whiteboard. Dry Erase markers. Post-it™ notes. A blank computer screen. And some shapes and drawings.



What do these items have in common? **Possibilities.**

Pure potential just waiting to be discovered.

A way to get unstuck.

Make decisions.

Move forward.

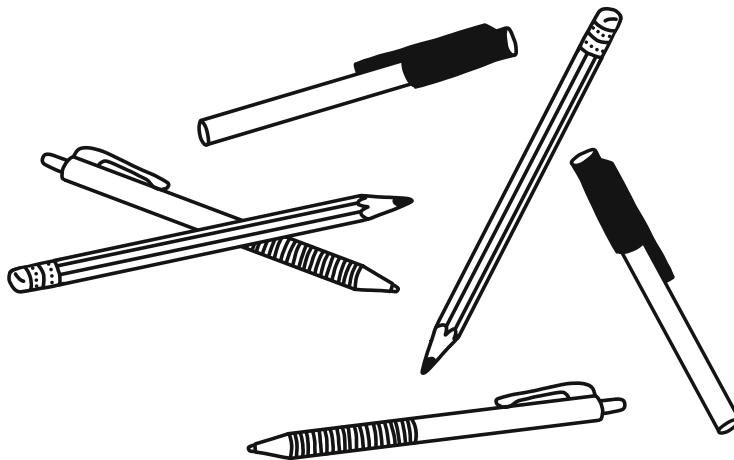
Discover your future.

Find your career, a job, or an internship.

Develop your network.

Create your own business.

Explore different futures.



The exercises on the upcoming pages are career hacks, of a sort. They are clever and quick solutions to your career problems and questions. And—even better—you create your own solution. Not a generic one-size-fits-all solution from another source. No, these solutions will come from within. You had the answers all along. You just need some help finding them.

These exercises have a certain “magic power” revealing new insights and discoveries while you work on them. They can inspire a previously unknown new level of thinking and uncover hidden meanings that you and others can’t see.

Each exercise is divided into three parts:

- **How Does it Help:** Why you should try it
- **Picture it:** How to create the image
- **Now Think About It:** Analyze what you created and what you have learned

We also provide some “Workspaces” where you can sketch out your ideas or plan your project.

The exercises are grouped into six sections: Developing Your Vision, Bringing Out Your Best, Getting Organized and Setting Goals, Managing Your Emotions, Exploring Your Career, and Conducting Your Job Search. You can start anywhere in the book based on where you need to focus.

Here's what you can expect from doing these exercises:

**Clarity.** In the same way that a drawer organizer clears up the clutter in a drawer, or a shopping list helps you remember what to buy at the store, these visual thinking exercises will help you clear up the clutter in your mind.

**Ease.** You don't need to spend hours learning to draw or learning a new computer program. You don't need fancy art supplies (although feel free to have fun and go wildly creative). And yet the results can be as powerful as expensive career tests or hours of career counseling.

**Unique ways of thinking.** These are not the typical activities you find in most career books. Visual thinking is everywhere, but this is the first time it's been so carefully applied to your career.

**Saving time and money.** Most of these exercises can be done in under 5 minutes— perfect for your busy lifestyle. And they don't cost anything. All you need is a pencil or pen and a surface to write on. Or your computer or phone, of course.

**Portability.** You can do them anywhere, anytime. Draw one on the napkin at your favorite coffee shop. Create one on your laptop or on your cellphone. Do one between classes or while watching TV.

**Versatility.** Many of the exercises can be used for different career issues. Once you learn a technique you can apply it to a variety of situations. You'll find that your problem-solving and creative thinking skills will improve in other areas of your life as well.

**Enlightenment.** The most common response from students when they finish an exercise is, "Wow! I never thought about it that way!" The exercises will help you quickly "see" what you are thinking and bring clarity to currently muddy thoughts. New patterns will emerge and transform your thinking.

**Empowerment.** Your ideas matter. You will feel more in control of your career process. You will know that you have the answers and you are more prepared than you realized.

**Less stress.** Admit it. This career process can make you feel overwhelmed, stressed, and confused. You may feel you're lacking focus or lacking in new ideas. These exercises will help you find a strategy for moving forward, organize your thoughts, create new goals and plans. You will move toward more clear and confident decision-making and innovative thinking about your career.

And, most of all:

**Fun.** Let your creativity flow. Have fun creating these exercises. Keep them simple or turn them into words of art. Think of it as career DIY.

Bottom line: This is not a reading book. It's a "doing" book. The more you do with it, the more you will get out of it. You don't have to do it all at once. Do the exercises in any order you want. Jump in where you need help. And get ready to learn a lot of new things about yourself and your career.

# THE 4-D ROADMAP for CAREER EXPLORATION+DEVELOPMENT

## DISCOVER

your strengths:

WHO AM I?

## DEVELOP

your vision:

WHERE AM I GOING?

## DESIGN

your path:

HOW DO I GET THERE?

## DELIVER

your talents:

HOW CAN I SHINE?

### MORE INFO ABOUT THE 4 D's:

## DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS

- What skills do you have?
- What special talents do you want to use?
- What are your best traits?
- What's important to you in a job?

### ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ✓ DECIDE ON A MAJOR
- WRITE A BASIC RESUME
- JOIN STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
- TALK TO A CAREER COACH
- SET UP SOCIAL MEDIA

## DEVELOP YOUR VISION

- What job titles or career fields interest you?
- Are you considering graduate or professional schools?
- Do you qualify for fellowships or scholarships?
- What work is meaningful for you?

### ACTIONS TO TAKE

- RESEARCH CAREERS ONLINE
- CONDUCT INFORMATION INTERVIEWS
- NETWORK WITH ALUMNI
- DO AN INTERNSHIP
- ATTEND CAREER FAIRS

## DELIVER YOUR TALENTS

- Set career goals for your future
- Learn to manage your time
- Develop new skills and expertise
- Make yourself indispensable

### ACTIONS TO TAKE

- DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK
- MENTOR A NEW EMPLOYEE
- DO WELL IN GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL
- NETWORK
- FIND A MENTOR

## DESIGN YOUR PATH

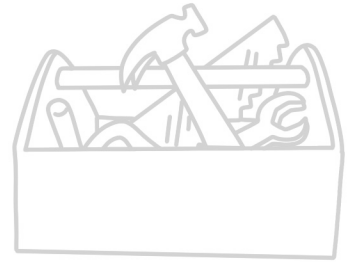
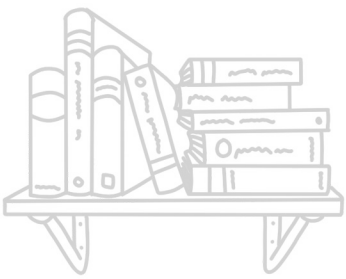
- How can you enter your chosen career?
- Where do you want to live and work?
- What steps do you need to take?
- Who can help you?

### ACTIONS TO TAKE

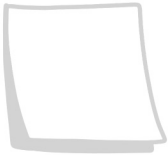
- WRITE A TARGETED RESUME & LINKEDIN PROFILE
- CREATE A LIST OF POSSIBLE EMPLOYERS
- DEVELOP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE
- ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS
- COMPILE COMPELLING STORIES FOR INTERVIEWS

THE 4 D'S ARE BASED ON APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY CONCEPTS. SOURCE: "YOU MAJORED IN WHAT? DESIGNING YOUR PATH FROM COLLEGE TO CAREER." KATHARINE BROOKS, ED. D. PLUME PRESS, 2017

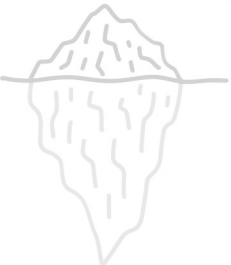
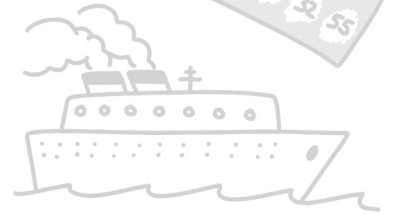




# SECTION 1



## DEVELOPING YOUR VISION



Bucket List

Choose the Life You Want

Cruise to Nowhere

Different Paths to the Same Goals

The Dream Board

"I Need a Break" Board

Project Design Map

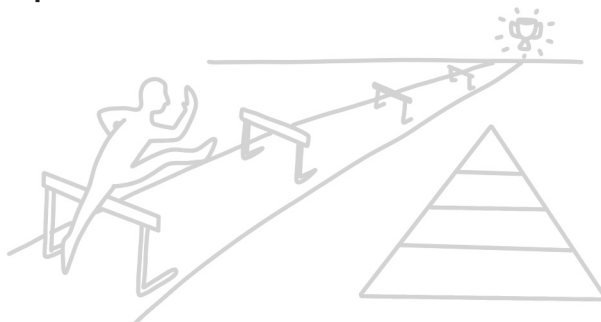
Pros and Cons for Making Decisions and Taking Action

Semester Vision Board

Staying on Track

The Lottery Game

My Inspired Life Vision Board



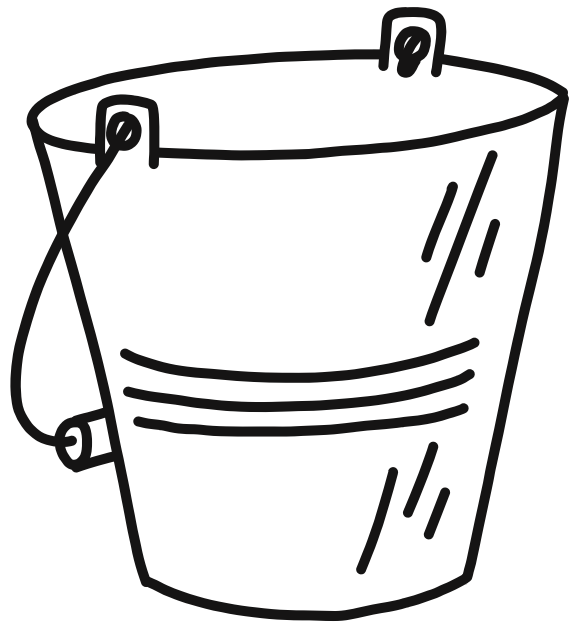
# The Bucket List

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

A bucket list is a compilation of all the things you want to do, all the goals you want to achieve, all the places you want to see-- in short, all the life experiences you want to have before you, well, “kick the bucket.” Bucket lists are popular: there’s even a movie about them. You probably think of them as something an older person might do, but a bucket list is for everyone. It’s a list that you can add to throughout your life, and hopefully, cross off many items as you go along. It’s a fun way to think about what an interesting life you can choose to have. And it’s a great way to expand your thinking and dream much bigger dreams.

## PICTURE IT!

- Make a list.
- List what you’d like to learn, do, be, or have in your life.
- Your bucket list can contain serious things and silly things.
- Keep your list true to yourself—this is about what you want, not what others want for you.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Now that you've made your list look it over and start thinking about how you can move forward on some of the items.

- Can you complete some of the items within one year? Mark those with a big "1."
- Can you complete some of the items within 5 years? Mark those with a big "5."
- Can you complete some of the items within 10 years? Mark those with a big "10."

Now you have a plan. Take note of what you said you could do within a year, and start there.

- If the item requires several steps to complete, break it down into manageable steps, and find time in your day to start it.
- Do some of the items require more money than you currently have? Start a small savings account.

For instance, maybe you listed a creative project like writing a novel or learning to play a musical instrument. Is that something you'd like to start now, 5 years from now, or 10 years from now? If it's now, how could you break it into smaller units that you could start working on today? Maybe you need to save money to purchase the instrument, or maybe you need to sign up for lessons. Perhaps you can join a local writers' group and use their meetings as "deadlines" that help you focus.

**One final note:** Keep adding to your bucket list. You will always find more things to learn, do, be, and have. That's the fun of this list. Enjoy!

## WORKSPACE:

### My Bucket List

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

# Choose The Life You Want

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Do you feel stuck sometimes? Like you have some ideas about what you want your life to be, but you're not making progress toward those ideas? In his excellent book, Choose the Life You Want, Tal Ben-Shahar asks three important questions to help you focus on getting the life you want. Let's take those three questions and place them on a four-column list so we can investigate further.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw three vertical lines on your paper to create four columns.
- In the first column, write a description of the life you'd like to have. Think about work, family, friends, health/wellness, finances, etc. You can divide your answers into the sections on the form, or just write a narrative essay about what you want your life to look like.
- In the second column, write: "What do I have to do for my life to be what I want?"
- In the third column, write: "Where do I need to go?"
- In the fourth column, write: "How do I get there?"
- Fill in the columns with whatever applies to your situation.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So what did you put in the left column? What do you want in your life? Is it a new job, a better school situation, more friendships, better family relationships, less stress, etc.?

What ideas did you develop for what you have to do to get the life you want?

What did you identify as places you need to go or how to find people who can help you?

And what steps did you uncover for how to get there?

This is a challenging exercise, so don't try to do it all in one sitting. You may need to take time to think about each column. You could also do this exercise with a friend and use each other for brainstorming.

Consider taking this activity to a career coach or counselor as a way to expand your thinking.

## WORKSPACE:

The Life I'd Like to Have: (Write a narrative or divide it by the categories mentioned in the instructions—family, friends, etc.)	What Do I Have to Do For My Life to Be What I Want?	Where Do I Need to Go? Who Can Help Me?	How Do I Get There?

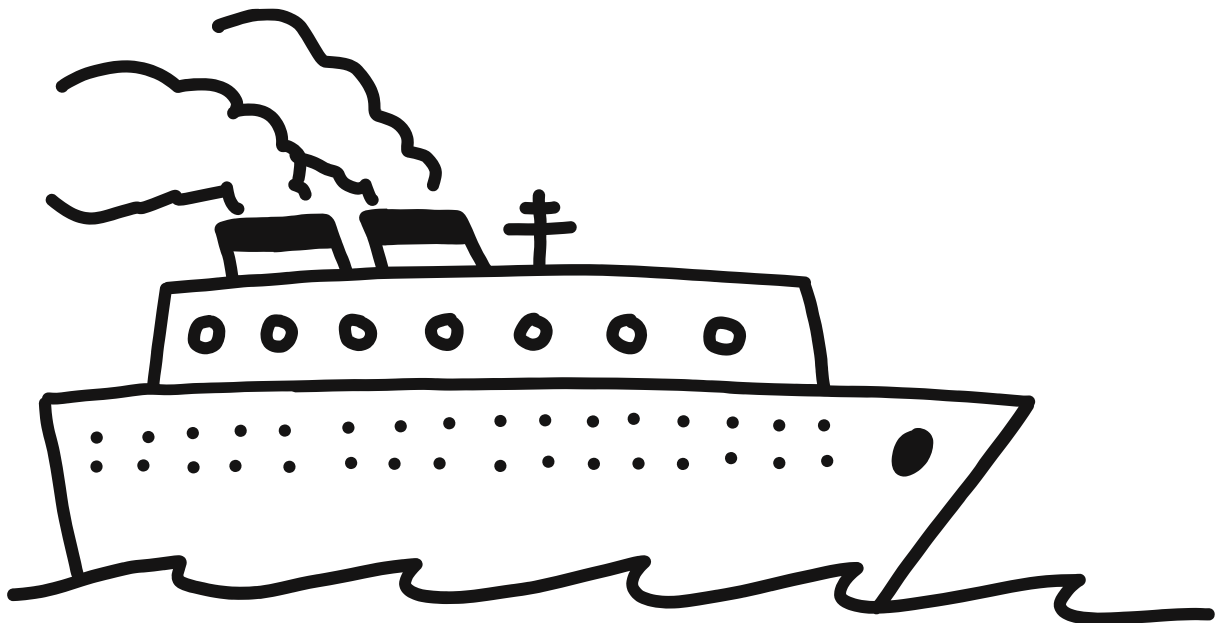
# Cruise to Nowhere

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Your cruise to nowhere is your chance to create a world you'd like to live in.

## PICTURE IT!

- Imagine you could design your very own cruise ship. You could dedicate each room to your interests, you could fill the ship with the type of people you'd like to interact with, and you could design any experiences you want. Go ahead and design it.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So what did your cruise ship look like?

What did it contain?

What did you focus on?

Who did you invite to join you?

Was it a noisy, party ship or a quiet retreat?

Where was your ship going? Did it land in any ports? Where? And why?

This exercise gives you a chance to create your own ideal world. What aspects of that world might fit into your life or career in the future?

## WORKSPACE:

# Different Paths to the Same Goals

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Very few career goals require the same path. Sometimes taking a unique route to a career can make you stand out in the field. Medical schools, for example, often admit non-science majors. Not all bankers study economics. This exercise will help you outline possible paths to your future goal.

## PICTURE IT!

Select a career goal you're considering.

- Think about and outline the traditional path to get there.
- What are some other ways to get to this same goal?
- What could you do that might make the path more interesting and unique?
- As you think about your career goal, what paths are you considering?
- How might each path work, depending on your options or choices?
- Which path appeals most to you?





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Were you able to identify a path that is both interesting and logical that will get you to your goal?

What unique features will you add to your path?

How do you think you could use these unique features to promote yourself to a school or employer?

What will be interesting about the path you have chosen?

Why is this path important to you?

## WORKSPACE:

# The Dream Board

## CAREER IDEAS BOARD

### HOW DOES IT HELP?

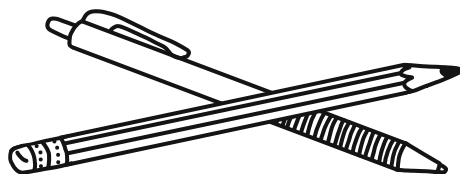
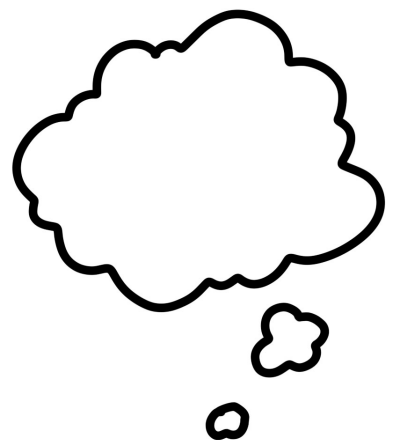
It's not unusual to have lots of ideas about potential careers. You've probably changed your mind about your future career many times. The purpose of this board is to capture those career ideas and dreams and keep them around for observation and exploration—or remove them from your thoughts if they are no longer viable.

### PICTURE IT!

- To create this exercise, you will need a large, blank surface, the appropriate writing tools, and other items like pictures or sticky-tabs. Your options are:
  - A large piece of newsprint or poster board with pens, crayons, markers, or other writing implements. If you're creative, add glitter, paints, stickers, etc.
  - A blank word processing document. Get creative with attractive fonts and downloading pictures from websites (try Pixabay.com for free photos).
  - If you want a large public display, consider a whiteboard with erasable markers and sticky tabs.

- On this blank surface, start brainstorming all the careers you have considered in the past and are currently considering. You can write the different careers on your paper, or you can use sticky tabs. Put up a new idea every time it comes to you. Don't remove or erase a career unless you are sure you no longer want to consider it.

This board is just for dreaming. All you need to do is list your ideas.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

As you look over your board, do you see any commonalities between your choices?

Are many of the careers creative, for example? Or are they science-based? Do they involve working with people, data, things, or ideas?

Do they require additional graduate study or a professional degree?

When you look at these careers, which ones catch your attention?

Which ones look interesting and worth continued consideration?

Remember, this is just an idea board; you don't need to make any choices. That's what's fun about it. No pressure. Just information. Keep thinking about and researching careers—and keep adding them to your board.

## WORKSPACE:

# "I Need A Break" Board

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Have you thought about taking a GAP year? Are you looking for a way to escape your current grind for a more exciting experience? Maybe you're thinking about a semester abroad or a summer doing volunteer work in another country? Taking a break can be an excellent way to cope when you are feeling stressed or pressured. Even just thinking about taking a break allows you to spend some time outside your normal world and experience something new. So let's plan a break by creating an "I Need a Break" vision board. Vision boards are a perfect way to gather your ideas, thoughts, desires, and dreams. By placing pictures about your thoughts for the perfect break experience, your ideas will gradually come into focus, and you'll be able to design an interesting experience. Every good plan starts with a vision, so let's create that vision now.

## PICTURE IT!

- To create your vision board, you will need a large, blank surface, the appropriate writing tools, and other items like pictures or sticky-tabs. Your options are:
  - A large piece of newsprint or poster board with pens, crayons, markers, or other writing implements. If you're creative, add glitter, paints, stickers, etc. You will also need a collection of pictures either from magazines or printed off the internet.
  - A blank word processing document. Get creative with attractive fonts and downloading pictures from websites (try Pixabay.com for free photos).
- Start by thinking about your break.
  - What geographic areas appeal to you? Where will you do this break? Gather pictures that relate to your ideal experience.
  - What goals do you have for it? Are you hoping to volunteer, learn something new, travel, make money, etc.?
  - What does this experience feel like? What words would you use to describe it? Find those words and place them on your board.
- Get creative! Place your images and words around your board in any way that pleases you. Make it highly personal, and don't censor yourself. Put in all your ideas, whether they are practical or not. This is the time to dream and experiment.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

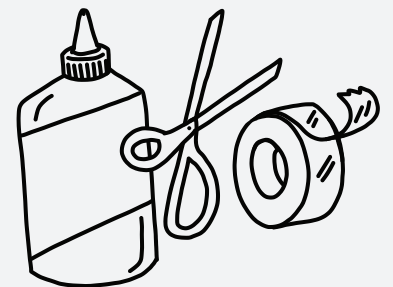
What have you learned about your break? What is most important to you?

What ideas have you discarded, and what ideas are you keeping?

How close are you to doing this experience? How could you start to set it up? What research is needed?

Keep your board visible in your room or your notebook and keep updating it as you think of new ideas or hear about exciting opportunities.

## WORKSPACE:



# Project Design Map

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Mindmaps open your mind to new connections and possibilities. A mindmap will help you brainstorm and generate new ideas. In this map, you are going to outline a project. The project can be something small (such as a research paper) or it can be something large like designing your new business. You can use it alone or with a group to organize and implement your next big plan. The suggestions provided will help you think about your project in a comprehensive way.

