

BECOMING CAREER SMART

THE ULTIMATIVE GUIDE TO UPHOLD EMPLOYABILITY,
RE-ENTER THE JOB MARKET, AND WORK GLOBALLY



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THE 4 STEPS TO CAREER SUCCESS

SET YOUR CAREER INTENTION: WHAT DO YOU WANT?

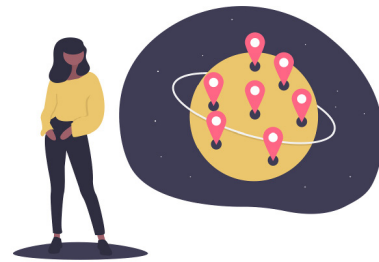
- Gain clarity on your path ahead
- Shape your career roadmap
- Boost your confidence



1

GAIN INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: MASTERING GLOBAL MOBILITY

- Get into the growth mindset
- Accelerate the adaptation process
- Master intercultural communication



2

GROW EMPLOYABILITY: BECOMING COMPETITIVE

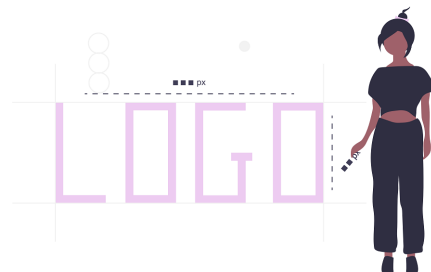
- Demonstrate initiative
- Futureproof your skillset
- Use design-thinking to grow resilience
- Create a portable career



3

BECOME VISIBLE & CONNECTED: STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

- Self-branding your profile
- Increase visibility
- Become a networking expert

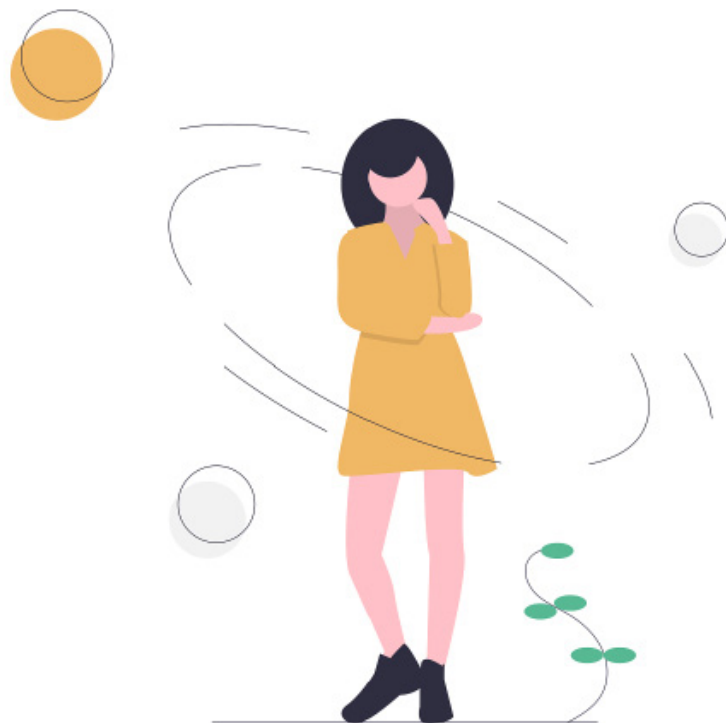


4

CHAPTER 1

SET YOUR CAREER INTENTION

WHAT DO YOU WANT?



INTRODUCTION

What are you aiming for in life?
What is important to you?
Where should you invest your time and energy into?

These are common questions, not only for expats but for everyone who is feeling lost or is thinking about changing career paths. When we leave the familiar path and start to look around for different options, we have to be sure about ourselves, our core values, our goals, and our drivers in life. Otherwise, it is very easy to get lost. When you are aiming for professional fulfillment, we have to start on a very personal level.

There is a reason why every business coaching ends up in personal coaching after a couple of sessions. We cannot separate our private life from our professional career. When we want to improve our work-life we have to look deeper into our personality first.

In this chapter, I am introducing you to helpful coaching techniques to gain clarification of who you are as a person and manifest where you want to go. The wheel of life exercise will demonstrate your pain points in life and show you where you lack behind your aspirations. The value exercise clarifies what is important to you in life and challenges you to re-check with yourself whether your professional goals are aligned with your core values. The career anchor exercise shows you on a professional level, what it is that gives you motivation and feeds your soul with the curiosity and willpower to raise the career ladder.

We will manifest your individual and professional goals and find ways to conserve the eagerness you are feeling at the beginning of the job-hunting process. Finding professional fulfillment is not a sprint but a marathon, and by setting the foundation in this first chapter, we are making sure that we will power through till the end.



GAIN CLARITY ON YOUR PATH AHEAD

WHEEL OF LIFE

The Wheel of Life exercise is a great way to manifest change, to see where you are at the very moment and to observe where you are developing to. It is a personal assessment of your satisfaction with your life right now and shows you at one glance the areas that are giving you the energy and stability you need to explore the new and changing areas in your life.

The structure of the wheel measures your satisfaction in your chosen areas of life. It is not a picture of how it has been in the past or what you want it to be like in the future. It is also not a report card where you elevate how you „performed“. The emphasis is indeed on how happy you are feeling right here, right now in this very moment.

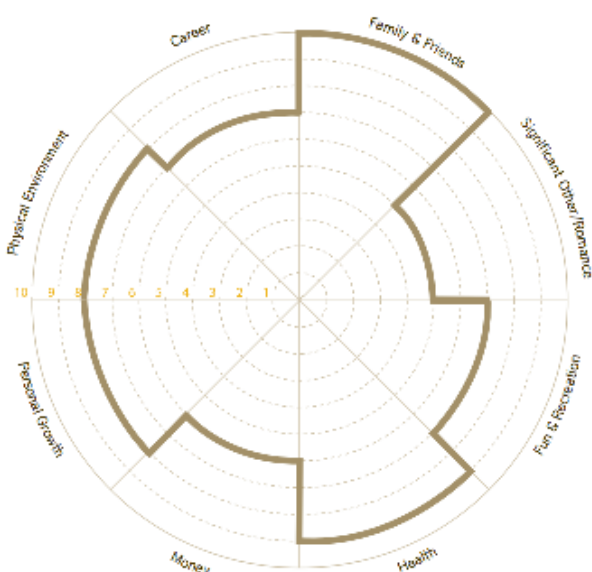
To get a better understanding, I show you an example of a filled out Wheel of Life. You can see that there are eight different sectors. In this example, the defined areas of life are Career, Family & Friends, Significant Other/Romance, Fun & Recreation, Health, Money, Personal Growth, and Physical Environment. When you are doing the exercise for yourself, the wheel will be completely empty, and it is up to you to define what areas there are in your life that are of your interest. Each section is then rated from one to ten, with one being the lowest amount of happiness and ten being the happiest you can be.

By connecting the dots, you will gain a great visual of your current satisfaction level.

The goal is to make you aware of what is working for you and where you want to spend more time on. When you are taking your time for reflection after the exercise makes sure that you are not only focusing on the fields that you want to improve but also notice what areas are working best for you. These are the sections you can build on. Based on the concept of positive psychology, we are getting much more benefit out of realizing what is going well than only trying to improve the sectors that are not working for us.

This is a great exercise to repeat once in a while to see a potential shift. Use a different color and draw in the same wheel to visualize the different times you did the exercise.

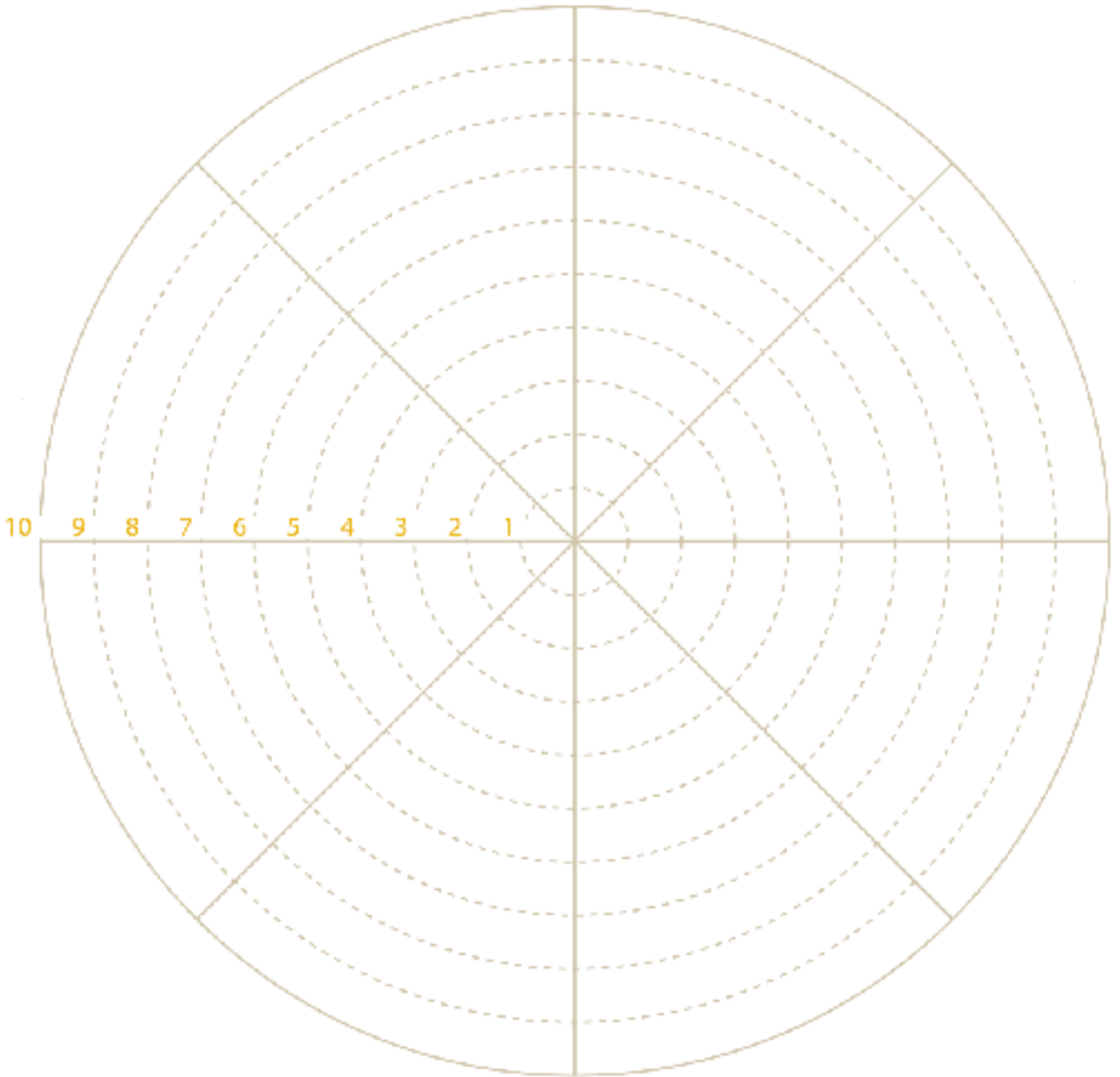
Turn to the next page for your Wheel of Life.



YOUR PERSONAL WHEEL OF LIFE

Color

Date

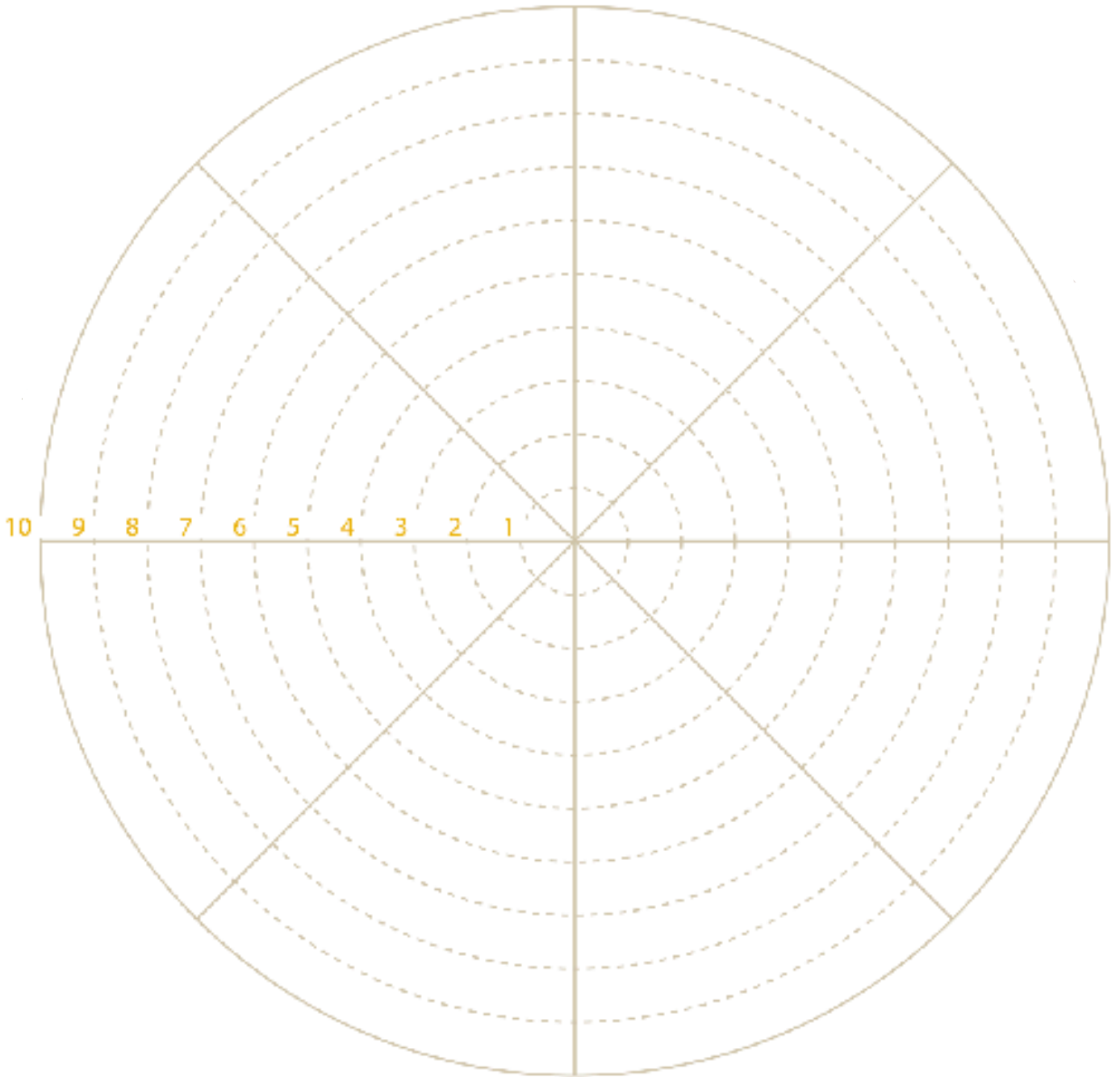


GENERAL LIFE PERSPECTIVE

YOUR PROFESSIONAL WHEEL OF LIFE

Color

Date



CAREER PERSPECTIVE

THE VALUE EXERCISE

Values are our core drivers. The most powerful triggers for our motivation. At the end of the day, we are satisfied if we can implement our core values in our everyday life, our work and relationships. It costs us a lot of energy to work against our values and it can be very inspiring to work align with our values. In order to evaluate in what direction you might be heading next, it is essential to define the status quo.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN? WHAT TRIGGERS YOUR CORE?

Below are listed some of the most common values. Take your time and read through all of them. Then, highlight the Top 10 values that speak to you without rating them.

ABSENCE OF PAIN	COMMITMENT	FRIENDSHIP	NEATNESS	SATISFACTION
ABUNDANCE	COMMUNICATION	FULFILLMENT	OPENNESS	SECURITY
ACHIEVEMENT	COMMUNITY	FUN	OPTIMISM	SELF-CARE
ACCOMPLISHMENT	COMPETENCE	GENEROSITY	ORDERLINESS	SELF-CONTROL
ADVENTURE	CONNECTION	GRATITUDE	PARTNERSHIP	SELF-EXPRESSION
ADVOCACY	CONTRIBUTION	HAPPINESS	PEACE	SELF-LOVE
AGGRESSIVENESS	CONTROL	HARMONY	PERCEPTIVENESS	SELF-MASTERY
ALTRUISM	COURAGE	HOLISTIC LIVING	PERSONAL GROWTH	SELF-PROTECTION
AMBITION	COURTESY	HONESTY	PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	SELF-REALIZATION
APPROACHABILITY	CREATIVITY	HUMOR	PHILANTHROPY	SELF-RESPECT
ARTISTIC EXPRESSION	CREDIBILITY	INDEPENDENCE	PLAY	SENSUALITY
AUTHENTICITY	DISCIPLINE	INTEGRITY	PLEASURE	SERVICE
AUTONOMY	DISCOVERY	INTIMACY	POWER	SPIRITUALITY
AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT	DISSENSION	INTUITION	PUNCTUALITY	STABILITY
BALANCE	EMOTIONAL HEALTH	JOY	PRIVACY	TOLERANCE
BEAUTY	EMPATHY	JUSTICE	PROFESSIONALISM	TRUST
BENEVOLENCE	ENVIRONMENTAL	LAUGHTER	RECOGNITION	TRUTHFULNESS
CARING	EXCELLENCE	LEADERSHIP	RELATIONSHIP	VITALITY
CHEERFULNESS	FAITH	LEARNING	RELIABILITY	
CHOICE	FAMILY	LOYALTY	RESPECT	
CLARITY	FLEXIBILITY	MINDFULNESS	ROMANTIC	
COLLABORATION	FREEDOM	NATURE	SAFETY	



Look at the values that you circled. Which one surprised you? Was there maybe a change since you moved abroad? Changing country and culture often affect our view of the world and the values that are important to us. It is great to take the time to reflect on what is truly important to us RIGHT NOW and not a year back in our home country with totally different daily routine, family situation, work etc.

As a next step try to cut these values down to your personal Top 5. Which Top 5 are the most important to you? Which speak to you? Write them down here and explain them to you. What does that value mean to you? For some people the value „Creativity“ means expressing themselves, for me it means creating something. Defining your personal values will help you to decide on some action steps.

MY TOP 5 VALUES

1

What it means to me:

2

What it means to me:

3

What it means to me:

4

What it means to me:

5

What it means to me:

SHAPE YOUR CAREER PLANNING ROADMAP

Career planning is the conscious reflection on the professional path behind us and the decision process of shaping our future career. When we think about how to shape this future career path, we are taking into account several factors:

- How does my personal career vision match with my family situation?
- What do I want to get out of my career?
- What options are there?
- Is it time to change my career paths?
- What are my key drivers for career success?

In this chapter, we are deep diving into the topic of career planning to find answers to these questions.



CAREER PLANNING FOR DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

In order to address your personal career planning journey, we should shed light on a phenomenon that is rising in importance within our modern society: The Dual-Career Couple.

The pure definition of a Dual-Career-Couple (DCC) is a married couple where both are working. While we can all agree that marriage can also be exchanged by a partnership, there is also a more interesting facet highlighted by several academics. Nowadays, Dual-Career Couples are also portrayed as the following: Both partners are heavily invested in their careers because they offer the primary source of self-fulfillment. There is a high degree of psychological commitment to work. Hence, it is not only about needing a second income, but even more about the need for self-fulfillment through developing a career one is passionate about. So it is not only about the question of whether the partner can find work, but if he or she can find meaningful work that contributes to this.

When you are living in a partnership, you will start to realize that it requires some real communication and effort to join the individual plans for life. The following insights are based on the work of researcher Jennifer Petriglieri and her latest Harvard Business piece „Dual-Career Couples move from independent to interdependent careers and lives“.



When both partners dedicate themselves to work, and when work becomes a primary source of identity and a primary channel for ambition, some form of management and planning is needed.

Dual-Career Couples tend to face specific advantages and disadvantages relating from prioritizing both careers:

ADVANTAGES

- increased economic freedom
- a more satisfying relationship
- a lower than average chance of divorce

DISADVANTAGES

- hard decision on whose job to relocate for
- increased level of conflict: Who will leave the job early to pick up the kids?
- struggling to give family commitments the full attention

Jennifer Petriglieri, argues that couples need a more comprehensive approach for managing the moments when commitments and aspirations clash. She studied 100 dual-career couples and identified three significant points of transition throughout the relationship and career:

- 1. Working as a couple**
- 2. Reinventing themselves**
- 3. Loss and opportunity**

Depending on where you are in your life right now, you might recognize yourself in those points of transition. So let's dig deeper into each phase of life and see what the opportunities and challenges are:

1. WORKING AS A COUPLE

You are full of energy and hope that you will make it all work: Having a fulfilling family life and a successful career for both of you. The first transition point happens when a life-changing moment occurs, such as moving abroad for the partner's job or having the first child. The most common mistake in this phase is to only concentrate on the practical. Couples tend to look on the logistical side of it and decide according to the higher income. However, it can be dangerous to leave out the emotional part of it. Such life-changing moments also come along with fear and doubts. Hence, it is crucial to talk to each other about those feelings and give them some room. Salary should never be the knockout argument in the decision process. Try to not neglect other motivational factors in a career such as learning, greater responsibility, personal interests, work-life balance, and location.



After this first life-changing moment (especially after having the first child) couples do increasingly discuss models on how to prioritize family and career within the family.

Jennifer Petriglieri, came up with three basic models that can be used:

PRIMARY-SECONDARY

For the duration of their working lives, one partner's career takes priority

IN-TURN TAKING

Partners agree to swap the primary and secondary position periodically

IN-DOUBLE PRIMARY

Both partners continuously juggle two primary careers

There is no right or wrong here. Couples can be fulfilled with their lives, no matter which model they favor as long as it is mutually agreed and aligns with their values.

The in-couple primary model brings more conflict to the table, and more discussions are necessary. However, when communication is managed fine, it allows both partners to strive professionally.

2. REINVENTING THEMSELVES

The second transition point Dual-Career Couples face is often happening in the early 40s. We often chose our career path based on expectations of parents and people around us than our own gutfeel. With time, we make our own experiences and might realize that there is a gap between what we are doing vs. what we really want to do. We might start to swim us free from expectations by others and question our career path. In this phase of reinvention and need for individuation, couples are forced to renegotiate their agreement.

Each partner might wrestle with self-redefinition, which triggers the need to reconsider preterm arrangements. Open-mindedness, curiosity in the journey of the other, and flexibility are required for now.

Research shows that couples who make it through their second transition are those in which the partner encourage each other.

3. LOSS AND OPPORTUNITY

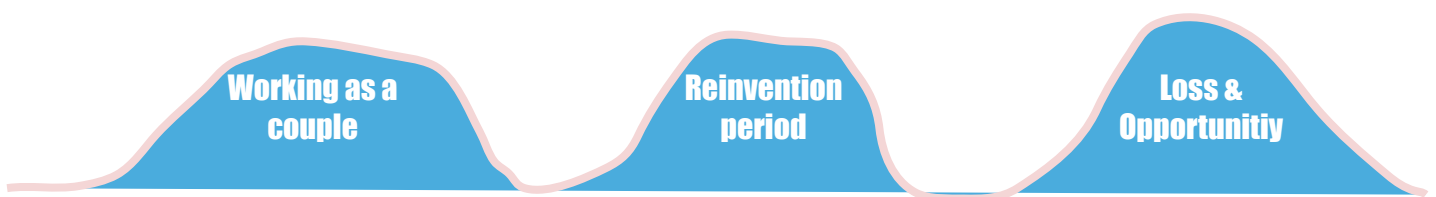
The third transition is often triggered by shifting roles later in life, which often create a profound sense of loss:

- career plateaus or declines
- Age is effecting lifestyle
- Children leave home

This might trigger the question: Who am I? Who do I want to be for the rest of my life?

Some couples use this phase as an opportunity for late-in-life reinvention. They might mourn the old but welcome the new. Others lack role models for what reinvention can look like at this stage of life and become increasingly frustrated.

Again, couples have to communicate with each other and renegotiate their common path together.



No matter what phase of transition you are in right now, it is helpful to see that there is a pattern and that the dilemmas and solutions are widespread around the globe. Pursuing two careers always carry some conflict, but the conflict can be even more dangerous when one person is neglected. Research shows that flexibility and open communication are the key solutions for living a happy life as a dual-career couple.

To say it in the words of Jennifer Petriglieri:

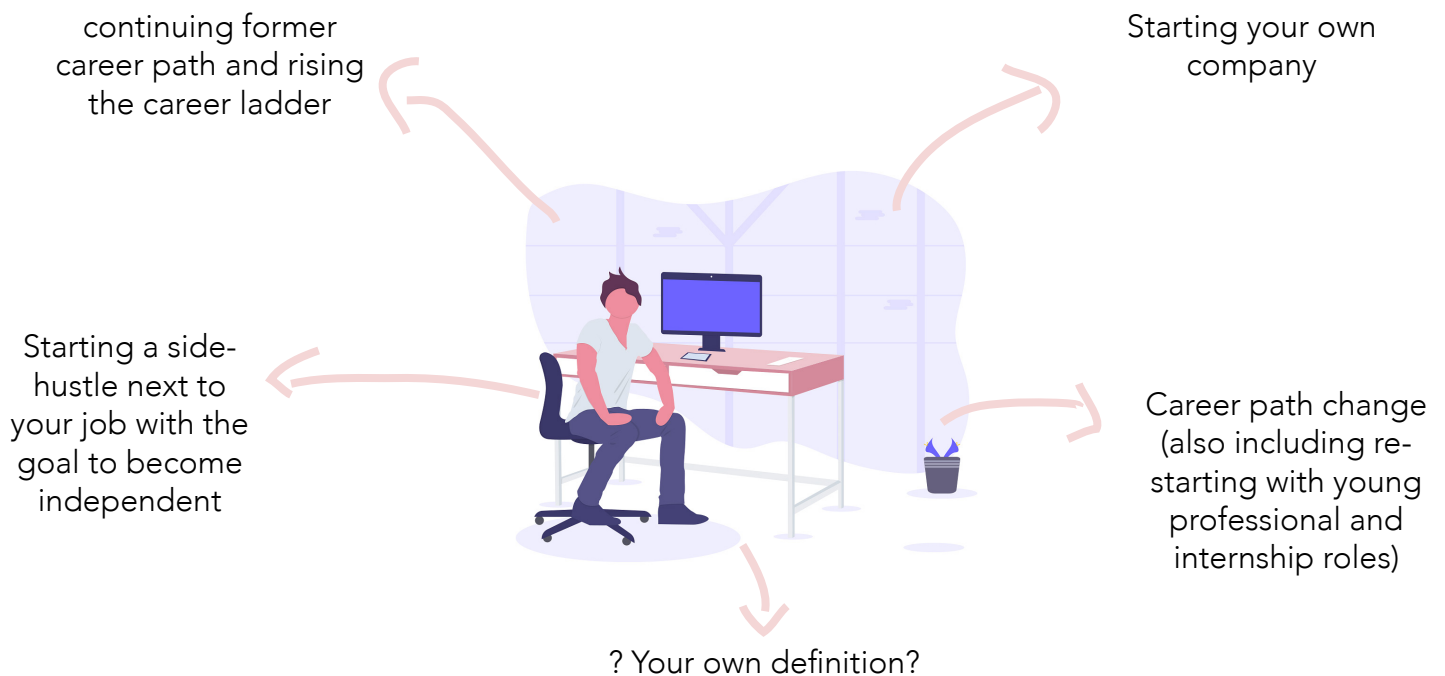
„Although the 50/50 marriage-in which housework and childcare are divided equally between the partners, and their careers are perfectly synched - may seem like a noble ideal, my research suggests that instead of obsessively trying to maintain an even „score“, dual-career couples are better off being relentlessly curious, communicative, and proactive in making choices about combining their lives.“

Jennifer Petriglieri

YOUR CAREER OPTIONS

When we focus on continuing a former career path or entering the next phase in our life, we are often very much hooked with that one specific idea - that one specific scenario. After moving abroad, my personal approach was to continue my corporate career in the same industry, the same position that I left back home. Thanks to coaching and personal development, I realized that there are way more viable options. Going through this moment of reflection enabled me to start my own business and get educated in a field I was not familiar with at all. Looking back, I would say that I went through such a big learning curve that I would hardly have managed in my former narrow thinking. For that, I want to open your mindset in this early stage of career planning for different scenarios. This first chapter intends to give you the opportunity of defining what career means to you, and what you rate as an accomplishment.