## PICTURE IT!

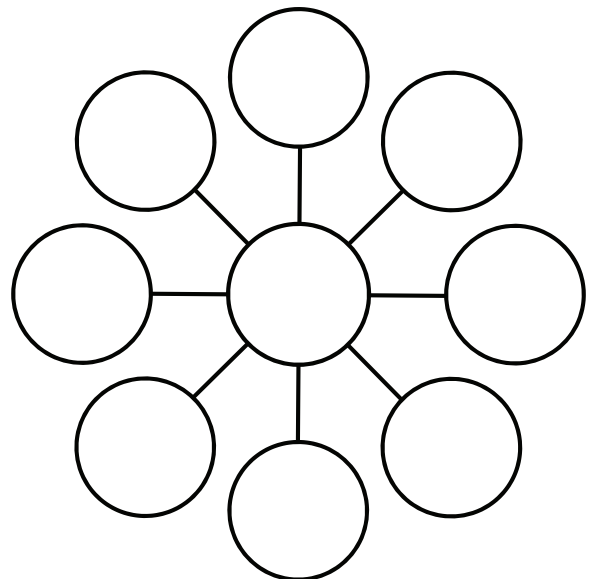
- Create the diagram below, starting with just the circle in the center. In that circle, write the name of the project.

**Hint:** *If this is a team project and you're in one location, you might want to create this on a whiteboard where everyone can provide their input. People can write their ideas related to the main topics on sticky-tabs and place them on the whiteboard next to the appropriate category.*

- Then, on the circles surrounding it, write the following words:

- Equipment
- Personnel
- Procedure
- Costs
- Process
- Communication
- Time frame
- Goal

As you think about your project, start filling in the information about how the project will proceed. What is the overall goal? What are the estimated costs? How will you communicate, both within your team and also to the outside world? What is the time frame for the project? And so on. Keep drawing more lines and circles to expand each of those areas. For instance, under "Procedures," you might include areas like safety protocols or reports you might need to write. Or the steps that might be needed to get to your goal.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you learn from this exercise?

What parts of the project have been more well-thought-out than others?

What areas will require more thinking or research? How will you proceed with that?

How are you going to assign parts of the project?

Can you use this diagram to develop your ideas for an entrepreneurial plan or a small business?

You can do this exercise alone or with others.

Can you use this diagram as a way to keep the “big picture” in mind while you work on the smaller components?

## WORKSPACE:

# Pros & Cons for Making Decisions and Taking Action

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Are you facing a tough decision between two choices? Almost everyone facing a decision at some point in their life has made a list of pros and cons. The advantage of writing down the pros and cons of your decision is that you can see your thoughts clearly. You can decide which thoughts are most important to you and which ones aren't important. Sometimes you'll need to start with one decision, but then that decision might lead to others. Just keep applying the same template.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw a large square or rectangle on your paper.
- Draw a line dividing it in half vertically.
- Draw a line dividing it in half horizontally.
- You now have 4 quadrants or boxes.
- On the upper left quadrant, write one choice and the word PRO.
- On the lower left quadrant, write the same choice and the word CON.
- On the upper right quadrant, write the other choice and the word PRO.
- On the lower right quadrant, write the other choice and the word CON.
- Now in each block, write your thoughts about what is good or bad about each choice.
- Then, consider adding weight to each thought. If you really like a thought, give it +3 points. If it's something you really don't like, give it -3 points. If it's a good thing, but not all that important, you might want to rate it a +1; if it's an annoyance but not all that significant, give it a -1. In between those ratings? Give your answer a + or - 2 points.
- Once you have listed all your pros and cons and you have rated them, add them up.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

As you look at your options, is an answer popping for you?

Does one option seem best?

Did you have enough information to make the right decision? Or do you need to do some more research?

How do these choices feel? Sometimes a decision can be very logical but still not feel right.

If you're still struggling with this, try out the heart/head decision-making activity to further clarify your answer.

## WORKSPACE:

Choice A: Pro

Choice B: Pro

Choice A: Con





Choice B: Con

# Semester Vision Board

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Vision boards are a great way to gather your ideas, thoughts, desires, and dreams. By placing pictures on a board, you make your hopes and wishes concrete and have a regular reminder of their importance. This board focuses on setting up a successful semester.

## PICTURE IT!

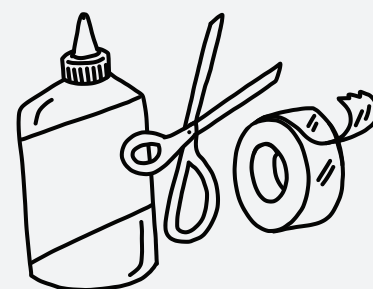
-  To create this exercise, you will need a large, blank surface, the appropriate writing tools, and other items like pictures or sticky-tabs. Your options are:
  1. A large piece of newsprint or poster board with pens, crayons, markers, or other writing implements. If you're creative, add glitter, paints, stickers, etc. You will also need a collection of pictures either from magazines or printed off the internet.
  2. A blank word processing document. Get creative with attractive fonts and downloading pictures from websites (try Pixabay.com for free photos).
-  Start by thinking about your upcoming semester.
  - What courses will you be taking?
  - What activities will you be involved in?
  - Will you be working or interning somewhere?
  - What fun things do you want to do?
  - What goals do you have for the semester?
-  Once you have identified what you would like your semester to look like, start finding pictures in magazines or on the internet that reflect your vision. You can search out quotes or words that exemplify the feelings or thoughts you want to have.
-  Get creative! Place your images and words around your board in any way that pleases you. Make it highly personal: you can write the names of your best friends, or identify the specific classes you're taking, or the organizations you belong to. This is your board and your vision, so include whatever is important. Don't forget to add essential elements of your life, such as family or wellness.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So how do you feel about your upcoming semester? Does your board inspire you—cause you to think about what you're looking forward to?

Keep your board with you throughout the semester for inspiration and to remind yourself of what is truly important.

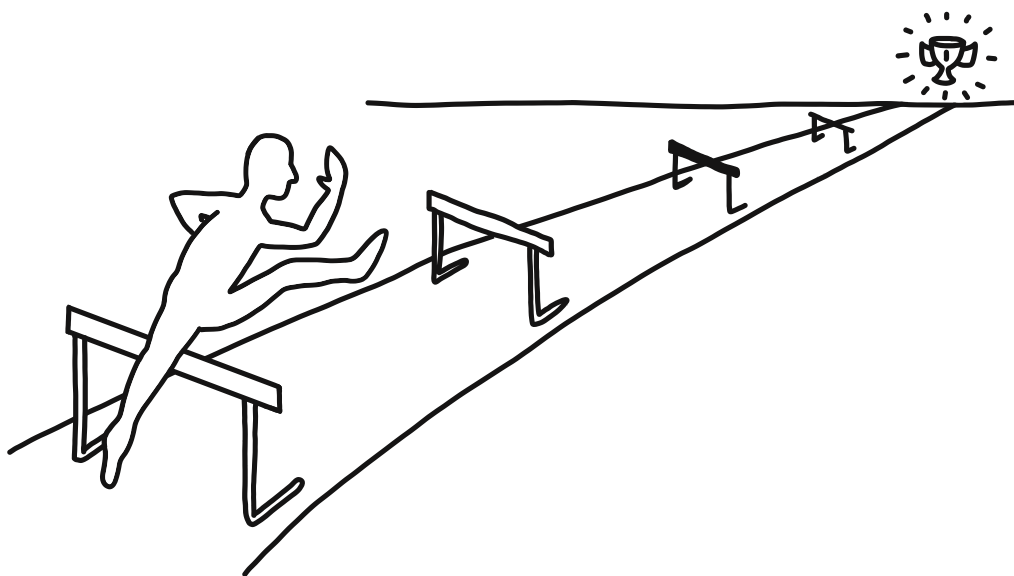
## WORKSPACE:



# Staying on Track

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

The job search isn't a sprint. It's a marathon. And arguably, it's a track event where you not only have to run, you have to jump over some hurdles along the way. So this illustration provides a clever way for you to think about just what those hurdles might be. And what does the finish line look like?



## PICTURE IT!

As you recreate this drawing, write on the following:

- What are my first steps? How do I want to start this process? Who can help me at the starting gate?
- What are the major hurdles I have to get past?
- Do I have cheerleaders on the sideline who are supporting me?
- What does the finish line look like? What do I hope to achieve by the end of this run?
- What is the "prize" for all my work?

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Was this a helpful way to think about your process?

Were you able to identify people who could help you along the way?

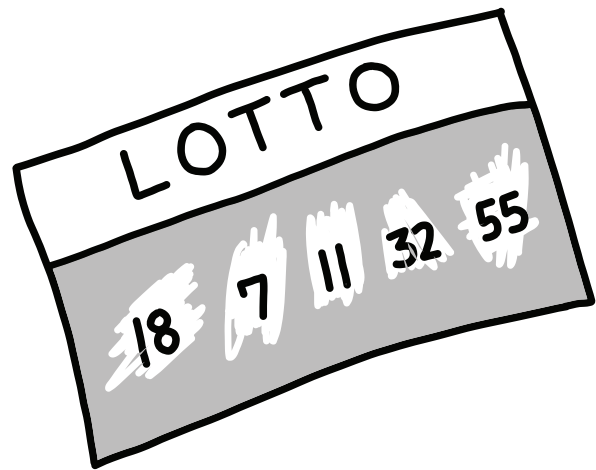
As you created it, were you excited about the “prize” at the end? Or did it seem a little disappointing for all that work? Maybe you need to rethink your career plans—this might be a good time to talk to someone in your career center.

## WORKSPACE:

# The Lottery Game

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

What if money and time were unlimited? What would you do then? The Lottery Game will help you identify the values that are most important to you, which might end up influencing the careers you want to consider.



## PICTURE IT!

Have you ever played the lottery? You know the mindset you have while you're waiting to see if you have won? You probably start thinking about all the ways you will spend the money. And then if you don't win, you just throw away the ticket. But let's put that ticket to work. There might be ways you can live your lottery dream even if you don't win.

So here are the steps:

- Create a list of what you would do, buy, or be if you won a mega-million jackpot. Write a paragraph about how you would spend the money initially.
- Now, wait a day or two and write another paragraph about what you would buy. (Assume that you already bought the items from your first list.)
- And, again, wait a few more days and write another paragraph.

Notice how your list begins to change and how you start focusing on what gives your life meaning rather than the objects you purchased on the first day.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you learn from this experiment?

Did you spend a lot of money on things like houses or cars?

Did you spend some money on charities? What charity or cause did you support?

What influence did you hope to have with this money?

What part of the world did you hope to save?

What did you want to learn or do? Are these new things? Is there a way you could start doing them now or at least learn about them?

Is there a connection between how you spent your money and the type of career you aspire to?





## WORKSPACE:

# My Inspired Life Vision Board

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Yes, vision boards get made fun of sometimes because they are seen as wishful thinking, or not realistic. But for those who believe in the power of visual thinking, a vision board that creates a clear picture of what you want in your life can be the key to long-term success. Taking your ideas out of your head and placing them on a board where you can see them each day and be inspired is one of the best ways to ensure that you will clear a clear goal and focus in mind. So ignore the nay-sayers, and create your board. It's OK to think big when you're thinking about your future. And vision boards let you do that. You still have to do the work, of course; simply placing ideas on a board isn't enough. But the board is the first step. You'll find other exercises in this book that will help you create the steps to your goals once you have created your vision.

## PICTURE IT!

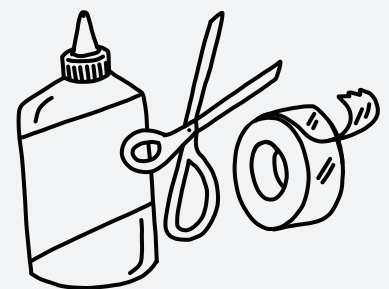
-  To create this board, you will need a large, blank surface, the appropriate writing tools, and other items like pictures or sticky-tabs. Your options are:
  1. A large piece of newsprint or poster board with pens, crayons, markers, or other writing implements. If you're creative, add glitter, paints, stickers, etc. You will also need a collection of pictures either from magazines or printed off the internet.
  2. A blank word processing document. Get creative with attractive fonts and downloading pictures from websites (try Unsplash.com for free photos).
-  Take some time to create this board. You don't have to do it in one sitting.
-  Start by thinking about what is important to you in your life. What inspires you? Who inspires you? What do you enjoy? What are your favorite activities or things? What would you like your time to be filled with? As you answer these questions, start gathering images that reflect your thoughts and feelings. Look for quotes that inspire you or words that state how you want to feel.
-  Get creative! Place your images and words around your board in any way that pleases you. Make it highly personal: this is all about creating the life you'd like to have.



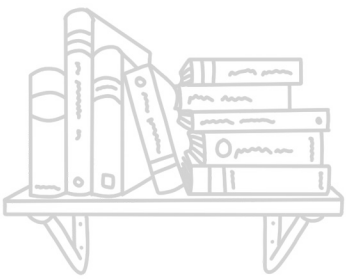
## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

How does your board make you feel? Your board should inspire you and make you smile when you see it. It should remind you of your talents, strengths, and interests. Keep adjusting and adding to your board as new interests and experiences capture your imagination. Use this board to stay focused on what is important in your life. When you're ready, you can visit other exercises in this book to develop goals and steps to achieve the items on your board.

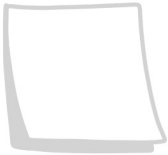
## WORKSPACE:



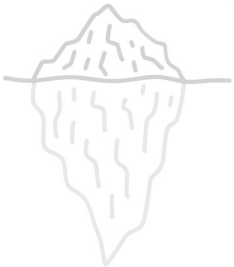
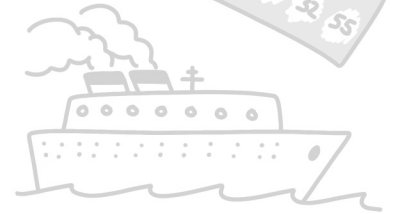
## REFLECTION



# SECTION 2



## BRINGING OUT YOUR BEST



Finding the Hidden Treasures  
How Past Leads to Potential  
Making the Most of Your Experiences



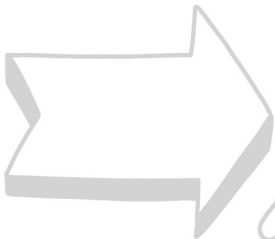
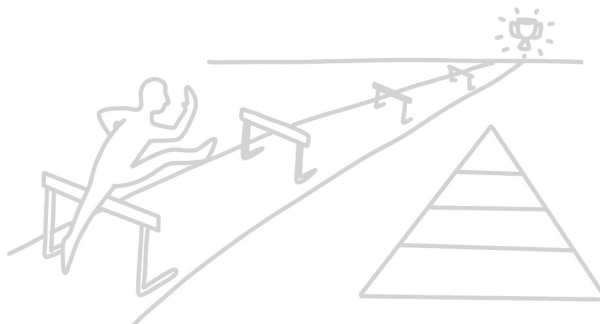
Rating Myself

What Do I Like?

What's in Your Toolbox?

Who Am I?

Constellation: My Universe of Knowledge



# Finding the Hidden Treasures

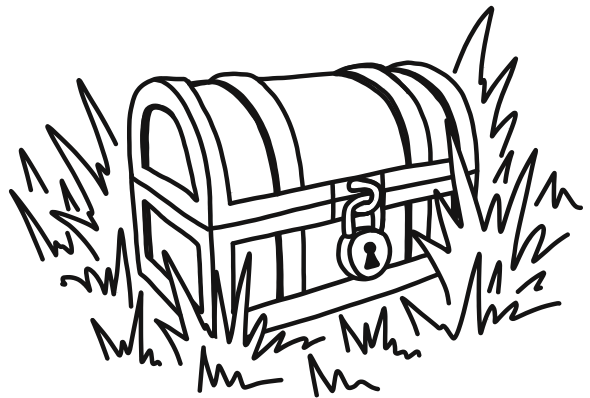
CONVERTING BAD EXPERIENCES TO GOOD

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

We all hit rough patches in the job search. Sometimes that one employer you were hoping to work for says no. Or an interview doesn't go as well as expected. You get a rejection letter from the graduate school you had hoped to attend. Maybe you pursued a major and then decided you didn't want a career in that field. Or you did an internship and hated the experience. It's easy to look at those experiences as mistakes or even failures. But nothing is a mistake or a failure if you learn from it, and you apply your knowledge to move forward and find a better situation.

Sometimes our challenges come from outside the job search: a difficult family situation, or a personal issue you had to overcome.

This exercise is designed to help you find the good in a situation and start to think about what you can do instead. Sometimes there are hidden treasures in the weeds.



## PICTURE IT!

- Draw a vertical line on your paper to create two columns. In the left column, identify a difficult situation or negative experience that you've had. Describe what happened. Take a few minutes to explain what you had hoped would happen versus what actually happened.
- Now in the right column, see if you can identify anything good that came out of the situation. If you're having trouble, try focusing on what you learned from the experience. What would you do differently now? For example, if you had a bad internship experience, perhaps you discovered that you don't like a career field you had planned to pursue. What does this new knowledge free you up to explore?

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Once you have described the experience and what you learned, step back and review what you wrote. After all, you are here working on this exercise, so you survived it. It's time to find the lessons:

- What did you learn?
- What did you discover about yourself as a result of this experience?
- What traits or skills did you possess to get past this experience? How did you demonstrate resilience or grit?
- How has this experience propelled you to something different?
- How can you re-frame this experience as a helpful life lesson?
- What's your next step since this setback? What actions could you take so that you won't experience that situation again?
- What stories can you create from your learning experience?

## WORKSPACE:

*Describe the negative experience*

*Identify the "good"*



# How Past Leads to Potential

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

One of the best predictors of future behavior is past behavior, and we are usually more confident in situations when we can bring part of our past into it. Just think of how much better you feel when you move to a new location and start unpacking your familiar items from the moving boxes. Just seeing something familiar makes the new situation a little less strange. Our experiences aren't all that different from tangible items. The opportunity to use old skills and reignite old interests can make the transition to a new job much easier.

It works the same in your future job or internship. The more skills, talents, and interests you have that you can use at work, the more comfortable and confident you can be. So, let's find a way to identify those skills and talents and come up with some creative ways to keep using them in future work.

## PICTURE IT!

-  Draw a line down the center of your paper to create two columns. Use the left column to identify various activities, skills, or interests you had in the past (recent or distant). Just brainstorm, thinking about former jobs you have held, and the activities, skills, and talents you have even if you haven't done them in a while. Go as far back as you want--- even to elementary school, if you wish.
-  Now, as you look over your list, what skills, talents, or interests would you like to apply to a future role you might have? How could you repackage some of those activities to fit the new job you're seeking or starting? How can you see a broader picture of your skills, so you don't limit them to the activity in the past? How might that early experience be a bonus for a future position?

**NOW THINK ABOUT IT:**

What did you learn from this exercise?

Can you begin to see how your current talents, skills, and traits might be valuable in different job settings?

What successes have you had in your past that would make for good interview stories?

How will you convey your skills to a potential employer?

How can you help a future employer see how your skills and talents apply to this new position you are seeking? Can you help to make the connection?

**WORKSPACE:**

Past skills, talents, & interests

Potential uses

# Making the Most of Your Experiences

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Want to have powerful bullet points in your resume or the strongest LinkedIn profile? Want to demonstrate your skills and experience to an employer fully? Want to develop potential stories for interviews that demonstrate your abilities? Try making a list—even better, several lists.



## PICTURE IT!

- Take a piece of paper or open a new Word doc.
- Create a separate column for each of your past major experiences: summer jobs, volunteering, leadership experiences, internships, etc.
- Then, select one of these experiences. (If you're not currently doing it, think back to that experience.) Picture a typical day. Write down everything you did from the moment you arrived until you left. Try to recall the problems you handled. What was your worst day? Your best day? Your favorite interaction with a colleague or customer. Your most challenging colleague or customer. Immerse yourself back into the experience and list everything you remember on your page. What was the most interesting experience you had?
- Go for it! Make a list of one of your major experiences:



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Now that you've created your list take note of the specific skills or knowledge you needed to do the job well.

- Which ones are “transferable”—that is, which skills from this job could be used in your future career?
- Which skills would a potential employer care about?
- What personality traits would an employer admire?
- What stories can you create for interviews?
- What skills or experiences would you like to continue?
- Which experiences or skills do you never want to deal with again?
- Note the skills you developed, the knowledge you gained, and the best of your personality traits.

Use what you've learned to start creating the bullet points for your resume or LinkedIn profile.

Now that you've created one list do more. Make a list for each of your major experiences. And here's a tip: save your lists. You may find that some skills will be useful to mention for one career field you're considering, and other skills might fit better with a different career plan. Save all your work—and refer back each time you're developing a new targeted resume.

## WORKSPACE:

# Rating Myself

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Whenever you're getting ready to start a project or think about a new plan of action, it always helps to make sure you're really on board with the plan. This quick exercise can help you throughout your career planning and development process by bringing the reality of the situation into focus.

## PICTURE IT!

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- Copy the above drawing into your notebook or on your computer.
- Select a subject you want to rate for enthusiasm, interest, or confidence.
- Examples you could ask yourself include:
  - How motivated am I to move forward on this project or idea?
  - How confident am I in my ability to succeed in this task?
  - How often do I use this particular skill?
  - How high is my interest in...?
  - How likely am I to pursue this project?
  - How important is this to me?
- Rate yourself by circling one of the numbers from 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest response and 10 being the highest. Create your own wording for the worst to the best. So, if you're rating your motivation toward a project, a 1 might mean you have no motivation; a 10 would mean you can't wait to start.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

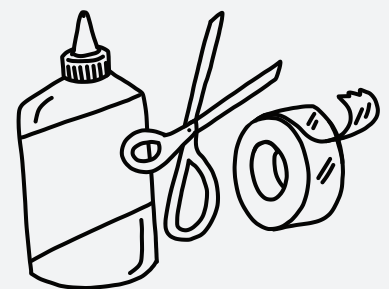
Take a look at the ranking you gave to your topic. Are you surprised? Was your ranking higher or lower than expected? What does that mean?

If you have a low ranking, do you need to do something else or focus on something else? Or does it mean that it's a task you must do, you just don't have the enthusiasm for it? If that's the case, how could you motivate yourself? What rewards could you set up for completing the task in steps?

If you rate your interest in a career field less than 5, you should probably take a hard look at why you're pursuing it. You might be doing so out of family obligation or the financial value of the field. While those considerations are important, they clearly aren't making you happy. Talk this over with a career coach in your career center.

This scale is an excellent item to keep handy, no matter what you're doing. When you're procrastinating, take it out and check what's going on in your mind. And be creative about ideas for how you could move higher on the scale with just some small action steps or new thoughts about the subject.

## WORKSPACE:




# What Do I Like?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Are you surprised to see this deceptively simple list in a career book? “Why would I need to make a list of what I like? My interest in guitars has nothing to do with my career plans,” you might be thinking. The “What do I like” list has several purposes, but the primary objective is to bring to light what you enjoy, what makes you happy, what interests you. So, start by just making a list of 20 or so items that you like. This list can include favorite colors, performers, movies, hobbies, locations, vacations, etc. Don’t worry about whether it’s “practical” or “career-related.”

## PICTURE IT!

-  Make your list of things you like before you read further.

## WORKSPACE

Things I like:

---

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Now we're going to examine this deceptively simple list.

Pretend someone else wrote this list you're looking at: what do you know about them? How would you analyze their interests? Are there any themes or similar items showing up? What would you tell this person about the list?

Now, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- What does your list say about you?
- Did anything on your list surprise you?
- Is there anything on the list you used to like but haven't done recently? Why? Would you like to start doing it again?
- Could or do any of these items relate to your work?
- Is there a way to monetize or derive income from anything on the list?
- Are you action-oriented, or do you prefer slower-paced activities?
- Are many of your "likes" expensive (hobbies like sailing, for example)? What does that say about the income you will need from your work?
- Are you primarily an indoor or outdoor person based on your interests?
- Is there a geographic pattern based on your list?
- Do you seem drawn to other countries or other locations?

If you found this list helpful, or if you found yourself veering in another direction, try creating lists based on these variations:

- What am I interested in?
- What do I like to do?

If these variations appeal, do them instead and then ask yourself the same questions as above.

# What's In Your Toolbox?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

The value of a toolbox is you have all the equipment you need and they are easy to access. So a toolbox is an excellent metaphor for being aware of the various skills you have that you will want to share with potential employers or graduate schools. Just like a regular toolbox, you won't need every tool for every occasion, but you never know when you might find a need for a skill that you'll want to talk about in an interview. You can think of walking into an interview with your toolbox, being ready to pull out whatever is need to accomplish the task (getting the job!).

## PICTURE IT!

Using the toolbox metaphor, create a list of your:

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Interests
- Personality traits
- Experiences



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

- Was it hard to identify your skills? Check with your career center or online for a list of the competencies that employers are most seeking in candidates. That's a great way to start your skill list.
- What have you filled your toolbox with? Which of the areas (skills, knowledge, etc.) contained the most information? Which areas about yourself do you need to research more? Consider ways to learn more about your skills and strengths.
- Now that you've filled your toolbox think of a title or tagline for it. What are the key skills, traits, knowledge, etc., that stand out? Which ones are most important? Place a star next to the ones you think an employer might be most interested in.
- How are you going to sell this toolbox? What stories are you going to create that will tell an employer the value of the elements in your toolbox?

## WORKSPACE

*My Skills, Knowledge & Experience*

*My Traits & Interests*

# Who Am I?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Sometimes the simplest exercises can be the most powerful. Making a “who am I” list can help you best identify how to craft a life and career you will enjoy.

## PICTURE IT!

- Take out a piece of paper or your computer and make a list of words that describe you. You could include your family or social roles (“student”, “brother”, “sister”), your traits (“smart”, “funny”, “introverted”), your skills and talents (“writer”, “musician”, “tennis player”), or even job-related descriptions (“entrepreneur”, “law student”, “investment banker”).
- What is most interesting is the way you choose to describe yourself. Try it now.

*insightful*      *curious*  
*creative*      **Me**      *hard-working*  
*perceptive*      *compassionate*  
                         *teacher*



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Look for patterns in your list.

Did you focus on specific personality traits?

Are they a source of pride or pleasure?

Did you focus on achievements?

Which achievements were most important to you?

Were relationships most important to you?

How do your relationships affect your career plans?

Do your answers point you in any career direction?

How could this information be helpful to you in developing stories for interviews or creating your LinkedIn account?

## WORKSPACE

*Who Am I?*

---

# Constellation:

MY UNIVERSE OF KNOWLEDGE

## HOW DOES IT HELP?



When we look up at the stars, we see random spots of light. But if we know about constellations, we can see how these random stars can be grouped into a meaningful unit.

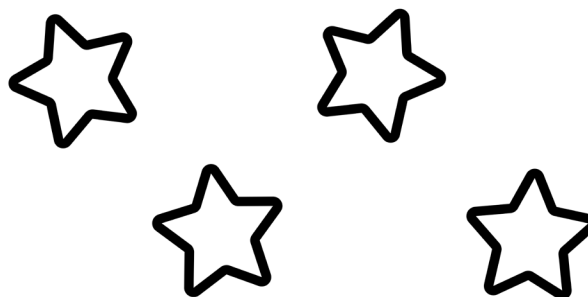


Constellations can be a great visual image for finding new ways to organize information you already know. Let's try one and call it My Universe of Knowledge.

- Do you ever feel like you have all this knowledge, and you're not sure how to apply it?
- What if all the subjects you studied in high school and college could be placed in the sky like stars?
- What patterns might you be able to create by connecting some of them?
- How could creating these patterns or groups of knowledge help you explain your education to an employer?

## PICTURE IT!

- ❑ Start with your blank piece of paper.
- ❑ Draw a random number of stars (let's start with 20).
- ❑ Think about all the classes you have taken or the key areas of knowledge you possess from your coursework.
- ❑ Write a word or two on each of the stars that describes your different areas of knowledge. When you've put them all down (add or subtract stars as needed), think about each star in terms of the job or career you're seeking.
- ❑ Can you think of anything that you learned from that class (either a piece of knowledge, a skill you acquired, or a personality trait needed to succeed)? Jot that down next to the star.
- ❑ When you have completed them all (even if there are a few where you just can't see a connection), look at your stars and see if a pattern (constellation) is emerging. Draw a line to connect the ones that you believe fit a career you're interested in.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you learn from this exercise?

Did you find some unexpected connections?

Which "stars" caught your attention or interested you the most?

Which "stars" could be most easily combined into a constellation?

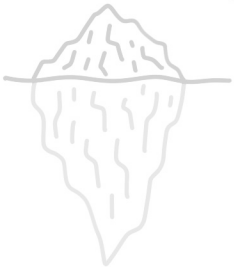
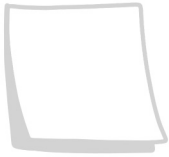
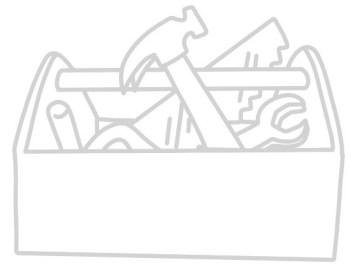
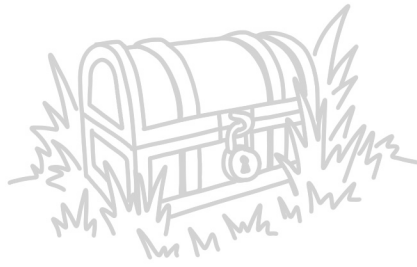
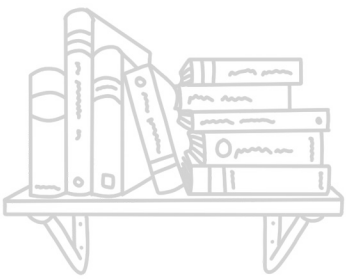
What careers might come from your constellations?

Did you find an old subject you'd like to revisit?

You can now take the key ideas, personality traits, knowledge base, and skills and create a list that you can use in your cover letter, resume, interviews, etc.

How might you take advantage of what you've uncovered?

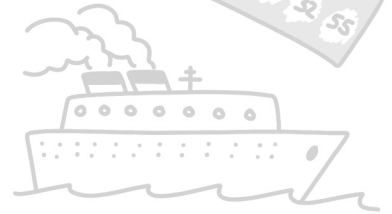
## REFLECTION



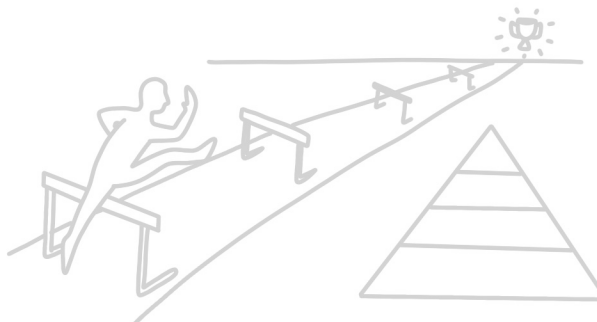
# SECTION 3



## GETTING ORGANIZED AND SETTING GOALS



9 Boxes of Life  
From Seed to Harvest  
Making Progress in Your Projects  
Organizing the Internship Search  
Sun on Horizon  
Talking with Someone Wise



# 9 Boxes of Life

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Does creating 9 boxes in your life seem like a lot? Like there isn't enough time to do what you want? Or you're so busy focusing on one area of your life (school, for example) that you neglect other important parts of your life (like friends or family)?

This exercise, first described in Susan Jeffers' book, Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway, involves creating a big box that holds nine smaller boxes. You are going to use these boxes to organize and prioritize what's important in your life. In each box you will write one area of your life that's important to you.

Does nine boxes sound like a lot? It is, but this exercise will help you create a balanced and full life. That way if something happens to one of those "boxes," you still have eight other boxes to draw from for strength and resilience. You focus on the strengths that remain, while you work to replace the lost box.

So grab a pencil, draw nine boxes, label each box with an important area in your life, and start planning your new fuller life. Focus on the solutions, not the problems. Focus on what gives meaning to your life. Consider areas like your classes, family, friends, volunteering, hobbies, health, money/finances, spirituality/religion, etc. Write each area in one box. It doesn't matter which box you place them in; all boxes are equal.

## PICTURE IT!

 Draw nine boxes just like below:


## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Take a look at the nine areas you identified and write down three overarching goals for each area. The goals don't need to be major; they could be something like, "Keep in touch with my friends from high school." Or "Outline all my upcoming assignments and tests for the rest of the semester." Or "learn to play the guitar."

Then write down one action you could take this week to move toward achieving each of the goals in each of the areas. Focus on small steps you could do easily this week.

For instance, if a goal is to connect with your friends from high school, maybe your action step will be, "Send Emily an email just to say hi and that I'm thinking of her." If you have a hobby that takes a lot of time (fishing or golf, for example) think about one small action you could take this week related to the hobby. Maybe it's reading an article in a magazine or online about your hobby. If you can't fish or play golf this week, you could still read about it or look at equipment in a local store. The idea is to treat yourself to some time with your hobbies even when you can't completely practice them.

Once you have identified a small task for each box, decide what you will focus on this week. You don't have to complete every step every week. Just decide which ones come first, and try to do as many as possible. Hopefully you will feel more balanced, and more in control of your life.

## WORKSPACE:

# From Seed to Harvest

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

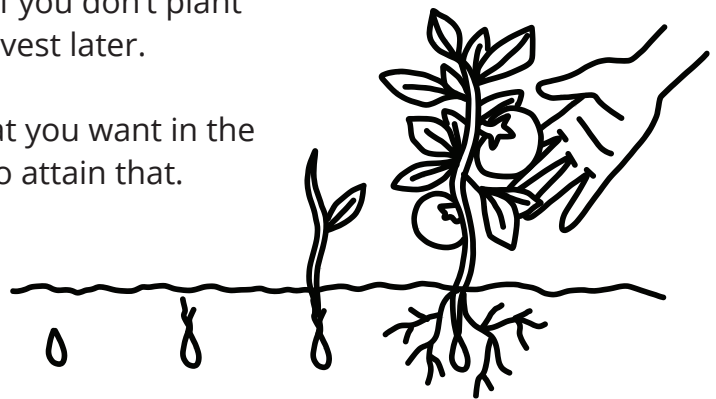
### HOW DOES IT HELP?

Many parts of the job search just take time. You might have to rush them along, but sometimes you have to wait. Consider the process of going from seed to harvest. It doesn't happen overnight. You have to take small steps now to achieve the big goals you seek for the future.

The same thing can be said in reverse. If you don't plant the seeds now, you can't expect the harvest later.

This exercise will help you focus on what you want in the future and the steps you need to take to attain that.

And if you find you are getting anxious about the job search process and it's taking too much time, this list will help to remind you of the steps in the process and the need for patience.



### PICTURE IT!

- Take out a piece of paper or your computer and make a three-column list.
  - In the first column, write NOW and date it.
  - In the second column, write FUTURE and date it.
  - In the third column, write HOW.
- Now, start with the second column and write the outcome you are hoping for. You can list several things such as “a completed resume,” or “several practice interviews,” “a job,” or “admission to graduate school.”
- In the first column, write your present state related to those desires. You might put items like “resume drafted,” “no practice interviews,” “just starting grad school application process.”
- In the third column, outline some steps to get you to your goal. What will it take to get to the harvest? What are the seeds you need to plant?



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Was this a helpful way to think about your job search? Were you able to see how planting some small seeds now will yield a terrific future?

You can use this list in many ways:

- First-year college students could identify what they would like to be able to say they accomplished by senior year (a four-year plan).
- Job seekers could put their current job situation, their desired future job, and then create the steps they need to achieve that.
- Writers could use this as a book-planning project, outlining what they've written or what ideas they have, and what the end product will look like.
- Project managers can use this a brainstorming exercise for their team: where are we now, where do we want to be at the end, and how do we get there.

What is important is starting with an honest analysis of where you are, a clear idea of where you want to be, and the time frame in which you hope to accomplish this. Once you have that, you will be able to outline the steps to get there. Can't figure that out? Time to seek support from a colleague or career advisor.

## WORKSPACE:

Now	Future	How

# Making Progress in Your Projects

## KANBAN BOARD

Have you ever heard of a Kanban board? It's basically a three-column board that can help you organize projects. You can use it to plan a paper you're writing, your job search—basically any goal or project you're trying to achieve. A Kanban board provides a great visual reminder of where you are where you need to go next. And it's easy to make—you can create one on a Whiteboard, on a piece of paper, or on your computer. If you're working with a team or group, putting your group project on a Kanban board can help you keep track of each person's progress as well as what you need to be focusing on now.

### PICTURE IT!

- Draw two vertical lines on your paper to create three columns. (You can also do this on a whiteboard.)
- At the top of the paper write the project or goal you are pursuing.
- In the first column, write "To-Do."
- In the second column, write "Doing."
- In the third column, write "Done."
- Now, use a stack of sticky-tabs to write the tasks related to this project. As you do that, place them in the appropriate column. (Yes, it's OK to write ones you've already completed and place them in the "Done" column. They provide great motivation to see your progress and keep going!)
- If you're doing this for a group project, and each person has different assignments, consider assigning a different color of sticky tab to each person.
- Keep your board in plain sight where you can move the sticky tabs around to show what stage you're in with each step of the process.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What have you learned by looking at your board?

Is it helping you sort out your project and break it into smaller steps?

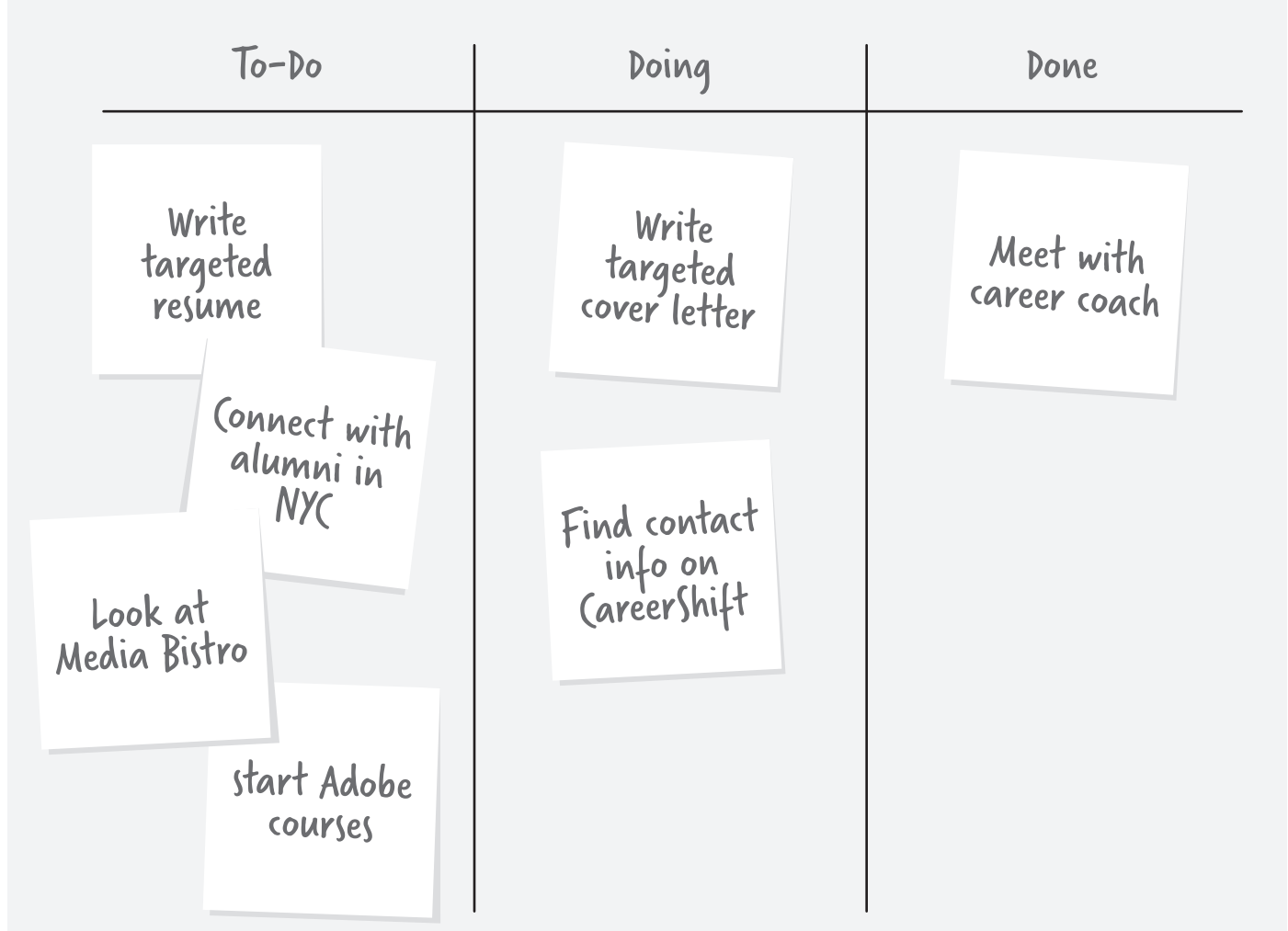
If you're working with a team, does each person know their responsibilities in the process?

Can you determine whether more action needs to be taken in a particular area of the project?

Start thinking about other ways you can use this board. What other projects or ideas would this board help you complete?

Consider using this board to organize your job search. For instance you could have a sticky tab that says "write targeted resume" and place it in the column that fits. Another sticky tab could be "connect with an alumnus from my school." Keeping those sticky tabs up will help remind you of what you need to focus on.

## EXAMPLE:



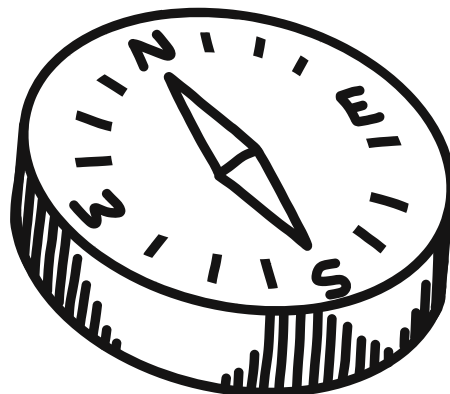
# Organizing the Internship Search

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Finding an internship takes a lot of steps and it's easy to get distracted. This simple chart will help you focus on what's important, first by establishing your goal, and then identifying the steps to get there.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw two vertical lines on your paper to create three columns.
- In the first column, write your overall goal for your internship. For instance, you could write "Internship in a law firm" or "internship in Finance" or "Internship in Biomedical Research." Just identify the basic field where you'd like to complete an internship. If you'd like to write more details about it, you can, but you don't have to.
- In the second column, write "Steps to Achieve this." Here you write what you need to do to make this happen. This list could include anything from identifying potential internship sites, contacting alumni from your school, writing a resume, speaking with a career coach, to reviewing the internship listings at your school's career center. Make as complete a list as possible.
- In the third column, write "Launch." This is the action phase of your process. Out of all the steps you identified, use the Launch column to place them in the order in which you plan to do them.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Did this system help you prioritize your plans for finding the internship?

Did you have trouble identifying the steps needed to get an internship? Definitely check with your Career Center for assistance with this.

If you had trouble identifying potential internship sites, take advantage of your career center's job database which usually contains internship opportunities as well. You can also research possible sites through online sites like "Indeed.com."

Are you feeling a little overwhelmed by all the steps you have to take? Break the big steps into smaller ones. For instance, if identifying sites is one of your goals, can you set aside a 30-minute block of time to do internet research? Then when you learn what you uncovered, you will know whether you need to set aside even more time, or if you have enough information to go to the next step. Keep all of your findings in the same document so you can easily revisit the information!

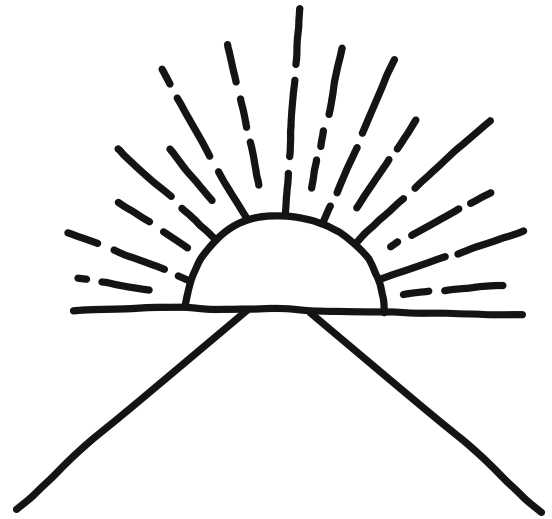
## WORKSPACE:

<i>My Internship Goal</i>	<i>Steps to Achieve This</i>	<i>Launch!</i>

# Sun on Horizon

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

The sun on the horizon is an excellent metaphor for focusing on your bright future. Use the sun to represent your goal, and then use the path before it to layout your plan. A drawing like this is particularly useful for those “long fuse- big bang” goals (like graduate school or medical school) that take a while to achieve. Keeping your eye on the shining sun/ goal will remind you why you’re working so hard now.