WHAT DOES A CAREER LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?



To add a different perspective, I would like to include an interview with a relocating spouse that I published on my website sharethelove.blog. In this interview, Simone, a German expat spouse in the US, shares her professional approach while living abroad.

„WHY I CHOSE NOT TO WORK“ - AN INTERVIEW WITH A GERMAN EXPAT SPOUSE

EXPAT SPOUSE INTERVIEW

MEET SIMONE

Simone Podgorny is a Senior HR Professional with more than 12 years of experience in the field of Human Resources. Born and raised in Germany, Simone holds a Master of Science in Economics from Copenhagen Business School and has most recently worked as a Global HR Business Partner for Bayer at its German Headquarters. Simone quit her job at the end of last year to join her husband on an international assignment to Chicago where she has consciously decided to take time off from the workforce to pursue some of her dreams, explore the city and enjoy life. Playing guitar, starting her journey as a Coach and volunteering as a Crisis Counselor with Crisis Text Line are some of Simone's newly discovered passions.



WHY I CHOSE NOT TO WORK AND WHAT I DO INSTEAD

When the offer came on the table to join my husband on an international assignment to Chicago – this was in July 2018 while we were vacationing in a little hut high up in the Alps and over dinner a text came in from my husband's manager – my immediate reaction was that of course, that is what we will do. We would pack our things, move to the US, figure things out, done deal. I did not have a single doubt that this was the decision to be made. I was in full support of my husband's career and the opportunities this created for him. And I saw some possibilities for me as well.

MY INITIAL IMAGE OF ME LIVING ABROAD

When imagining myself abroad at that time, I knew I would want to be working, too. That is what I had been doing in Germany for over a decade, so I did not question this lifestyle for even a tiny second. I always loved working, as it is something that gives me identity, day-to-day challenges, a fun community, and pays my bills. I imagined myself working somewhere in downtown Chicago, in an interesting and challenging position, at an office in one of those cool high-rise buildings, which I could walk to every day with my coffee mug in hands.

Not a minute did I see myself as a spouse who would 'just come along', so this was not an option I explored any further. I had too many (true or not) images in my mind of expat partners hanging out most of the time, "cappuccino-ing" their days through town, playing tennis, and spending their (mostly) husbands' money until it was time to move back home. Not an image that fit me well, I felt.

IN NEED FOR A PLAN B

Soon after we officially made the decision to relocate, it became apparent that it is not as easy as I anticipated to find meaningful work. I did not have a work visa yet, the time that was planned for us to be in the US did not feel long enough for any decent type of employment and the company that I was with at the time did not have an office big enough for me to just change location. My nicely laid out plan just plopped right in front of my eyes, and I was forced to aim for a plan B. I was forced to move out of my comfort zone.

This plan B developed with a very simple question to start with: If I was given a year or so of time off and there are enough savings to cover for that period, what would I want to do? Did you ever ask yourself that question? What would your response be? Would you decide to spend more time with your family, climb the highest mountains on the planet, become a Yoga teacher in India, open a diving school on Bali, start your own business, join the Peace Corps, write a book or sell your house and all your belongings and just see where life takes you?

My mental list of things to do was very short at first. Knowing that I would certainly live in Chicago, I was a bit clueless and went for some of the more obvious ideas: do an MBA, train for a marathon and find exciting US vacation spots which we would travel to. Hmm, not bad, but nothing that would really sweep me off my feet in a moment of excitement. Thankfully, I had several months to think this through, great conversations with family, friends, and colleagues and yes, I also did a ton of research to find out if what I made up in my mind was at all possible and affordable.

SEEING A WHOLE NEW SET OF OPPORTUNITIES

With every week that passed, my plans grew more and more concrete, and at the same time, my enthusiasm rose so much, it gave me sleepless nights. I was dying to finally get on that plane and start my adventure – my sabbatical. All the thinking and talking and researching and calculating eventually led to four areas that I wanted to dedicate my time and money too. Those would be areas I might have neglected for some time and wanted to give more weight in my life, areas that would help me plant seeds for potential future possibilities, areas I enjoy and thrive in, and new areas I want to discover.

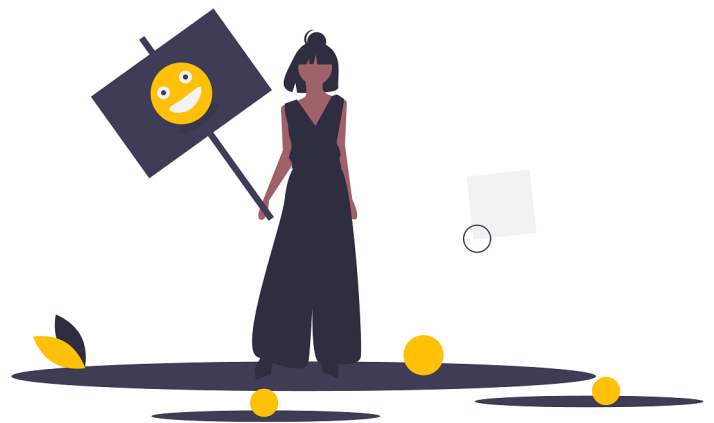
The first one is learning and personal growth. I love learning new things, from typing with ten fingers instead of just three (looks much more elegant), to becoming a Certified Professional Coach (certainly more demanding than learning how to type), and a few other topics I had always wanted to dig my head into. Learning is what is at the top of my list and will consume probably most of my time.



The second item is improving my fitness level. Over the past several years, I went from holding a gym membership but never entering one, to exercising for at least 3-4 hours every week. I feel there is still potential for more, and since Chicago offers so many possibilities for working out, I can almost try out a new type of sport every week. Doing a few official 5-10k runs is at the top of my work-out agenda and something I will start training for immediately.

The third item on my list is giving back to those in need. I consider myself as very fortunate when it comes to the status of my health, educational background, and financial situation, but I know that there are millions of people around the world – and thousands of them in Chicago – who are not that lucky. Now that I have the time, I want to help where my resource and energy can make a difference. I worked through Chicago Cares to find a few very meaningful volunteer activities of things that are close to my heart and which I feel I want to commit to for a longer period.

The fourth and last item on my list is doing lots of fun things. This involves starting my own blog, exploring everything Chicago has to offer, traveling the country, learning to play an instrument (yep, you heard right, that is on my bucket list as well, and I am in the process of finding my best-fit music school), networking with the locals (easier than I thought) and sometimes just reading a book or simply doing nothing. There is a wealth of things to experience, and already now I feel that I do not have enough hours in the day.



EMBRACING THOSE MOMENTS OF DOUBT

While this sounds super exciting, there are moments of doubt. Society expects us all to work and earn our living. This is how we identify ourselves as human beings unless we are enjoying our retirement after decades of contributing. I do experience moments in which I wonder if this is where I should be devoting my time. There are moments of guilt for just spending and not earning any money (this is an especially tough one for me, I must admit). There are moments of fear for what the future might bring, and there are moments of exhaustion from all the change happening at once. Luckily these moments are rare, and I decided to embrace rather than reject them as my healthy check-in points, which allow me to every now and then calibrate where I stand.

There is something precious I have been noticing over the past few months – about myself and life in general. Work might give us purpose and identity, but a lot of other things do too, we just need to find them and make room for them in our lives. Do I plan to or can I even afford to always live like that? Certainly not. I expect to be wanting to return into the paid employment sector at some point. But until then – and I leave this moment in time completely open for now – I will enjoy my little sabbatical break and, if you want to hear more, let you take a part in it at www.windycitymoments.com.

**„ASK YOURSELF, WHAT IS A VALUABLE
„WORK“ FOR YOU, APART FROM THE
OBVIOUS OFFICE TREADMILL“**

Another great approach by Antje on the blog:
[http://www.sharethelove.blog/expat-partner/
identity-struggle/interviewantjedohring/](http://www.sharethelove.blog/expat-partner/identity-struggle/interviewantjedohring/)

IS IT TIME FOR CHANGE?

If you are working already but looking for a change, this exercise on the next pages might be helpful for you. If you are working already but looking for a change, this exercise on the next pages might be helpful for you. How reflective are you with your current choice of career? We tend to question our diet, our partner, friends... but how happy are we in our current job environment? If we are unhappy, is this just for the moment or does it reflect a long-term frustration?

Let's shift the topic from an emotional place to a reflective assessment based on several factors. If you are questioning whether your current job perspective is still your mid-term goal check out these eight happiness factors.

Are you aiming to continue in the known career path because it's convenient and you are just used to it? Or would this be a perfect time to switch gears? Reflect on these eight job satisfaction factors either with your current or your previous job in mind to find out!

FACTOR #1: PEOPLE

It's all about human connections. People can influence our happiness to a positive or negative extent. You either learn from your colleagues and grow together or you are feeling uncomfortable if not stressed. We spend way more time with our colleagues than our family so it is a valid factor to include when thinking about changing jobs/career.



FACTOR #2: PAY

Last week I learned in a seminar for career coaches, that 80% of employees that have asked for a raise did get one. However, only 19% of employees are happy with their current salary. So if you are unhappy money-wise think about asking for a raise and express this to your employer instead of immediately thinking of a new career with a new employer.



FACTOR #3: PROJECTS

How meaningful are your projects? Do you see any progress in the things you are doing compared to the start of your career? Are your projects recognized by the company? Do you feel responsible for your tasks? These factors can play a major impact when deciding how happy you are with your current job. Think about your current and most recent projects.



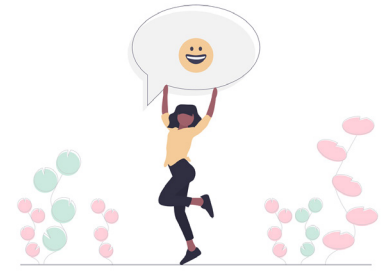
FACTOR #4: PROGRESS

Are you still learning? Or are you buried in micromanagement tasks? People value learning differently so ask yourself how important this is to you. For me personally, learning is one of my core drivers and I know this for some time now. Therefore I rate my work not only based on salary and immediate effect but most of all the by the learning curve my work brings along.



FACTOR #5: PURPOSE

This is a factor that many expats have become experts in. Moving abroad forces you to reflect and by this many of us start to question our purpose. How do we want to design our life? What is important to us in the long-run? These can be really big questions but we can also drill them down a bit to come to a conclusion on how much purpose we can find in our job. What is our private purpose in relation to our professional purpose? Are those connected at all? The more they are connected, the more meaningful we define our work. And with meaningful I don't mean sustainable, humanitarian, charitable but how meaningful it is to you personally.



FACTOR #6: PASSION

Do not mix this up with purpose. Passion is something inside you and not inside the job. What do you care about personally? What do other people say about you? How passionate do you feel about your work? How about the general career outlook?

FACTOR #7: PERKS

This is a rather new-age category. I doubt that our parents thought about this when thinking about whether or not to change jobs. Perks are all the little things employees receive from their employer. This is mainly driven by the start-up and tech industry that started to use food, activities, and smaller incentives to make employees stay longer at work. On a more serious level, especially in the US, health care and retirement plans are to be mentioned here.



FACTOR #8: PERSONAL

This factor is all about work-life balance. How satisfied are you with your hours? Your days-off? Do you need to work during vacation time or is your employer leaving you be? Can you flexibly react to family matters?

ASSESSMENT TIME

Now it's time to value each category. Are (were) you happy with your current team environment, salary, projects and so on? Write 1 for yes and 0 for no. So when you add up all the factors you will get a result between 0 (not happy in any of the categories described above) and 8 (happy in each and every category). If you are ending up with a value of 6 or higher you are absolutely fine! You can even step up this game to a higher level by rating each section differently. In my case, I appreciate learning much more than other factors so I valued this number more than others.

MY PERSONAL RATE:

- PEOPLE: ____
- PAY: ____
- PROJECTS: ____
- PROGRESS: ____
- PURPOSE: ____
- PASSION: ____
- PERKS: ____
- PERSONAL: ____

CALCULATE YOUR SCORE

Now take out your math skills and calculate based on the points how high your happiness percentage is. If you are getting out 6 points out of 8 your happiness score would be 75% for instance. Check your score with the chart below. Of course, this is just a broad method but it's a great place to start!

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

0-10 %	Is this even a job?
11-20 %	Run! Get out of there
21-30 %	Bad situation - time to pack your bags
31-40 %	Ok - might be time to think about an exit strategy
41-50 %	Average - absolute tolerable
51-60 %	Good enough - room for more
61-70 %	Good - but not great
71-80 %	Great - stay and get comfortable
81-90%	Amazing - you are loving your job!
91 - 100%	Unicorn!

WHAT DO WE WANT FROM A CAREER?

Different factors shape what we expect from a career and how fulfilled we are. While money is a fundamental driver, I want to focus on more sophisticated factors that, in the end, make the difference between a job and a career. A job is paying the bills, while a career is also addressing how we feel about the time spent and our commitment. Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, chief talent scientist at Manpower Group, stresses that there are three elements we are looking for in a fulfilling career. Let's have a look:

WE WANT THREE SPECIFIC THINGS FROM A CAREER:

1. A SENSE OF COMPETENCE AND MASTERY

by being given the chance to perform above expectations and grow

2. A SENSE OF COMMUNITY OR AFFILIATION

the product of fair and respectful relationships with colleagues and the sense that one is appreciated at work

3. A SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE

a feeling that we are devoted to something that matters and that aligns with our core values and drivers



As humans we want to belong, to contribute, and to grow. The more we can thrive in these areas, the more successful we are in our profession and the more fulfilled we feel about our life in general.

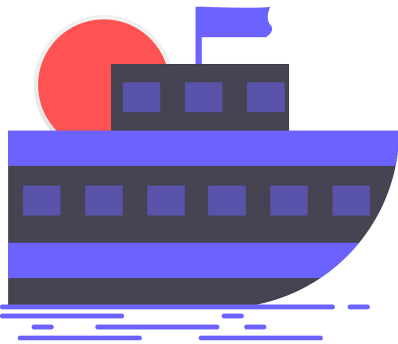
**TOMAS CHAMORRO-
PREMUZIC** Chief Talent
Scientist at ManpowerGroup
and a professor of business
psychology at University
College London and at
Columbia University on
the consequence of these
three career goals and its
consequence for our current
job:

*„In order to land the job you really want, you need to be clear about what you are good at, what the job in question is really like, and de-emphasize financial incentives to fulfill other values and career drivers. Above all, you will probably benefit from being less resilient so you are less likely to put up with a bad job or a bad boss. The important thing to remember is that only a minority of people ever regret quitting a job. This implies that people tend to stay in jobs for longer than they should. As Hippocrates famously noted, *Ars longa, vita brevis*. It takes a long time to develop expertise and become skilled. Life is short — so don't be afraid to choose the path you actually want.“*

So how can we find out how fulfilled we are with our previous career path in order to shape our future? If we put financial matters aside, what is really motivating us to push our career forward? A great way to deep-dive this idea of mastery, purpose, and community is the career anchor concept on the next page.

THE CAREER ANCHOR EXERCISE

What are you striving for in your career? What was your original motivation when applying for your first job, and what has changed along the way? Naturally, we are more fulfilled and successful when we are striving for something professionally that is also aligned with who we are as a person. If you are thinking about a career change or you are unsure where to head next to, now is the time to check your motivation. I want to introduce you to the concept of career anchors and how that simple test can be a helpful guide to you for your personal career planning.



WHAT IS A CAREER ANCHOR?

The concept of career anchors was introduced by Edgar Schein, a former professor at the Sloan School of Management. The original model roots in his work from the 1970s but a 2008 study has extended the model to its form today.

WHY ARE CAREER ANCHORS IMPORTANT?

The goal of defining one's career anchor is to see if your personality is matching your professional aspirations. In times of change, we are likely to be influenced by our surrounding, that tells us how a successful career is defined. Often it is not only the fact that career plans are changing but mostly that we are heavily influenced on how other people back home define a successful career: Traditionally it is defined as a linear path increasing in salary and responsibility over time.

If you want to get some distance from the singular perspective of connecting a successful career with money or responsibility, keep on reading to figure out what is really important here. Maybe it is the increasing responsibility – maybe its more about becoming the expert in a specific field. Let's see: To get us back to our very own motivation, Edgar Schein invented a questionnaire, asking all kinds of questions to assess your specific career goals. Depending on your ratings, you will figure out what type of job makes you happy and fulfilled.

HOW DO I IDENTIFY MY CAREER ANCHORS?

If you want to find out about your very own career anchor, you can do so easily without spending any money or wasting time. Over the next two pages, you will find the questionnaire to get started right away.

I have tested this model with other expats, family, and friends around me, and without exception, the assumptions have been confirmed. It's always great to see a result like that black on white.

LET'S START WITH THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Use the following scale to rate how true each of the items is for you. How to rate each item is shown below.

Never true for me	Occasionally true for me		Often true for me		Always true for me
1	2	3	4	5	6

No.	Question	Rating
1	I dream of being so good at what I do that my expert advice will be sought continually.	
2	I am most fulfilled in my work when I have been able to integrate and manage the efforts of others.	
3	I dream of having a career that will allow me the freedom to do a job my own way and on my own schedule.	
4	Security and stability are more important to me than freedom and autonomy.	
5	I am always on the lookout for ideas that would permit me to start my own enterprise.	
6	I will feel successful in my career only if I have a feeling of having made a real contribution to the welfare of society.	
7	I dream of a career in which I can solve problems or win out in situations that are extremely challenging.	
8	I would rather leave my organisation than to be put into a job that would compromise my ability to pursue personal and family concerns.	
9	I will feel successful in my career only if I can develop my technical or functional skills to a very high level of competence.	
10	I dream of being in charge of a complex organisation and making decisions that affect many people.	
11	I am most fulfilled in my work when I am completely free to define my own tasks, schedules and procedures.	
12	I would rather leave my organisation altogether than accept an assignment that would jeopardise my security in that organisation.	
13	Building my own business is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position in someone else's organisation.	
14	I am most fulfilled in my career when I have been able to use my talents in the service of others.	
15	I will feel successful in my career when I have been able to use my talents in the service of others.	
16	I dream of a career that will permit me to integrate my personal, family and work needs.	
17	Becoming a functional manager in my area of expertise is more attractive to me than becoming a general manager.	

No.	Question	Rating
18	I will feel successful in my career only if I become a general manager in some organisation.	
19	I will feel successful in my career only if I achieve complete autonomy and freedom.	
20	I seek jobs in organisations that will give me a sense of security and stability.	
21	I am most fulfilled in my career when I have been able to build something that is entirely the result of my own ideas and efforts.	
22	Using my skills to make the world a better place to live and work is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.	
23	I have been most fulfilled in my career with I have solved seemingly unsolvable problems or won out over seemingly impossible odds.	
24	I feel successful in life only if I have been able to balance my personal, family and career requirements.	
25	I would rather leave my organisation than accept a rotational assignment that would take me out of my area of expertise.	
26	Becoming a general manager is more attractive to me than becoming a functional manager in my current area of expertise.	
27	The chance to do a job my own way, free of rules and constraints, is more important to me than security.	
28	I am most fulfilled in my work when I feel that I have complete financial and employment security.	
29	I will feel successful in my career only if I have succeeded in creating or building something that is entirely my own product or idea.	
30	I dream of having a career that makes a real contribution to humanity and society.	
31	I seek out work opportunities that strongly challenge my problem solving and/or competitive skills.	
32	Balancing the demands of personal and professional life is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.	
33	I am most fulfilled in my work when I have been able to use my special skills and talents.	
34	I would rather leave my organisation than accept a job that would take me away from the general managerial track.	
35	I would rather leave my organisation than accept a job that would reduce my autonomy and freedom.	
36	I dream of having a career that will allow me to feel a sense of security and stability	
37	I dream of starting up and running my own business.	
38	I would rather leave my organisation than accept an assignment that would undermine my ability to be of service to others.	
39	Working on problems that are almost unsolvable is more important to me than achieving a highlevel managerial position.	
40	I have always sought out work opportunities that would minimise interference with home or family concerns.	

WHAT CAREER ANCHORS ARE THERE?

Edgar Schien is distinguishing between 8 different career anchors depending on your personality and what you are looking for in your career.

TF	Technical & Functional
GM	General Management
AU	Autonomy & Independence
SE	Security & Stability
EC	Entrepreneurial Creativity
SV	Service & Dedication to a Cause
CH	Pure Challenge
LS	Life Style

LET'S DO SOME QUICK MATH

TF		GM		AU		SE		EC		SV		CH		LS	
1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16	
17		18		19		20		21		22		23		24	
25		26		27		28		29		30		31		32	
33		34		35		36		37		38		39		40	
Total		Total		Total		Total		Total		Total		Total		Total	
+5		+5		+5		+5		+5		+5		+5		+5	
Ave		Ave		Ave		Ave		Ave		Ave		Ave		Ave	

Based on Edgar Schien's Career Anchors

MY CAREER ANCHOR IS: _____

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL CAREER ANCHOR AND HOW IT AFFECTS WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR:

TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is the opportunity to apply your skills in this area and to continue to develop those skills to an even higher level. You derive your sense of identity from the exercise of your skills and are most happy when you work permits you to be challenged in those areas. You may be willing to manage others in your technical or function area, but you are not interested in management for its own sake and would avoid general management because you would have to leave your own area of expertise.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up, is the opportunity to climb to a level high enough in the organisation, to enable you to integrate the efforts of others across functions and to be responsible for the output of a particular unit of the organisation. You want to be responsible and accountable for total results and you are presently in a technical or functional area, you view that as a necessary learning experience; however, your ambition is to get to a generalist job as soon as possible. Being at a high managerial level in a specialist function does not interest you.

AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is the opportunity to define your work in your own way. If you are in an organisation, you want to remain in jobs that allow you flexibility regarding how and when you work. If you tend to dislike organisational rules and restrictions to any degree, you seek occupations in which you will have the freedom you seek, such as teaching or consulting. You turn down opportunities for promotion or advancement in order to retain autonomy. You may even seek to have a business of your own in order to achieve a sense of autonomy; however, this motive is not the same as entrepreneurial creativity described below.

SECURITY & STABILITY

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is employment security or tenure in a job or organisation. Your main concern is to achieve a sense of having succeeded so that you can relax. This career anchor shows up in a concern for financial security (such as pension and retirement plans) or employment security. Such stability may involve trading your loyalty and willingness to do whatever the employer wants from you for some promise of job tenure. You are less concerned with the content of your work and the rank you achieve in the organisation, although you may achieve a high level if your talents permit. As with autonomy, everyone has certain needs for security and stability, especially at times when financial burdens may be heavy or when you are facing retirement. People anchored in this way are always concerned with these issues and build their entire self-image around the management of security and stability.

ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is the opportunity to create an organisation or enterprise of your own, built on your own abilities and your willingness to take risks and to overcome obstacles. You want to prove to the world that you can create an enterprise that is the result of your own effort. You may be working for others in an organisation while you are learning and assessing future opportunities, but you will go out on your own as soon as you feel you can manage it. You want your enterprise to be financially successful as proof of your abilities.

SERVICE/DEDICATION TO A CAUSE

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is to pursue work that achieves something of value, such as making the world a better place to live, solving environmental problems, improving harmony among people, helping others, improving people's safety, curing diseases through new products and so on. You pursue such opportunities even if it means changing organisations, and you do not accept transfers or promotions that would take you out of work that fulfils those values.

PURE CHALLENGE

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is the opportunity to work on solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems, to win out over tough opponents, or to overcome difficult obstacles. For you, the only meaningful reason for pursuing a job or career is that it permits you to win out over the impossible. Some people find such pure challenge in intellectual kinds of work such as the engineer who is only interested in impossibly difficult designs; some find the challenge in complex multifaceted situations such as the strategy consultant who is only interested in clients who are about to go bankrupt and have exhausted all other resources; some find it interpersonal competition such as the professional athlete or the salesperson who defines every sale as either a win or loss. Novelty, variety and difficulty become ends in themselves, and if something is easy it becomes immediately boring.

LIFESTYLE

A high score in this area would suggest that what you would not like to give up is a situation that permits you to balance and integrate your personal needs, your family needs and the requirements of your career. You want to make all the major sectors of your life work together towards an integrated whole, and you therefore need a career situation that provides enough flexibility to achieve such integration. You may have to sacrifice some aspects of the career (for example, a geographical move that would be a promotion but would upset your total life situation), and you define success in terms broader than just career successes. You feel that your identity is more tied up with how you live your total life, where you settle, how you deal with your family situation and how you develop yourself than with any particular job or organisation.

REFLECTION TIME

- How do you feel about the result?
- Does it match your intuition?
- How could it help to foster your career?
- Compare your current or last job and match the company's culture and your job profile with your personal career anchor. Does it fit? If not, what is missing?



THE CONNECTION OF INTENT AND GOAL SETTING

I hope by now you have a clearer understanding of what career means to you and what direction might be interesting to follow. As a next step for career planning, let's look into the topic of goal-setting and defining an intent for life. The concept of INTENT is rooted in the coaching education where coaches help their clients to set their intention for the session and also for their life in general. Based on my coaching education and practice, I will share how Intent is defined, shaped, and how it supports your career planning journey in connection with your own mission.

People widely agree, that we are living a happier life when we know the motivation behind our actions and act according to it. However, not everyone is clear about their very own intent for life. What do you want to do with your life? What is the direction that feels right to you? Are you triggered by your inner belief or are you more influenced on what seems desirable according to media and society?

WHAT IS INTENT? A SHORT DEFINITION

The dictionary describes Intent as showing great determination doing something with full attention and effort. One of the biggest challenges of intent is that we are not always aware of our very own viewpoint on life. We are influenced by friends, family, and society as a whole. Scrolling through social media and flipping through magazines we are encountered with a certain way of life that is promoted. We start to run after this specific image on what a successful, happy life looks like. Often this entails owning certain things, looking a certain way or owning a particular professional position. Intent is behind all our decisions in life. What education do we aim for? What job did we choose? What boxes do we want to tick before we start a job at a certain company? Intent is our trigger, our core motivation, and our steering wheel.

ARE YOU LIVING A LIFE ALIGNED YOUR VALUES?

The thing is: Intent is not a light switch we can just switch off. We always have intent, but it is not constantly conscious to us nor does it have to be aligned with the values we have in life. You can now choose to know your intent, or you can choose to ignore it. However, be aware that ignoring our intent is like ignoring our goals. We are on the ride without knowing the destination. It takes bravery to look ourselves in the eyes and check in to our intent. It might be something that we did not know. We might be disappointed by our intent or even shocked. However, the secret is: You can create whatever intent you want. It is not given to us by birth, but we can decide on our very own intent every morning we wake up. If we are a more reflective person, we will even ask us before going to bed how helpful this intent has been to us throughout the day. The more important point is, that the intent we chose is aligned with us and not with the life of someone else. Intent should be matched to our values, our perception of life and what is important to us and not to the ones around us. For most of us, the hardest thing is to live a life that is not craving for acknowledgment by others. Check in with yourself: Have you reached a goal recently that did not feel quite right? Have others complimented you to something that did not fill you with joy?