## PICTURE IT!

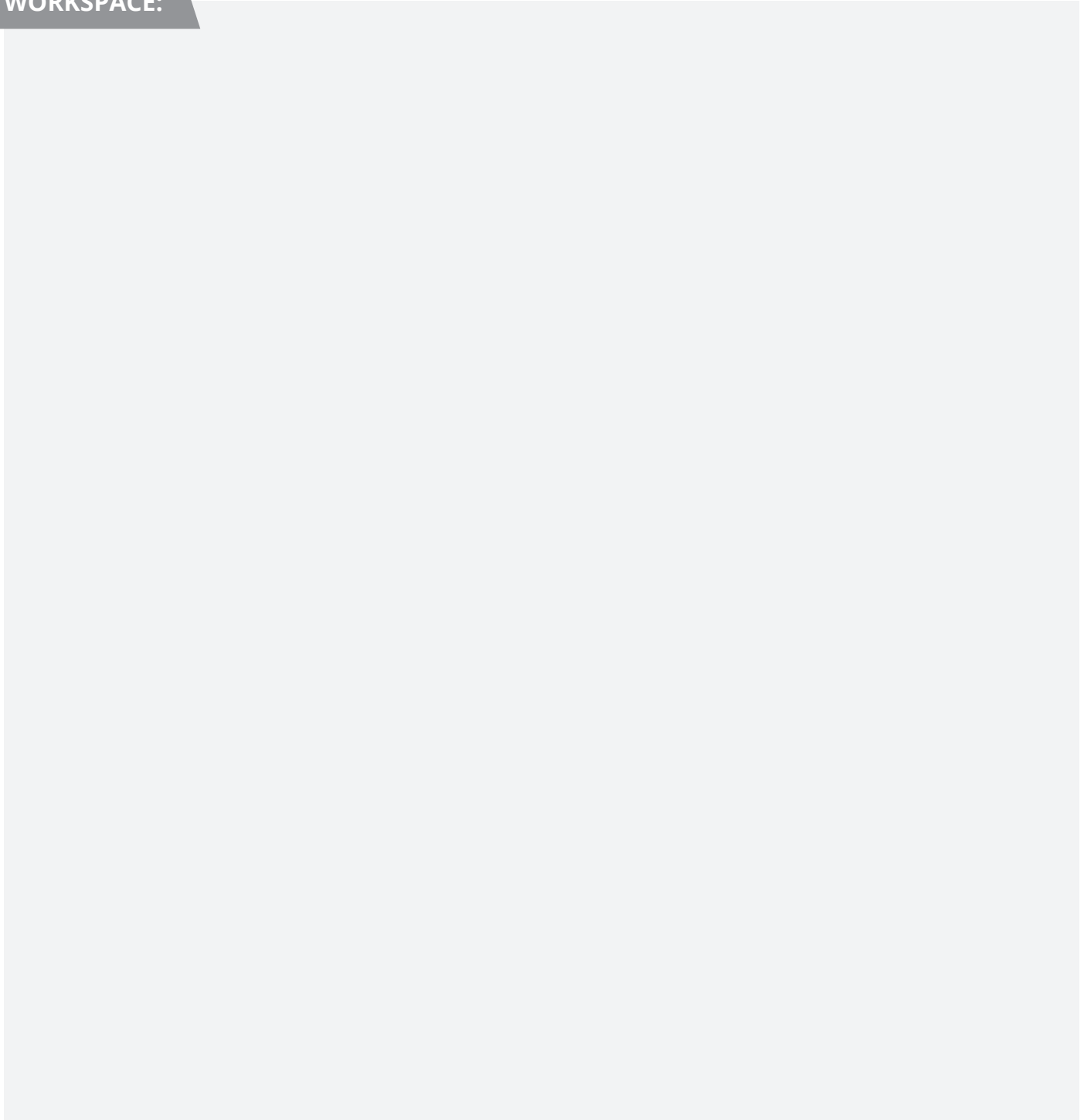
- ❑ To create this exercise, you will need a blank surface: paper, blank computer screen, or whiteboard (if it's a group project). Copy the drawing of the sun, and then draw a path leading to it.
- ❑ Write your goal on the sun. And then write some of the key steps to your goal on the path leading to it.
- ❑ You can make your path a series of blocks and label each with a different time frame if you want, starting with the present time and then putting the time for the goal to be achieved at the base of the sun.
- ❑ Place your drawing in a public area where you will see it every day and be reminded of how much you will enjoy achieving your goal.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What goal did you choose? How far out is the goal? Can you accomplish it in a month? A year? Or will it take several years? Whatever the time frame, set milestones (steps) to achieve it so you can see your progress.

Know that along the way, you might have to adjust your steps. Just re-draw it, or add new steps as you learn more about the process.

## WORKSPACE:



# Talking to Someone Wise

WHAT WOULD \_\_\_\_\_ SAY?

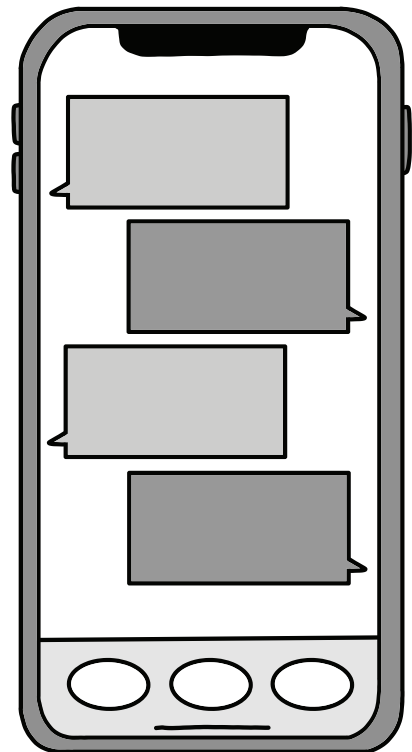
## HOW DOES IT HELP?

What if you could have a quick motivating conversation with someone you admire? Someone wiser than you who always has something encouraging to say? When you get caught up in mental loops and negativity, it can be hard to access your smarter, better self (you know that person is in there!). This exercise is excellent when you need to psych yourself up to get ready for a task like interviewing or networking.

Think of someone you admire or someone whose judgment you trust. It could be a teacher who always knew you would succeed, or a parent, or a minister. It could be someone whose quotes you enjoy reading or whose life/work you admire, even though you don't know them. Maybe it's your favorite writer, a religious figure, or a celebrity like Oprah Winfrey. What inspires you about their messages?

## PICTURE IT!

- ❑ Let's create a conversation using text blocks—as if you were texting this wiser person.
- ❑ On the left-side block, write what you're thinking about an upcoming situation that is causing you some anxiety. ("I'm worried about this upcoming presentation.")
- ❑ Then in the right-side box, write what you guess that other person would say to lift your spirits. How would they help you face the situation? If you're having trouble, try finding their quotes online and see if a quote fits your situation.





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So, who did you identify as a wiser individual?

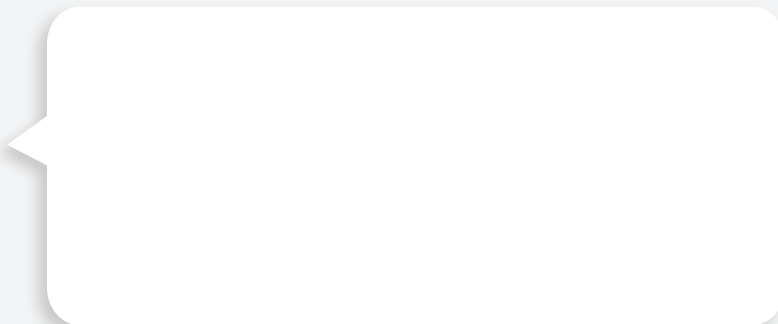
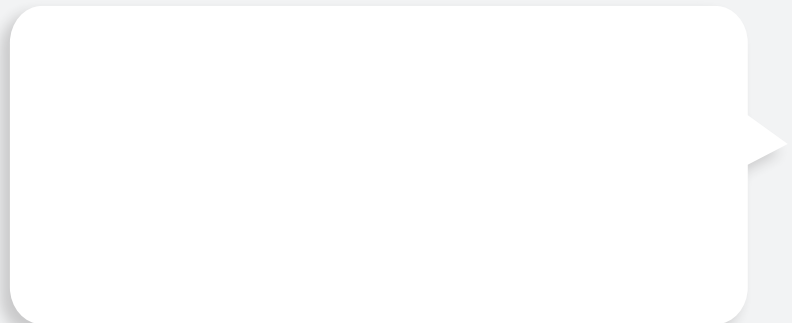
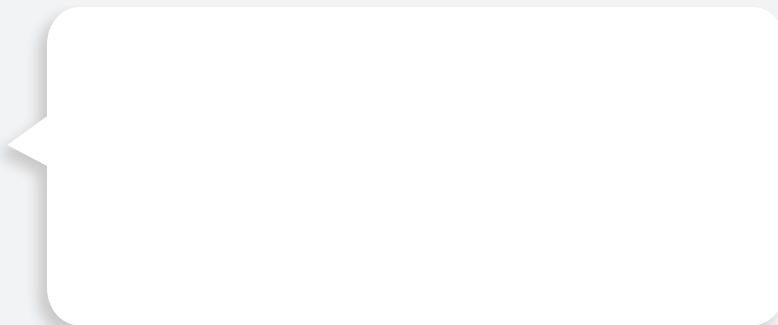
What did they say to motivate you?

Can you incorporate their thoughts and motivational attitude into your own thoughts?

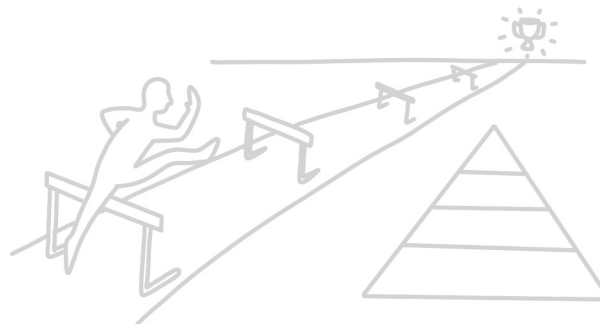
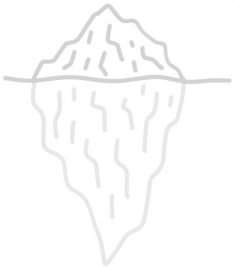
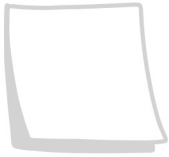
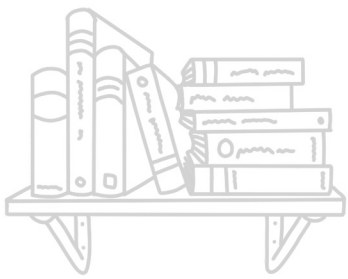
You might want to write some of those motivating thoughts on a sticky tab and place it in your notebook or on a mirror to remind yourself.

The idea is to help you remember that your thoughts are just your thoughts. They may or may not be true or accurate. They might just be reflecting your feelings of anxiety or sadness. By focusing on how a wiser person might respond, you can boost your confidence. Keeping someone else's thoughts in your head can help you get around your thinking.

## WORKSPACE



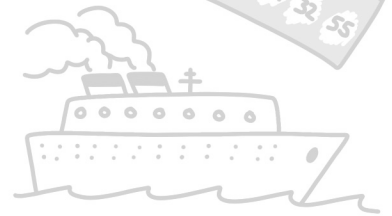
## REFLECTION



# SECTION 4



## MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONS



Calming Down Your Anxiety  
From a Wall to a Path  
Transforming Fear to Hope  
Gratitude List  
Head and Heart Decisions  
Honoring the Creator and the Critic  
Vampire Emotions and Thoughts  
What Am I Balancing?



# Calming Down Your Anxiety

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

A major mental challenge of anxiety (fear) is how your mind can just keep spiraling down into deeper and deeper fearful thoughts. This exercise will help you see more clearly the type of catastrophic thinking you might be doing which can paralyze you.

A common question that incites and strengthens anxiety is “what if?” As in, “what if that happens?” or “what if I mess up?” or “what if no one offers me a job?” Sound familiar? Usually, when our mind starts thinking like that, we just want to run away from it. Well, this exercise is designed to do the opposite. This time instead of running away or avoiding those thoughts (which only reinforces them), let’s have a conversation with your mind.

## PICTURE IT!

We’re going to use the text box approach as if you were texting yourself.

- Start with your “what if” thought that’s making you anxious. Write it down in the first box.
- Then in the right box below it, write “and then what?”
- Think for a moment about what would happen if your feared experience actually did happen. What would happen next?
- Write that next thought in the left-hand box.
- Then in the next right box, write “And then what?” again.
- Keep going until you end up at your worst possible fear or where you start to realize that maybe it isn’t as bad as you thought.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

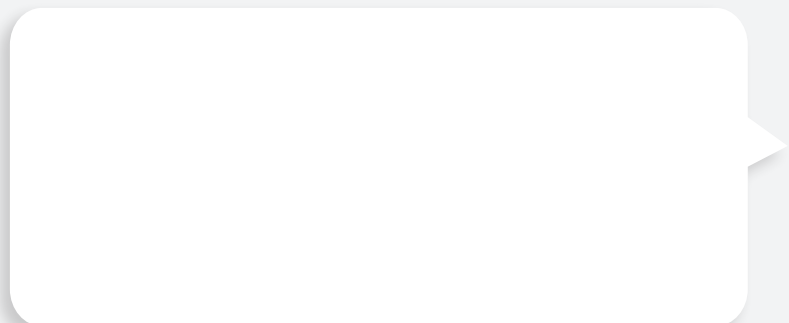
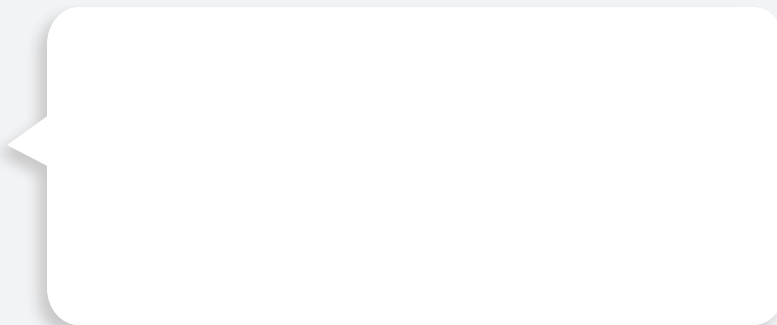
So how did your conversation go? Could you start to see that maybe your fears are a little exaggerated?

As you examine your anxious statements (your fears) can you identify some ways you could take more control? For instance, if one of your fears is that you will not do well in an interview, what steps could you take to keep that from happening? What kind of preparation could you do?

What was your bottom-line, worst-case scenario in this exercise? Let's say you started with "I won't get this job I want," and your last line is something like "I'll be a homeless person forever." Do you believe your last line? Does it seem like a plausible reality? Then try going back to the top and start estimating the odds that this event will occur. Place a probability on it as if you were betting on a sports team. Putting realistic odds on a situation can help you put it in perspective. Sure, anything is possible. But is it probable? That's how you want to think about it.

Take a look at what your anxiety is saying when it talks to you. Generally, anxiety is not very nice to you. It will say things to you that you would never say to a friend. Would you tell a friend they will likely be homeless? Of course not. So, you need to catch those unkind and unpleasant thoughts and see them for what they are: fear. You're just afraid, and that's normal.

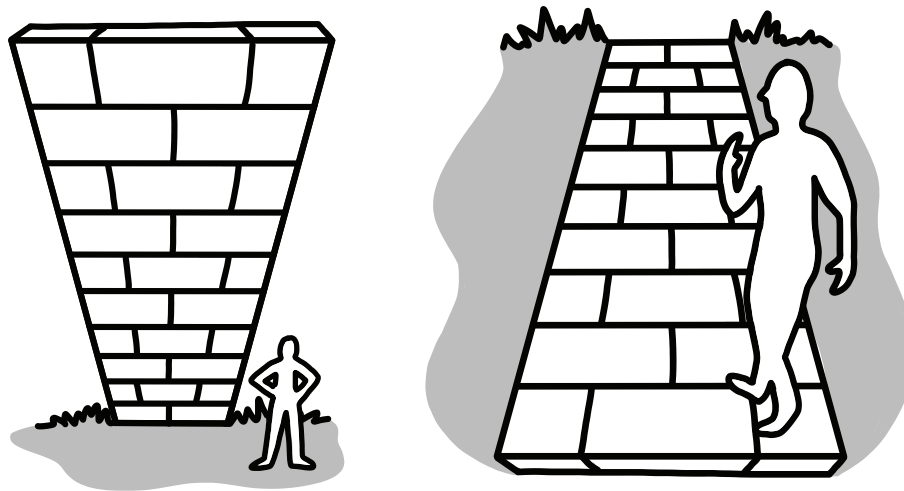
## WORKSPACE:



# From a Wall to a Path

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Are you feeling stuck? Have you hit some “brick walls” in trying to achieve your career plans? This image can help you rethink your plans and turn those bricks into a path to something new or different.



## PICTURE IT!

- Draw a wall with some bricks. Identify the bricks that have created this wall. Perhaps your grades aren't strong enough for a program you'd like to attend. Maybe an employer requires a major you don't have. Maybe you are creating your bricks by not having the confidence you need, or by not doing your best work on your resume or social media. Identify what's holding you back by labeling the bricks in your drawing.
- Now, one-by-one tackle those bricks. If your GPA isn't where it needs to be, do you have time to improve it? If so, set a goal and place that brick on your path. If you don't have time to improve your GPA, can you change your goal slightly? Perhaps apply to a different school or seek a different job within the industry.
- Are your bricks self-made? How can you overcome any personal issues that might be holding you back? How could you improve your resume or social media?
- Each time you come up with a solution for one of the bricks, move it from the wall to the path beneath your feet.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you identify as the components of your brick wall? How much of your wall can't be fixed? How can you work around it?

If you change your goals slightly, will that affect your wall? Will more doors open for you in a slightly different career field, for example?

Before you give up due to a brick wall, always investigate ways around it!

## WORKSPACE:

# Transforming Fear to Hope

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Fear is one of the most crippling emotions, and it can hold us back from experiences. In her excellent book, Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway, Susan Jeffers says that there's really only one fear: the fear that if something happens, you won't be able to handle it.

One quick way to calm your fears is to consider the probability or likelihood of what you fear coming true. We can always say, "anything is possible," and it's true—that thing you fear might very well be possible. BUT- is it probable? Consider estimating the probability of something occurring versus the possibility. Think of a common source of anxiety for people: flying. Is it possible that a commercial plane will crash? Absolutely. We know this is true because it has happened. However, there are very few plane crashes relative to the number of flights. So, while it is a possibility, the probability is very low.

So, with the ongoing theory that it's better to write down your thoughts and fears so you can deal with them, let's create a diagram to do that.

## PICTURE IT!



Draw a line down the center of your paper to create two columns. In the left column, write "My Fears" and in the right column write, "Finding Hope."

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So, what fears did you list? As you look them over, how many are "probable"? Remember, there's a difference between possible and probable.

Were you able to come up with an answer to your fears and provide some hope for yourself?

If that was hard to do, your fears might have too much power. In that case, consider seeing a career coach or a counselor to help you look more realistically at your fears and find calming responses and solutions.



This is a great chart to keep handy because we tend to "recycle" our fears. Fears don't just go away; they return to haunt sometimes at the worst times like 3:00 am. But since we know they tend to do that, referring back to this list of hopeful responses to our fears can help calm your anxious thoughts, and you can also see that many of these thoughts aren't new—and many have never come true.



**EXAMPLE:**

Here's how one job-seeker filled out her **Transforming Fear to Hope** list:

Can you see how once she put her fears down on paper, it was possible to analyze them more logically and come up with reasonable arguments against them? That way, if she faces those same fears again, she will already have a counterargument. This is another example of the power of writing things down; so often we keep our fears in our heads and let them just drift there. By naming them, facing them, and coming up with coping statements, we will be able to fight them more easily.

<b>FROM FEAR TO HOPE</b>	
<b>My fears</b> 	<b>Finding hope</b> 
I'll never find a job.	It's possible, but not probable. What I'm really afraid of is I won't find a job I like. I will find a job. And if I don't like it, I'll start my search for a better one. There are lots of jobs out there.
Everyone else is more qualified than I am.	It's possible and probable that I am competing with highly qualified people. So I will find a way to demonstrate my unique value, skills, and traits to an employer. I can also keep reading and learning to build my expertise.
	<b>"I can handle it."</b>

# The Gratitude List

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Gratitude lists appear in almost every book about positive psychology. They have been extensively researched and have been shown to be a key element to increase happiness. They are one of the best ways to help shift your focus when you start to feel negative or down about a situation. Just keep in mind that there's no one way to make a gratitude list. Some researchers suggest you do them first thing in the morning or the last thing at night. Some will say you should do them every day. Some say just do them when you want. Here's a suggestion: try writing a gratitude list before you go to bed every evening for a week. See how the list makes you feel. Want to continue it? Sure, go ahead. Not as interested? Then don't. The worst thing you can do is make a gratitude list just one more chore in your life.

## PICTURE IT!

Take a few minutes and try making your gratitude list:

## Gratitude List

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

First, how do you feel now that you've completed your list? Did it feel good to write down what you're grateful for? Was it hard to complete? Maybe you struggled a little. That's OK; you are learning a new mindset. If you start doing this more regularly, you are more likely to notice events in your life to be grateful for. Keep in mind that it's fine to be grateful for small things: not everything you're thankful for has to be a major item or event.

A gratitude list is a great way to start shifting your thinking into a more positive realm. When you're in the midst of a job search or feeling unfulfilled in your current job, it's easy to get discouraged and feel like nothing good is happening. By focusing on what you're grateful for (especially the small things), you start to realize that your life has lots of positive elements, even when you're not in the "perfect" job or you're stressed about your career. Taking the time to focus on gratitude will go a long way to stay positive in a tough situation.

## EXAMPLE:

Here's a sample gratitude list an alumna created when she was on campus interviewing students for jobs at her company.

Notice that her list doesn't have much to do with work at all. She was much more aware of what gives her comfort at the end of the day.

### Gratitude List

1. my daughter's smile
2. favorite song playing on radio
3. my walks with my dog
4. the sun is shining today
5. finished that big project at work
6. great take-out food
7. the smell of lavender
8. the air after a thunderstorm
9. my comfy sheets
10. finding spare change for a meter
11. the client I helped today
12. my dog's wagging tail when I get home.

# Head & Heart Decisions

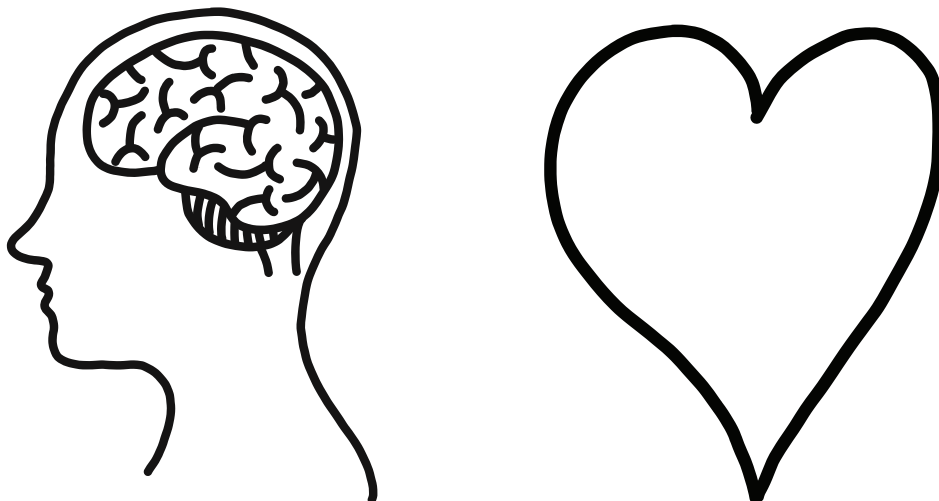
## HOW DOES IT HELP?

One of the hardest elements of decision-making is when you have strong feelings about a choice, even if you know your choice isn't logical. Or you agree with the logic of the choice, but you don't feel good about it.

The truth is, most good decisions involve both heart and mind. So if you have a decision to make consider evaluating it using this graphic.

## PICTURE IT!

- Create 4 quadrants on your page.
- On the top-left quadrant, write "Choice A: How I feel about it/What my heart says:"
- On the bottom-left quadrant, write "Choice A: What's logical/What makes sense?"
- On the top-right quadrant, write "Choice B: How I feel about it/What my heart says:"
- On the bottom-right quadrant, write "Choice B: What's logical/What makes sense?"



**NOW THINK ABOUT IT:**

Which one of the segments was easiest to complete?

Where did you find the most obvious benefits?

Is one choice more logical and the other more emotional?

Which one gives you the most energy toward moving forward?

Which choice seems like the best one to make now?

**WORKSPACE:**

Choice A: How I feel about it/What my heart says:



Choice B: How I feel about it/What my heart says:



Choice A: What's logical/What makes sense?



Choice B: What's logical/What makes sense?



# Honoring the Creator and the Critic

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

You're trying to do a creative project. But you're procrastinating. Maybe you're already judging your work even though you haven't started. And the critical part of your brain won't stop talking.

If you're writing a paper, are you stopping to edit instead of letting your ideas flow? Or do you quickly crumple up your paper and try again? If you're painting, are you afraid to put that first brush stroke on the canvas?

When it feels like your brain is fighting you, it helps to get these conflicting thoughts and ideas down on paper. By writing your creative ideas on the left, you can choose which ones you want to try first. By writing the possible criticisms, you can argue with them and keep them at bay.

## PICTURE IT!

- ☐ Take out a piece of paper and draw a line down the center to make two columns.
- ☐ On the left column write your creative ideas.
- ☐ On the right column, write your criticisms, judgments or fears.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Which side was harder to complete?

Did you find that your critical side is overwhelming your artistic side?

How can you tell that the critic has taken over? Are you procrastinating? Are you demanding perfection of yourself?

How can you challenge the critic? Could you say something like, “That’s a reasonable concern. I will focus on it after I’ve finished my initial draft or drawing.” That way, you’re not ignoring it, but you are telling yourself that you will respond in the future.

Was your artistic side stronger than the critic side? Does that work for you? Have you completed successful projects? Or are you told that your creations have challenges or receive a lot of criticism?

You don’t want the critic side to overwhelm the artistic side. There’s a place for editing and changing, but not during the creative process. When you’re working on a creative project, allow yourself a lot of time to create, and tell your critical side that it will get a chance to speak up later.

## EXAMPLE:

Here’s a sample chart created by a student who’s working on an essay for a creative writing class.

Creative Ideas	Criticism & Judgment
My essay is about the summer I spent with my grandparents when my mother was ill.	I don’t think this is a very good topic. Who would be interested?
I want to write about how conflicted and guilty I felt all summer, having a good time and relaxing when I knew my mother was in the hospital.	I’m not sure I should share this. It’s private. People might judge.
I would like to write about the letters and cards I sent my mother—what was important to me to tell her.	Some of what I wrote was really sad. I was only a child and I didn’t know how to explain how I felt. Should I tell people about this? Do I need to explain why?
I want to write describe my grandmother’s kitchen and all the baking we did.	This makes me really nervous. I’m not very good at descriptions. I think about all the great writers I’ve studied in English classes. I don’t come close to what they do.

*Once the negative ideas are down on a piece of paper, the student was able to look at them rationally and make decisions. She chose to ask her professor about her topic, and learned that the professor thought it was an excellent topic. And she decided to write all her ideas, and then once she finished the essay, she would decide what to leave in and what to take out. But it was better to write it all first and then decide. Now she can write and tell her critical side to be patient.*

# Vampire Emotions & Thoughts:

PERFECTIONISM, PROCRASTINATION, ENVY

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

During a job search, it's so important to focus on what you can do and what you can control. When you start looking around at other people, you start comparing yourself and losing your focus on your search. Three emotions that can make you unhappy are procrastination, perfectionism, and envy. Have you caught yourself feeling that way? It's OK. Everyone does. The trick is to catch these "vampire emotions" that suck the joy out of your life and find new ways to focus and think. You change your thoughts; you will change your feelings.



## PICTURE IT!

By writing down your feelings, you can see them in black-and-white, and you can examine the thoughts that lead to those feelings. Then you can develop some arguments for a more grounded and honest way to respond to them.

- Draw two vertical lines on your paper to make a three-column chart.
- Select the vampire emotions you're dealing with and see if you can develop some counter-arguments. One quick way is to ask yourself how you would respond to a friend if they talked like that. Would you agree, or would you help them see themselves in a better light? That's what you want to do yourself. Another way is to pretend you're in a courtroom and on the stand. Would you be able to make a genuine case for these feelings about yourself, or could you make a great argument as to why they aren't true? The chart on the next page shows how you could fill yours out. Read through it, select the various vampire emotions you might be feeling, and tackle them!



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So, what did you learn? What emotions did you select? Were you able to create better, more positive, and supportive thoughts in the right column, than in the middle one?

How could you remind yourself of these positive thoughts when you start to get down? Could you write them on sticky tabs and post them on your bulletin board or mirror? Maybe you could write them in a journal.

If this exercise is helpful to you, look up “Cognitive Behaviorism” online. You will find a ton of resources and readings that will help you re-frame how you think—and then, how you subsequently feel.

## EXAMPLE:

Emotion/ Thought	What I Tell Myself	My Dispute— and How I Want to Think
Procrastination	I hate this project. I have no energy. I'd rather just watch a show tonight. I'll do it tomorrow. I deserve a break. I'm afraid to start: what if it's not perfect or I ruin it?	This task is important to me. That's why I'm a little nervous. That's OK. I don't have to do it all today. What could I do for just 15 minutes? I'll set a timer and if I want to quit in 15 minutes, I will. At least I will be further along. And then I'll keep doing that until the project is done.
Envy	My friends are so much luckier than I am. Other people get the breaks. I don't. I have to work harder. I wish I had the same major as ... I don't have...	I'm lucky to have friends who are talented and succeed. Good for them. I'm going to focus on my unique gifts and my strengths. I have accomplished so much in my life so far. I can accomplish more, but I'm going to do it my way.
Perfectionism	Everything I do must go perfectly or it's a waste. I am not as good as .... If it didn't go perfectly, it's my fault	Nothing is perfect; even in nature everything has some flaws. What's important is my effort. Did I try? Then I have done well. I will try again. Practice won't make it perfect, but it will make it better. I have lots of skills and talents. I can keep improving.

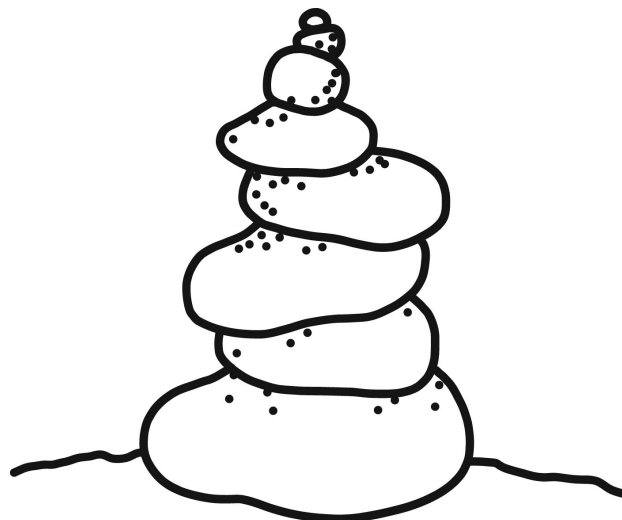
# What Am I Balancing?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

This exercise is designed to give you a break from your busy life and take a few minutes to think about how you can create more balance. You are likely trying to balance classes, social life, papers, projects, activities, and even a job. That's a lot. This drawing of rocks reminds us it's time to focus on calming, lest the pile tumble.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw a stack of rocks on your paper. Label each one with one of your responsibilities.
- Write down the key responsibilities you have in your life.
- As you look at your carefully balanced stack of rocks, are one or two rocks taking most of your time and energy?
- What are you missing because of all these rocks?
- Write down some simple ways you could step away from these responsibilities for a few minutes and do something that would be relaxing and centering.
- Write down some simple ways you could step away from these responsibilities and do something active that would give your system positive energy and excitement.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Was this exercise hard to do? Was it a little overwhelming to think about all the “rocks” you’re trying to balance in your life? Or do you feel that you have a good handle on everything?

How did it feel to start thinking about ways to step away from your rocks?

Was it easier to think of quiet meditative ideas (journaling, listening to music, reading), or was it easier to think of active ways to step away (exercise, dancing, partying)?

You can’t always control all the responsibilities you’re dealing with. That’s life. But you can control how you cope with the stresses, and you can make it a priority to find time to relax and take a break.

## WORKSPACE:

# HOW to FIND an INTERNSHIP

## STEP ONE:

CLARIFY ONE OR TWO TARGET INDUSTRIES OF INTEREST



## STEP TWO:

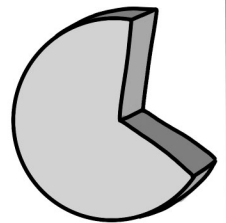
CREATE A STRONG, TARGETED RESUME AND COVER LETTER



## STEP THREE: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SITES & START YOUR SEARCH

WHAT GOES INTO AN INTERNSHIP SEARCH?

70% NETWORKING



UNIVERSITY ALUMNI DATABASE



LINKEDIN ALUMNI CONNECTIONS



FACEBOOK ALUMNI GROUPS

FFF

THREE F'S: FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND FACULTY



PAST SUPERVISORS

20% ONLINE RESEARCH



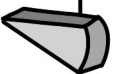
UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER WEBSITE

EXPLORE CAREER FIELDS @ VAULT.COM

ORGANIZATIONS SUGGESTED VIA NETWORKING

USAJOBS.COM - GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIPS

10% COLD CALLS+EMAILS



Selective & Occasional

USE TARGETED GOOGLE SEARCH:

EMPLOYER NAME, RELEVANT KEYWORD, "INTERVIEW WITH..."

## LINKS FROM INDUSTRY:

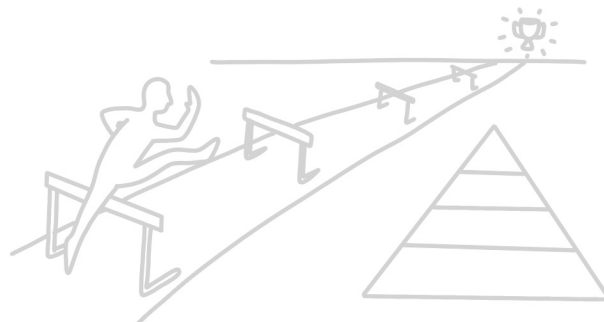
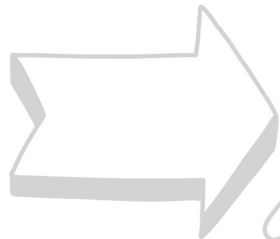
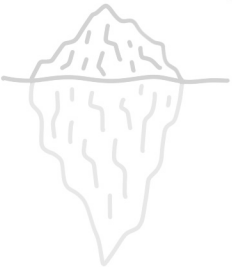
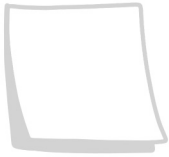
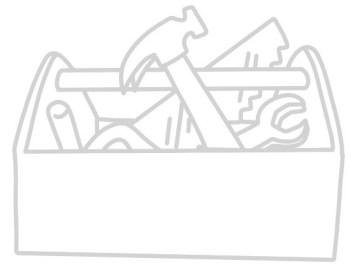
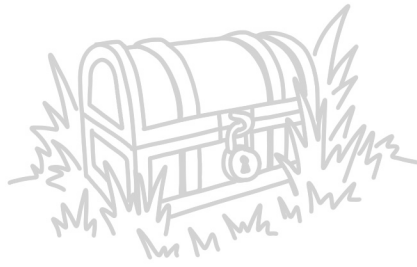
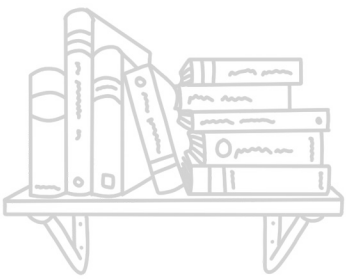
- IDEALIST.ORG
- MEDIABISTRO.COM
- TALENTZOO.COM
- JOBS.NEWSIDENTIST.COM
- GREENCAREERADVISOR.COM

## STEP FOUR:

WORK WITH YOUR CAREER COACH TO DESIGN AN ACTION PLAN. PREPARE FOR INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS.

REMEMBER:

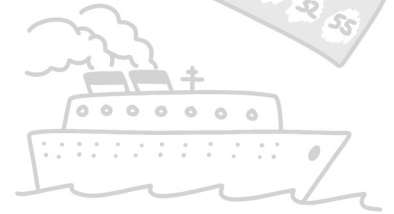
HAVE A POSITIVE NETWORKING MINDSET!



# SECTION 5



## EXPLORING YOUR CAREER



- Conducting Career Experiments
- Energy Gainers vs. Energy Drainers
- Major/Minor Mindmap
- Matching Myself to a Career
- Transforming My Skills & Interests into Opportunities
- Who Am I at Work?
- Career Pyramid
- My Perfect Job



# Conducting Career Experiments

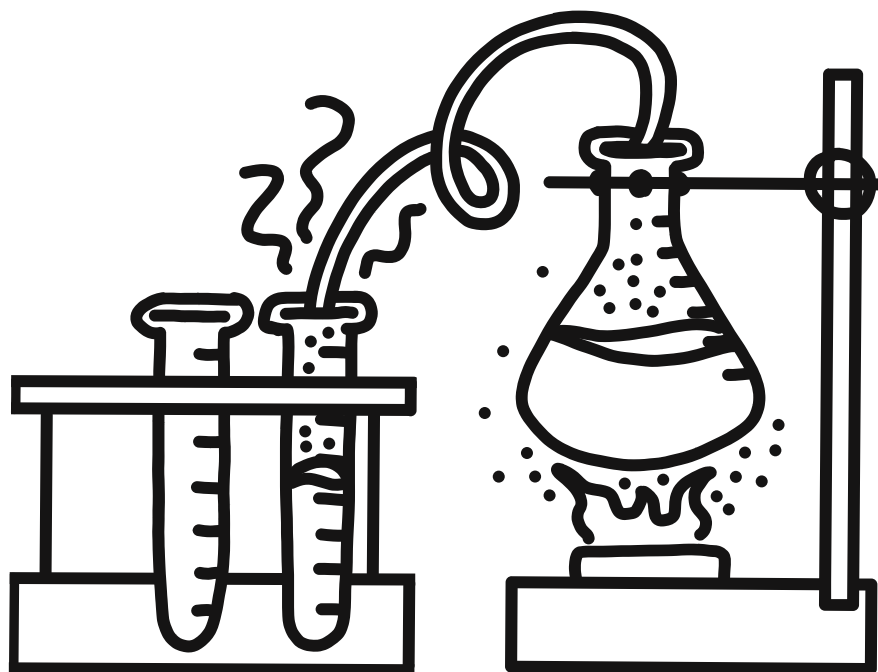
## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Choosing a career path can be anxiety-provoking. It's easy to get caught up in the fears of making a wrong decision. One way to reduce that thinking is to treat your decision-making process as an experiment. Because experiments are designed to learn, and they don't always succeed, as scientists know well. You hope for success, but if you don't achieve it, you just try again

## PICTURE IT!

Think of the process as 4 steps:

- Create the hypothesis (what's your idea for a possible career choice).
- Build the experiment (decide what action you'll take).
- Do the experiment (maybe an internship?).
- Analyze and explain the insights you have gained.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So what experiment(s) have you decided to try?

What career field are you considering? How could you learn more about it before making a full commitment?

Does thinking about this as an experiment lessen your anxiety?

## WORKSPACE:

# Energy Gainers vs. Energy Drainers

## JOB CRAFTING

This powerful list can be the start of much greater happiness in your work or school life, or it can give you the information you need to move to more interesting and fulfilling opportunities. Once you make this list, you will be empowered to make changes in your day-to-day experience and maybe even start a new life.

### PICTURE IT!

- ❑ Take out a blank piece of paper and draw a line down the center.
- ❑ On the left side, write: “Energy Gainers”; on the right “Energy Drainers.”
- ❑ Now, think of all the different activities you do during the week: your classes, activities, sports teams, fun with your friends, etc. If you have a job, list your duties or responsibilities, the extra work you take on, the projects you’re involved in.
- ❑ As you consider each piece of your life, school, and work, place that piece under the column that best fits your feelings about it.
  - Do they excite you, do you gain energy, and do you enjoy them? Then they go in the left column.
  - Do you lose energy just thinking about them, dread them, or otherwise wish they weren’t part of your job? Then they belong in the right column.

### WORKSPACE:

Energy Gainers	Energy Drainers

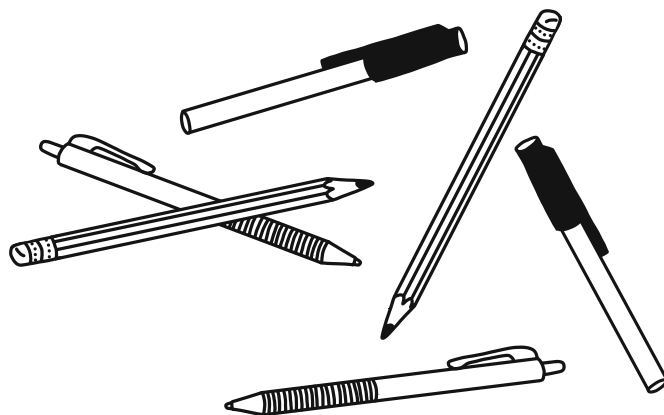


## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

- What have you discovered? Are your columns of equal weight or is one fuller than the other?
- If the left column is fuller, that's a great sign. You're probably living the life you want to live. On the other hand, if you have many more items in the right column than on the left, you have some decisions to make.
- You might want to look at what's in your right column and see if there's a way you can eliminate some of the tasks so you can focus more on your left column activities. You might decide to drop out of an activity that isn't interesting to you anymore.
- Or maybe you realize that while you're not enjoying something (like a class you're taking), you can rationalize that you only have to be in it for a few more months, and then it will end.
- Consider how much of your day-to-day work is up to you. Do you have the power or ability to change some of your tasks, so you're not spending so much time on something you don't enjoy?
- If not, and your right column is too full, is it time to look for a different way to live that would offer you more opportunities to do what you enjoy?

This can be a great exercise to do with your friends or with co-workers. Sometimes you discover that a task you dislike is one that someone else loves. You might be able to switch some duties around with your colleagues so each of you can do more of what you enjoy. Or if there's an activity everyone loves or hates, spread it around: share the experiences, fun or not. (For instance, maybe you put "doing laundry" on an energy drainer list.) If your friends agree, perhaps you can do laundry together and take a game with you. Everyone can play the game while waiting for their laundry to finish.

Most important from this activity, though is the new awareness of whether you really are in the right place. If you've been thinking about making changes in your life, this might just be the exercise that tells you that not only is it time to do that, but it also gives you some guidance on what to do next.



# Major/Minor Mindmap

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Mindmaps open your mind to new connections and possibilities. They can be a great way to brainstorm and generate new ideas. This major/minor map will help you think through the value of what you have studied during your time in college. Use this mind map to develop a more robust understanding and analysis of what you have been studying.