“If our goals are not well aligned with our values or our sense of self, we’re more likely to procrastinate.”

– Timothy A Pychyl (Ph.D.)



THE TWO SIDES OF INTENT

Be careful when thinking about intent. Intent can also be negative. Let's say you have created the intent of being the victim – this will lead to you being the victim. If you said to yourself that you want to be successful, you would more likely be successful than a victim. Of course, it's not that easy, but manifesting your intent helps. If you are thinking about your intent, you will be clearer in your communication and actions. Hence, intent is a powerful tool that can go in both directions. Reflection on your idea of life and what is important to you will help you to adjust.

HOW MEDITATION HELPS WITH REFLECTING ON YOUR LIFE GOALS

Many find meditation a useful tool to find intent. Why? Well, meditation helps us to exit the hamster wheel for a short amount of time and forces us to concentrate on ourselves, our breath, our immediate surrounding. Meditation aims to put all thoughts about work and private struggles aside. It helps us to connect with us in a different way than we are used to.

If you don't see yourself rolling out the mat and sit in a cross-legged yoga position, what about using that commuting time? Try not to stare on the phone for a change but be with yourself. It will take a bit of concentration of just sitting there in the bus, not starring at other people, not using the phone, not listening to a podcast but merely sitting there and reflecting on your life.

WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?

What worries you?

In what situations do you feel comfortable?

When do you feel like a fraud or an actress?

What is important to you in life? Is it living in a big house?

Walking outside in nature?

Living a sustainable lifestyle?

Living in a big family?

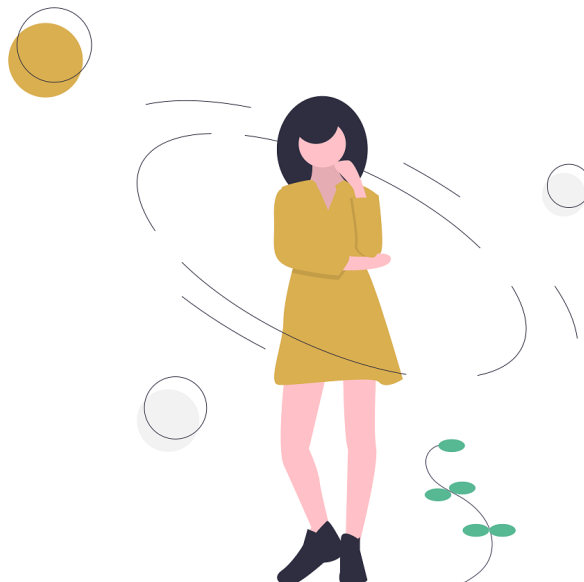
Having lots of friends?

Treating our body with high-quality food and great nutrition?

Owning many things?

Being an early tech adopter?

Traveling the world?



WHAT IS YOUR MISSION?

A mission is a specific task that a person is sent to perform. You can also call it a reason for being, or a self-imposed duty or task. Some name it „their calling“, others refer to it as their life purpose. No matter what you want to name it, it is about knowing who you are and what role you are playing on this earth.

SETTING UP YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

Corporations love to define a mission statement. The purpose is to make this mission present in daily work life to aim all projects towards this mission. Similarly, a mission statement can work in your personal and professional life. When you define a mission for yourself, you can check whether your current actions are actually aligned, and if you are acting according to the bigger purpose of your life.

Knowing your mission and life purpose can help you live with clarity and focus. Your purpose gives you a clear direction in life.

Defining a mission statement is not an easy task! It can be quite overwhelming.

If you want to discover your true purpose in life, you must first empty your mind of all the false purposes you have been taught (including the idea that you may have no purpose at all).

IT HELPS TO BREAK IT DOWN IN SMALLER STEPS:

- Start with nouns that describe your role
- Add adjectives that highlight your values
- Include what motivates you
- Tie it all together with a WHY

Write down 1-5 sentences describing your mission/life purpose. It often helps to connect noun and verbs.

For example:

- supporting women
- challenging thoughts
- creating value
- living passionately
- valuing time
- maximizing profit

***To be a teacher, to be known
for inspiring my students to
be more than they could be.***

Oprah Winfrey

***To have fun on my journey
through life, and to learn
from my mistakes***

Richard Branson

MY MISSION STATEMENT



BOOST YOUR CONFIDENCE

We are stronger than we think we are. On good days, we are all well aware of our capabilities and contribution to society. On worse days, we question our role in life, our professional contribution, and our personal skills. Especially after a career break, it is normal to have doubts about one's own strengths. The acknowledgment we received from former colleagues and bosses blurred in our memory. We kept managing our private life but lack to see where this has contributed to our professional skill level. We might lose confidence in ourselves, doubting that we would be the right fit for a position or struggle with marketing our assets to the outside world. In this part of the smart career guide, I want to refocus ourselves on our strengths, assets, and qualities that we bring to the table on a daily basis. No matter if you have worked for the last couple of years or you seem to have lost track of former successes, this is the time to create awareness about our strengths and look the impostor syndrome in the eye.



**You will grow most,
where you are already strong**

THE STRENGTHS TEST

Each of us has a unique combination of talents, knowledge, and skills or strengths that we use in our daily lives to successfully achieve goals and interact with others. The belief of psychology is that when people understand and apply their strengths, the effect on their lives and work is transformational. When you are acting alongside your strengths, you are more engaged in your work and are more likely to have an excellent quality of life. At the same time, we as human beings tend to focus on our weaknesses rather than playing to our strengths.

There are many tests out there you can do to get a better understanding of your personal strengths. Some of them can get costly while others are still free. The important thing is to identify the valuable ones.

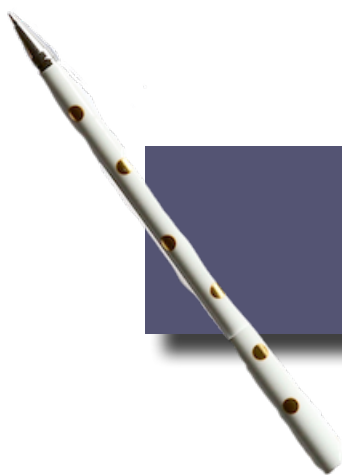
From my experience within the coaching industry, I can highly recommend you the VIA strengths finder. It is a very comprehensive questionnaire, testing your strengths from different angles - and most of all it's for free.

The VIA concept classifies 24 character strengths that all humans possess but to different degrees, giving each person a unique character profile.

On the next page, you will find an overview with all strengths classified by VIA and a short description. After answering the questions of the comprehensive survey, you will immediately get your results in a pdf download link that will show you all strengths according to its manifestation in your character.

GUIDANCE ON ACCESSING THE TEST:

- Go to www.viacharacter.org
- Click on the Take Surveys button in the menu bar.
- Click on the VIA Survey option.
- Click on the Enter the Survey Center to Register button.
- The test is free, but you have to register to be able to take it.
- After filling out the form, click on the Register button and you will be taken to the test.



GO HERE:
<http://www.viacharacter.org>
(available in different languages)

VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

Virtue of Wisdom



Creativity

Original, adaptive, ingenuity, seeing and doing things in different ways



Curiosity

Interest, novelty-seeking, exploration, openness to experience



Judgment

Critical thinking, thinking through all sides, not jumping to conclusions



Love of Learning

Mastering new skills & topics, systematically adding to knowledge



Perspective

Wisdom, providing wise counsel, taking the big picture view

Virtue of Courage



Bravery

Valor, not shrinking from threat or challenge, facing fears, speaking up for what's right



Perseverance

Persistence, industry, finishing what one starts, overcoming obstacles



Honesty

Authenticity, being true to oneself, sincerity without pretense, integrity



Zest

Vitality, enthusiasm for life, vigor, energy, not doing things half-heartedly

Virtue of Humanity



Love

Both loving and being loved, valuing close relations with others, genuine warmth



Kindness

Generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruism, doing for others



Social Intelligence

Aware of the motives and feelings of oneself and others, knows what makes others tick



Teamwork

Citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty, contributing to a group effort



Fairness

Adhering to principles of justice, not allowing feelings to bias decisions about others



Leadership

Organizing group activities to get things done, positively influencing others

Virtue of Justice

Virtue of Temperance



Forgiveness

Mercy, accepting others' shortcomings, giving people a second chance, letting go of hurt



Humility

Modesty, letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves



Prudence

Careful about one's choices, cautious, not taking undue risks



Self-Regulation

Self-control, disciplined, managing impulses, emotions, and vices

Virtue of Transcendence



Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence

Awe and wonder for beauty, admiration for skill and moral greatness



Gratitude

Thankful for the good, expressing thanks, feeling blessed



Hope

Optimism, positive future-mindedness, expecting the best & working to achieve it



Humor

Playfulness, bringing smiles to others, lighthearted – seeing the lighter side



Spirituality

Connecting with the sacred, purpose, meaning, faith, religiousness

OBTAIN A 360 DEGREE PERSPECTIVE ON YOUR STRENGTHS

Ask family members and friends about your core strengths based on the VIA characteristics to paint a full picture. Use the form below to illustrate your strengths on one chart.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- **COLUMN ONE (FAMILY):** Record the attributes that a family member identified and thought best described yourself.
- **COLUMN TWO (FRIEND):** Record the attributes that a friend identified and thought best describes you.
- **COLUMN THREE (VIA):** Record the top five strengths as evidenced by the VIA Signature Strengths Questionnaire online.
- **COLUMN FOUR (COMPOSITE):** Add the number of times that each attribute was checked in the previous columns.
- **COLUMN FIVE (DESIRE):** Identify five strengths, which you desire to possess.

	CHARACTER STRENGTH	FAMILY	FRIEND	VIA	TOTAL	DESIRE
1	APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY AND EXCELLENCE					
2	INTEGRITY					
3	BRAVERY&VALOUR					
4	CREATIVITY					
5	CURIOUSITY					
6	FAIRNESS					
7	FORGIVENESS					
8	GRATITUDE					
9	HOPE&OPTIMISM					
10	HUMOUR&PLAYFULNESS					
11	KINDNESS					
12	LEADERSHIP					
13	LOVE					
14	LOVE OF LEARNING					
15	MODESTY&HUMILITY					
16	OPEN-MINDEDNESS					
17	PERSISTENCE					
18	PERSPECTIVE					
19	PRUDENCE					
20	SPIRITUALITY					
21	SELF-REGULATION					
22	SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE					
23	TEAMWORK					
24	ZEST					

THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROM

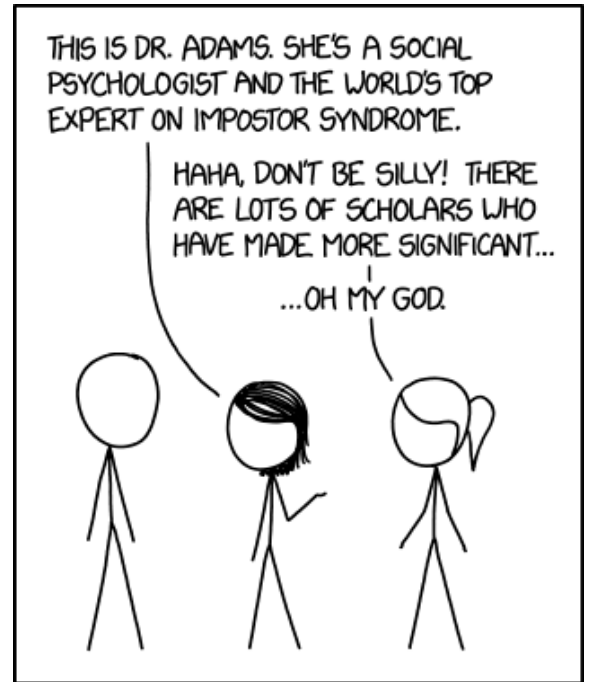
WHAT IS THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME?

Let's start with a short definition. You might not have heard the term Impostor Syndrom, but I am sure you are familiar with the concept:

It is a psychological pattern in which an individual doubts their accomplishments and has a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud. Especially women are facing this fear in the workplace where they are not convinced about their skill and think they got the job by mistake and someday the boss or colleague will find out about it.

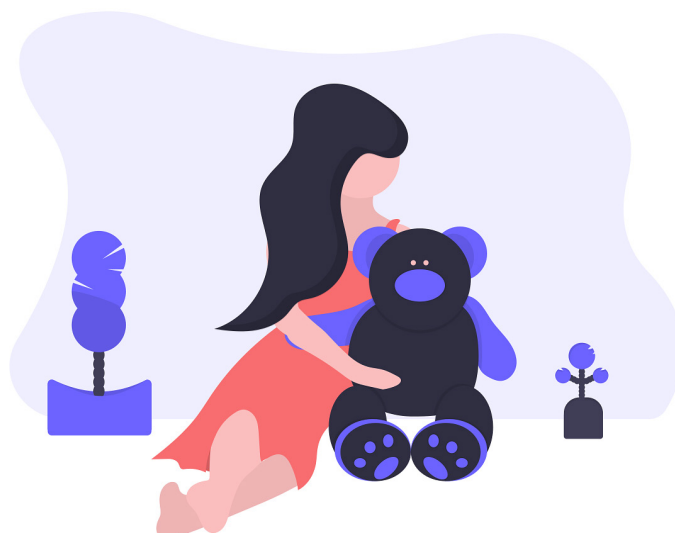
THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME IS NOT A UNIQUE THING

Generally speaking, about 70% of people state they are facing the Imposter Syndrom at least once in their life. This is even more common in the Expat and women of color communities regardless of their profession. Even Sheryl Sandberg, CMO of Facebook, talked in her well-known book "Lean-in" about her own experience with the Impostor Syndrom! "Every time that I was called on in class, I was sure that I was about to embarrass myself. Every time I took a test, I was sure that it had gone badly. And every time I didn't embarrass myself – or even excelled – I believed that I had fooled everyone yet again. One day soon, the jog would be up."



TYPICAL SYMPTOMS OF THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

Many people facing this are afraid that colleagues or supervisors expect too much from them. Especially women start to avoid extra responsibilities but bury themselves in work they feel familiar with to stay busy. The worst thing about this psychological phenomenon is that it can turn into a vicious circle. The more you excel in work, the more you fear that soon everyone will realize that you are fake. It's reversed logic, but it's hard to stay confident once the thought of not being enough or even worse "being fake" is stuck in your mindset.



WHY IS THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME SO COMMON AMONGST EXPATS?

Expats are the masters of growth and change. However, new Expats are faced with a massive learning curve before mastering it. This learning curve brings a lot of uncertainty and trial and error experiences with it. Expats have less safe havens such as a supporting social network in times of new beginnings. At a certain level, the feeling of new beginnings can become overwhelming.

Thankfully, this phase is often followed by an adaptation phase, but it can often take some time to reach this stage.

In combination with the Impostor Syndrome, Expats start to question their entitlement to be in this new country, this new company, this new home.

On top of the regular feelings of inadequacy, you may be feeling:

*"It's not my country, I don't really belong here." –
"I have an accent, it's clear I'm not from here."
"I look different, I don't fit in."
"I don't have all the cultural code." (e.g. I don't understand the small talk topics about local sports or VIPs)*

Interestingly enough, I found out that there is another group of people struggling with the Impostor Syndrome, and it tells a lot about it: Data Scientists and especially women in tech. One reason is that this field of work is still relatively new and develops very quickly. At the same time, many supervisors or HR-experts who hire Data Scientists have no clear picture of the exact dimensions of the job. Many hired employees in that field feel like a fraud as they get a lot of recognition by people who are not professional experts in that field.

HOW TO OVERCOME THE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

There are many ways to overcome the Impostor Syndrome, but only a few might be helpful depending on your character.

In my experience with my clients and also from my own journey, the most helpful approach is to document accomplishments. You are the most qualified person to convince yourself that you are not fake as you are the only person who talked you into that in the first place. Therefore it is tremendously helpful to write down positive feedback from clients, colleagues, superiors, family members, and friends. When I started my journey with Share-the-Love, I did the exact same thing. Every time I got supporting feedback via personal messages or social media comments I was writing it down in a small book, and I am so glad I did this as you will forget about these lovely messages in the endless universe of digital notes. It is also tremendously helpful if you need some focus and want to be reminded of your original business purpose. If you are applying for jobs in the corporate world, it is also excellent preparation for a job interview. It will not only boost your confidence but give you the best arguments for the meeting with a potential new employer.



If you are feeling too much into the vicious circle of the Impostor Syndrom, you might think that there is no positive feedback. Let me assure you that this not the case. I recommend talking with friends and family first. Most of the times, they remind you about accomplishments in the past and prep you to dig deeper. In this context, I can also highly recommend coaching. Coaching is nothing else than a conversation between a qualified person who has nothing on their own agenda than helping you to help yourself. A good coach can use specific conversation techniques to take you back in time and remind you of your accomplishments and the skillset you are bringing along. Other ways to battle the Impostor Syndrome are:

- Ask for the positive feedback
- Join a community, talk about it
- See failure as a learnings
- Focus on your strengths
- Find allies

NAME 5 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OUT OF YOUR HEAD:

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2

ACCOMPLISHMENT 3

ACCOMPLISHMENT 4

ACCOMPLISHMENT 5



THE EXPAT'S STRUGGLE WITH CONFIDENCE

Many of us expats tend to draw acknowledgment and confidence out of our accomplishments and career. Moving abroad can bring a sudden stop to this, and you have to build up everything from scratch. You might feel detached from the former career work and the longer you are out of profession – the more you are questioning your value.

I have consulted a confidence coach from South Africa about her advice for expats and specifically for relocating spouses.

Makhethi has specialized her coaching and consulting practice on the topic of how to gain more confidence. You can find her work on her www.makhethispeakslife.com. Makhethi is doing a lot of things, and it's hard to tell what she is doing in just a few sentences. She is a woman with a lot of drive, who loves Mondays, who likes to start something new and engage in different fields simultaneously to learn and grow. Breaking it down, Makhethi is engaging in 4 different businesses from business consultancy, public speaking, and coaching, to being an Online Teacher for English and starting a salon specializing in black people's hair. That's a lot on one plate!

When talking to her, you immediately connect Makhethi with confidence. She really embodies it in the way she talks, arranges appointments, and starts conversations with a total stranger like me. Her website is radiant with joy, bold colors, and statements.

HERE IS WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY TO RELOCATING SPOUSES:

It is ok to lose confidence in your career for now – because you still have confidence in yourself. Build on that confidence in yourselves, and you will be fine.

Sit down for a minute and forget your career. Forget that you are moved and just focus on the moment. Ask yourself: Why am I here? Dig deeper in your purpose. What is your purpose?

Finding your purpose is not an overcomplicated thing. It's about two essential things you need to ask yourself:

What do you enjoy doing?
What are you good at?

Don't get too close to your former career but think of your life as a whole. It can be a hobby. It can be a skill or something you enjoy. For me it was "I love talking to strangers" and here I am talking to you as a confidence coach and public speaker.



PUTTING ALL THE PARTS TOGETHER

MY TOP 5 VALUES:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

MY TOP 5 STRENGTHS:

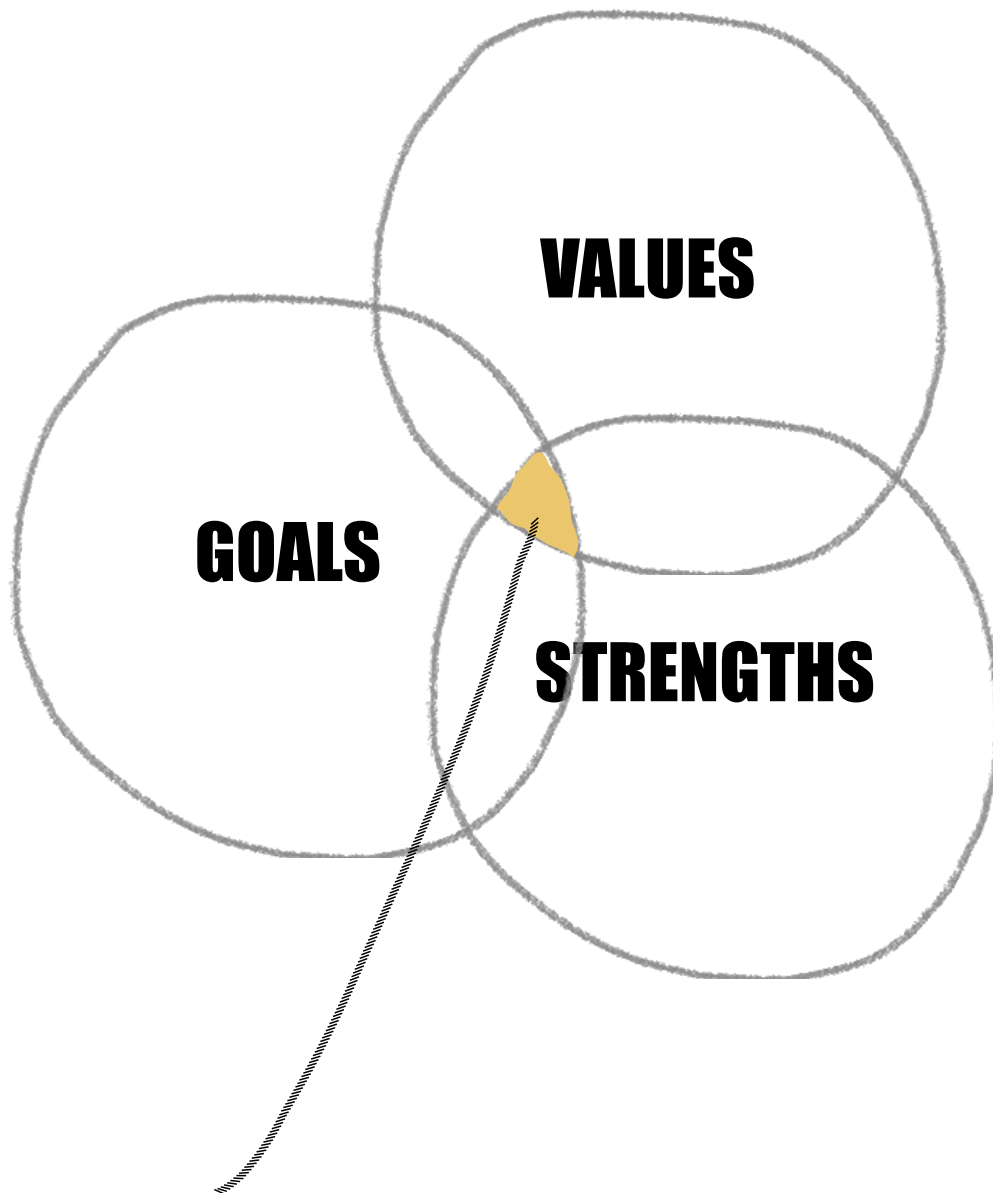
- _____
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- _____



MY MISSION STATEMENT:

MY TOP 3 CAREER ANCHORS:

- _____
- _____
- _____



YOUR SWEET SPOT

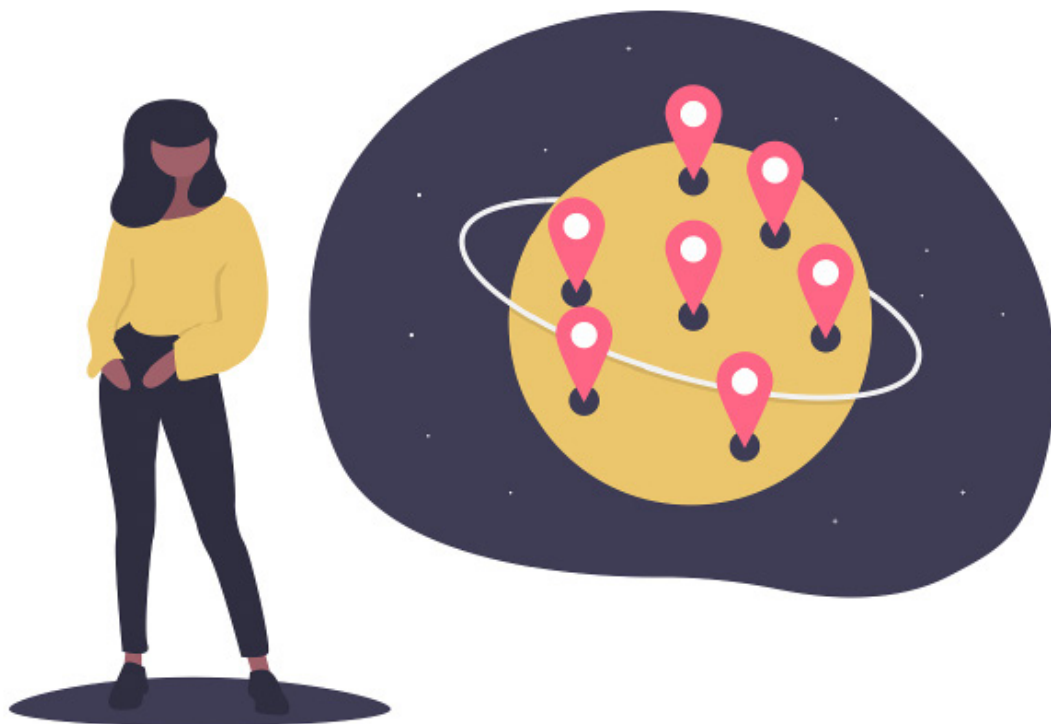
There is also a free template available on www.sharethelove.blog to create your own career vision. Check it out [here](#) or type in <http://www.sharethelove.blog/career/careerchange/>



CHAPTER 2

GAIN INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

MASTERING GLOBAL MOBILITY



Katharina von Knobloch | www.sharethelove.blog

INTRODUCTION

Career Paths are becoming increasingly global. Whether it is you who is moving abroad for a foreign assignment or whether your team is getting more and more global. Working on your intercultural skillset is an essential part of becoming career smart.

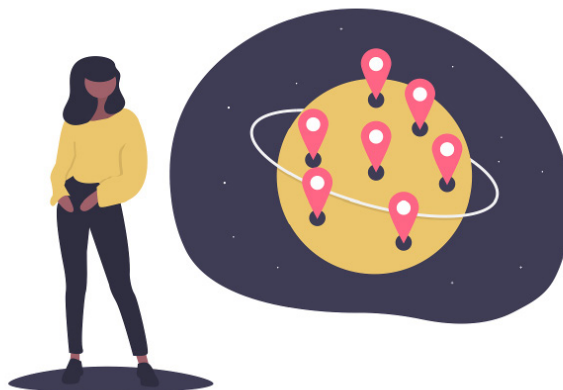
In this chapter, we will cover three different pillars to create a global mobility skillset:

THE GROWTH MINDSET THE ADAPTATION PROCESS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Mindset is the most influencing factor of every adaptation process abroad. Your mindset will lay down the tracks of your wellbeing for the next adventures ahead. It is essential to stress the mindset in the very first beginning of your onboarding journey. Set the tone right from the start. We will explore what kind of mindsets do exist and which ones are helping you. We will assess where you are now and where you want to go. We will also go into the changes expatriation will bring into your life and paint a bigger picture on adaptation.

I will introduce you to theoretical frameworks that teach you to embrace diversity and understand how successful intercultural communication works.