## PICTURE IT!

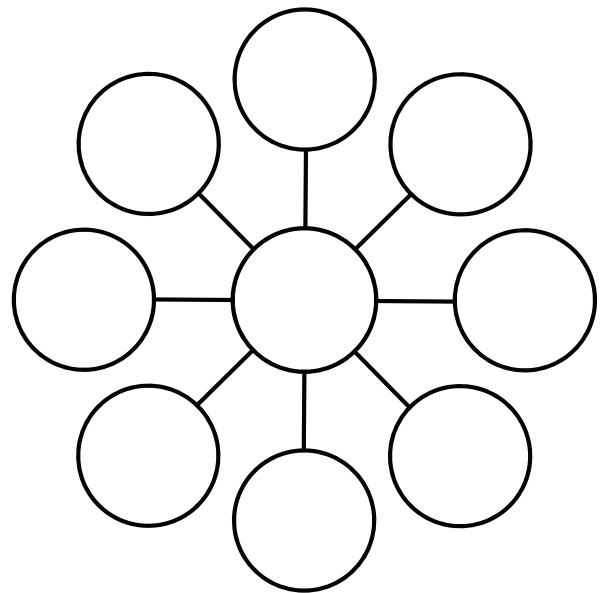
■ Create this diagram, starting with just the circle in the center. In that circle, write your major or minor. (Note: Mindmaps are much more fun and interesting when drawn by hand than on a computer. Try it!)

■ Then, on the circles surrounding it, write the following words:

- Mindsets
- Challenges
- Experiences
- Skills
- Other courses
- How I succeeded
- Theories/Research/Authors
- Key Courses

■ Then start drawing more lines from those circles that further explain the headings.

- For instance, under “Challenges,” you might draw a line and write about a particular course that was harder than the others.
- Under “Other Courses,” you might draw more lines and list courses you took in other departments that changed your perspective or enhanced your knowledge.



- Under “Theories/Research/Authors,” you might include theories you agree with or beliefs you have acquired through studying different experts in the field.
- Under “Mindsets,” consider how this major has taught you to think. How do you view the world differently because you have studied this subject? Draw several lines from the Mindsets circle and place those different mindsets on the lines. Then you can draw more lines to explain the stories you might tell about those mindsets.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you learn from this exercise? If you were going to describe your major or minor to an employer who never took a course in the field, how would you explain it?

What skills did your map reveal? Which areas were you able to expand more easily?

What stories might you create about the value of your major?

What mindsets have you developed (e.g., analytical, mathematical, creative) because of this major?

*This map is based on the Majors Map created by Katharine S. Brooks and published in [You Majored in What? Designing Your Path from College to Career](#). (Plume, 2017)*

## WORKSPACE

# Matching Myself to a Career

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Now that you have researched a career field, how do you fit? Try using this SWOT analysis to see if you're a match.

## PICTURE IT!

- Start by drawing a four-square grid on a piece of paper or your computer.
- Once you have your four boxes, place the words "Strengths" and "Weaknesses" (internal factors) in the two left-side boxes and "Opportunities" and "Threats" (external factors) in the two right boxes.
- In each of the boxes, fill in what you know about yourself and the career field. In the Strengths box, fill in the strengths you have that would fit this field. In the Opportunities box, fill in what the field could do for you. How fulfilling it would be, how interested would you be in career opportunities, how many positions are available, etc.?
- In the Weaknesses (Challenges) section, list what the career field requires that you will need to acquire, whether that's more education or experience. Finally, in the Threats section, enter what issues you've uncovered that you might not be able to control (such as the economy and whether positions are plentiful or not).

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you learn from your examination? Do the positives (Strengths and Opportunities) outweigh the negatives (Weaknesses and Threats)?

Did you find yourself getting more excited about the opportunities and what you could do in this career field? Or did you find it less interesting the more you examined it.

Taking the time to analyze yourself in relation to a particular career field can be one of the best ways to determine if you have made the right decision or if it's time to keep looking.

## WORKSPACE:

Strengths:

opportunities:

Weaknesses(challenges):


Threats:


# Transforming My Skills & Interests into Opportunities

## HOW DOES IT HELP?


Mindmaps open your mind to new connections and possibilities. They can be a great way to brainstorm and generate new ideas. In this map, you will take your skills and interests and begin thinking about ways you could use them in the workplace—or even develop your own business!

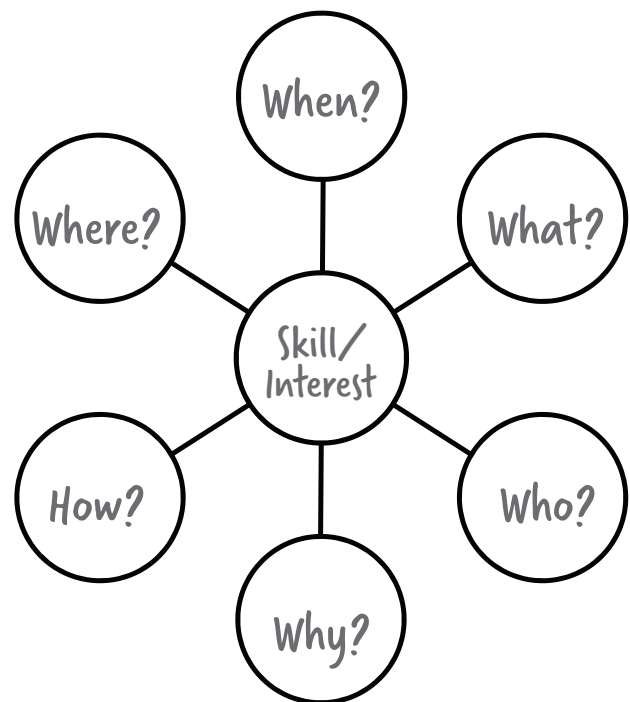
## PICTURE IT!

 Create this diagram, starting with just the circle in the center. In that circle, write your key interests or skills.

 Then, on the circles surrounding it, write the following words:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

 As you think about your skills or interests, start answering those questions and drawing more lines from each of the circles to add your ideas.



- **What** are the key skills and interests you'd like to use in your career?
- **How** would you use them?
- **Where** would be the best places to use them? What settings or job titles would likely fit those skills?
- **Why** are these interests and skills important to you, and why do you want to use them?
- **How** could you start using them?

- **Who** could help you find opportunities to use them?
- **When** are you going to start applying this knowledge?

- Then start drawing more lines from those circles that further explain the headings. For instance, let's say you have a talent for music, but you're not sure how to use it in a career. You can start by identifying your specific musical talents. Do you plan an instrument? Are you a good arranger? Write out these skills and interests.
- Then, in the How section, write how you could use these skills. Could you perform? Could you teach? If you are thinking of teaching, would you create YouTube videos or design an online class? Would you teach lessons in your home or at a studio? Would you want to get certified to teach in a public school?
- Each of the words in the mindmap will help you expand your thinking to the point where you can see a picture of how you might pursue your interests and skills.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So what picture started emerging as you developed your ideas?

What did you learn from this exercise?

What skills or interests did your map reveal? And how might you implement them in a career?

Do you have ideas for summer jobs or even a full-time career path?

Can you use this diagram to develop your ideas for an entrepreneurial plan or a small business?

If you get stuck on ideas, ask your friends or family to help. How do they think you could make a career out of your skills and interests?

# Who Am I at Work?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Lists are a relatively simple way to take your thoughts and get them down on paper so you can analyze them. Perhaps you already tried the “Who am I” list on another page. Let’s try a variation on the “Who am I” list suggested in a blog post by Dr. Art Markman at The University of Texas at Austin. This time we’re going to focus on who you are at work. Sometimes we’re very different at work than we are at home.

## PICTURE IT!

Think about how you behave at work and make a list of those characteristics. See what shows up.





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What did you discover?

Did you find traits you exhibit at work that you don't usually list on your "Who Am I?" list?

Are those traits generally more positive or negative?

- For instance, do you find you are more efficient or organized at work than you would typically describe yourself?
- Or do you find that you are more stressed or anxious at work than you would normally describe yourself?

Did you uncover positive traits that you will want to mention to an employer? For instance, maybe you realized that you're more patient at work. Or that you get more tasks done at work than at home. Consider making a shorter list of the traits you want to be sure to include in cover letters or your LinkedIn profile.

In this list, you may discover important clues to changes you need to make at work, or characteristics you possess that you will want to incorporate into your non-work life.

## WORKSPACE:

### Who am I at work?

---

- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 1.  | 11. |
| 2.  | 12. |
| 3.  | 13. |
| 4.  | 14. |
| 5.  | 15. |
| 6.  | 16. |
| 7.  | 17. |
| 8.  | 18. |
| 9.  | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |

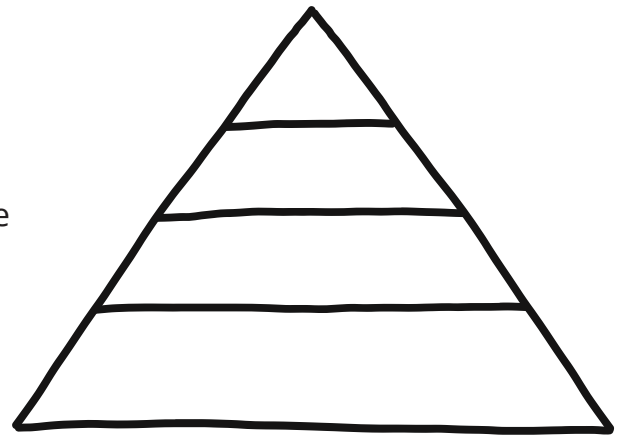
# Career Pyramid

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

This pyramid shape will help you clarify and develop your career ideas into a plan. In this exercise, you're going to use the bottom of the pyramid to fill in the basic values and skills you want to see in your career. Then, you'll start indicating where you might use those skills at the next level. Then, start to hone in on actual jobs or opportunities. Finally, you identify your specific career plans and goal.

## PICTURE IT!

- Start by drawing a pyramid shape and divide it into four sections with horizontal lines.
- At the base of your pyramid, indicate the skills, values, interests, and knowledge you hope to use in your career (e.g., value of service and helping others, interest in healthcare, knowledge of sociology and medicine).
- At the next level up, start to define the various fields or industries where you would like to use your talents (e.g., hospitals, rehab centers, nonprofit organizations).
- At the next level up, name specific job titles and employers that interest you (e.g., medical social worker position at a children's hospital).
- At the top of the pyramid, write out your career plan: what career you hope to pursue and where you will focus your job search efforts.



**NOTE:** This exercise will take time to complete. Start at the bottom and work your way up as you learn more.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

How far where you able to fill in your pyramid?

Were you able to identify the skills, interests, values, and knowledge you want to take into your work? If not, stop here and work with a career coach or use some of the other exercises in this book to better identify your most important skills, etc.

Were you able to identify the various fields or industries where your talents could be best applied? If not, then meet with someone in your career center or research online to learn more about industries. Research is key.

Were you able to identify specific job titles that fit your interests and industry? Using Indeed.com or other job sites can help you find job titles. Just use your skills as keywords for your search. (Example: "Spanish" will bring up jobs that need bilingual individuals.)

Finally, pull all the elements of your pyramid together to create a specific job title and description for where you will best be able to apply your strengths.

## WORKSPACE:


# My Perfect Job


## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Before you start your job search, consider what would be the best outcome. What would your “perfect job” look like? Is it a passion-based job like a musician or teacher? Or a service-oriented job like being a doctor or nurse or therapist? Or it might be a high-paying job like an investment banker. Or perhaps it’s the freedom of being an entrepreneur. What does the “perfect” job look like to you? Consider aspects like:

- Location
- What you’re doing every day
- How much you earn
- Who you’re working with?
- What’s your purpose or mission: why are you doing what you’re doing?

## PICTURE IT!

 Take out a piece of paper or an empty Word doc. Take a few minutes to think about what you would experience in a “perfect” job.

 Try listing 10 or so characteristics of that perfect job. Make your list now. Don’t worry about the job title; just list the characteristics of this job.

### 10 Things I'd like to do at my "perfect" job

1. Make a great income

2. Consult about mental health issues

3. Analyze a problem

4. Meet interesting people

5. Use my social media skills

6. Work with adolescents

7. Work in a medical setting

8. Help people change their lives

9. Find a mentor

10. Drink lots of coffee



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Look over your list. What items stand out for you?

Are there any items that you must have in whatever job you pursue?

What aspects of your “perfect” job are attainable now? What aspects could you attain in the future?

What parts of this “perfect” job would you most like to have now in your first or next job?

Keep these characteristics in mind as you evaluate your plans for the future and apply and interview for jobs. You may not find the “perfect” job—but you might be able to find one that is close and meets some of your most important criteria.

Take a look at this completed list.

Can you see how this list provides some great starting points for thinking about that next job? This person is clearly a “people person” with lots of energy (or at least lots of caffeine to give her energy). She has already identified some key elements: the type of clients she wants to work with, what challenges they might face, and how she might help them. She already has a great start with the type of work setting that might be best for her. She notes her willingness to learn and grow in this job, as evidenced by her desire to find a mentor.

## WORKSPACE:

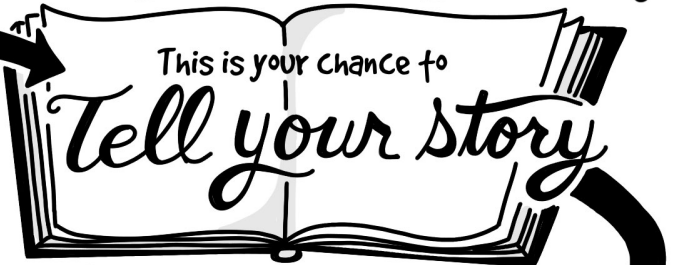


# RESUME

IS A ONE-PAGE DOCUMENT THAT SHOWS WHO YOU ARE <sup>AT YOUR</sup> BEST!

## WE USE THEM FOR:

- COLLEGE ADMISSIONS
- STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
- VOLUNTEER PROJECTS
- FELLOWSHIPS
- SUMMER JOBS
- FULL-TIME JOBS
- INTERNSHIPS
- AND MORE!



? WHAT DO YOU WANT THE READER TO KNOW?

## QUICK TIPS:



• Always focus on what is relevant to potential employer



• A resume is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Try to target your resume to a specific position/industry



• Your document should look balanced, pleasing to the eye, and easy to read. Your formatting (bold, italics, etc.) must be consistent throughout your document.



• List degrees in reverse chronological order with the most recent listed first



• Include your GPA if it's 3.0 or above or specified in the job posting  
• Use "GPA" not "G.P.A."



• List your experience in reverse chronological order beginning with the most recent position  
• Include relevant full-time & part-time work, internships, and volunteer experience



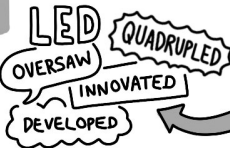
• When listing dates, you may include the month and year, or just the year of employment, but be consistent in the formatting throughout your document.



16-18pt

• Use a **LARGE FONT SIZE** on your name so it **STANDS OUT!**

• Your contact information (email, phone, etc.) can be a smaller size (10-12pt)



• Use strong **ACTION** words to describe work experience



• Eliminate personal pronouns (i.e. me, I, we)



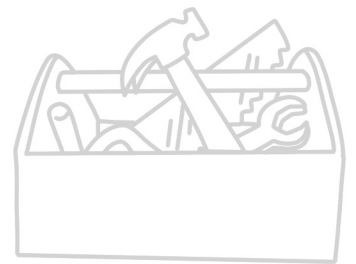
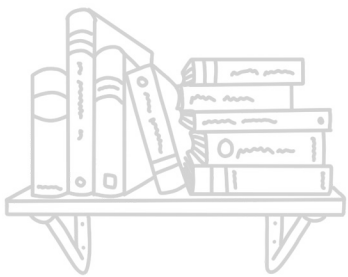
• Avoid passive phrases such as "responsible for" and "duties included"



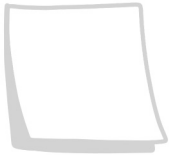
• Include numbers to quantify experience when possible. Ex: number of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, number of workshops taught, number of projects coordinated, \$ amount saved/earned by ingenuity, etc.



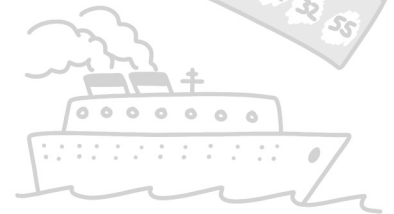
• Focus on your accomplishments and results. How were you valuable to past employers?



# SECTION 6



## CONDUCTING YOUR JOB SEARCH



Cover Letter Creation

Creating Interview Stories

Finding Meaning in Your Work

Identifying Potential Employers

Networking and Information Interviewing Practice

Interviewing Practice

Jigsaw Puzzle

Job Search Emotions Map

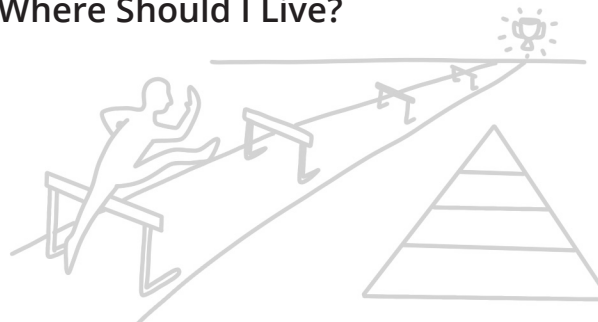
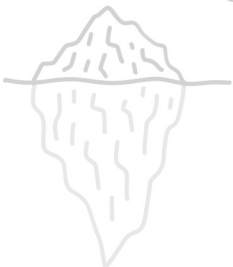
Myth-Busting

Researching Potential Employers

The Iceberg

The Network Target

Where Should I Live?



# Cover Letter Creation

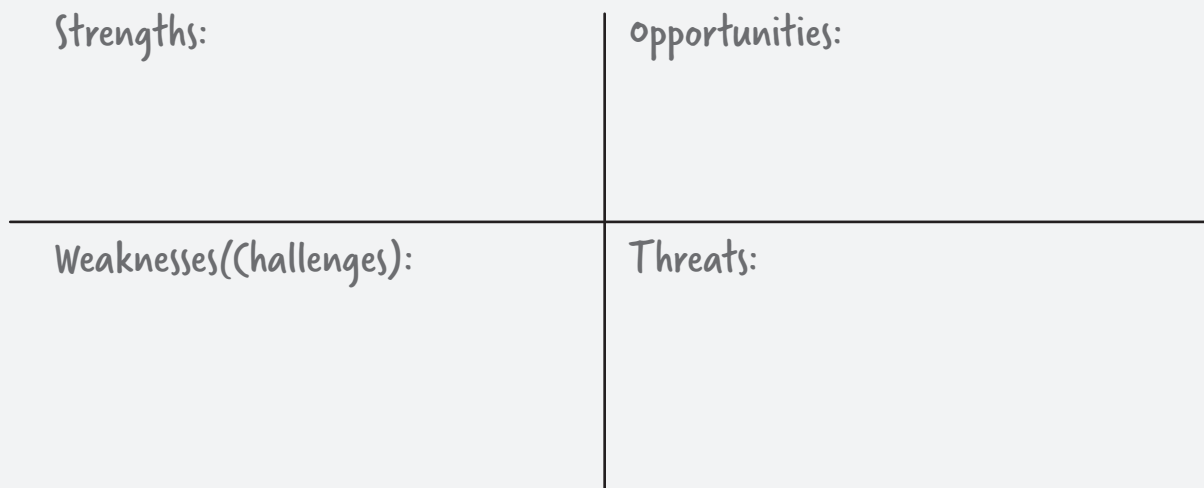
## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Writing cover letters is one of the hardest tasks in the job search process. You will be better prepared to write a letter if you use this exercise to outline what you plan to say.

## PICTURE IT!

- Start by drawing a four-square grid on a piece of paper or your computer.
- Once you have your four boxes, place the words “Strengths” and “Weaknesses” (internal factors) in the two left-side boxes and “Opportunities” and “Threats” (external factors) in the two right boxes.

## EXAMPLE:



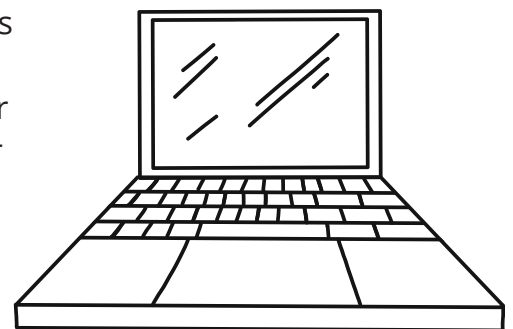
- Now read the job announcement or company information about the position you're applying to and use what you are learning to develop a profile that fits.
- In the **Strengths** box, jot down the strengths you have relative to the position. This is important-- don't waste time telling the employer about talents that they don't need or care about. Your talents/skills must match the position. Pick the most relevant. Try to focus on the 3-4 essential skills most needed for the job. Once you've completed this section, try writing a few sentences relating your strengths to the position. Back up your statements with examples.



- As you read the position description, what worries you? What are they seeking that you might not have? What aspects of the position would you find challenging? What skills or knowledge are requested that you don't have? These are potential **Weaknesses/Challenges** that you will want to address if needed. Once you've identified these challenges, determine which ones you can overcome or mitigate in some way. For instance, suppose the announcement mentions that you'll need to work with Excel spreadsheets, which you've never done. You have a choice here: you can simply say it's not something you currently know but hope to learn (weak)-- or, if you really want the job, you will start learning Excel. Tonight. There are tons of online tutorials. Find some instructional videos on YouTube or open up an Excel document and start playing with it. Practice by setting up a fake budget. Get familiar with the basics of the program, including the terminology. Now instead of writing nothing about Excel (since you wouldn't bring up weaknesses), you can write something like, "Your advertisement indicates you are seeking someone with Excel experience. I have recently started working with Excel spreadsheets for budgetary purposes."
- Now fill in the **Opportunities** box, which refers to the opportunities this organization might offer you for your career. What are the opportunities for advancement? What excites you about working for this organization? As you look through their website, what appeals to you? What divisions are in the company-- is there a division or area you hope to move into eventually? You can use this information to create a sentence or two in your cover letter, such as: "I am particularly excited about the opportunities in your marketing division. I led several successful marketing campaigns for my student organization, and I think that's an area where I could excel."
- The **Threats** section refers to outside forces over which you have little control, including the economy, rapidly changing fields that are shedding jobs, the other applicants for the position, etc. If you can think of a possible threat, you might want to include a sentence or two to mitigate it. For instance, if the organization is seeking a different major from yours, explain the relevant value of your major.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

This exercise should have given you lots of good ideas for what you could include in a cover letter. Now that you've created some sample sentences for your cover letter check out cover letter templates on your career center's website, or work with a career coach to help craft your ideas into a great letter.