With this toolset, you will be equipped to push your career to a global level.



GET INTO THE GROWTH MINDSET

FIXED VS. GROWTH MINDSET

Basically, we can divide between two different mindsets:

The mindset of change vs. the mindset of staying the same.

THE MINDSET OF CHANGE

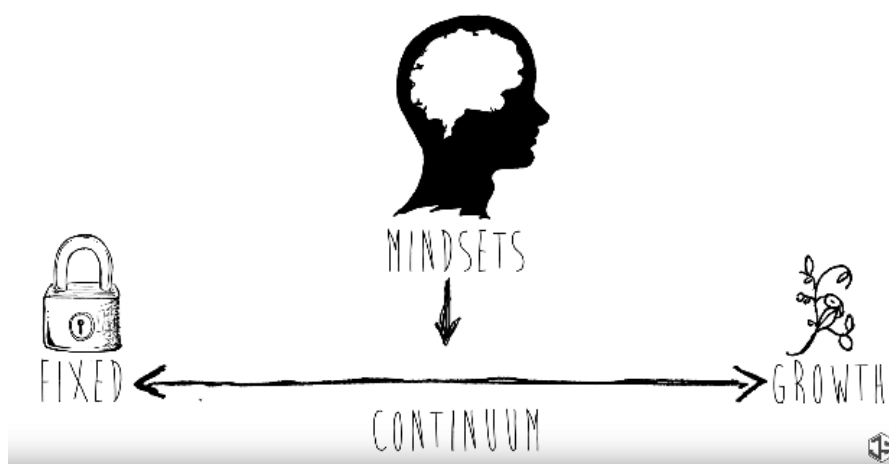
The mindset of change is a growth mindset. The idea behind: We will make mistakes and there will be setbacks, but we have the confidence that these experiences will help us to grow. The way we think about ourselves and our lives will determine whether we move forward and flourish or stay stagnant in the same old, unproductive way (the fixed mindset).

Throughout our expat experience, we will find ourselves switching between those two mindsets. The most important thing is to focus on getting back on the growth mindset when it is way too tempting to stay at home with our blanket over us hiding from the challenges around us.

The expat mindset is the one embracing change and welcoming challenges equipping us with the mood of everything is possible.

Check out this short video about fixed vs. growth mindset

Click on picture for link or search for John Spencer „Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset“



HOW TO GET FROM A FIXED MINDSET TO A GROWTH MINDSET

This might be a long journey, depending on how deep some underlying beliefs are already consuming us. Depending on our personality we are already welcoming or shying away from change. It is helpful to make ourselves aware of our nature and reflect on how we have reacted to an unasked shift in the past.

TIME FOR SELF-REFLECTION: MARK WITH A PEN WHERE YOU SEE YOURSELF ON THIS SCALE BASED ON YOUR PAST EXPERIENCES

I don't like change



I embrace change

I don't like exploring



I love exploring

I don't like learning



I love to learn sth new



LIMITING BELIEFS AS A BARRIER TO THE GROWTH MINDSET

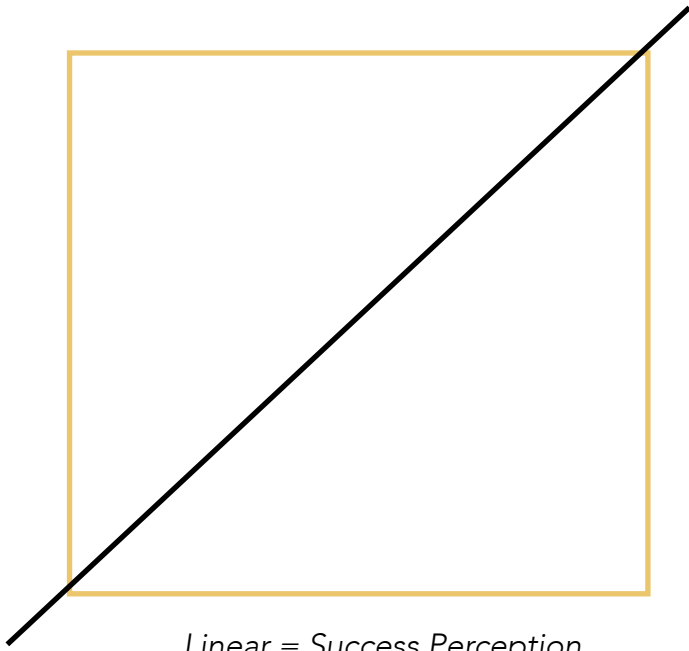
We often relate to the straight line as a success story. When someone is going through life from one promotion to another, working in the field they went to university for, increasing the salary year after year, we rate them as successful. A line with ups and downs, career changes and career gaps is often seen as negative and weak by our society. However, to be successful in the future world of work, a growth mindset which is able to jump from one reality to another will be way more helpful.

As the expat who is about to risk this straight line in life we have now the chance to position ourselves: Do we see this curvy line as a weakness or actually as a hidden strength that should be promoted by us?

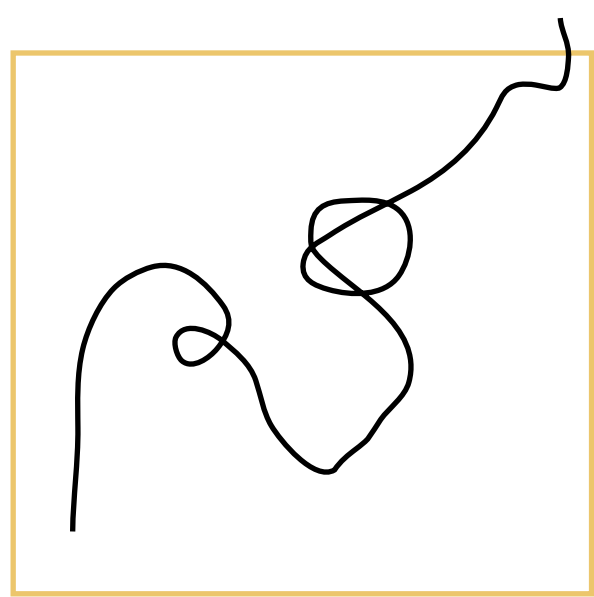
Limiting beliefs are certain expectations about what a successful career looks like. They can hold us back and limit our options. We stay in a fixed mindset which is only serving us in a fixed world with no change. In case you embrace expatriation with a growth mindset, you will return home as a master of change. You will have earned valuable skills for life that can't be learned at work or university but only by personal experience.

EXERCISE

Look at the two boxes and think about what success in life means to you. Are you in the mindset of a fixed line? Are you already opening yourself to a more adventurous path?



Linear = Success Perception shaped by society



View on success with a growth mindset

HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE A POSITIVE EXPAT MINDSET?

You can set your own expectations here. Ask yourself what you want to get out of your time abroad.

- What it is that you want to learn?
- In what area do you want to grow?
- Are you ok with giving things up?
- Are you prepared for setbacks?
- Will you value yourself beyond your career?

Our mindset is closely linked to our expectations on how fast things will be back to normal. Expatriation is a whirlwind of ups and downs, and you will learn that you could never have anticipated the things happened to you looking back. Set the right tone for your expectations and find an equilibrium between being motivated by your own goals but not overwhelmed.

POSITIVELY INFLUENCING FACTORS TO A GROWTH MINDSET

Many academic studies are researching the field of successful expatriation factors. One I want to mention here is the research paper by Kelly Ross. The study defined five characteristics that help to foster a global/growth mindset and the results of the sample match the real world to great extent. The five factors are:

ADVENTUROUSNESS

Defined as the expat's desire to have exciting and new experiences, both at work and in life outside of work. A willingness to try and fail and an outgoing attitude were factors that are contributing to expat success.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Defined as the expat's ability to understand the culture in which they are living and working, and to integrate/fit into it. The understanding that other cultures might have a better idea or approach about something than what was perceived as the best in the home country.

CURIOSITY

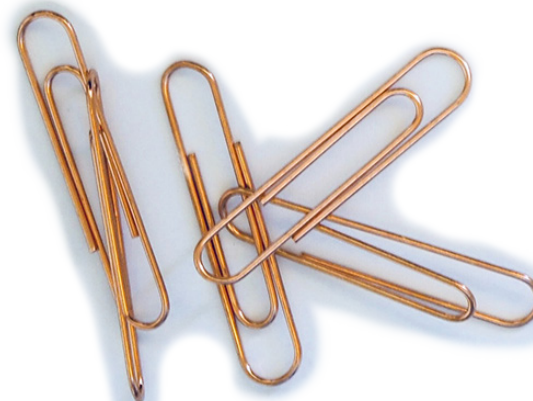
The expat's interest in learning about their new culture, environment, and job. Being inquisitive and curious is a contributing to success. Desire to understand different practices and methods, even as a way to minimize frustration.

FLEXIBILITY

The expat's willingness to try new ways of doing things. Adaptability and flexibility are core.

OPEN MINDEDNESS

The expat's ability to look at their new environment with a desire to learn about and understand it and an interest in seeing things differently. Willingness to try new methods and accepting failure as a means to learn and improve were necessary.





With the theory of fixed vs. growth mindset and the success factors mentioned by Kelly Ross as a foundation - let's go back to the essential questions here:

WHAT IT IS THAT YOU WANT TO LEARN?

IN WHAT AREA DO YOU WANT TO GROW?

ARE YOU OK WITH GIVING THINGS UP?

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR SETBACKS?

WILL YOU VALUE YOURSELF BEYOND YOUR CAREER?

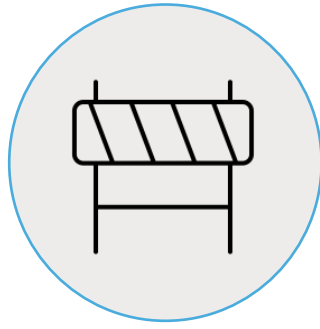


ACCELERATE THE ADAPTATION PROCESS

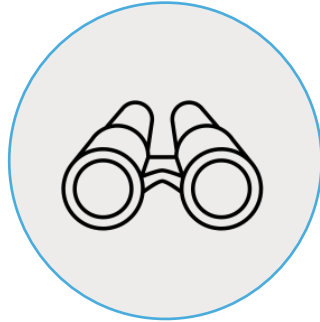
Culture can become a significant barrier to expat happiness. No matter if you are looking for friends, a job, a hobby, you will always face the potential obstacle of culture. Differences can divide us if not understood and make us feel lonely. Understanding the concept of culture is a crucial step to overcome this barrier. Only by understanding can we start to say goodbye to judgments that are separating us from the rest. I can promise you something right now: If you are encountering your new surrounding with an open heart and a curious mind, you will experience a wonderful time that will be a part of you for the rest of your life. Let's start working on that by discussing different cultural models that will help you understand why culture defines us that much. You will learn how to approach something new with curiosity and joy!



THE ROADMAP TO CULTURAL COMMUNICATION



**STEP 1:
FACING CULTURAL
DIFFERENCES**



**STEP 2:
DEVELOPING
CURIOSITY**



**STEP 3:
STARTING
LEARNING**



**STEP 4:
SAYING GOODBYE
TO JUDGMENTS**



**STEP 5:
REACHING
UNDERSTANDING**

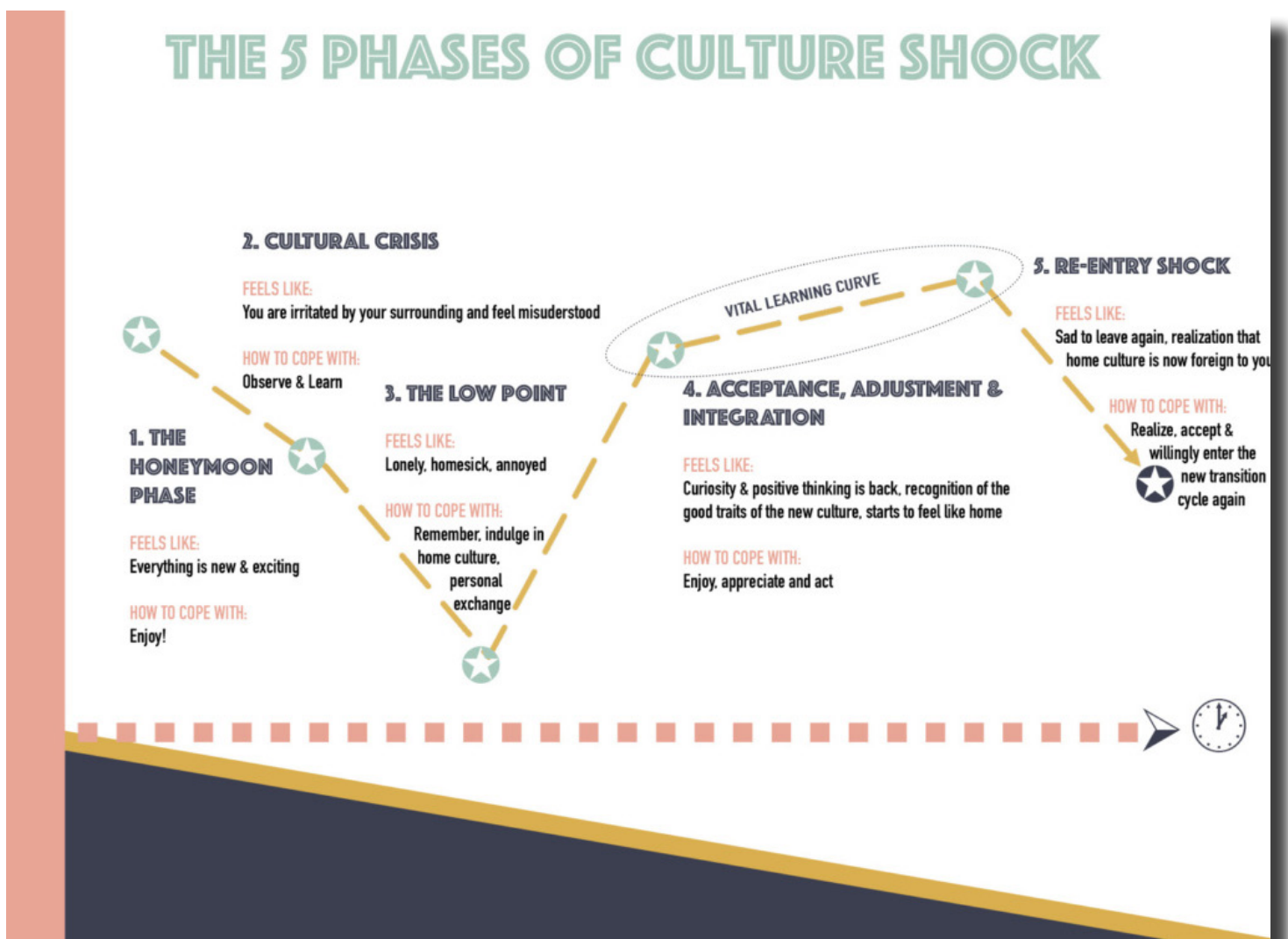
THE 5 PHASES OF CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is what you can expect when moving to another country. It does not matter if you move to a place similar to your own culture or you are changing continents. No matter the distance, or how often you have moved abroad before, you will still experience a cultural shock and the different phases it comes with.

The good news: Culture shock does not need to be something bad. In the best case, it's just the transition you make when realizing that the new culture you are experiencing, is a bit more different than expected.

In a slightly trickier scenario, it will take you longer to get used to the new culture. It might be a bit more stressful to feel comfortable and home again. You will need more energy to acknowledge the unknown till you come to the conclusion that different does not by default mean bad. However, when you know what is ahead of you before going abroad it will be easier to digest.

HERE ARE THE TYPICAL 5 PHASES MOST EXPATS GO THROUGH:



1. THE HONEYMOON PHASE

HOW IT FEELS

You literally just entered the country. Everything feels new. All your senses are on alert. Language, odors, gestures – everything seems just so beautifully foreign that you can't do anything else than absorb everything with curious eyes.

Also, there is lots to do: Find a new place to live, check-out new means of transportation, orientate yourself within the new city, find a new employer or master this new job abroad. Hence, there is no time to miss home or to feel grumpy.

The bucket list in your head seems endless, and there are so many things ahead of you that you can't wait to start.

You start to realize potential conflicts but the page is still empty, and there is nothing that can't be solved in the future.



RECOMMENDATION

Enjoy! Really, there is nothing else to do for you than enjoying this magical time.

One little recommendation: Start to write down your feelings. If you are experiencing a really rewarding day full of new impressions write it down. You might find it useful later on. You can come back to your thoughts and feelings from the beginning when everything seemed to go smoothly. It can give you the necessary perspective and energy booster you might need in the future.

2. THE CULTURE SHOCK PHASE

HOW IT FEELS

Now real life kicks in. You keep misunderstanding people around you. You have more and more difficulties in understanding small gestures, and you keep running into the same situations where you don't get what people want from you.

Everyday tasks like doctor appointments and shopping are more different than expected.

You start to feel uncomfortable and insecure.

RECOMMENDATION

First, be forgiving towards yourself. Most people enter this phase quite early as they put too much pressure on themselves. Stop for a while and realize what you just have done: You said goodbye to friends and family and entered this big, new adventure of moving abroad and starting to live in an entirely new environment. Of course, it will take time to feel home again.

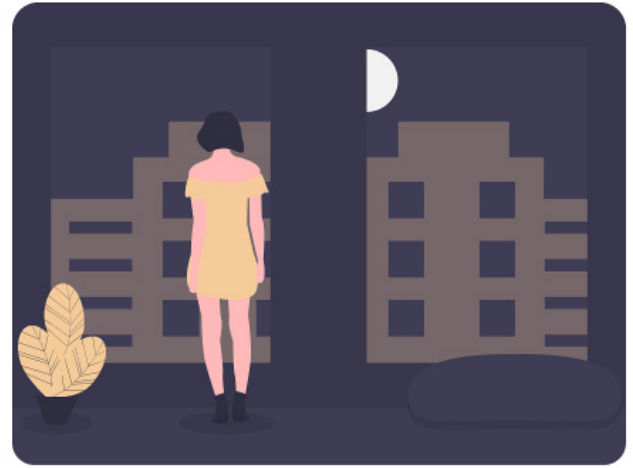
Second, keep learning. Try to learn as much as possible about the new culture and language to understand situations the right way.

3. THE LOW POINT PHASE

HOW IT FEELS

Looking back, this might be the toughest part. The intensity is different for everyone, but this is most likely the time when you start to feel homesick, where the plans you made just did not work out. You are not able to find a job, or the job you have just does not feel right. You have trouble finding new friends and the more negative experiences you have trying to become friends with locals the lonelier you will feel.

You will catch yourself explaining all the time to your friends back home what you don't like about your new place and why your home culture is way better than this new culture. You keep saying that this or that is better back home and you feel a growing aversion to local social behavior.



RECOMMENDATION

Again, I really recommend you to write down your feelings. You also might go back to your notes taken earlier. If you are not a writer, talk to people around you who might be in a similar position. By analyzing your feelings, you will do the first step to acknowledge where you are in the transition phases, and you realize that what you are feeling at the moment is totally normal. Keep in mind that you are not the first person feeling like that – nor will you be the last. Also: Know that this period will pass if you are open to learn and grow.

4. THE ACCEPTANCE / ADJUSTMENT / INTEGRATION PHASE

HOW IT FEELS

Your curiosity is back. You start to see the differences again in a more positive light. You are more interested in experiencing more of this foreign culture than hiding behind your own background. You have started to establish a local network. You meet new, and positive-minded people and embrace this new life. Of course, there are still sad days, but they are to the same extent than living back home. But wait a minute. Where is this 'home' now? Might it be here as well? On the other side of the planet? It might just well be so.

RECOMMENDATION

Similar to the honeymoon period: Enjoy! Use the new drive to realize projects in your mind and reach out to new people. Strengthen your social surrounding and keep on learning. Realize that bad days don't have so much to do with this new surrounding but with your personal mood. In the best case, this period will go on for the longest.

5. THE RE-ENTRY SHOCK

HOW IT FEELS

Not all frameworks refer to this phase, but it is essential to understand the whole picture of moving abroad and adapting to a new culture. While at the beginning of your adventure there are days where you can't think of something terrible about moving back one day this might change during your adjustment period. Now that you feel comfortable and you arranged everything the way you want to, moving back might seem a little sad. You have to say goodbye again and start this whole cycle again. This is a sign that you have embraced the foreign culture and have created a mixed culture for yourself.

After coming home, many face a tricky adjustment period and many expats say that this period is actually the toughest part of all.

RECOMMENDATION

Acknowledge from the very beginning that this period might kick in. It will make all the phases before easier to digest. Feeling sad leaving again is the ultimate proof that you made yourself at home in the new culture – something you can be proud of!

By realizing your feelings, you will also make it easier to adjust to the new country. However, it won't make it go away – there is always a transition process to expect. No matter how often you have moved abroad before it will happen again and again.



SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY (SIT) - ETHNOCENTRISM

Knowing about theories and frameworks in the field of intercultural communication helps us to understand the bigger picture.

One very interesting theory is the so-called "Social Identity Theory (SIT)".

This theory is based on several experiments and studies that showed the concept of "**Ethnocentrism.**"

Ethnocentrism states that we favor our own ethnic group as superior to another ethnic group. We, humans, tend to search for group belonging to feel safe and understood. We favor the group we belong to (no matter on what basis, let it be gender, ethnic, hair color...) and we want to improve the quality of life for our group.

ETHNOCENTRISM HAPPENS IN THREE STAGES:

1. SOCIAL CATEGORIZATION

Based on external or internal criteria we start to categorize ourselves into different groups.

2. SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION

We start to invest emotionally into that group. We even begin to change our behavior to some extent.

3. SOCIAL COMPARISON

Finally, we start to compare ourselves to other groups. We look outside our group for distinction. By this, we acquire self-esteem for our own group which makes us feel superior.



HERE IS AN DISTINCTION TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CATEGORIZATION:

STEREOTYPES (PERCEPTUAL LEVEL)

– our overgeneralized views towards a specific group of people who share similar identities.

PREJUDICE (ATTITUDINAL LEVEL)

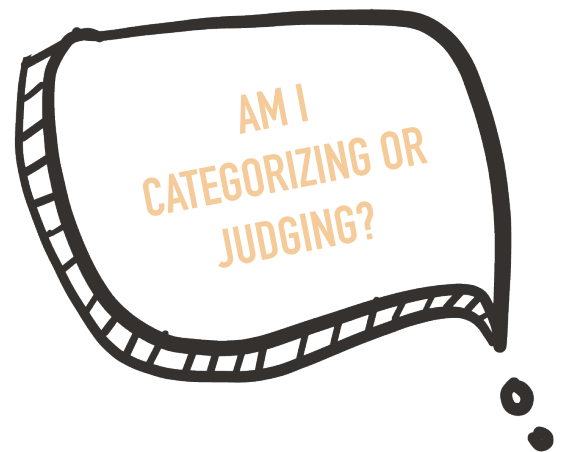
– our preconceived opinions (usually not based on actual experiences or logical reasons) and the related judgments about others.

DISCRIMINATION (BEHAVIORAL LEVEL)

– our unjust, excluding, biased, or proactively prejudicial treatment of those we relegate to different categories, usually based on perceptions of race, age, sex, or other social or personal lifestyle markers.

HOW BIASED ARE YOU?

What would you say if I asked you how biased you are about the new culture you are about to explore? Do you have “healthy” stereotypes in mind? Do unbiased stereotypes even exist? We use stereotypes to understand the cultural identity of another person. That is the only thing that we have for the first meeting. Stereotypes help us to categorize. However, we know that stereotypes are over-generalized and won’t help us in an advanced conversation. Always be aware that stereotypes can cause prejudicial attitudes and discriminative behavior. When it comes to a behavioral level, it can cause more harm. So we do have to categorize but take into account that there is a range of individuals. Being part of a group helps us with our sense of belonging and it creates safety. However, building groups based on stereotypes can also make other persons feel isolated and excluded.



MASTER INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

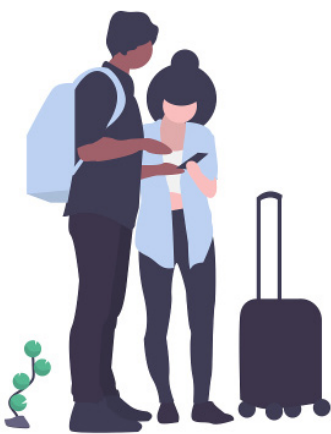
THE NEED OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

THE FISH METAPHOR

Imagine you are a fish, but you are taken out of the water - that's similar to interact with other cultures. We feel the water as our natural habitat. With changing the environment, we start to feel uncomfortable. Expectations of easy things are unmet. It is uncomfortable. We don't feel to be part of a group. Learning intercultural communication will help to be more aware of differences and make us feel more comfortable interacting with people from different cultures. Remember that you are the person who left the water. Invite others to teach you how life is outside the water.



THE BAGGAGE METAPHOR



We all carry cultural baggage with us that we have unintentionally packed. We are tracking this weight along with us our whole life. Just like a traveler preparing for a long trip, our respective cultural backgrounds have socialized us to “pack” the world we observe around us in particular ways.

We have been taught to be selective and tell ourselves what is right/wrong, important/unimportant, or polite/impolite. We spent a lifetime packing our ideas and expectations. Some have a fuller backpack than others. No matter how hard we try to recognize what it is that we are carrying with us, we still end up subconsciously carrying more than we would like to admit.

An essential part of intercultural training is guiding us to examine what is in our cases.



MY PERSONAL CULTURAL BAGGAGE:

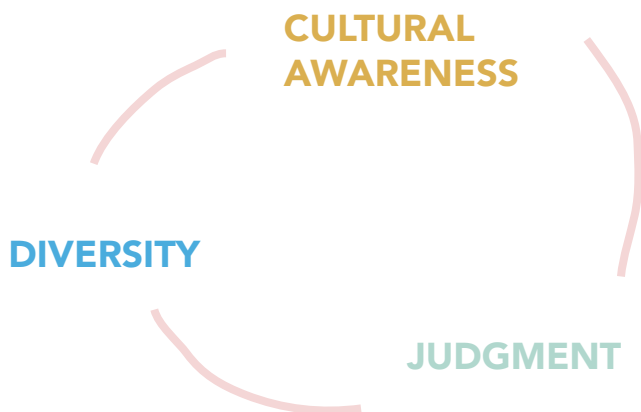
A large, blank, yellow rectangular area intended for writing or drawing, representing the 'Personal Cultural Baggage' section of the worksheet.



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Each and every person is unique. We think differently, act differently. We believe in different things and have different values. The difference is based on the fact that each of us has a set of knowledge that we store. We act on this set of knowledge, deciding what feels right or wrong and what is socially acceptable.

Diversity is about celebrating differences and thinking about how wonderful it is that we have difference. The foundation for this is cultural awareness, and the concepts discussed so far help us to see, reflect on, and cherish diversity. Cultural awareness is about having knowledge about a certain culture.



The process of reflecting what differs us from each other often comes from a place of judgment. To compare our culture to another is to judge another culture. So in order to get to a place where we cherish diversity and establish cultural awareness, we need to distance ourselves from this judgment. We can do so by focusing on the positive aspects of culture rather than the things that annoy us.

No person can escape entirely from his or her culture, and this should not be the goal. However, reflection on our own culture helps us to maintain a more reflective perspective. The more we know about our culture, the more cultural awareness we can establish, the more we can explore cultural differences from a place of curiosity rather than judgment.

CASE STUDY: CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING

To detect our own cultural baggage, it is great to observe how others are communicating with each other and how we rate the situation. This case study by Steve Kulich will help you to understand how misunderstandings happen and what negative effect they can have.

AFTER READING THIS CASE STUDY: WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? WHAT WENT WRONG? HOW COULD THIS SITUATION HAVE BEEN AVOIDED? WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND?



THE SITUATION - „A TRIP TO FOREST PARK“

Markus, a Chinese language major from Germany, arrived in Shanghai. After settling into his new campus routine, he went downtown to explore and slipped into Starbucks for a familiar coffee. There, he was politely greeted by a young graduate named Chen Lin. Mr. Chen had both excellent English and passable German, so they talked a while. Feeling comfortable with each other, they exchanged contact information as they parted.

A week later, Markus felt rather isolated and called Chen Lin. Chen greeted him warmly. Markus mentioned that he longed for a break from the overcrowded city and inquired about somewhere to go for fresh air and nature. Chen also liked the outdoors and suggested they go to Forest Park along the river on the north edge of Shanghai. Chen offered to arrange everything, so they set a time to meet at Markus' dorm the coming weekend - Saturday at 9 a.m.

Markus woke up Saturday eager for the excursion and the chance to talk about all the cultural challenges he was facing. He was just in the middle of his shower at 8:30 when Chen knocked at his door. Dripping wet and wrapped in

a towel, Markus opened the door and was surprised that besides Chen, there were four people - two of Chen's high school buddies and two female classmates! Markus muttered an apology and rushed back to dry off.

After hurriedly dressing, he came out to find Chen Lin had pulled out drinks and some watermelon seeds from one of the bags they brought. They were busy looking through his CDs and books, loudly chatting, laughing and spitting cracked hulls on the table, while the girls thumbed through his photo album and giggled. Markus seemed very agitated. Chen tried to cheer him up and suggested they set off right away.

They walked about 15 minutes on a hot, humid morning to catch a bus, then rode for nearly an hour to the park. While standing on the bus, Chen tried to introduce each of his friends, but Markus seemed withdrawn. Markus kept looking out the bus window expecting the city to end, and was shocked when after a turn down another busy road Chen announced their arrival. To Markus' further annoyance, there were loads of people arriving, noisily streaming into the park. Chen's friends tried to talk to Markus, some in English

and both of the girls in German, but Markus seemed more and more despondent. Chen Lin was increasingly frustrated. Why, when he had gone to such lengths to call his friends and arrange everything, was Markus so unwilling to get to know his friends? Markus suggested they go home early, and neither called the other again.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

DO YOU ALREADY SEE WHERE THIS WENT THE WRONG DIRECTION? LET'S SEE HOW THE SAME SITUATION WAS PERCEIVED BY MARKUS AND CHEN:



THE MEETING - A WESTERN VIEW

Markus, as a new arrival, hoped for helpful contact with a local. On his campus, many students over eager to practice English had boldly approached him, which put him off. Chen Lin had been more respectful, sensitive, somehow sophisticated. Markus was really impressed by Chen's language ability, personal finesse and apparent intelligence.

Their short talk in Starbucks was really a pleasant experience. Markus felt positive about getting to know such a guy, spending time talking about life and discussing their different viewpoints on things. Subconsciously, Markus was hoping for a good one-to-one relationship that might grow into a friendship. His chief goal was for verbal interaction, growing self-disclosure, and increasing psychological depth.

THE MEETING - A CHINESE VIEW

Chen Lin had quite a different set of expectations. Several native-speaking Americans and Germans had taught him in university, so he felt fairly comfortable in both languages. But suddenly in Starbucks he saw a rare opportunity, a chance to meet a foreigner nearly his own age. He held back his nervous enthusiasm and tried to speak politely and appropriately. When Markus suggested they sit down together to talk, and then asked if they could keep in touch, it seemed like a dream come true.

Chen said goodbye and immediately called his best friends on his mobile phone. "You'll never guess my luck! I met this nice, open foreigner and we really hit it off. He's a sharp guy and knows quite a bit about Chinese culture - you really need to meet him!" When Chen met with his circle of friends for dinner Friday night after work, the main topic of conversation was Markus. They felt that they could each be a big help to Markus, so they made plans to join Chen the next day. Chen's chance meeting would provide a really good opportunity for all of them, and they wanted to extend good Chinese hospitality to him.

THE ARRIVAL - A CHINESE VIEW

While arriving on time or about five minutes late may be fashionable in the West, Mainland Chinese tend to be pre-punctual. Chen and his friends calculated the maximum bus travel time, but things went smoothly and they arrived half an hour early. The exact time is not as important as the opportunity to be together, so they walked right up to Markus room and knocked.

Having a wet, towel-wrapped foreigner open the door actually was a shock to them. Chinese would normally take night baths (that keeps the bed sheets clean and promotes a comfortable sleep), so a morning shower never entered their minds. Chinese are also generally very early risers, so they assumed Markus would be ready early and waiting on them.

Since Markus wasn't ready and couldn't play host to offer tea and snacks, Chen jumped in to diffuse the embarrassment and got out drinks and seeds. A Chinese way to break awkwardness with any group is to get everyone busy eating and drinking. The group quickly relaxed. Being naturally curious about the newcomer, they looked around the room and thumbed through his CDs and photo albums to learn more about him.

THE ARRIVAL - A WESTERN VIEW

For Markus, this whole situation seemed impossible! Who were these people, anyway? Why had Chen not called him to tell him he would bring friends? And now they were all in his room, which he had not cleaned up. Wasn't this supposed to be an outing? And where was their regard for a sense of privacy, guest propriety or politeness. Markus' brain was spinning over their early arrival, the awkward moment at the door and the unexpected invasion. This kind of spontaneous and non-communicated development was not at all welcome to an organized, individual-oriented Westerner.

THE EXCURSION - A WESTERN VIEW

The trip was no better. Markus thought that if it had just been Chen and him, they could have taken a taxi, got away from the hot, crowded bus and saved time. And then there was all the inaccurate expectations built around the words, "edge of the city," "along the river" and "forest." Markus anticipated the quiet expanse and cool green of secluded woods. Instead he found himself in a mass outing in what felt like any other busy city park, just bigger. Most Westerners view nature as a refuge for quiet escape, and if accompanied by a companion, as a relaxing environment for good, unhurried conversation. None of this was living up to Markus' expectations.

THE EXCURSION - A CHINESE VIEW

For Chen and his friends, just having the day together was the important thing. Walk time, bus time, park time, mealtime, all rolled together into an opportunity for a common experience. Along the way, they could talk, laugh and just have fun being around each other. The non-verbal aspects of their interaction were just as important as the verbal ones. The park setting mainly provided an entertainment venue where a group could do things together. And if a Chinese group is having fun, the tone is usually "renao," literally "hot and noisy." So they all hoped for a good time with Markus. That he was so unresponsive, serious and increasingly agitated was both puzzling and a great disappointment. In fact, it became increasingly embarrassing for Chen Lin, because it indicated that he had totally misjudged Markus' character. He felt he was losing face before his friends. Their hopes of having an opportunity to enjoy getting to know a foreigner were dashed. No matter how hard they tried to be friendly and hospitable, they felt snubbed.



WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE?

Situations like these are difficult, because on the spur of the moment, surprises catch us off guard. We may not be able to hold back our shock, frustration or anger. Of course, Chen should have been more aware of the Western focus on individualized communication, planning and clear communication. And Markus should have recognized the group orientation when he opened the door and tried to adjust himself. But the fact is that even if we want to be flexible, sometimes experiences like these bring out undesired or uncontrolled responses.

No matter what has happened, it's never too late to look back and evaluate. Post-situation analysis can bring perspective. And communication can often help patch up such misunderstandings. Not taking ourselves too seriously and laughing at our faulty expectations or responses can also help. With a sense of humor, we can sometimes begin our attempt to understand or explain the situation. So if you get caught in the shower, find yourself on a long bus ride, or strolling through a packed park that you thought would be a forest, just try to make the most of the situation, hang on to your wits and keep smiling. Remember, **"A viewpoint is indeed a view from a point."** If you can somehow see the other side of things, it may get you through the thick of it. And it may give you something to talk about later!

COMMUNICATION IS KEY!

**MAKE YOURSELF AS CLEAR AS
POSSIBLE AND DON'T ASSUME THE
OTHER PERSON MIGHT KNOW WHAT
YOU WANT.**

HIGH CONTEXT (HC) & LOW CONTEXT (LC) CULTURES

One concept that will help you with intercultural communication is the one by Edward T. Hall. He distinguishes between two types of culture: A low context culture and a high context culture. This theory is widely known and accepted and we can't talk about intercultural communication without talking about the work by Edward T. Hall. Think about where you are coming from and to what context culture you are moving to adopt early on.

LOW-CONTEXT CULTURE

- Rely on the spoken or written word to communicate meaning (say what you mean, mean what you say)
- Prefer explicit formulations and rules, direct, sometimes frank speech
- Usually aim at efficiency, concise use of words, and elaboration of unclear meanings
- Value being articulate and clear
- Consider detailed writing helpful and often necessary, bilaterally negotiated to the satisfaction of both sides
- Value documents and contracts, to be signed as legal and binding for each partner equally (objectively)

HIGH-CONTEXT CULTURE

- Rely more on non-verbal aspects to communicate meaning (like facial expressions or gestures)
- Prefer implicit, indirect communication
- Usually consider situational factors more important than what is actually being said
- Value relational trust as more important than specified contents (words are treated flexibly, contracts are changeable as long as a relationship is in place)
- Consider in-group membership and "we-talk" towards building relational closeness (subjectively)

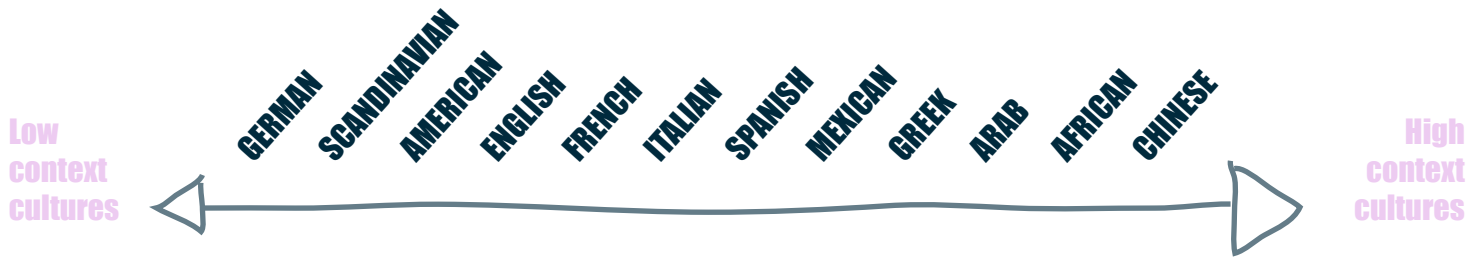
Low context culture may seem more efficient, but for people from a high context culture, this lack of hospitality can seem aggressive. It's almost this or that but a blended approach that will help you succeed in communicating abroad.

No culture is 100% High-Context (HC) or Low-Context (LC), but we often tend to a particular area. Germany, for example, is seen more like a straightforward culture (LC) while Japan is famous for its tendency to High Context communication. Knowing the difference can help you categorize the actions of people into their cultural habits and prevent misunderstandings.

WHAT CULTURE WILL YOU BE LIVING IN? HOW WILL THAT BE DIFFERENT TO YOUR OWN CULTURE?

MY OWN CULTURE IS:

MY HOST / WORKING CULTURE IS:



THE 6 CULTURAL DIMENSIONS BY HOFSTEDE

Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory is a famous framework for cross-cultural communication. Geert Hofstede developed his original model examining IBM employees in the late 60s. Since then, Hofstede constantly worked on his concept of defining cultures in dimensions. Today we are talking about six dimensions to classify cultures. Similar to the LC/HC concept by Edward Hall, this is a great method to examine how another culture is conflicting with your own culture. Read about the definition and check online how the new culture differs from what you are used to. (Link on next page)

HERE IS A DEFINITION OF THE SIX DIMENSIONS BY HOFSTEDE:

POWER DISTANCE INDEX (PDI)

The power distance index is defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.” In this dimension, inequality and power are perceived from the followers, or the lower level. A higher degree of the Index indicates that hierarchy is clearly established and executed in society, without doubt, or reason. A lower degree of the Index signifies that people question authority and attempt to distribute power.

This index explores the “degree to which people in a society are integrated into groups.” Individualistic societies have loose ties that often only relates an individual to his/her immediate family. They emphasize the “I” versus the “we.” Its counterpart, collectivism, describes a society in which tightly-integrated relationships tie extended families and others into in-groups. These in-groups are laced with unquestioned loyalty and support each other when a conflict arises with another in-group.

INDIVIDUALISM VS. COLLECTIVISM (IDV)

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE (UAI)

The uncertainty avoidance index is defined as “a society’s tolerance for ambiguity,” in which people embrace or avert an event of something unexpected, unknown, or away from the status quo. Societies that score a high degree in this index opt for rigid codes of behavior, guidelines, laws, and generally rely on absolute truth, or the belief that one lone truth dictates everything and people know what it is. A lower degree in this index shows more acceptance of differing thoughts or ideas. Society tends to impose fewer regulations, ambiguity is more accustomed to, and the environment is more free-flowing.

In this dimension, masculinity is defined as “a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success.” Its counterpart represents “a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life.” Women in the respective societies tend to display different values. In feminine societies, they share modest and caring views equally with men. In more masculine societies, women are somewhat assertive and competitive, but notably less than men. In other words, they still recognize a gap between male and female values. This dimension is frequently viewed as taboo in highly masculine societies.

MASCULINITY VS. FEMININITY (MAS)

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION VS. SHORT-TERM ORIENTATION (LTO)

This dimension associates the connection of the past with the current and future actions/challenges. A lower degree of this index (short-term) indicates that traditions are honored and kept, while steadfastness is valued. Societies with a high degree in this index (long-term) view adaptation and circumstantial, pragmatic problem-solving as a necessity. A developing country that is short-term oriented usually has little to no economic development, while long-term oriented countries continue to develop to a point.

This dimension is essentially a measure of happiness; whether or not simple joys are fulfilled. Indulgence is defined as “a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun.” Its counterpart is defined as “a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms.” Indulgent societies believe themselves to be in control of their own lives and emotions; restrained societies believe other factors dictate their lives and emotions.

INDULGENCE VS. RESTRAINT (IND)

Germany ×

United States ×

TRY IT OUT

Go to www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/ to check the countries that interest you.



YOUR REFLECTION:



PUTTING ALL THE PARTS TOGETHER

I AM IN A

FIXED

GROWTH

MINDSET PHASE BECAUSE:

IN THE CULTURAL SHOCK CYCLE I AM IN PHASE

THE HONEYMOON PHASE

THE CULTURE SHOCK PHASE

THE LOW POINT PHASE

THE ACCEPTANCE PHASE

THE RE-ENTRY SHOCK PHASE

BECAUSE:



CULTURAL BAGGAGE I AM NOW AWARE OF:

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION TRAITS I WANT TO WORK ON:

CHAPTER 3

GROW EMPLOYABILITY

BECOMING COMPETITIVE



INTRODUCTION

Global trends, such as automation and artificial intelligence, are changing the future of work. Machines replace jobs performed by humans today while new professions will emerge that we are not even aware of today. While this is addressed by companies worldwide, the speed of it and its implication for the workforce are often underestimated. As a consequence, we as the labor market are asked to reinvent ourselves in forms that are not even defined yet.

Megatrends such as globalization and digital disruption are profoundly influencing the way we work in the future. Of course, globalization is nothing new, but it is definitely accelerating. While disruption, on the other hand, is continuing to hit the skills landscape, making it easier to connect people around the globe. As technology advances, more business functions can be automated meaning that an increasing number of skill gaps that businesses are likely to face in the future will resolve around soft skills.

We are expecting a huge workforce change comparable to the shift from blue-collar to white-collar and the growing participation of women in the workforce.

Companies increase their efforts in the concept of life-long learning, knowing that they can't define the specific skills of the future but understand that the learning process should be ongoing. Individuals need to acquire skills that will be in demand and be prepared to learn new ones on an ongoing basis. Hence fostering soft skills is more critical than ever. Disrupted CVs won't only be the norm but also highly encouraged.

For expats, this changing work environment offers a vast spectrum of opportunities. It does not only let us feel less like the person with the discontinued CV but puts our flexibility and willingness to relocate to great use. The world is looking for people who can adapt fast - well, they can be found explicitly within the expat community.

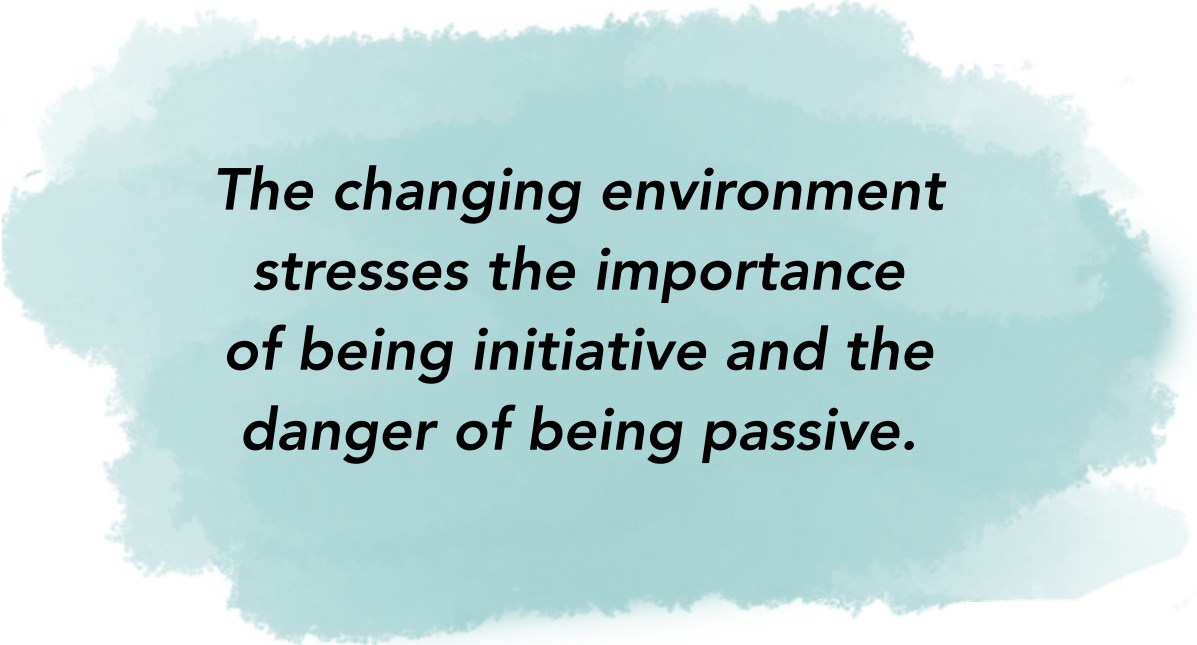
If you want to know more about the changing work environment, I am recommending the [report by McKinsey Global Institute](#).

This chapter gives insights into how to show initiative and make use of your global lifestyle, pushes us to think about our own skill portfolio and discusses how to become location-independent to work globally without risking career breaks. Let's start!



DEMONSTRATE INITIATIVE

As we cannot influence directly the macro factors influencing our society but our personal attitude towards it and the portfolio we offer, I want to shift our perspective on how to create a competitive profile in a fast-paced work environment.



The changing environment stresses the importance of being initiative and the danger of being passive.

I want to sum it up like that: The changing environment stresses the importance of being initiative and the danger of being passive. We need to be lifelong learners and stay open towards new paths that will open up if we are willing to let them be a part of our life.

If you are following the conversation of the future of work and the needed skillset, two things, in particular, are named universally: Innovation & Collaboration.

INNOVATION

We are talking about the ability to think differently and to test new ideas and approaches. It's about questioning the status quo and challenging existing concepts. Are you a person who is neglecting change, or do you even embrace it? Where on the scale do you see yourself right now and where would you like to be?

COLLABORATION

One thing is for sure: We can't do it on our own. Hence, we need the ability to work together with colleagues who might not be from the same department or even country. The ability to co-work with others will become even more crucial than today. Where else to acquire the skill of collaboration than throughout expatriation?! Again, where on the scale do you see yourself right now and where would you like to be?

When you are a fresh expat, you might not be aware of it, but it's true: successfully adopted expats are actually striving in both areas, innovation, and collaboration.

You can find more information about this [here](#) but let me elaborate a little bit about what I mean by that with a portrait of one successful global mind: Caleb Meakins.



Caleb Meakins, founder and director of Rala Media, coined the sentence "We are equipped – more than others – to make a change" in his keynote at a global mobility conference in Bangkok.

As a third culture kid, he has lived in different places around the world – most of the times in Ethiopia and Great Britain. In his early age, he realized the privilege of jumping between cultures. In his speech, he stressed that global citizens bring along the fruitful mix of

AWARENESS

+


EXPERIENCE

+

**ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE & UNDERSTAND
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

In his work, Caleb focuses on supporting local entrepreneurs in transforming low-income consumer markets. He established a social venture aimed at inspiring people to overcome the fear of failure and founded the Ethiopian Entrepreneurs Association to work on investment projects into Ethiopia. So one can say he truly reflected on how he can put his background into good use.

After jumping in between countries for a while, he realized:



***"IF IT CAN BE DONE DIFFERENTLY -
IT CAN BE DONE BETTER."***

He saw many things that have been done better in Ethiopia than in the United Kingdom or the other way round. What the one lacks in social responsibilities within families, the other is showing off with efficient work processes. Being in between two different cultures; however, one is able to realize that things are being done differently in different places. Once we understand that we can approach a problem from different angles, we start to learn that there is always a better way, a different solution, a particular method or approach to improve a situation.

Living abroad, in a foreign cultural setting, allows us to become aware of the difference. It will enable us to understand that problems can be tackled and approached differently. Living abroad is the best school of life to establish a holistic view of the world and definitely improves our problem-solving skills.

**"GLOBAL CHALLENGES NEED
GLOBAL SOLUTIONS FROM
GLOBALLY-MINDED PEOPLE."**

Hence, when we approach the opportunities we gain as an expat with an open mind, we can put the learnings into good use. It might not be effective for the job you are seeking right now, but it will definitely shape your skills-set in the long run, making you more open for innovation and helping you to embrace change as an opportunity rather than something to neglect.

This story by Caleb shows us how important it is to be initiative and observe the world around us with open eyes. If you are living a global life right now, make use of it, and bring differences to your attention.

Think about adaptation opportunities, business ideas, different solutions to a similar problem. Without necessarily acting on it, this will enable you to start understand the concept of a global mind and foster your future proof skillset.

FUTUREPROOF YOUR SKILLSET

It is estimated that up to 30% of the hours worked globally could be automated by 2030, although there is significant variation between the countries studied. Automation does not necessarily mean that jobs will be lost, but it does require the acquisition of new skills. Where jobs involve managing people or engaging with customers, the scope for effective automation is lower. "Low level" manual jobs are difficult to automate, and there is little economic incentive to do so. Here are some more interesting insights from the latest McKinsey study about the future of work:

WHAT KEY SKILLS WILL BE REQUIRED IN THE FUTURE WORLD OF WORK?

- Openness to life-long-learning
- Face-to-face and digital collaboration skills
- Work experience
- Thinking differently
- Willingness to try out new ideas

WHAT WILL BE THE BIGGEST IMPACT OF DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES?

- The business insights to be gained from data analysis
- How big data will enhance our understanding of how the world works
- How the model of our working lives is changing as we live longer and experience multiple careers

Go to
[McKinsey study](#)

WHERE NEW JOBS ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE CREATED:

- To satisfy the increasing demand for consumer goods
- Healthcare needs related to aging populations
- Developing and providing information technology services
- Construction industry and associated services to meet the rising demand for housing
- Development and installation of renewable energies
- Domestic and caring services for the very young and the very old
- Based on historical shifts in demand, 8-9% of the workforce could be employed in roles that currently don't exist.

YOUR 21-CENTURY SKILLSET

In a continually changing work environment and times of career change, it is key to identify and apply your transferable skills. By knowing about our own skills and the most central 21st-century skills, we can make the most out of an agile career market.

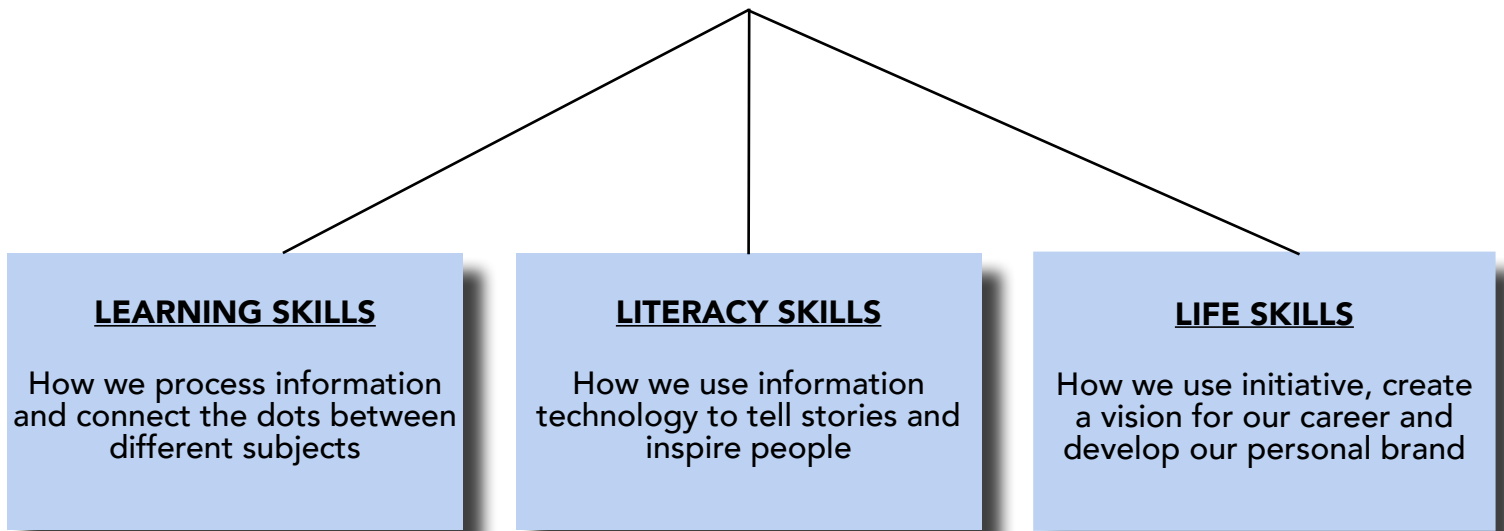
If we are searching the web for skills that are highly looked out for right now we come across a vast list of challenging soft skills:

- adaptability
- change Management
- problem-solving skills
- coding
- emotional intelligence
- foreign language skills
- critical thinking
- effective communication
- creativity
- lateral thinking
- innovation skills
- digital literacy
- open-mindedness
- leadership skills
- design thinking
- teamwork

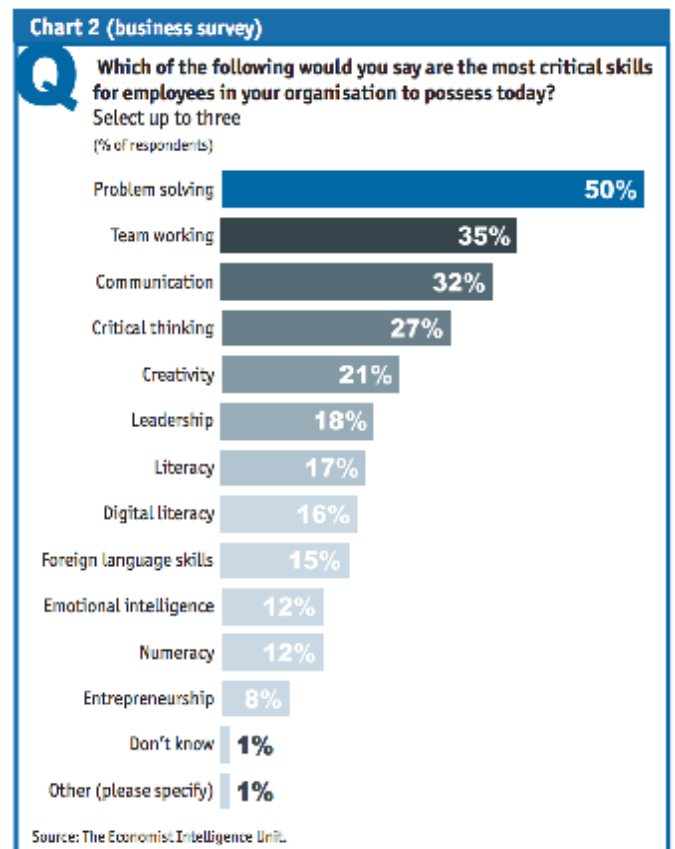
While in the past we spent most of our time and energy in fostering our technical knowledge, society is moving more into the direction of improving soft skills to facilitate agile working and successful projects across all kinds of departments. Let's go a bit deeper here to better understand the soft-skills learning approach.