# Crafting Interview Stories

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

It's easy to get off-track while preparing for an interview. Contrary to what you might believe, you don't need a ton of different experiences to talk about... you just need to craft your stories around 3 experiences you already have. This activity will show you that three overarching experiences can create a multitude of stories. These experiences should be ones that show off who you are at your very best! By doing this activity, you will be able to articulate what is most meaningful and where you are having the most impact.

## PICTURE IT!

-  Create the diagram pictured in the example, starting with just the circle in the center. In that circle, write an experience that you would naturally talk about in an interview.
-  In the space around the circle, start writing down keys moments you remember from the experience that demonstrate how you spent your time. As you are making your experiences come to life, start thinking about how your actions translate into career competencies that we know employers are looking for.
-  Next to each key moment, write down the core competency it represents like leadership, adaptability, critical thinking, and professionalism. Now start to translate each piece into possible responses to interview questions. So, a future employer might ask, "Tell me about a time you had to collaborate with a team, and how did that go?" or "Tell me about a time you had to navigate a multifaceted situation." Does your experience answer these questions?
-  Make 2 more circles with different experiences.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

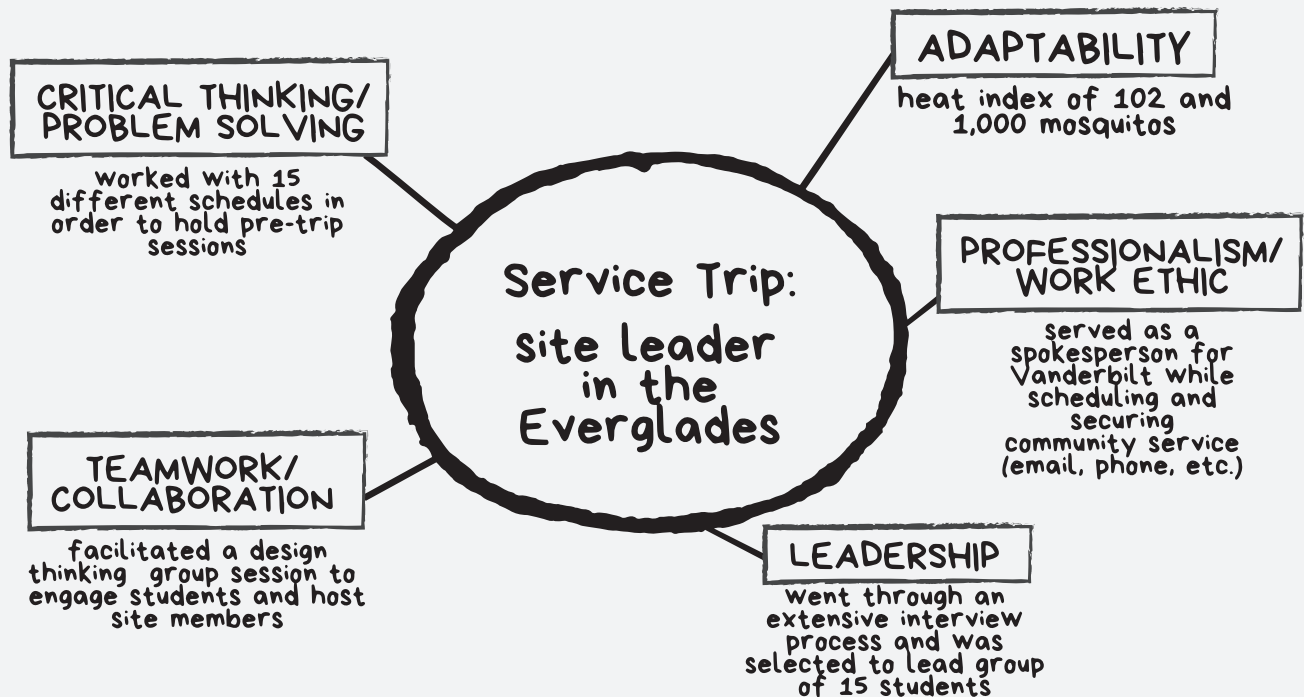
Could you complete all three circles?

Did you come up with moments from the experiences that aren't portrayed on your resume?

Do you have enough to talk about in an interview?

Meeting with a career coach can help, sometimes other people hear things from your story that you haven't considered as significant.

## EXAMPLE:





# Find the Meaning in Your Work

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Most people seek fulfillment and meaning at work. And that can come from two directions: how the job benefits you; and how you can benefit others. Therefore, every job has at least two potential sources for fulfillment and meaning. This quick exercise will help you focus on these two aspects of your work and help you uncover the value of your work, even when you're not always sure.

## PICTURE IT!

 Take out a piece of paper and draw a line down the center. In the left-hand column, write: "What's in it for me?" In the right-hand column, write: "How can I serve?"

 As you think about your job, fill in the left column with:

**What's in it for me?** This first column is important for your satisfaction. How do you benefit from having this job? It may be the salary you receive, the benefits, the prestige of your title or nice office, or the opportunity to use your talents and interests.

 Now fill in the right column with your answers to:

**How can I serve?** This will take your focus to a new dimension, thinking of how others benefit from your work, helping you see a greater purpose to your activities. If you're an intern, you're probably serving a lot of others. You are supporting the people who work full-time at that organization. If you're a tutor, you are serving the children you are teaching. You might find it interesting to just start by listing all those you "serve."

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Stop to ponder what you've just written. Does thinking about work this way give you a different perspective?

Are you able to see how your work, while perhaps not always personally fulfilling or exciting, serves value to others?

Are you getting what you need from your work? Is it providing you the income you need or the experiences you are trying to acquire?

Can you see some new ways to do your work?

This can be a thought-provoking exercise and provide a new mindset about your work. Consider writing some additional paragraphs as you explore the thoughts and ideas you develop from this thought process.

## WORKSPACE:

*What's in it for me?*






*How can I serve?*

# Identifying Potential Employers

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Use the diagram below to focus on potential employers in the major employment sectors. By thinking about how your job title or career field could fit into the different areas, you broaden your potential list of employers. Almost every field of work has a counterpart career in another industry; think creatively, research online, and talk to experts in the field to learn more about how your career plans could cross different industries and sectors.

## PICTURE IT!

-  Fill in the boxes in the workspace on the next page, filling in your career field and/or prospective job title.
-  Research online the career field as it relates to the different sectors of employment. Use the Occupational Outlook Handbook online, Vault guides, and other career guides to learn more about your job interests in all the employment sectors.
-  Note similar job titles in different sectors. (For example: Training in the For-profit Sector would be called teaching in the Education Sector and both terms might be found in Government.)
-  Research the key employers in each of the sectors, particularly noting those that are in the geographic areas where you hope to work.
-  Identify at least 10 organizations in each category where your field of interest or job title can be found.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Research each organization on your lists to determine if they are hiring and/or if you have connections to individuals currently working in the organization. Use LinkedIn, Indeed.com, and other resources to identify more information about the organization.

Now that you have identified a list of possible employers that are hiring review it and determine which organizations you will seek first based on what you have learned.

Use a Kanban board or other organizing system to determine how you will reach out to each organization.

## WORKSPACE:

Career Field/Title		
For-Profit Job Titles	Nonprofit /Education Titles	Government Titles
Potential Companies 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Potential Organizations 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Potential Agencies 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

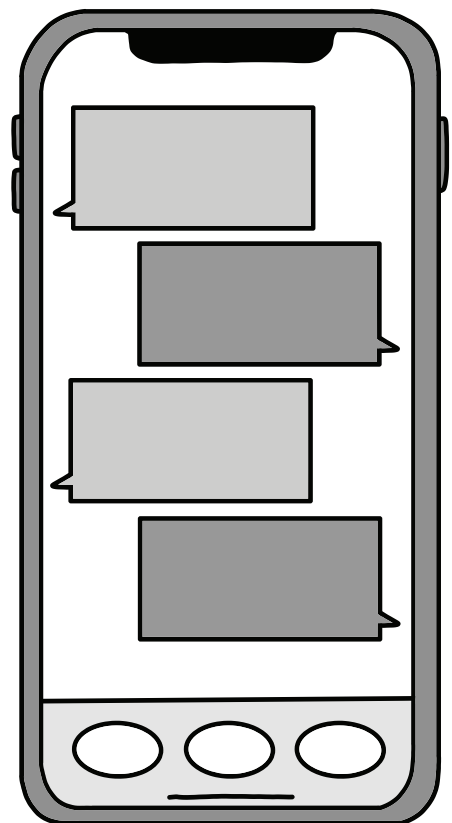
# Networking & Information Interviewing Practice

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Conducting information interviews and networking are two of the best ways to learn more about a career field or graduate program that interests you. But many students avoid doing this because it feels uncomfortable to reach out to strangers for help. It's particularly hard when you don't know what to ask or how to approach someone. So we're going to practice by developing questions you might ask.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw some conversation/text boxes on your paper. Make two columns back and forth, just like a text would appear on your phone. Now pretend you're texting someone about their career. What would you like to ask them? Place those questions on the left-hand side of the conversation.
- Now, on the right-hand side, see if you can answer them yourself. Or try Googling your question and see if the answer shows up quickly. If it does, then you might want to dig a little deeper and think of other questions to ask. Try thinking about questions that relate more to the person you're speaking with rather than generic questions. Or you could expand your questions by saying, "I was doing some research online, and I learned that many people think (insert what you learned) about your career field. Do you agree?"





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

How did creating this conversation help you think about the questions you might ask?

Were many of your original questions easily answered online? For instance, if you had questions about the salaries in a field, or the typical starting position, you probably found great answers online. But questions about that person's experience, or how they would enter their career field if they were your age probably can't be found online. These are the questions that will result in a more meaningful information interview, and possibly the start of a great networking connection for you!

If you're stuck for ideas, you can always go online and ask about typical information interview questions. Just be sure to adapt them by personalizing them to your career interests and the person to whom you're speaking.

## WORKSPACE:

Question here

Response Here

Question Here

# Interviewing Practice

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Practicing your responses to interview questions is one of the most valuable activities you can do. You should also practice the stories you might tell in response to those questions. Ideally, you'll have a friend or someone who can help you practice. But what if you don't? That's where this text box exercise can come in handy. In this case, you get to play both roles in the process: interviewer and interviewee.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw some conversation/text boxes on your paper. Make two columns back and forth, just like a text would appear on your phone. Now pretend you're texting your interview questions.

Think of the upcoming interview you're practicing for:

- What field/industry is the position in?
- Where would you be working if you got the job or internship?
- What are the typical interview questions you might be asked? Not sure? Do an online search for "interview questions related to \_\_\_\_\_" (entering the field you're considering).

On the left-side blocks, write the question you expect to be asked. Some classic questions might include:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths? How have you overcome challenges?
- What personality trait do you have that would be most useful in this position?

Now, read the question you entered, and try talking through your answer. Then write the key points of your answer in the response box to the right of the question.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

How did you feel answering those questions? Are you comfortable with your answers? Did you have stories to share that illustrated your skills or competencies?

If you're not totally satisfied with your answer, ask yourself, "what would make this response better?" If you were the interviewer, what would you like to hear from the person being interviewed?

If you have time, take your questions and answers to someone else—a friend, or a coach in the Career Center, and review your answers. See if they have some other suggestions for you.

Note: the advantage of just writing a few keywords about your answers is that you will remember those key points, and you will be able to frame a larger story or response around them when you're in the interview. That will keep your answers fresh and less likely to sound over-prepared.

## EXAMPLE:

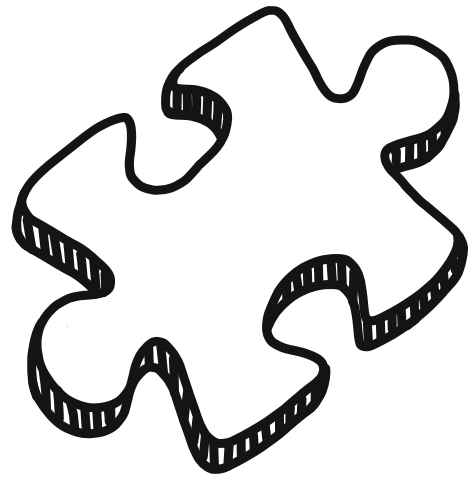
Question here

Response Here

Question Here

# Jigsaw Puzzle

The Jigsaw Puzzle is a great metaphor for a complex project with lots of pieces that have to fit together. This exercise can work if you're trying to organize a major project, write a paper (or even a book!), finish your education, search for a job, etc. Each piece plays an important role, and some pieces are key to finding the overall design. If you have a large project that has lots of "pieces" to it, try creating a jigsaw puzzle.



## PICTURE IT!

- Use a jigsaw illustration as a starting point for your jigsaw puzzle.
- Think about how you put together a real jigsaw puzzle. First, you usually have a picture on the box to see what the final puzzle will look like. So what is the big picture of your project? What will it look like at the end? Can you describe what the "picture" will look like?
- Now start thinking about the key elements that must be in place first. Those elements will become your corner pieces.
- Then select the elements that "frame" the project: the key activities or steps.
- Finally, fill in the remaining elements in the center. You might include the people who will work on the project or the services provided.

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

How did thinking about your project as a puzzle change your thinking? Did you start to realize that some steps of the project were more important, or needed to be completed first?

Did you have a clear sense of what your overall puzzle would look like once completed?

What parts of the puzzle were easy to complete? What pieces could you quickly identify?

What other pieces are needed?

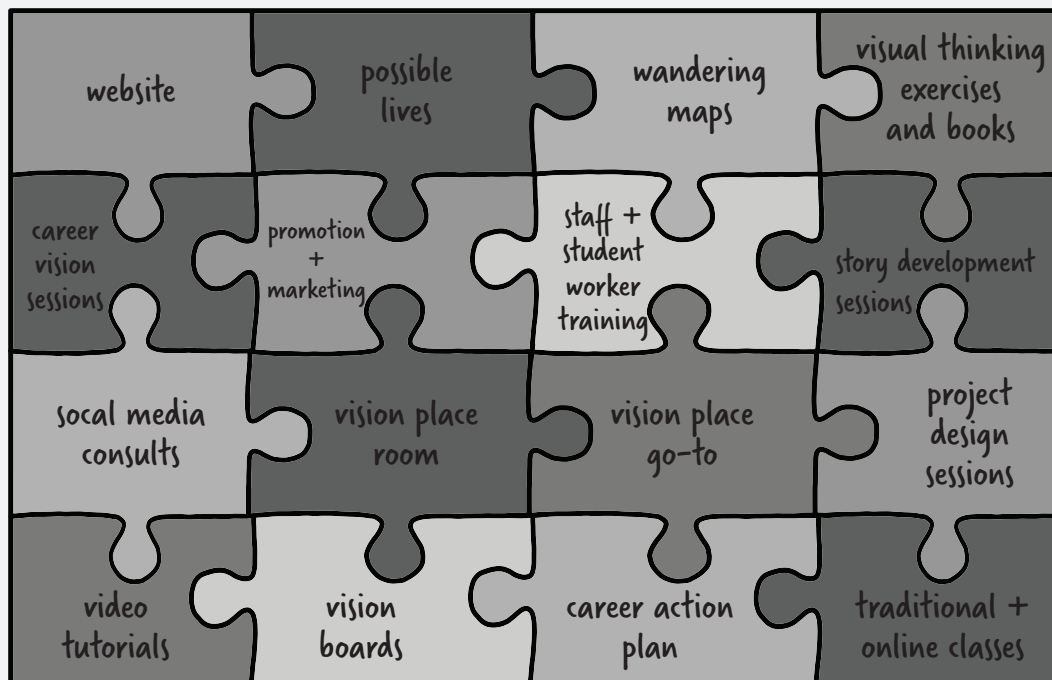
What parts of the puzzle can't you see?

How could you get help fitting the pieces together?

## VISUAL THINKING IN ACTION:

Here's a sample Jigsaw Puzzle one of the authors (Kate) created when developing various Visual Thinking projects for the Career Center at Vanderbilt University. On the corners, she placed the key "products" we could produce. The outside pieces framed the activities we would do. Finally, the inside pieces focused on the processes we would use including the staff and marketing. By placing all the components in a jigsaw puzzle, we were able to demonstrate just what this visual thinking project could turn into.

## EXAMPLE:



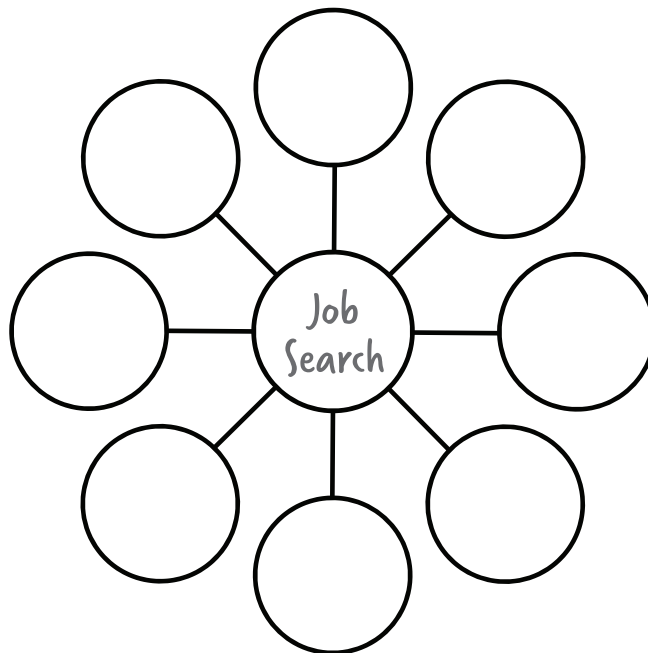
# Job Search Emotions Map

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Are you feeling stuck in your job search? Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed by all the work you need to do or the emotions that are holding you back? Creating a mindmap about the tasks and your feelings might open your mind to new connections and possibilities. You might discover a better way to tackle the search.

## PICTURE IT!

- Create this diagram, starting with just the circle in the center. In that circle, write "Job Search," or if you know the position you're seeking, fill that in. When you do that, what pops in your head? For instance, if you just wrote "job search," the first thought might be, "I don't know what to do." If so, put "What to do" in one of the circles. Maybe that thought sparks some feelings, so you'll want to expand your mind map further. Next to "what to do," you might write "tired" or "frustrated."



- What else are you thinking or feeling about the search? Maybe another thought is, "What do I like?" If so, place that in one of the circles, and start expanding on that. Another thought might be, "Where do I start?" What ideas do you have about that? Can you fill that in?

## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

This is a great exercise for labeling the thoughts and feelings that might be holding you back. By listing your fears or concerns, you are making space for the more positive thoughts of “What could I do now?” Naming your challenges can start the process of solving them.

What did you learn from this exercise?

What are your basic thoughts or feelings? Are they more negative or positive? Remember, both are valid. Naming those thoughts you’d rather avoid is the first step in remedying them.

What actions would you like to take now that you’ve done this map?

What steps could help reduce or eliminate any negative thoughts or emotions?

For instance, if you wrote that you were anxious or nervous about something, what would help reduce your anxiety? Do you need more practice? Or do you need to talk to someone in your Career Center? Could you ask your friends about your feelings? You may find they are feeling the same way, and you can support each other to find positive solutions.

You might want to keep this mindmap around when you find yourself stuck or procrastinating. It could be that one of those old thoughts keeps returning. This will remind you that you have felt this way before, and you found solutions in the past. You just need to find a new solution.

## WORKSPACE:

# Myth-Busting

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

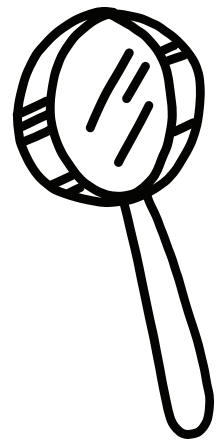
One of the biggest challenges in your job search might be what you “think” you know about something versus the truth. That’s why internships, information interviews with alumni, and shadowing experiences are so helpful. You learn the truth about a job.

Many of us get our first ideas about careers through television. But ask anyone whose profession is depicted on a TV series and they will tell you it’s not very realistic. That’s why career research is so important.

But-- what do you do when you learn the truth about a profession and you no longer want to pursue it? It’s easy to feel disappointed and stuck. “What do I do now?” you might be thinking. The chart below will help you sort out your thoughts and move you forward.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw two vertical lines on your paper to create three columns.
- In the first column, write: “What I believed or thought I knew”
- In the second column write, “What I have learned”
- In the third column, write “Next Steps”
- Fill in the columns with whatever applies to your situation.





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

- What did you learn from this experiment? What is the difference between your original thinking and the reality? Where did your original thoughts or beliefs come from? How did you discover the “truth”?
- How does what you learned affect your future actions?
- Has it caused you to switch career plans?
- Are you going to pursue something new?
- Or are you simply going to make adjustments and stay with your original plan?

Finding out the “truth” about something doesn’t mean you have to abandon it. Sometimes you just need to approach it with a new perspective.

## WORKSPACE:

What I believed or thought I knew:	What I’ve learned:	Next steps

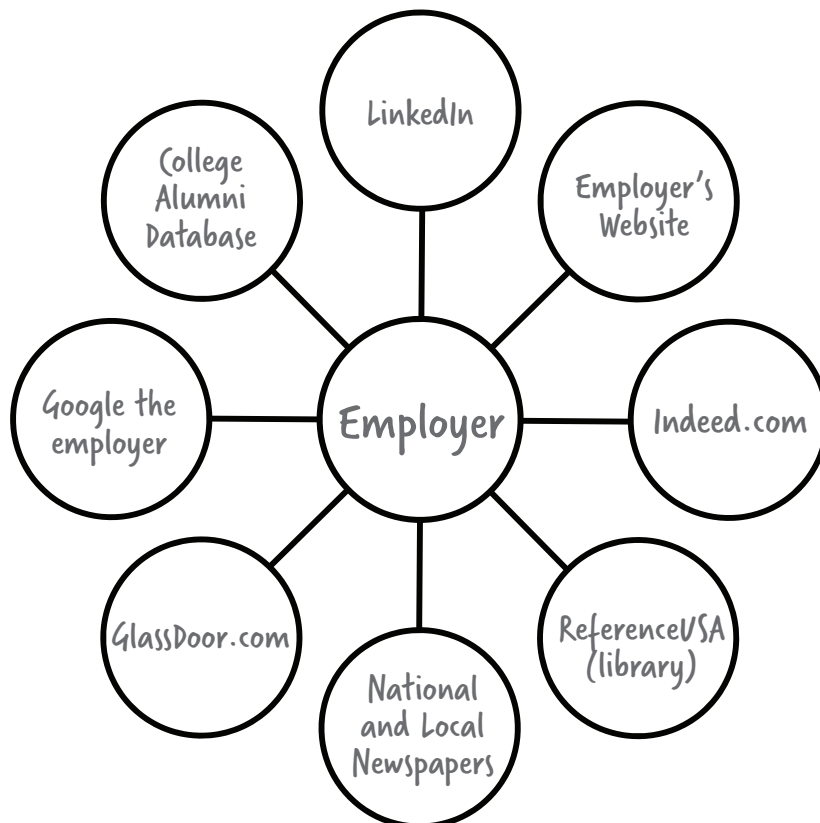
# Researching Potential Employers

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

This diagram will remind you of the various resources you can use to research an employer. If one of the options doesn't work, just try another. Write down what you learn about the employer as you research them so you'll know whether to keep investigating or not.

## PICTURE IT!

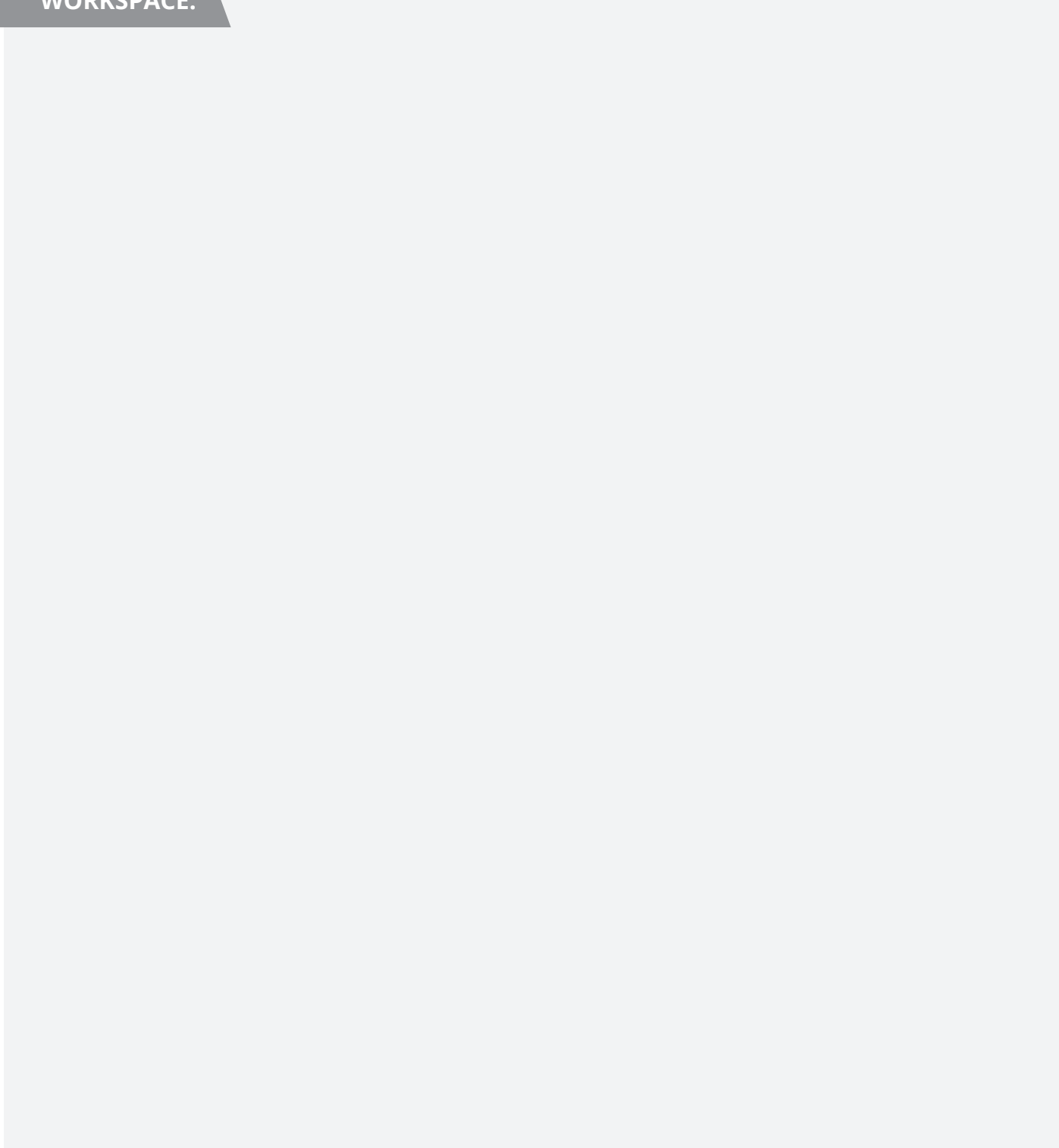
- Use this diagram to uncover the most efficient and effective ways to research a company. You can use LinkedIn and your college alumni database to find the profiles of people who work there already. You can reach out to them for an information interview. You can use all sorts of sites for online searching, including a general Google search and specific sites like Glassdoor.com and ReferenceUSA (through your library). Indeed.com will tell you if the company is hiring and what positions they are hiring for, and your local and national newspapers will have the latest news and information about the organization.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

What's your next step? Have you uncovered some employers you'd like to work for? Then it's time to set up your plans for the job search. Outline your next steps using some of the other diagrams in this book.

## WORKSPACE:



# The Iceberg

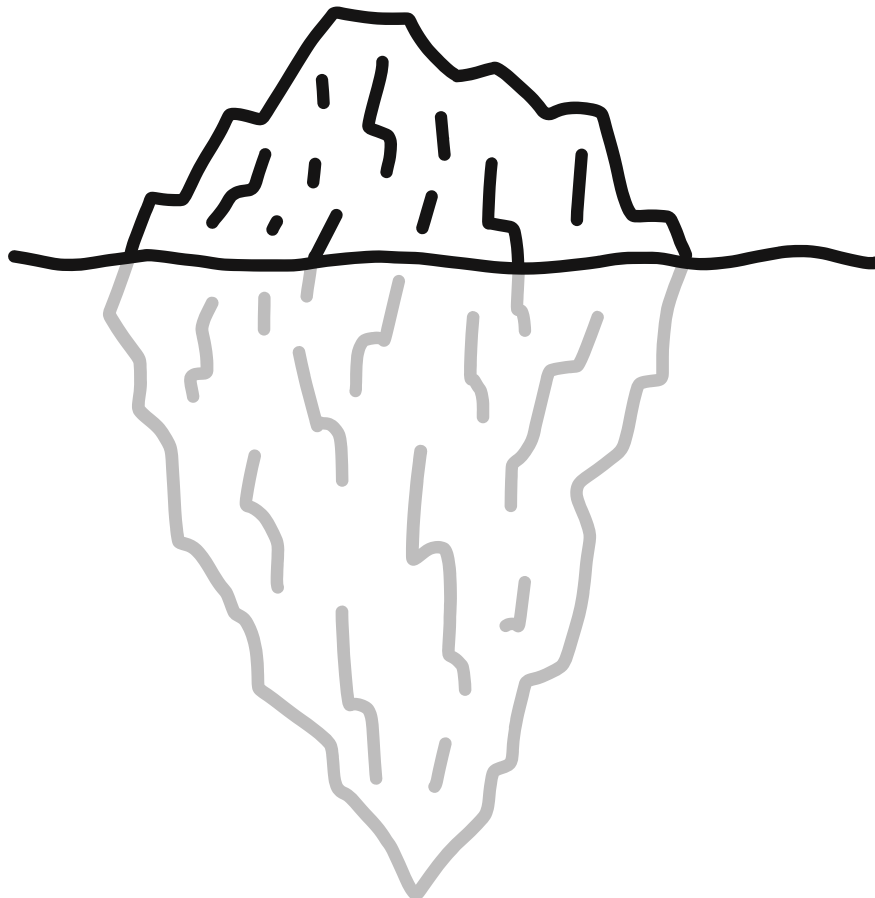
## WHAT'S REALLY INVOLVED IN A CAREER?

### HOW DOES IT HELP?

The iceberg is a great metaphor for thinking about all that is hidden in a job search. You can use it in several ways, but for this exercise, let's use it to learn more about a career field that interests you.

### PICTURE IT!

- Select a career field you've been considering.
- Write what you already know on the part of the iceberg that's above the water line.
- Now, talk to 2-3 people who work in the career field you're considering. Or—do an online search about your career field.
- Write what you learn about that field underneath the water line.



## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

Now that you've learned more about your field, are you still interested?

What surprised you about the field?

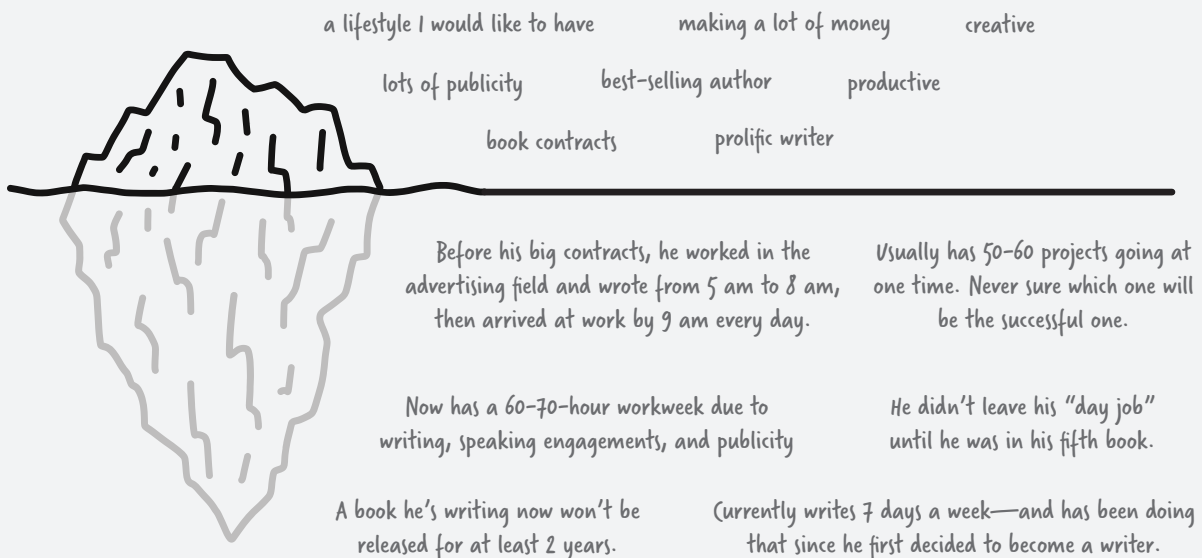
What could you do to learn more?

How could you start getting experience in your field of interest?

Try sharing your iceberg with someone in the field—ask them what you left out.

## EXAMPLE:

David has always thought it would be great to have a career as a novelist. An avid reader, he particularly enjoys political thrillers and espionage types of books. He envisioned a life where he could write a book every few years, travel a lot and see new countries, and go to parties and book signings. To learn more about how to shape a career as a writer, he attended a writer's conference. He was excited to see that the keynote speaker was one of his favorite authors: a multi-millionaire prolific writer who is always on the best-seller list.



Analysis: After listening to the keynote speech where the writer described his system for writing books, David had a new appreciation for how much work it took to become that famous and to be such a prolific writer. He still plans to write, but he realizes now that he needs to get a paying job first and write on the side until he is successful enough to write full-time.

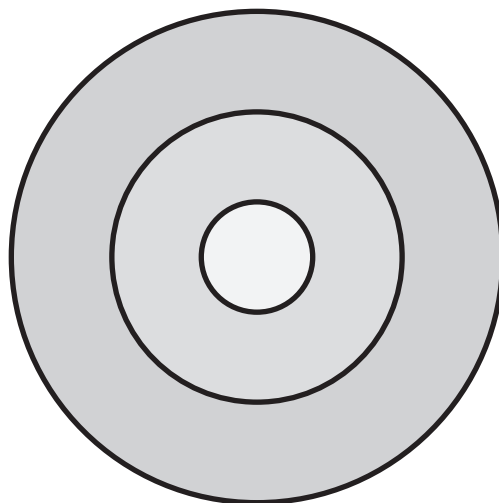
# The Network Target

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

This target image is a great way to think about your network. Try using it to develop the connections that can help you in your job search.

## PICTURE IT!

- Draw a large circle on your paper or computer. Draw a circle inside it, and then one more circle in the middle.
- In the inner circle, think about your closest connections: relatives, friends, former supervisors, etc. Who might be able to help you in this group?
- In the next circle, identify people who aren't as close to you but might have connections. For instance, professors or administrators at your school, the parents of your roommate (who might know someone who could help), alumni from your college, or recruiters who come to campus for information sessions, etc.
- In the outside circle, consider people you haven't met, such as social media connections, a customer at the coffee shop where you work, people you meet for the first time at a networking event, or elsewhere.
- Use the Workspace on the next page (or create a table in a word doc) and list the contacts you identified in your target. Enter their contact information and decide how you will reach out to them.



**NOW THINK ABOUT IT:**

What did you learn from this exercise?

How many people were you able to identify who might help you?

How are you going to connect with them?

Hopefully, this exercise will help you think more broadly about connection and networking. You can work with your Career Center to develop strategies for connecting with people who can help you.

**WORKSPACE:**

Outer Circle	Middle Circle	Inner Circle

# Where Should I Live?

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

When searching for a job, sometimes it feels easier to say, “I’ll live anywhere that has the job I want!” That’s a nice thought, but it can make a job search really hard. Your search process can have a more structured approach if you narrow your city and/or state options down to three possibilities.

## PICTURE IT!

You’re going to rank your top cities based on factors like cost of living, demographics, public transit, and other personal preferences.

- Start by listing up to six different cities where you would like to live.
- Under each city, list out the factors that you’ll be ranking. You might think about the proximity to your family or friends, if the city has sports teams to root for, if there is a multicultural demographic, and even if you can do things easily like hiking or going to the beach.
- Rank each one on a scale of 1-6 with 1 being the best and 6 being the weakest. So if you have Nashville and New York on your list, and you’re ranking public transit, you might put 1 for New York and 6 for Nashville.
- While you’re ranking each city, it might be helpful to look at resources like the Chamber of Commerce, a cost of living calculator, apartments.com, and resources your Career Center has.
- Add up the rankings you gave to each city and see which one has the lowest (best) score.





## NOW THINK ABOUT IT:

So how did your ranking go? Did you think of more factors as you were filling out your city's lists? You can add new factors and rank them all again. Did one rise to the top that you didn't expect? Was there a city that you thought sounded awesome, but doesn't have what you're looking for when it comes to a work/life balance?

Circle your top three. Can you now narrow your job search to those three areas? Having a few identified cities to work with during a search will be much easier than looking all over the world.

You can use this type of ranking activity if you're trying to decide between graduate schools, too. Some factors to consider might be access to resources, strong alumni presence, location, and the school's career data.

### EXAMPLE:

<u>L.A.</u>	<u>CHICAGO</u>
cost of living 6 <i>would need roommates!</i>	cost of living 2 <i>can live with sis</i>
multicultural demographic 2	multicultural demographic 1
public transit 5 <i>would need car</i>	public transit 1
sports teams 1	sports teams 2
reasonable driving distance from family 6	reasonable driving distance from family 1 <i>pretty easy drive</i>
have friends already in the area 2	have friends already in the area 2
total: 22	total: 9 <i>Best!</i>
<u>NEW YORK</u>	
cost of living 2 <i>can live with au</i>	
multicultural demographic 1	
public transit 1	
sports teams 1 <i>Yes!</i>	
reasonable driving distance from family 3	
have friends already in the area 3	
total: 11	

# Instructions For Coaches

We hope this guide will be helpful in your work with students.\* These exercises are designed to be engaging and interesting, help your students think creatively, open up new conversations, and reveal previously hidden information. Students respond well to these exercises, and they appreciate the clarity they acquire as a result.

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The most important instruction we can give you is:

*Have fun, and don't worry about your lack of artistic skills.*

Here are some quick ideas and tips for using the exercises:

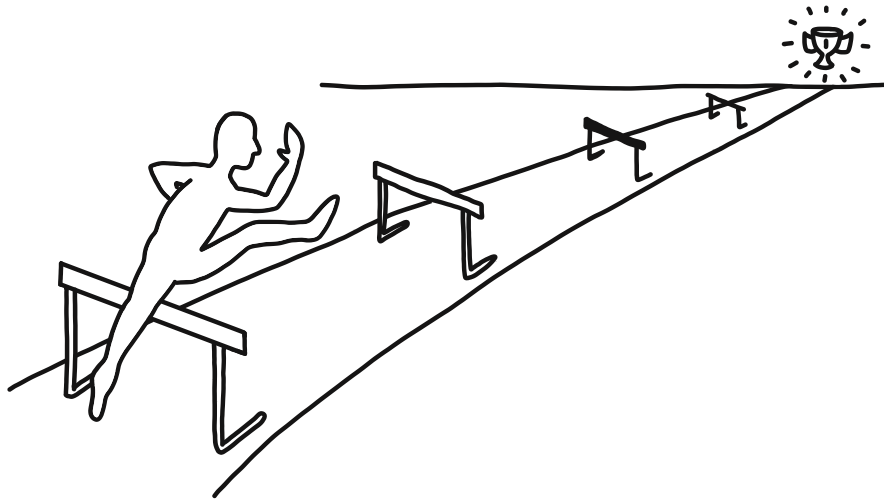
Read through each of the exercises and determine which ones you plan to use. Keep in mind the purpose of the exercise and adjust it as needed to fit the student's situation.

- Be creative and come up with your own ideas for the techniques. The three-column technique, for instance, can be used for everything from goal-setting to decision-making to time management. Vision boards are unlimited in terms of the topic.
- Keep printed copies of the exercises in your office or save them as a PDF to email as needed.
- The exercises can be completed during a coaching session or can be used as "homework" assignments. Students enjoy having something in writing after an appointment.
- The exercises are flexible for individual or group sessions and can be done in an office setting or during a virtual session. You can even use them as the topic of a workshop.
- If you're using them in a group setting, consider asking students to pair up and share each other's findings. Students love to help each other figure out the solutions to their challenges.
- Many of the exercises can be completed without the book: just use blank paper and whatever pens or markers you want.
- When working one-on-one, consider being the scribe and asking the student to dictate the content to you. That allows the student to focus on the "thinking" while you help out with the "visual."

- With your students' permission, make a copy of their work so that you can show your colleagues the power of visual thinking (remove the student's name from the drawing).
- After completing an exercise, don't forget to talk through what you just did. Don't assume a student will see all of the benefits or draw all the right conclusions.

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*\* Because this guide was prepared with college career coaches and college students in mind, we use the term "student" throughout. Please substitute the word "client" as needed if you are in a private practice.*



# References

The following books were mentioned in the text of Picture Your Career, and we recommend them for further reading:

Ben-Shahar, Tal. (2014). *Choose the Life You Want: The mindful way to happiness*. Workman Publishing.

Brooks, Katharine.(2017).*You Majored in What? Designing your path from college to career*. Plume.

Jeffers, Susan. (1988). *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway*. Ballantine.

To learn more about visual thinking, we recommend the following books:

Birsel, Ayse. (2015). *Design the Life You Love: A step-by-step guide to building a meaningful future*. Ten Speed Press.

Brand, Willemien. (2017).*Visual Thinking*. BIS Publishers.

Capacchione, Lucia (2000). *Visioning*. Tarcher/Putnam.

Cazaly, Lynne. (2013). *Visual Mojo: How to capture thinking, convey information and collaborate using visuals*. Self-published.

Herting ,Nora & Williams, Heather. (2016). *Draw Your Big Idea*. Chronicle Books.

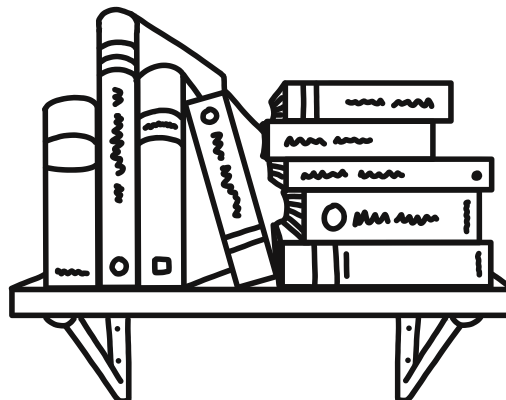
Margulies, Nancy & Maal, Nusa. (2002). *Mapping Inner Space*. Zephyr Press.

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Port, Michael & Wallis, Jocelyn. (2013). *Book Yourself Solid Illustrated*. Wiley.

Roam, Dan. (2016). *Draw to Win: A crash course on how to lead, sell, and innovate with your visual mind*. Penguin.

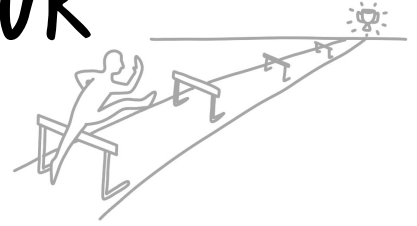
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# VISUALIZE AND PLAN YOUR CAREER PATH



Are you ready to make some big career moves? This workbook will help you discover your strengths, develop your vision, design a path forward, and deliver your talent.

**Packed with dozens of interactive exercises from professional career coaches at Vanderbilt University's Career Center, you'll learn how to:**

- Develop your vision and discover possible career trajectories
- Discover your talents and understand how they help you in the workplace
- Get organized and set goals for your future
- Complete inner work such as managing emotions and anxiety
- Explore possibilities in your career field
- Conduct a job search with practical tips on networking, interviewing, and resumes

## PRAISE FOR "PICTURE YOUR CAREER"

"If you are searching for a career path, *Picture Your Career* is your yellow brick road to success."

**Tom Devlin**

Career Center Executive Director  
University of California Berkeley

"The creative visual ideas described in this book are so relevant for any student or alumnus you may be coaching. Whether your students are full time, part time, in person, or virtual you will find this book using visual thinking to be incredibly valuable in your workshops and coaching!"

**Meg Flournoy**

Career Management Center Sector Director  
Fuqua School of Business at Duke University