IN HR THEORY, WE DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THREE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF LEARNING:



The Economist published a very interesting [study](#), surveying company executives about the importance of different 21st-century skills. The report stated that “problem-solving, teamwork, and communication are the skills that are currently most in demand in the workplace.” The majority of work in the future will be required to be done across boundaries stressing those key skills on an everyday basis. For the near future, it states that creativity and digital literacy are expected to grow in demand.



Go to study

“PROBLEM-SOLVING, TEAMWORK, AND COMMUNICATION ARE THE SKILLS THAT ARE CURRENTLY MOST IN DEMAND IN THE WORKPLACE.”

Generally speaking, we can say that there is no universal definition of the term soft skill. However, some examples of various labels include the following categories:

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Acquired in one job but still relevant in another. With an increasing frequency of job changes, this gets more in focus.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Those are skills that are not only to gain employment but to grow within an enterprise.

ENTERPRISE SKILLS

A combination of developed problem-solving techniques and the ability to think creatively to come up with new solutions and recognize business opportunities.

SOFT SKILLS

Interpersonal and intrapersonal qualities necessary for individuals.

CAPABILITIES

A holistic view on individuals ability to perform in a broad context.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Intrinsic traits of individuals, such as loyalty or motivation.

COMPETENCIES

Skills and knowledge required to achieve performance standards for specific occupations.

So as we see, there is a wide range of categories, but they are no synonyms but consider different angles of skills. Going through each category, thinking about one's own skills can help to prepare your elevator pitch.

“SOFT-SKILL-INTENSE OCCUPATIONS WILL ACCOUNT FOR TWO-THIRDS OF ALL JOBS BY 2030 COMPARED TO HALF OF ALL JOBS IN 2000.”

DELOITTE, 2017

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Another great source to deep-dive into modern skill development is the Deakin University. They defined the top 10 professional skills you need to futureproof your career. In a nutshell, a professional skill is developed through experience in the workplace. We often don't recognize we have them as we learn them on the go. So now is an excellent time to reflect on our past experience and think about what we could do now to grow the professional skills we feel least prepared in.



COMMUNICATION

is a critical component in successfully responding to change, enhancing innovation, and promoting continuous improvement when deployed with other capabilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and emotional judgment.

DIGITAL LITERACY

is necessary to identify, access, manage, integrate, and evaluate digital resources and construct new knowledge to improve strategic operations.

CRITICAL THINKING

empowers employees to learn from their mistakes, recognize opportunities, and observe facts objectively, systematically identify causes of problems, research, and anticipate future events and overcome challenges to improve workplace success.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

involves the ability to define and analyze problems, identify problem severity, and implement optimal solutions.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

is essential to demonstrate your capability to continually learn, respond to changes, and enhance work practices.

TEAMWORK

is critical to work productively within a collaborative project or team and is vital for increasing creativity, improving the quality of work and fostering healthy and productive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders in business.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

is essential in understanding your professional responsibilities in an increasingly diverse global economy.

EMOTIONAL JUDGMENT

is essential in navigating social networks, and influencing and inspiring others.

INNOVATION

is essential for organizations to respond to future opportunities, embrace new uses of technologies, and improve industry methods.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

encompasses the personal, organizational, and corporate standard of behavior expected of professionals.

Let's do a self-assessment of your core 21st-century skills. On the next page, you will find a skill audit. Use this form to answer the following questions:

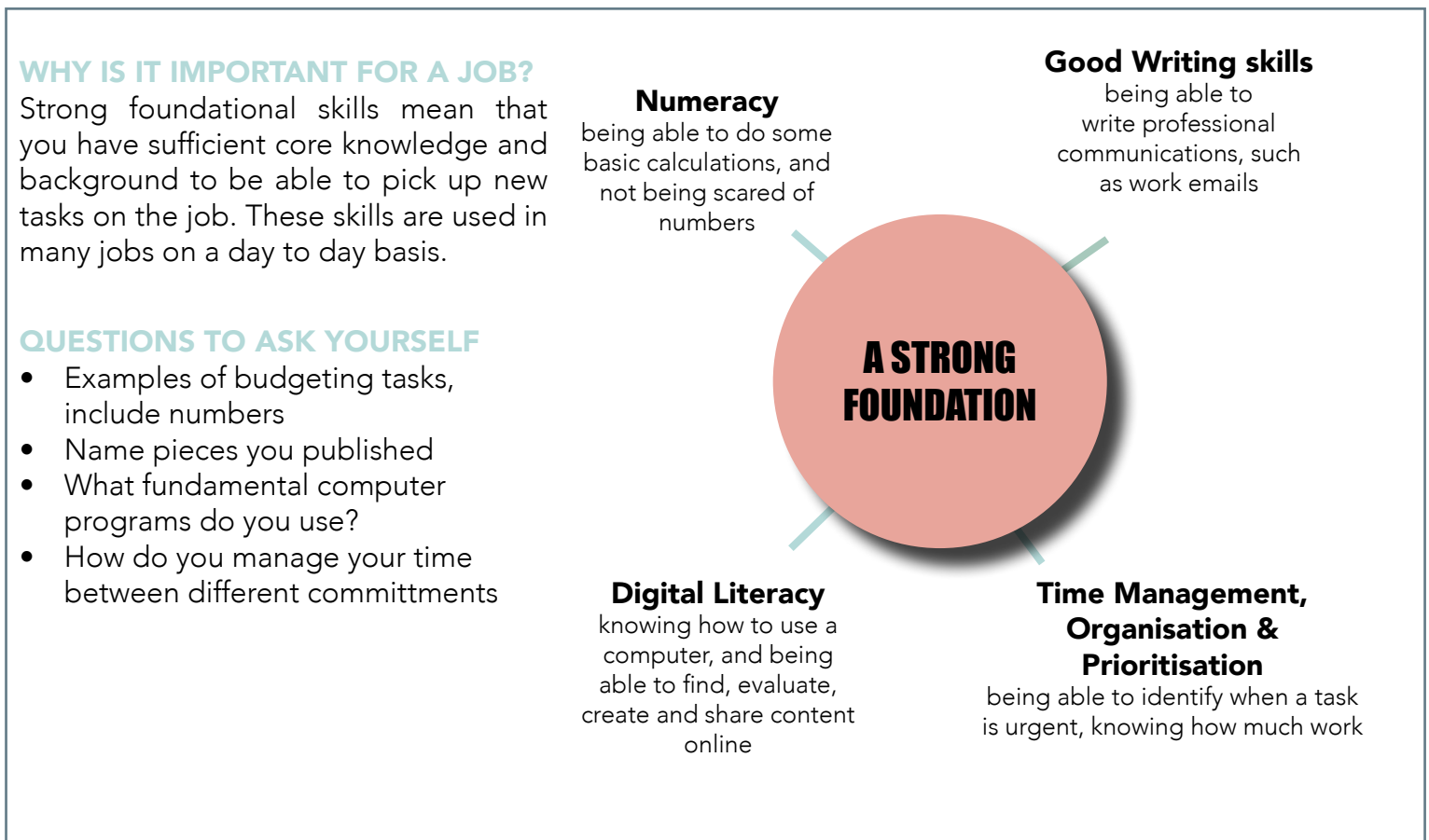
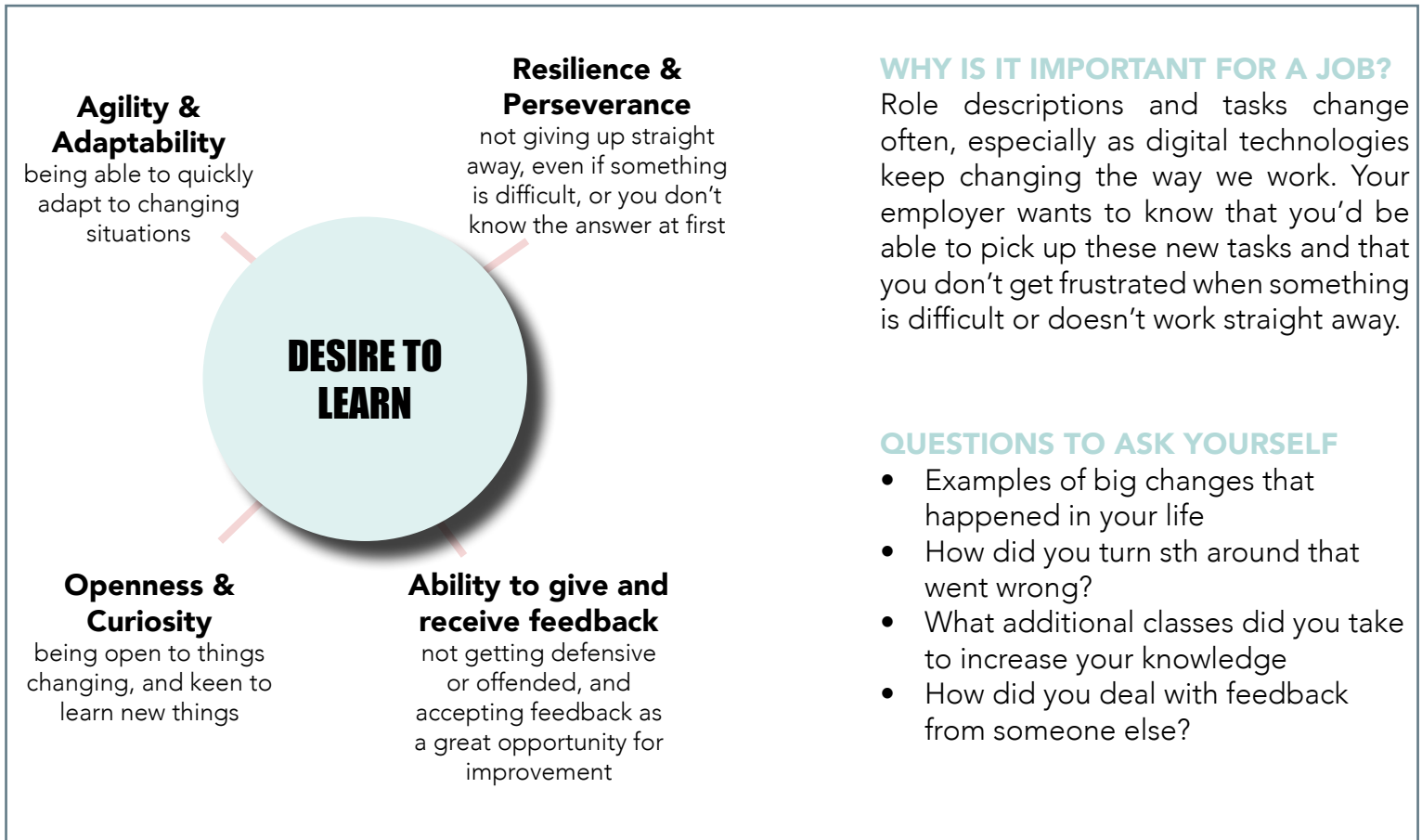
- What skills do you have?
- What levels are they?
- When did you demonstrate them?

Free services to learn new skills online on the blog:
<http://www.sharethelove.blog/career/selflearning/>

Evidence listing		21st century skills																								
		Communication	Digital Literacy	Critical Thinking	Problem Solving	Self-Management	Teamwork	Global Citizenship	Professional Ethics	Emotional Judgment	Innovation															
#	Evidence Details <i>Provide a short description of your evidence with an estimated date</i>	Skill Level																								
		Indicates level of expertise	Rate from 1 to 5																							
1																										
2																										
3																										
4																										
5																										
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HOW ACCENTURE IS DEFINING A 21ST CENTURY SKILL SET

I want to introduce you to the 6-pillar skill model, the Accenture talent recruiting team is using when analyzing candidates for a job. I added questions to ask next to it to prepare for the interview situation as it is not only about having the skill but also demonstrating it. Let's have a look:



Awareness and ability to use professional tools

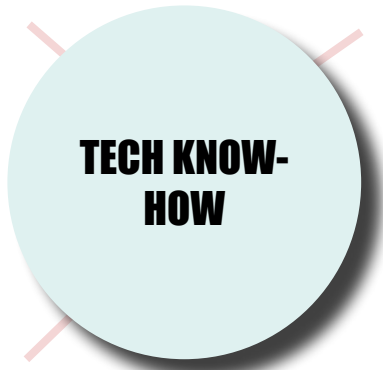
being able to handle digital devices and to learn how to use new programmes or software with some instruction or training

Awareness of data sources & interpretation

being able to identify data and recognise it as such, and to interpret data or data visualisations, e.g. graphs or charts

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A JOB?

In almost every job, you will get to use digital devices or technologies in one way or the other. Your employer will want to know that you can learn how to use them on the job. A basic understanding of data is also important because more and more companies want to use it to improve their business, so they need their employees to be able to draw conclusions from it. For example, you could find out where customers typically buy their products. If a company knows this, they can target their advertisements better and sell more!



TECH KNOW-HOW

Online content creation & curation

creating content or identifying pieces of content suitable for a specific channel or audience

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Reflect the role of data in your life
- How savvy are you with social media?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A JOB?

You will almost certainly be working together with other people at some point. Your employer wants to know that you'll be able to talk to others, convey and process information and take on responsibility. This is especially important as we have more and more opportunities to collaborate because of digital technologies.

Teamwork and Collaboration

being able to work effectively with others, split up work and support others with achieving a common goal

Communication

getting your message across to others in writing and in conversation



SOCIAL AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

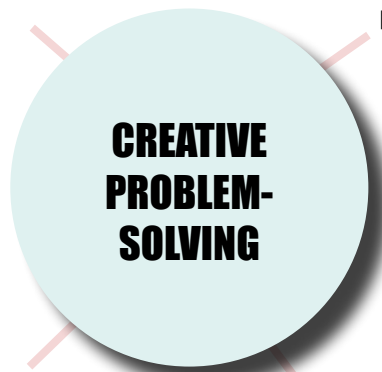
- What is your role within a team?
- Showcase examples of verbal and written communication
- How do you make decisions as a team leader? How do you take on responsibility?
- How do you tackle weaknesses?

Leadership

motivating or persuading others, giving guidance and making decisions, as well as leading by example

Self-awareness & Self-regulation

knowing your strengths and weaknesses and realising when something doesn't go right



Creativity

coming up with new approaches to solve a problem or improve a situation

Problem-Solving

being able to identify what causes a problem, thinking through and evaluating possible approaches, and then trying out the most promising ones

Logical & Critical Thinking

Observing and analysing phenomenon, reactions and feedback, and drawing conclusions based on that; questioning statements presented as facts that are not supported by evidence

An entrepreneurial mindset

being able to identify new opportunities for value creation, embracing innovation and change, and being able to deal with calculated risks

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A JOB?

No matter what job you'll do, there will always come a time when there's a problem and somebody needs to fix it. As machines can take over repetitive and simple tasks, the problems that people solve become more complex as well – that's why we need to think creatively and critically to solve them.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- What are creative (not artistic) problem solving techniques you are working with?
- The last time you solved a problem: How did you get to the solution?
- When was the last time you questioned something that others considered strongly as an effect?
- Do you see a business opportunity where others see an issue?

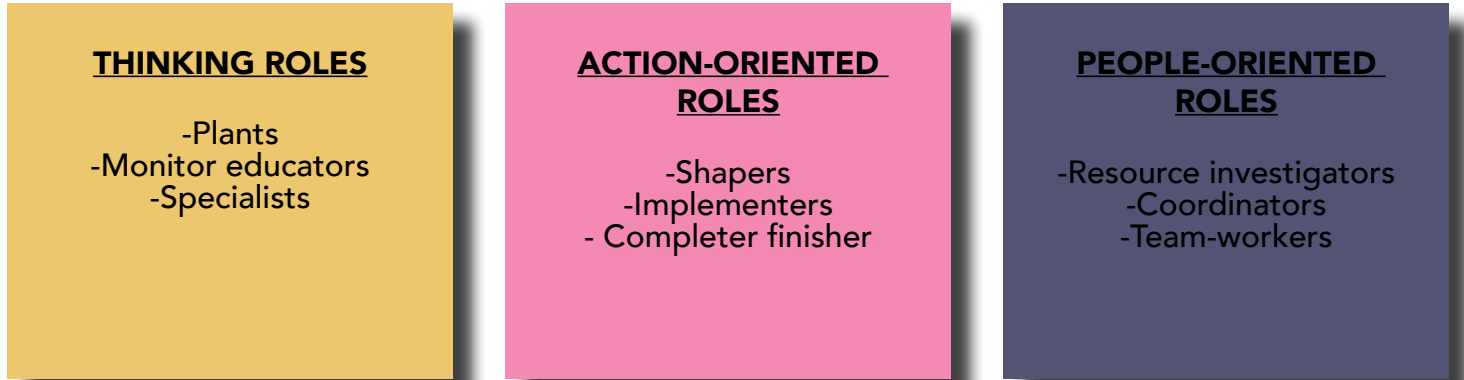
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A JOB?

This could be anything from knowing how to handle an industrial crane to performing heart surgery. These skills you will have to pick up in specialised courses, or on the job. Once you know what you're interested in, it's worth researching more about it and making use of online resources such as training courses, video tutorials, podcasts or blogs where possible. A mentor or job advisor could also help you to identify the best ways to learn your relevant specialised skills.



YOUR ROLE WITHIN A TEAM

While skill-sets are diverse, companies are also looking to fill very different personality types in their teams. When preparing for an interview or looking for the right position, it is helpful to assess what kind of role you are taking in within a team. As discussed, teamwork is getting more critical in a world where you are not only working together with different apartments but cultures. The professor Belbin (2014) distinguishes between 9 different types of team roles. She states that you can inherit either one particular role or a mix of a few. She divides these roles into three categories:



Let's dive into each role with a short explanation.

PLANTS

This role describes creative people who are good at generating ideas and solving complex problems. They can be a bit careless of detail but very helpful in the early phase of projects.

RESOURCE INVESTIGATORS

This role describes extroverted people who are good at developing contacts, identifying opportunities, and resources in the external environment. They also tend to lose enthusiasm towards the end of projects.

COORDINATOR

This role describes people who see the big picture. They clarify goals and allocate roles and responsibilities. They often act as a chairperson for the team and are good in delegating tasks to the right person. They can be perceived as manipulative.

SHAPERS

Shapers are task-focused people who provide the necessary drive to ensure that the project is kept moving and does not lose focus. These people challenge the team to improve and make sure that all possibilities are considered. They sometimes can become aggressive and offend other team members.

MONITOR EDUCATORS

This role describes people who critically analyze ideas rather than generate them. They act as neutral and logical observers and judges of the team's ideas and decisions. They can become very critical and lack the ability to inspire others.

TEAM WORKERS

This role describes people who are excellent listeners and diplomats. They are supportive, and understanding of others and are great at smoothing over conflicts. They are very low-profile, so their beneficial effect on the team might be hard to notice.

IMPLEMENTERS

They convert ideas into practical actions and are seen as reliable and efficient. They can be relied onto delivering on time but can also be inflexible.

COMPLETER FINISHER

This role describes people who are perfectionists. They make sure everything is just right and might also worry extremely over minor details.

SPECIALISTS

Specialists provide expert knowledge and skills. They are single-minded and self-motivated, but many dwell on technicalities.

According to Professor Belbin, a successful team consists of team members who are all reflecting the skills mentioned above. It does not need to be nine individuals, as one can incorporate diverse roles. However, a combination of all these roles within a team has a tremendous effect on the success of a project.

Let's reflect on you! What role mirrors back your own actions and behavior within a team? The goal is not to change your role but to be aware of it so you can tailor your next job towards your strengths instead of your weaknesses. Knowing about your team role is also a great opener in interviews when asked what your strengths are. Explaining your team role based on your experiences in the past can give great insights into your personality and helps to see whether the job is a good fit for you.

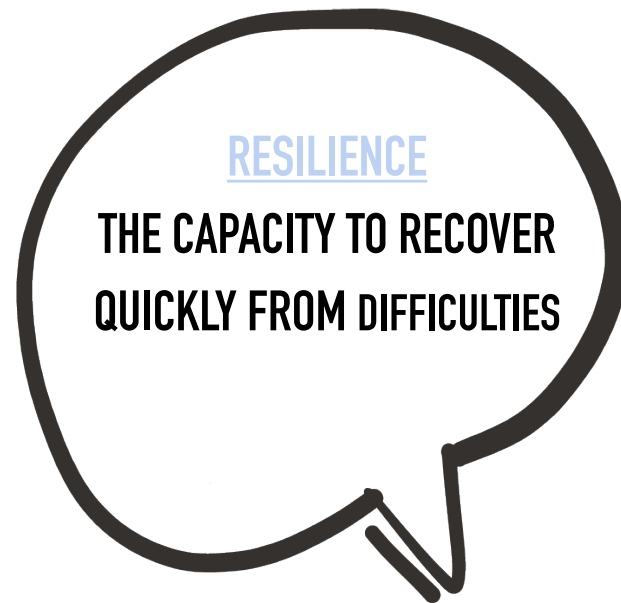
MY TEAM ROLE: _____

USE DESIGN-THINKING TO GROW RESILIENCE

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience is a modern buzz word that is used not only in job interviews but as one of the most named “soft-skills”. So it is even more important to have a more in-depth look to understand what resilience is all about in the first place. Also, I want to introduce you to how we can come up with our very own resilience strategy.

Let’s start with a simple definition. A resilient person can bounce back from adversity. A high degree of resilience means that you are more easily coping with crisis in private and professional life. So resilience is commonly defined as the capacity to ‘bounce back’ after an adverse event.



YOUR RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Improving our level of resilience supports us in living a happy life with a higher level of wellbeing. This sounds simple, but it takes some effort to come up with your very own resilience kit. No single strategy leads to resilience. It’s about putting together a set of strategies that make sense to you and suit your life.

Resilience is a key notion of flexibility. The more flexible and strong you are, the more likely will you bounce back from challenges that come across your private and professional life.

It’s about being flexible and adaptable in our thinking, our relationships, our career.

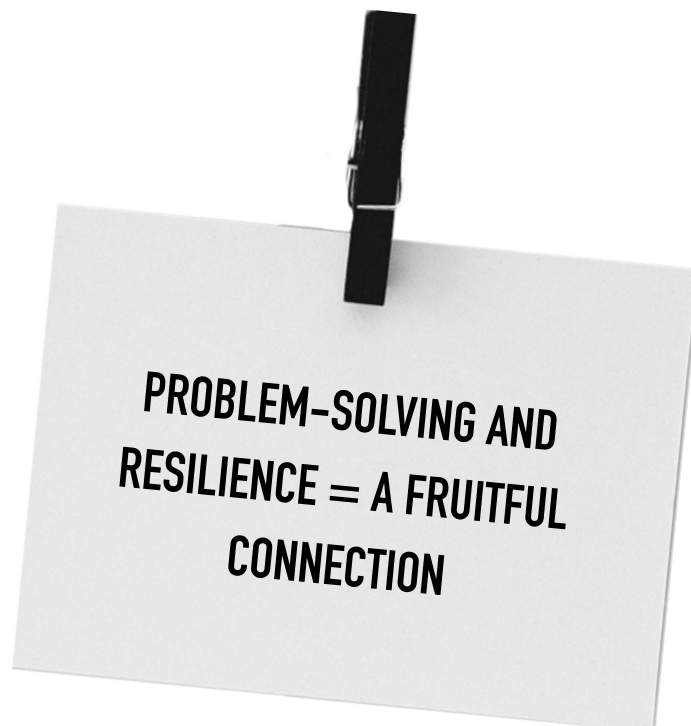
SOME KEY POINTS ABOUT RESILIENCE:

- Resilience is about being able to 'bounce back' after difficult times.
- Resilience is a process we work towards, not a defined permanent state.
- We need to work with others and nurture our networks to become more resilient.
- Resilience is also about generating creative solutions to everyday problems during times of stability.
- We can learn to respond in more or less resilient ways.
- Isolated, individual strategies don't work.
- Resilience requires a systematic or ecological approach.

THE LINK BETWEEN PROBLEM-SOLVING & RESILIENCE

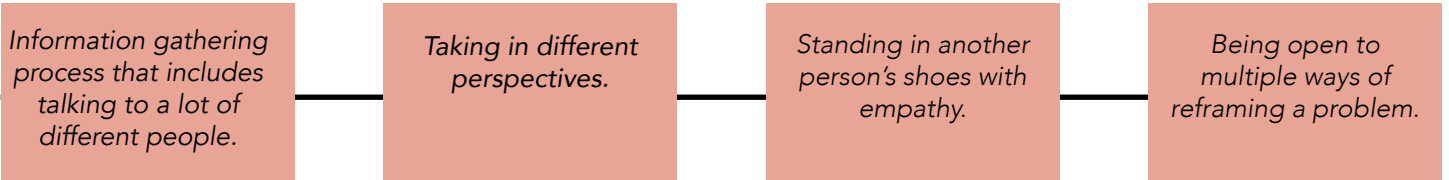
One of the most important aspects of resilience involves developing a flexible way of thinking about challenges and adversity. Being able to solve problems is the foundation here. So let me introduce you to this concept:

Next to the buzzword resilience, one of the most demanded skills is the ability to problem-solving. We discussed this already in the skills chapter of this workbook. Problem-solving is about how you approach challenges that are coming your way and are, therefore, highly linked to the topic of resilience. When we work on our resilience, we tend to get better in problem-solving. This is because we are gaining the necessary distance and become able to see problems not only as a pure challenge in a negative sense but as an opportunity.



One popular approach here is the so-called Design Thinking.

Design Thinking has its roots in the creative industry and describes how graphic designers, engineers, architects approach their work. For them, a problem is not something negative but always an invitation to create a new product. These people are actively seeking out problems, asking their surrounding, watching out for potential problems they can find a solution for. Problems are their source of inspiration and innovation. They curiously ask themselves, "What is not working out? And would could I do to bring a solution with my work?"

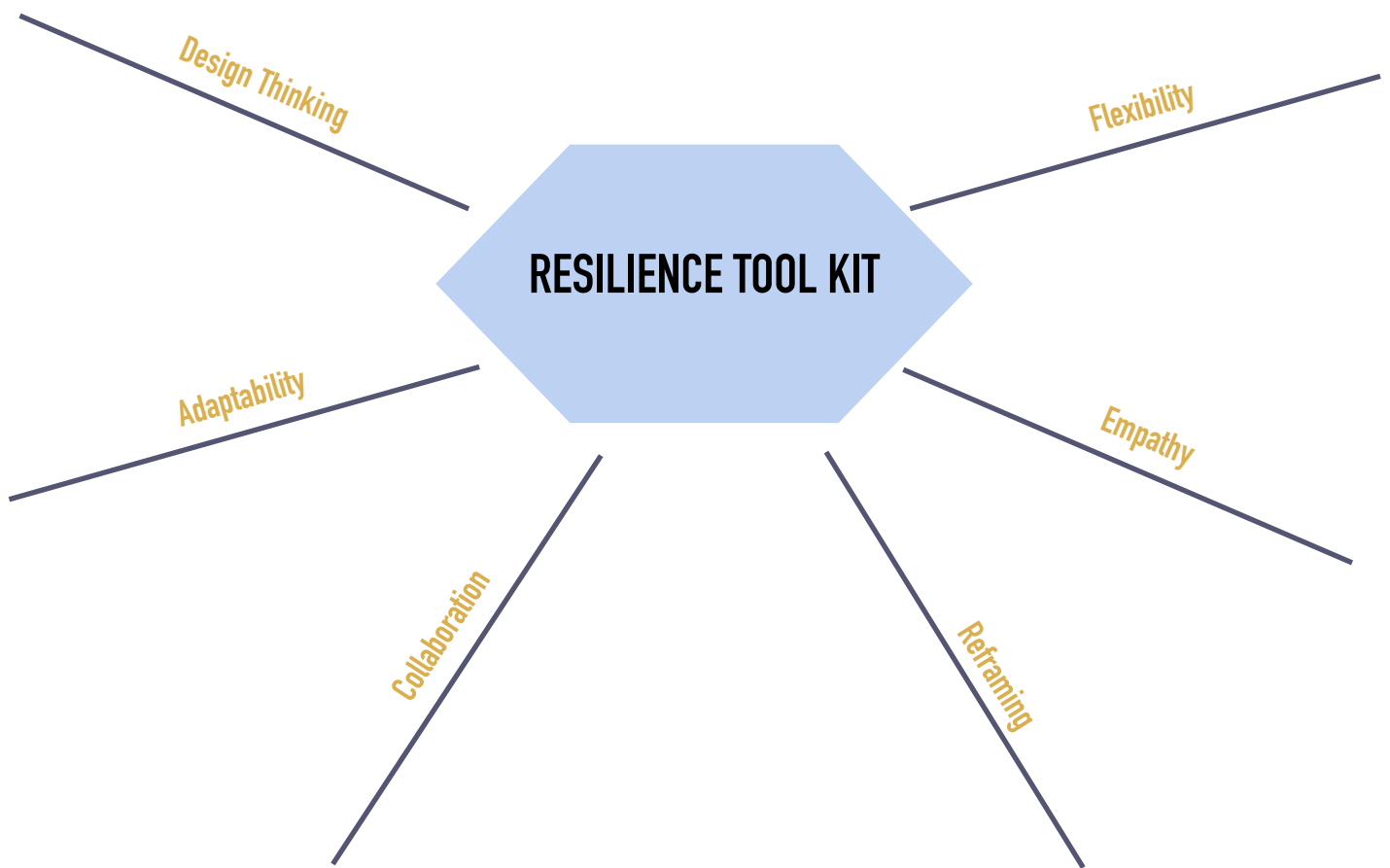


So Design Thinking requires collaboration, empathy, and reframing. All tools and skills that are not only vital for being a valuable employee but to actually shape your resilience. We need the perspectives of others to check in whether we are still on track.

- Are we viewing the problem from the right angle?
- Do we need to switch perspective?
- Do we need to collaborate with someone else?
- Do we need another department to join?
- Should we carry the problem on our own shoulders alone?
- Does it make sense to add new brains to the project or challenge the existing team with a different viewpoint?

The ability to reframe or think differently about problems is, therefore, a crucial part of building your resilience tool.





HOW DESIGN THINKING HELPS TO BECOME RESILIENT

STEP 1: OBSERVE

In the first phase of Design Thinking, creatives are looking for problems and try to define the problem as accurate as possible. When we transfer this stage into our own lives, we need to look at our personal problem we might be facing. Let's take the example of a missing work permit when moving abroad. I like this example because I came across this barrier in countless coaching sessions, and it always had the same effect on clients: Making them fixated on this unmanageable barrier unable to get into a problem-solving mindset.

First ask yourself: What is my problem?

In our example, the problem is a missing work permit that makes it impossible to continue a career. Next, try to get into the mindset of someone that is not familiar with this problem. Get curious and ask yourself all the questions a stranger would ask here. Is there really no other way to get a work permit? Where could you go to doublecheck? What does that mean for your career? How do you feel about it? What will be the long term effect? What will be the short term effect?

The goal is to get a clearer understanding of the problem. Another approach is to reframe the problem and describing it from another angle.

You can either say:

„I don't have a work permit, and that makes it impossible to join the local job market.“

Or you can say:

„I am struggling obtaining a work permit which makes it impossible to follow the traditional career path I am used to.“

The second way of claiming the problem is still true to the same degree but gives you more flexibility to start the problem-solving process. So if there is a traditional career path, might there be a non-traditional career path? By that, you already created a first crack in the wall which enables you to think more creatively about the issue.

HAVE COMPASSION!

Something I want to highlight here: Have compassion for yourself. Cut yourself some slack and allow yourself to feel bad for your situation. Problem-solving and becoming resilient is not about becoming a superhero without emotions! Allow yourself to feel miserable but watch out if this feeling is blocking you constantly from moving forward. In our example, it is totally understandable to feel miserable about not having a work permit. You can be angry or frustrated. Neglecting those feelings won't help you at all. Note those feelings, accept them, have compassion for yourself but then move on and get into the design thinking process.

STEP 2: CREATE A PLAN B

We tend to fixate on the very first approach, the very first solution that comes to our mind. However, this carries a big risk: You will most likely just run against another wall, escaping one problem but facing the next barrier right after. Therefore now is a good time to come up with a list of opportunities. Now that you have defined your original problem from various angles write down all the options that come to your mind. Don't stop just because your options might get too creative, unrealistic, or just crazy. There is a relief in writing down crazy thoughts that, to some extent, can lead to very manageable opportunities. So empty your brain and heart using the list on the next page. The reality check will come soon enough - well, right after this step of Design Thinking, and it is called "Rapid Prototyping."

MY PLAN B LIST



STEP 3: RAPID PROTOTYPING

Rapid Prototyping is an essential phase in Design Thinking. It allows to quickly check all the potential solutions you have come up with in the previous step. This might entail a conversation with a potential client or wider market research. In any case, you can also adopt this phase to your very own problem-solving approach.

Go through the list of your personal ideas. Mark the ones you find most interesting and start a quick reality check. Google can be your friend or enemy here, so don't just rely on the internet giving you an idea if your solution might be feasible. Also, try to reach out to real people asking them about their approach. In our example of the work permit, it might be a good idea to reach out to specific facebook groups dealing with this kind of issue. Share your solution approach and see if someone has good advice for your or further thoughts that will help put this into reality. Contact experts in the field and specifically ask for out of the box solutions. You will be surprised what that can trigger in someone else.



THE TAKE-AWAYS

Resilience is a buzz word with a lot of depth to it. Per definition, it describes the capability to bounce back from a crisis and cope with challenges. It is a skill that can be trained so even when you are not feeling very resilient right now you can work on your toolkit right now.

Soft skills such as problem solving and techniques such as design thinking help us to approach resilience with a solution-oriented mindset. We should not see ourselves isolated in this journey but as part of society. Colleagues, friends, and family members are struggling with their resilience skills from time to time. Offering help to each other and serving as a person to brainstorm ideas and reflect issues on will help all of us.

Struggling with your professional situation can have a substantial negative impact on your wellbeing. Being resilient can, therefore, help you to stay motivated throughout the application process and keep your confidence high even so you will be rejected.

The introduced design-thinking approach can help you to approach this professional journey with an open mindset. It is essential to add here that it should be not only about your professional identity. Life is much more than work, and we have many different areas in life we want to foster and grow in. In times of professional turmoil, we can boost our resilience by taking care of our personal health, fitness, mental wellbeing, and social interactions. Our body, mind, and social life will help us to stay resilient!

SECOND OPTION - IF YOU WANT TO GET INTO MORE DETAIL

Come up with three alternative five-year or 'odyssey' plans, each of which includes:

- a timeline
- three key questions that test out assumptions in each plan
- a six-word headline that sums up the intent of your plan.

SCENARIO 1: _____

TIMELINE:

KEY QUESTIONS TO TEST:

HEADLINE:

SCENARIO 2: _____

TIMELINE:

KEY QUESTIONS TO TEST:

HEADLINE:

SCENARIO 3: _____

TIMELINE:

KEY QUESTIONS TO TEST:

HEADLINE:

CREATE A PORTABLE CAREER

In a global life, establishing a portable career can be THE essential step to create professional freedom. It can bring a lot of ease to life and partnership when you can move your job with you. In this chapter, I want to introduce you to the supporting current trends "Gig economy" and "Digital Nomadism" and the effect on the traditional corporate work. We will look into typical portable career paths and what you can do now to establish a portable career in the future. We will learn from successful digital nomads and cover essential concepts of having a location-independent business.

THE TWO MAJOR GLOBAL MOBILITY TRENDS THAT SHAPE THE FUTURE OF WORK

The two trends GIG-economy and Digital Nomadism have one thing in common: They trigger the global workplace to think in more flexible terms. We are more and more departing from the typical 9-to-5 and are leveraging technology to make this shift possible.

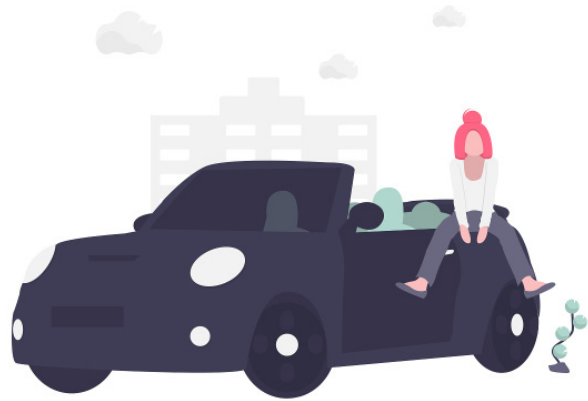


THE GIG-ECONOMY

The Gig-economy is no new phenomenon but a trend that has accelerated at such high speed that it is actually starting to disrupt the traditional corporate job culture.

People working in the GIG-economy are called giggers and often manage multiple gigs to make a living. The majority of giggers has a full-time job for a fixed income but adds smaller jobs to increase salary. This inclusion of a flexible workforce eventually opens up organizations to the idea of being more agile and accommodative to modern work forms. It is estimated that the flex or mobile workforce will comprise half of the workforce by 2020 and 80% by 2030 within the US. These figures seem to be extremely high, and it's hard to find robust surveys that would support that. Other studies state that approximately 1/3 of all American workers are currently participating in the Gig-economy. Nevertheless, the trend towards more agile work forms is clear, and the Gig-economy is here to stay.

The Gig-economy is highly pushed by the growing app market place, which makes it possible that we are outsourcing tasks to non-corporate employees. Job platforms such as Manpower, Upwork, Flexing it, and Task Rabbit have emerged fostering the self-service aspect of this new labor market.

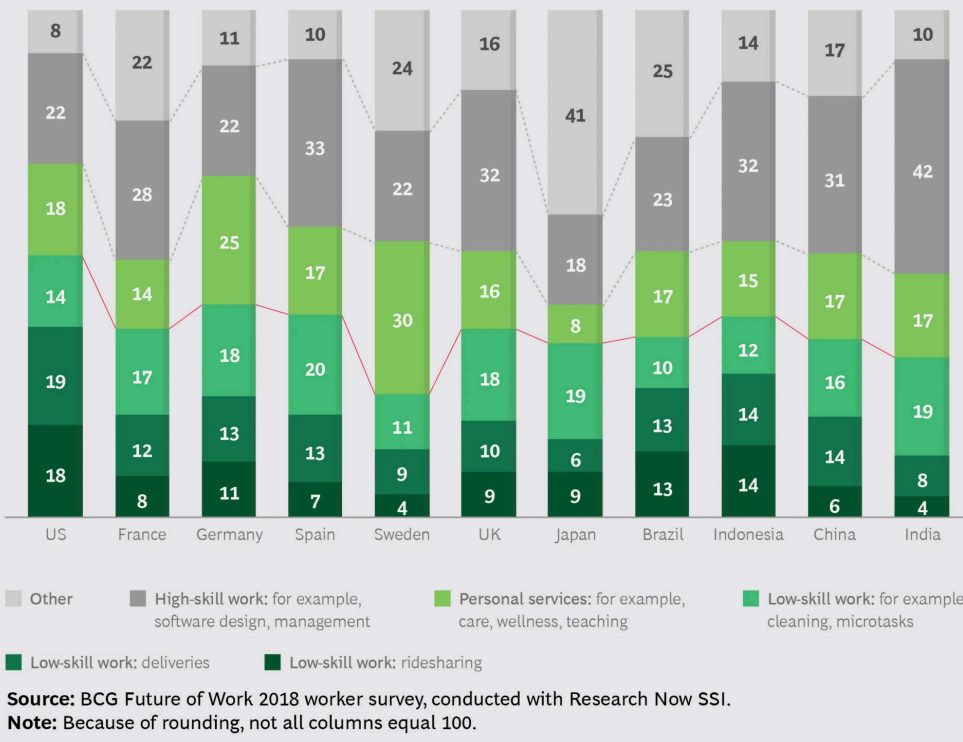


SKILL-BASED VS. NEED-BASED TASKS

Critics say that the GIG economy is only fostering low-income jobs. It is often perceived as a fast-growing threat to employment stability and labor rights, promoting low-grade, low-paid jobs that offer workers little appeal or dignity.

The Gig-economy does not provide standard benefits like retirement plans and financial stability. The flexible hours often eat up the time spent socially with friends and family. Also, interestingly enough, we have chosen to exchange a human boss with an algorithm. In the case of UBER, the algorithm is stimulating drivers to take on night or weekend shifts without knowing the destination to get a higher pay rate.

EXHIBIT 3 | Many Freelancers Find Work on Platforms That Seek Higher-Level Skills



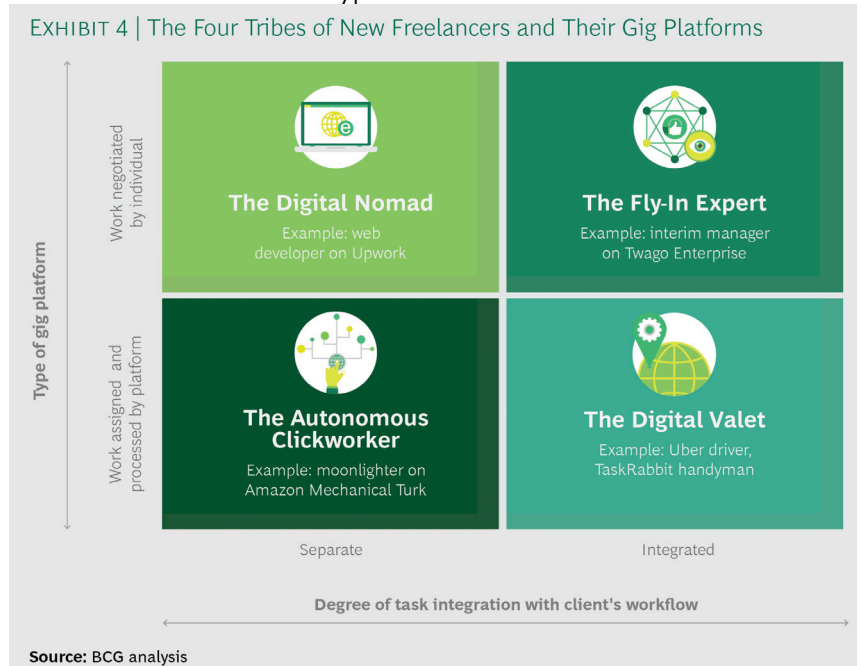
While this is definitely true, we have to divide between skill-based and need-based tasks. In the latest research by the Boston Consulting Group on the gig-economy, the shift of required skill-levels is highlighted. The need-based tasks such as driving for UBER will definitely fall in that category. However, more and more freelancers are able to use their high-profile skills for higher paid gigs. As you can see in this diagram, many freelancers find work on platforms that seek higher-level skills.

It is estimated that the gig economy might develop from cheap labor to top talent - although the current proportion is not mirroring that yet. However, with the current workforce's obsession with freedom intensifies, the gig economy will continue to grow and disrupt businesses.

The Boston Consulting Group distinguishes between 4 different types of new freelancers:

- **Digital Nomads:** Who is negotiating the gig on an individual basis and takes on high-skilled tasks
- **Fly-in experts:** The short-term but high-skilled employee (e.g. interim manager)
- Autonomous Clickworkers
- Digital Valets

The first type, Digital Nomad, is a category that is worth a closer look!



THE DIGITAL NOMAD

While work is getting increasingly portable, digital nomads are on the rise. In this subchapter, I want to highlight the key features of Digital Nomads. You will find out what you can learn and adapt from this trend and where to get further resources to make your business portable like Digital Nomads are doing it.

SO, WHO ARE DIGITAL NOMADS?

Digital Nomads are people who have rejected the idea of working in a conventional office, but instead, they work and travel without a clear destination.

They are definitely pushing the discussion of remote work to a whole new level and increase awareness about global mobility.

They leverage digital technology to gain independence, and some media consider them to be role models of new forms of work.

Hence, the term Digital Nomad speaks for itself, explaining the two key features of this lifestyle:

DIGITAL

relates to the use of computer technology

NOMAD

relates to being a wandering tribe without a fixed destination



WHAT MOTIVATES DIGITAL NOMADS TO GET ON THE ROAD?

If you follow the topic of Digital Nomads on the media, you might have this image of a person sitting on the beach with a laptop on the lap and a coconut in the hand.

However, the reality is a bit different. Digital Nomads are often hard-working people spending more time in co-working spaces than on the beach.

So what triggers Digital Nomads to leave their comfort zone and start this highly entrepreneurial life-style?

PULL & PUSH FACTORS OF BECOMING A DIGITAL NOMAD

- Leaving the office behind
- Feeling like a slave or stuck in a too bureaucratic and fixed setting
- Want to escape from the comfort zone
- Urge for adventure
- Quest for self-development
- The pursuit of freedom, self-determination, and flexibility
- Only want to do work that they like, want to become their own boss
- Not seeking personal attachments

HOW MANY ARE THERE?

In general, exact numbers are hard to find as there is not much statistic research around Digital Nomads. Moreover, it's hard to put the label Digital Nomad on someone who is always on the move and does not like to register.

However, here are some numbers from 2018 that are helpful to get a clearer picture (Source: MBO Partners)

- About 5 million workers describe themselves as digital nomads in the US
- Digital Nomads tend to be younger and male (about one third are women) - although numbers differ strongly between different studies.
- Amongst this group, there are different levels of commitment: Some are doing it part-time, some are committed full-time. About 38% are earning less than \$10.000 per year, 16% more than that, and the rest is somewhere in between.
- Most Digital Nomads like to go to countries with low living expenses and good internet connection. Hence cities like Chiang Mai in Thailand and Tallinn in Estonia are very popular destinations for Digital Nomads.



DIFFERENTIATING FACTORS BETWEEN DIGITAL NOMADS, EXPATS, AND TOURISTS

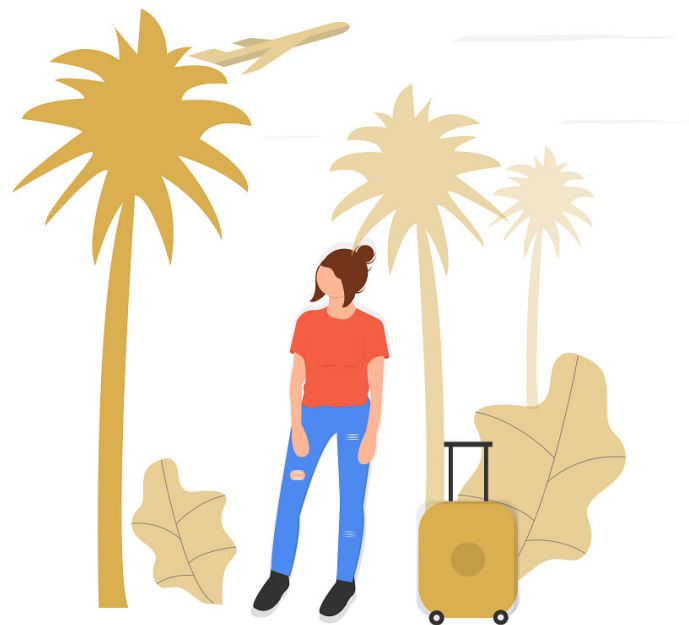
- Digital Nomads are moving by choice, expats often move triggered by a project or a company. Internal motivation vs. external push
- Digital Nomads are changing the location every couple of months or even weeks - Expats tend to stay in one place for years
- Expats are more adapting to the local culture, trying to establish their home abroad while Digital Nomads cherish the independence of travel. So one can say that expats are building roots while Digital Nomads are wanderers.

So when we imagine a timeline from short to long stay or low to impact, the tourist would be on the left, the expat on the right and the Digital Nomad in between.



However, there are also some factors Digital Nomads and expats have in common:

- The majority has a higher education and used to work in a corporate setting. Over 70% of expat partners have a higher education of 4 or more years as studies from Internations and Expat Communication show.
- They are both leaving the security of their home countries and need to adapt to a new environment.



DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT OF THE DIGITAL NOMAD LIFESTYLE

You can categorize the Digital Nomad commitment into four different levels depending on the degree of independence and risk. Many Digital Nomads are going through a development starting with a portable version of their existing job until starting their own company by creating their own products and services.

TAKE CURRENT JOB ON THE ROAD

- Make a deal with former employer
- Switch to project work
- For many expat partners this most likely won't work but: Have you even asked?

FIND A REMOTE JOB

- Go to job portals with a portable focus such as:
 - FlexJobs
 - Remote Jobs
 - Remote.co
 - Jobspresso
 - We work remotely
 - Remote ok
 - Remote workers club
 - Skip the Drive
 - Working Nomads
- Working Nomads

START FREELANCING

- Be your own boss
- You are responsible for getting your own clients
- Trade your skills for money
- Your client is your boss
- Gain flexibility

BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR

- Start your own gig such as:
 - Blogging
 - e-commerce (purchasing and selling)
 - Start-up with own products and business idea

So there are different levels of dependence, and most Digital Nomads are aiming for the latter: freelancing or starting their own business.

So we are still left with the question: What do Digital Nomads do exactly? Have you ever wondered what all those people in Starbucks coffee shops do in front of their laptops? Well, let me give you some examples.

INSIGHTS INTO DIGITAL NOMAD PROFESSIONS

To get an answer, I dug deeper into facebook group discussion of Digital Nomads. This way, I got answers by people who are actually already living the remote life professionally and were ready to share their experience.

All jobs of Digital Nomads are somehow related to technology to some extent and can be performed via laptop.

Here is a list of some of the most common professions:



COPY WRITING & CONTENT WRITING

Copywriting is the process of writing promotional materials geared towards convincing the reader to take action.

Content writing: is more in the context of requested articles about a specific topic and also by using specific keywords for the search engine. Depending on the job, different levels of research are required.

It is classified as a more mainstream profession that needs less specialized knowledge.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Graphic designers are best described as communicators. They convey messages in a creative visual manner. They are the people who create all the adverts, billboards, brochures, business cards, and other marketing communications materials that you see.

Requirements: Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, and a graphic eye

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT

A virtual assistant's most important task is to offer support services to businesses.

A virtual assistant can offer a host of support services ranging from simple administrative tasks to complex creative tasks such as:

- Social media management
- Blogging/ghostwriting
- Ecommerce assistant
- Web design
- Customer service
- Email management and marketing
- Bookkeeping
- Data entry
- General admin work

Requirements: you need to be an allrounder to do this job!

ONLINE TEACHER

Especially native English speakers are offering their skills online to teach others. There are a couple of organizations that help you with the administration and sales process and you can work on an hourly basis.

Requirements: Get TEFL certified

COACHING

This profession is relatively new in comparison but rising fast in popularity. There are tons of digital nomads coaching others how to become a digital nomad, and you have to be cautious here because there is a lot of scam.

However, more and more pure coaches with actual certification turn their business online, having remote clients around the globe. They take different clients from life to business coaching.

Requirements: Certification is not legally required. However, as a coach myself, I cannot stress the importance of a profound education enough! You are in contact with people guiding them in your best interest and experience. With that comes responsibility!

BLOGGING

This profession is pretty much self-explaining. For inspiration: topics range from travel to fashion, cooking, and business blogs. The more interesting thing here is how to make money off your passion for a particular topic. Hence it is essential to think of your business model right away:

Choose your business model behind the blog:

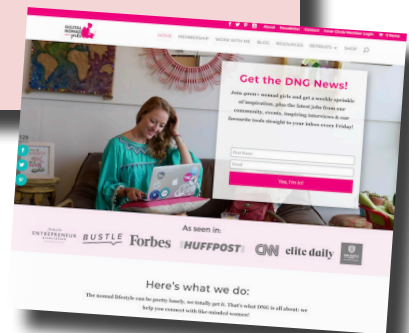
- Affiliate Marketing
- Selling ebooks, epaper
- Collaborations with brands
- Online Courses
- Freelance Writing
- Google AdSense
- Sponsored Posts

An Instagram/Facebook/Pinterest marketer is a social media marketing expert who specializes in running Instagram/Facebook/Pinterest accounts on behalf of businesses. A social media marketer is tasked with research work, creating creatives, and engaging Instagram content including images and accompanying captions, posting the content, responding to fans on the platform as well as monitoring performance of the posts.

WHERE TO GO TO LEARN MORE?

The internet is full of useful information to get deeper into the professions mentioned. However, to get a clear picture, I highly recommend joining Digital Nomad Facebook Groups and use the search function within those groups. Nomads tend to share their experience pretty open and straight-forward. Get in touch with someone who is already living the lifestyle and interview him or her.

One of the best sources: <https://digitalnomadgirls.com/>



WHAT EXPAT PARTNERS CAN LEARN FROM DIGITAL NOMADS

To get a closer look on what exactly Expat Partners can learn from Digital Nomads, I conducted two types of surveys. One within the Expat community asking for their opinion on their current career situation and one within the Nomad community asking almost the exact same questions.

I paid close attention to only address Digital Nomads that were already successfully on the road and experienced - same with the Expat Partners.



From these surveys and also from some personal interviews I conducted, here are my seven insights:

1 The influence of having a work permit is overrated

2 Digital Nomads show a high degree of confidence

3 Caring about other people's opinion triggers insecurity

4 We are defined by what we do not have

5 The job hunting limbo has negative impacts on confidence and happiness

6 Digital Nomads see work as a tool

7 Expat Partners & Digital Nomads share a common skill-set



The influence of having a work permit is overrated

The survey results show that the influence of having a work permit on happiness, job opportunities, and career outlook are overrated. Expat Partners are more likely to have a work permit than Digital Nomads but are still not working. On the other hand, many Expat Partners working abroad seem to have found ways to do so without a local work permit.

As a result, the survey undertaken did not find any correlation between having a work permit and being content with the current career situation.

WORK PERMIT SITUATION

So what is the work permit situation for Digital Nomads who change countries often and serve clients around the globe?

Basically, it's a grey area. Some Digital Nomads own a work permit, some are just taking the risk, which is quite low due to the constant moving. The legislation is frequently changing and new forms of work visas are emerging: Estonia for example just introduced a new visa making it easy to work and travel within the Schengen area, and Thailand issued the so-called 4-year smart visa which is currently restricted to specific promising industries like robotics.



Many countries turn a blind eye as digital nomads are on the move and are not taking away local jobs. Mostly their customer base isn't even local but living in a completely different time zone. Due to the lack of competition and direct interference with the local workforce, most countries are looking away. Also, because there isn't a box to tick for this new form of work, administration struggle with filing those cases.

Most Digital Nomads are traveling on tourist visas and are doing so-called Visa runs - meaning hopping in and out with the neighboring country to extend the visas.

However, please keep in mind that a work permit is not a golden entry ticket to the glory world of work. If you lack a permit there are still lots of things you can do to work on your career - even if that means building on your future skillset right now.

A similar grey area exists for Expats who start a business abroad. The legal foundation for that is very unique to the country of origin, country of destiny, and work permit situation. Hence, it is best to consult with a local savvy lawyer before starting and registering a business even when clients are based in the country of origin.

2**Digital Nomads show a high degree of confidence**

Digital Nomads are in general way more positive about their future career, feel way more independent, more confident with their skillset, and do not care what others back home might think about their career choice. On the other hand, Expat Partners are struggling with these points way more, especially when they are still in the process of finding work abroad.

Degree from 1 to 100, 1 being the lowest	EXPAT PARTNERS	DIGITAL NOMADS
Degree of worrying what others might think of career choice	25%	9%
Degree of being concerned about future career path	43%	17%
Degree of defining their happiness based on career success	60%	40%
Degree of feeling independent in own choices for life	49%	84%
Degree of feeling confident with own skill-set	66%	82%

3**Caring about other people's opinion triggers insecurity**

There is a correlation between worrying what others might think of your career choice abroad and how you personally rate your future career paths.

Expat Partners who are highly concerned what others might think of their choices are also very worried about their future career and question whether it was the right decision to quit the job and move abroad.

Expat Partners who are worried about the opinion of others tend to be more insecure about their own skill-set and feel less independent.

Digital Nomads showed no concern at all about what others might think.

4

We are defined by what we do not have

Your career situation defines you significantly more when you are not having a career. Expat Partners who are searching for work are more worried about their career future and state that career defines them to a high degree (67%) compared to Digital Nomads (40%) or Expat Partners who managed to take their career abroad (46%). It seems to be part of the human quest of seeking what we do not have.

Digital Nomads profit from their self-made approach on how they got in this situation in the first place. Out of free will and desire to create something.

“I set myself up for success” was hence a common quote by Digital Nomads



„I SET MYSELF UP
FOR SUCCESS“

5

The job hunting limbo has negative impacts on confidence and happiness

Expat Partners who are currently looking for a job are highly afraid of losing track of their long term career plans.

Biggest insecurity comes in times of limbo like the process of finding a job abroad which can take longer than anticipated. Digital Nomads often prepare for this before moving abroad as creating a portable career is a precondition for leaving home behind.

Most Digital Nomads choose to base their business on their skills and interest and are not looking for remote corporate jobs.

If you are an Expat Partner: Think about ways to get back into the driver seat by basing your next career step on your current and potential future skill-set.

Digital Nomads are less defined by their work, and many state that their profession is more a tool to enable a location-independent life. Many say that they would change the career path if it is not fun anymore or is restricting them in their freedom.

They show a high degree of flexibility and see work as a tool for a more significant cause.


I stated in the beginning that Digital Nomads are often wrongly portrayed in the media as being lazy at the beach all day long. The truth is, they have a high work ethic as they are working for themselves.

Here are some interesting quotes to underline this statement:


- They are always connecting their work with a value
- Many do struggle with work-life balance as work is always there, and they are often working in a vacation environment.



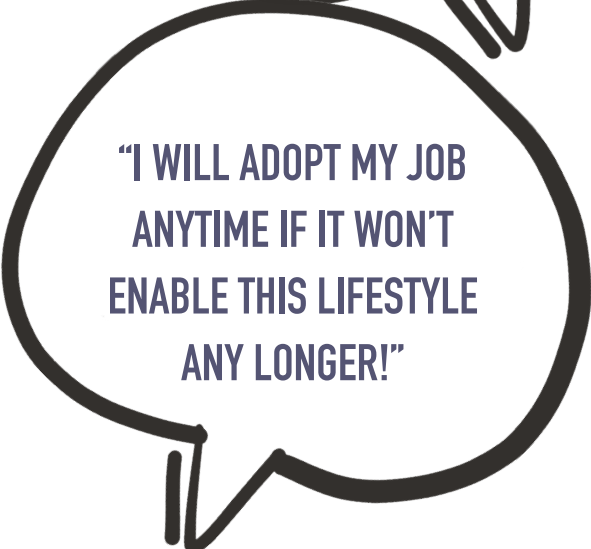
"I DEFINE SUCCESS AS HAVING FREEDOM AND CONTROL OVER MY OWN LIFE."



"EVERYTHING I DO IS MAXIMIZED FOR PRODUCTIVITY SINCE I GET PAID FOR CREATING THINGS, NOT BY THE HOUR."



"I WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO STAY IN THE POSITION OF FREEDOM THAT I CURRENTLY ENJOY."



"I WILL ADOPT MY JOB ANYTIME IF IT WON'T ENABLE THIS LIFESTYLE ANY LONGER!"

7

Expatriate Partners & Digital Nomads share a common skill-set

For me, this is one of the most exciting insights from my study:

Asked what kind of skill-set Digital Nomads and Expatriate Partners should possess to be successful, both parties stated mainly soft skills. Interestingly enough, there is a lot of overlap of the top 10 mentioned skills:

	EXPAT PARTNERS	DIGITAL NOMADS
1	Flexibility	Open-Mindedness
2	Adaptability	Flexibility
3	Discipline	Adaptation to host culture
4	Organizational Skills	Curiosity
5	Curiosity and Openness to learn	Communication Skills
6	Communication Skills	Confidence/Courage
7	Resilience	Patience
8	Being able to work independently	Language Skills
9	Computer Skills	Tolerance
10	Self-Marketing	Organizational Skills

Bottom line: I am the master of my own fate

What we can learn from Digital Nomads is the "I-can-do-attitude."

Of course the setting is different and for example, not having a work permit is a more looming scenario when you are living in a place for several years instead of months. However, do not get stuck in this thought just yet but break it down in smaller pieces. Imagine yourself as a Digital Nomad being in this place right now: What could you do. Or think about potential educational paths you can take now to create a portable business you can use for your next move. Digital Nomads create this unique professional life to gain independence to live outside their home country. You, on the other hand, are living that life already.



ONLINE TOOLS TO MAKE YOUR PORTABLE CAREER WORK

Digital Nomads are experts in leveraging technology and make it work for them and their business. I want to introduce you to some of the most effective tools to take your work on the road. Some tools are really helpful to stay accountable even when no boss is looking over your shoulder while others facilitate your daily work.

STAYING FOCUSED AND CONCENTRATED

- » **Focus Keeper** (App with Pomodoro technique)
- » **Momentum** (Chrome extension with motivational quotes)
- » **1-click timer** (Pomodoro technique for your computer)
- » **Noisli** (Chrome extension that lets you create noise that help you focus)
- » **Freedom app** (Blocks you from apps and websites that are distracting you most)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT HELPERS

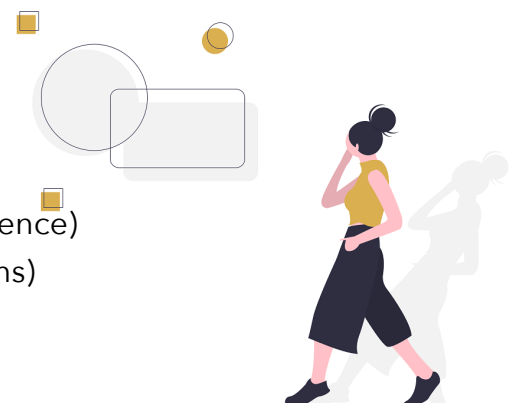
- » **Google Docs & Sheets** (Cloud based word, spreadsheets, presentations)
- » **Asana** (Managing tasks for several team members)
- » **Trello** (Great for creating workflows)
- » **Zapier** (Connecting different apps to create automated workflows)
- » **Evernote** (Best for storing documents and creating to-do lists)
- » **Wunderlist** (Easy straightforward to-do lists)
- » **Calendly** (Great for scheduling meetings and clients appointments)
- » **WeTransfer** (Good for transferring bigger files from one person to another)
- » **Synchronize** (App to never miscalculate time differences again)

WORDPRESS WEBSITE HELPERS

- » **GoDaddy** (Cheap and easy to register domains)
- » **Elementor** (Powerful and flexible wordpress themes without programming)
- » **Akismet** (Helps you to get rid of scam comments)
- » **Wordfence** (Protect your website from hackers)
- » **MemberPress** (Good for turning your website into a membership site)
- » **Updraft** (Plugin to create automated backups)

COMMUNICATE WITH TEAM AND CLIENTS

- » **Slack** (Simple communication app for remote workers)
- » **Zoom** (Great for webinars or sharing your screen with an audience)
- » **Loom** (Record your screen and communicate tasks or problems)



DOING THE SEO MAGIC

- » **Yoast SEO** (Easy to use plugin to optimize your SEO on your content)
- » **bit.ly** (Link shortener that lets you create custom links and tracks traffic)
- » **Quicksprout** (Perform a SEO audit of your website)
- » **Google Keyword Planner** (Research organic keywords)
- » **Moz Keyword Explorer** (More keyword research)

MARKETING SUPPORT

- » **Mailchimp** (Easy to use newsletter tool)
- » **Google Analytics** (Must have to track your stats of your website)
- » **Typeform** (Great for creating beautiful forms, quizzes, surveys)
- » **SurveyMonkey** (Create and analyze surveys)
- » **Planoly** (Instagram scheduling tool so can take breaks from social media)
- » **Tailwind** (Scheduling tool for Pinterest)
- » **LinkTree** (App that allows you to add more than one link to your Instagram profile)
- » **DaFont** (Huge selection of fonts to use)
- » **Canva** (Create nice graphics for social media without photoshop)
- » **Unsplash** (Great selection of licence free pictures with a millennial touch)
- » **Adobe CC** (Free colour palette generator)

FREELANCING TOOLS

- » **Rescuetime** (Track the time you need for each client)
- » **Bidsketch** (If you are not a fan of InDesign and need quick client proposals)
- » **Transferwise** (Cheapest way to send money abroad)
- » **Stripe** (Accept electronic payments on your website)
- » **Quickbooks** (Helps you with your accounting)

LEGAL STUFF

- » **Termsfeed** (Generate your privacy policies and terms and conditions)
- » **Cookie Notice** (Plugin to add a cookie notification for visitors from Europe)

WRITING HELPERS

- » **Grammarly** (Grammar and spellchecker for English)
- » **Google Translate** (Free translations)
- » **Duolingo** (Step up your language game)
- » **Work Hard Anywhere** (Best app to find nearby places with wifi and power outlets)

PUTTING ALL THE PARTS TOGETHER

TOP 5 21ST CENTURY SKILLS I POSSESS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

TOP 5 21ST CENTURY SKILLS I WANT TO DEVELOP:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

MY ROLE WITHIN A TEAM: _____



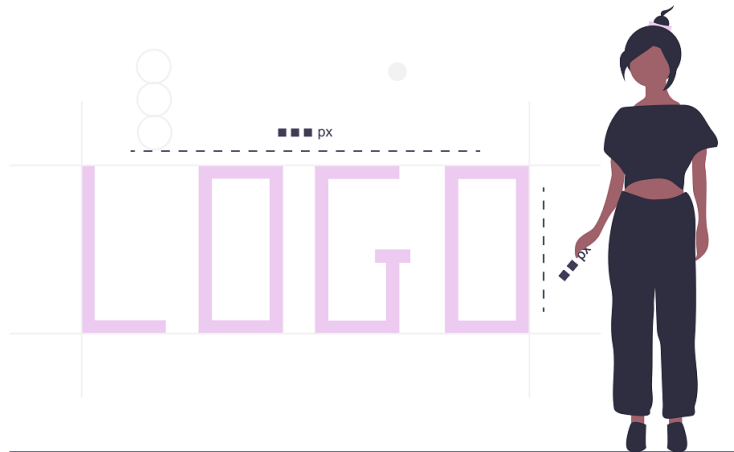
MY RESILIENCE STRATEGY:

DIGITAL NOMAD PROFESSION / SKILL I WANT TO EXPLORE MORE:

CHAPTER 4

BECOME VISIBLE & CONNECTED

STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT



INTRODUCTION

So far, we reflected on finding your personal career paths, take on intercultural competencies, and shaping your profile of 21st century skills. In this chapter, I want to bring something to your attention that is often overlooked (especially by women): Promoting yourself.

Throughout my coachings, I came across numerous women who traveled the world and have lived in different places. They managed challenge after challenge and added one defining life experience after the other.

However, they all struggled to introduce themselves in a bold and conversation triggering manner. We are often consumed to hide behind our weaknesses and do not like to show off with our experience, that we mistake understatement with undermining our competencies.

So here we are, in the last chapter of this ebook, focusing on exactly that: Bringing your skills and competencies back into the spotlight, showing the world what you are capable of. On the next pages, we will cover the topics of self-branding, increasing visibility, and networking. These three pillars will help you to make yourself available to the modern job market and become noticed. It will also help you to get in the spotlight for other stakeholders in your professional career, such as customers, colleagues, and partners.

So spotlight on and let the show begin.



SELF-BRANDING YOUR PROFILE

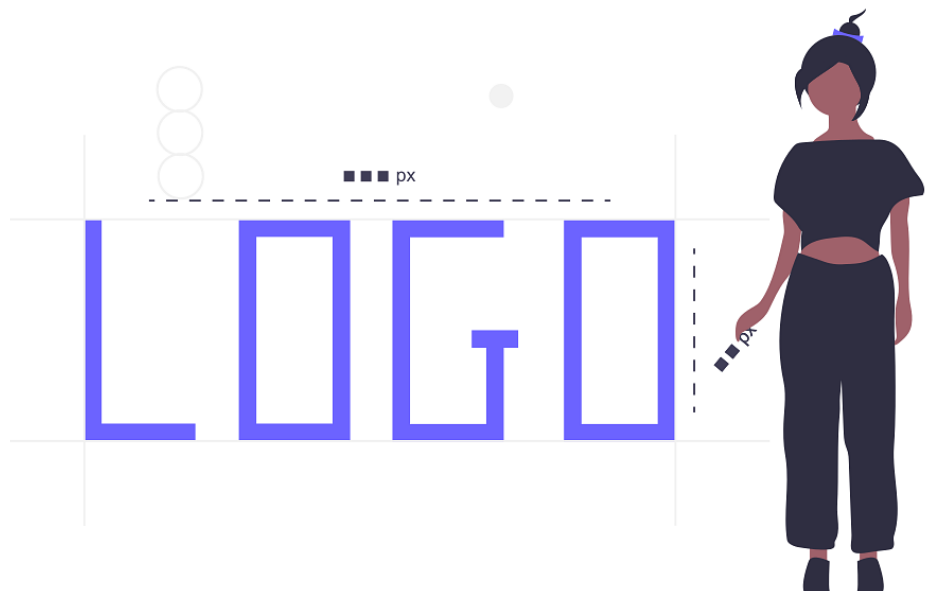
Self-branding is the new buzzword when it comes to modern career planning. Recently we have started to use the known marketing concepts not only on products and services but also on our own CV. With the arrival of digital media, this is even more important than ever.



In the business world, brands help instantly transmit complex messages and transform them into positive emotions in the consumer mind. As a result for a happy customer, a branded product or service becomes more than just the sum of the physical attributes. It brings value, harmony, and piece of mind.

Self-branding has become very popular as the modern work environment is full of noise. The workplace is volatile like never before, and it has become increasingly challenging to stand out next to other potential employees with sometimes very similar CVs.

The goal is to showcase your skills to prospective employers and other relevant stakeholders such as potential clients when starting your own business. So let's get started!



THE VUCA CONCEPT

In the academic world, we are talking about the VUCA-concept when referring to volatility in the job market. This concept beautifully describes how the current work environment is perceived and why self-branding as a tool for self-positioning, and standing out from the crowd has become so popular.

V

V - VOLATILE

The work environment is perceived as volatile based on changes in the global economy and global mobility. We are dealing with changing market needs and have identified the need to develop soft skills to adapt.

U

U - UNCERTAIN

The work environment is perceived as uncertain, with less predictable outcomes. A static career within one company is less likely, and in the US, people tend to switch industries and jobs at least every seven years.

C

C - COMPLEX

The work environment is perceived as complex based on the global focus we have reached and the level of connectivity. We are communicating with colleagues and clients from all around the world, adding more dimensions to our daily work routine.

A

A - AMBIGUOUS

The work environment is perceived as ambiguous based on the high level of uncertainty. There is a need to stop being afraid of change but learning to embrace it.

SELF-DISCOVERY & SELF-MANAGEMENT IN A VUCA ENVIRONMENT

SELF-DISCOVERY

So living in a VUCA environment, it is extremely important to know who we are, how we want to position ourselves and in what direction we want to head. Hence self-discovery is an essential basic step before jumping into self-branding.

We mostly highlighted the crucial steps and tools for creating self-awareness in the first chapter of this Career book. In this chapter, we already covered:

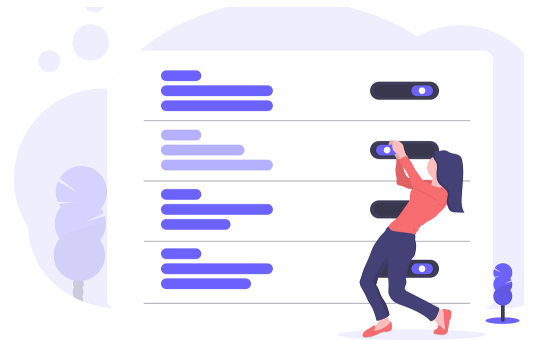
- personality traits
- values
- mission
- goals

The most important message with this self-discovery is:

The more we are aligned with who we are at work, who we are at home, who we are in our personhood, we have a higher level of this special energy called alignment. It gives us strength, resilience, and courage in the face of uncertainty.

If you need more tools to define who you are, there are a couple of good and also free tests out there you can do:

- The Myers-Briggs
- The DiSC model
- The Holland Model



DEEP-DIVE DiSC MODEL

DiSC is a psychometric behavior assessment tool based on the DiSC theory of psychologist William Moulton Marston. This theory centers on four different behavioral traits - Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. This tool is a great way to explore more the personality side of yours. You will become more self-knowledgeable, and also you will better understand how you communicate with people around you. The DiSC model is great to be introduced within teams and to reduce misunderstandings based on different personality traits.

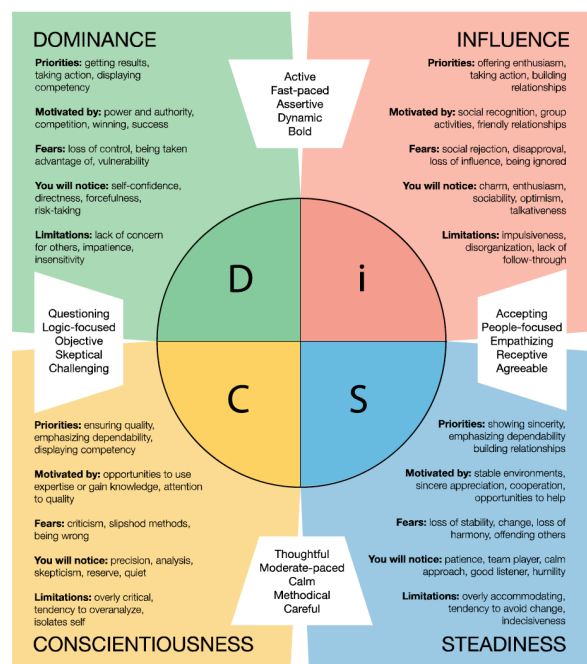
CORNERSTONE PRINCIPLES:

- All DiSC styles are equally valuable, and everyone is a blend of all four styles
- Your DiSC style is also influenced by other factors such as life experience, education, and maturity
- Understanding yourself better is the first step to becoming more effective when working with others
- Learning about other people's DiSC styles can help you understand their priorities and how they may differ from your own
- You can improve the quality of your sales interactions by using DiSC to build more effective relationships

OVERVIEW OF THE DiSC® STYLES

EVERYTHING
SALES

The graphic below provides a snapshot of the four basic DiSC® styles.



THE FOUR BASIC DISC STYLES

DOMINANCE

A person who places emphasis on accomplishing results, the bottom line, and confidence.

Behaviors include:

- sees the big picture
- can be blunt
- accepts challenges
- gets straight to the point

INFLUENCE

A person who places emphasis on influencing or persuading others, openness, relationships.

Behaviors include:

- shows enthusiasm
- is optimistic
- likes to collaborate
- dislikes being ignorant

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

A person who emphasis on quality and accuracy, expertise, and competency.

Behaviors include:

- enjoys independence
- objective reasoning
- wants the details
- fears being wrong

STEADINESS

A person who places emphasis on cooperation, sincerity, and dependability.

Behaviors include:

- doesn't like to be rushed
- calm manner
- calm approach
- supportive actions
- humility

Online you will find lots of resources to deep-dive the DiSC model as well as free tests to find out how your personality is portrait as a mix of the four types. Reading through the results will help you with your self-discovery journey as well feed you with some great strengths to mention in your job interviews!

SELF-MANAGEMENT

The VUCA environment demands a lot of self-management meaning getting motivated to act on change proactively and taking on new skills and habits autonomously. Let's explore how to incorporate self-management into your daily life:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{SELF-MANAGEMENT} \\ &= \\ &\text{SELF-CONTROL} \\ &+ \\ &\text{SELF-REGULATION} \\ &+ \\ &\text{SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING} \end{aligned}$$

SELF-CONTROL

- Puts you in the driver seat
- Makes you the CEO of your own career
- Being active - not passive
- Take your career planning back in your own hands

SELF-REGULATION

- The ability to change your behaviour and actions as you need to
- modify your behavior in your best long-term
- modify in alignment with your values and consistent with your mission
- You look out what is needed and evaluate how to move forward

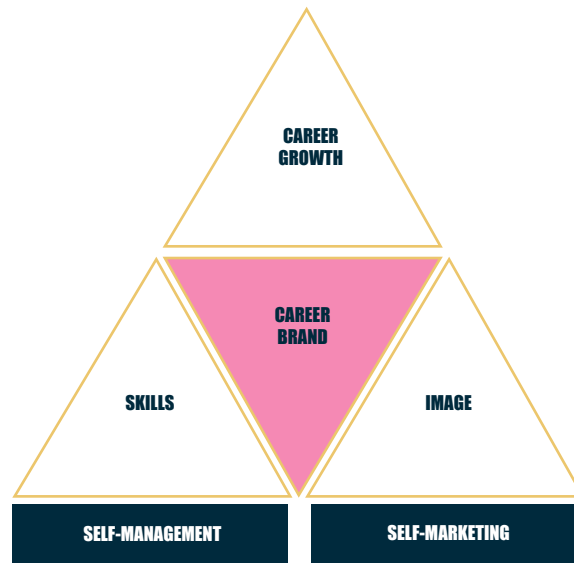
SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

- Just-in-time learning allows you to grow your skills at your pace
- learning new skills provides a high level of career agility
- not lead by an instructor but led by you
- you are the professor and student at the same time as you are teaching yourself how to learn and what to learn

Ask yourself:

How are these incorporated in my life right now? Where do I see the biggest lever to create change? Are you active or passive? Are you the professor or student?

THE COMPONENTS OF CAREER BRANDING



A strong brand is based on a strong skill portfolio and reinforced by a powerful personal image. So a career brand consists of two essential components:

the functional: **SKILLS**

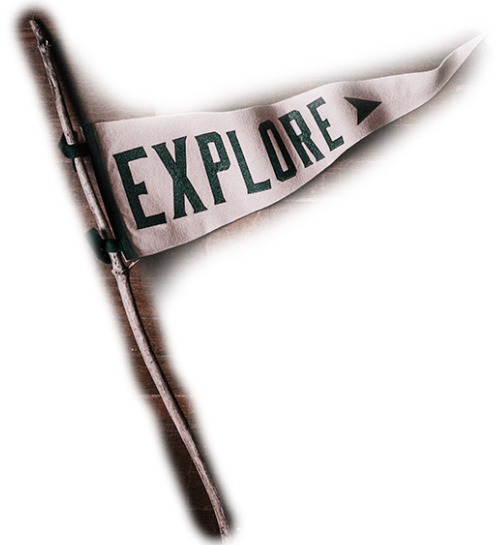
the emotional: **PERSONAL IMAGE**

Both components are critically important for employability. We learned that career pathways have become non-linear. The workspace has become more volatile and also competitive. Standing out is essential, but it is nothing that “just happens” but something that needs to be prepared and prioritized. Working on your functional (SKILLS) and emotional level (PERSONAL IMAGE) is therefore vital to your career success. According to Schaffner and Zalewski (2011), six factors heavily influence career success:

1. Maintain your own employability
2. Develop capabilities to acquire new skills on your own / be a self-directed learner
3. Increase your human capital by developing transferable skills
4. Learn how to document and communicate your skills
5. Engage in self-marketing
6. Be proactive and develop a positive attitude towards self-improvement

So how do employers choose the perfect candidate for the job? Sure they are going through the different applications checking for education, skills, and work experience. However, once invited to the personal interview, they see themselves sitting across potential employees with a very different set of assets. Now it's the time when employers are looking for points of differentiation. They are paying attention to their inner voice, telling them which candidate fits best.

Consequently, it is vital to make a distinct impression to stand out at exactly this moment. This is the time we are shifting our attention from the functional level (Skills) to the emotional level (Personal image).



The goal of this whole chapter is to connect brand building with skill building and provide a holistic approach to career self-management, with the use of self-coaching tools.

Personal branding is about telling your story. BUT: It is vital to make sure that your story is clear and supported by evidence that suggests your unique value proposition.

The potential contribution that you make and the evidence that you can find can really present the difference that differentiates you from potential competitors.

So, think about: what values and qualities are you standing for?

YOUR UNIQUE BUNDLE OF SKILLS

YOUR CREDENTIALS

YOUR ABILITIES

YOUR TEMPERAMENT

YOUR STRENGTHS

YOUR VALUES

YOUR EXPERIENCES

YOUR TALENTS

YOUR PERSONALITY ATTRIBUTES

You can start to collect artifacts that really speak to each of these categories and integrate them into your portfolio.

WHEN DOING SO, REMIND YOURSELF OF TWO SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS:

- How does it set you apart from competitors
- How do you keep your personal brand current?
- How would you describe your current career identity?

THE FOLLOWING EIGHT CATEGORIES MIGHT HELP YOU WITH THAT:

SPECIALIZATION

What are your unique skills?

LEADERSHIP

Have you lead projects? Have you created team-based communication strategies?
Can you name them?

PERSONALITY

How does your social media presence capture your personality?

DISTINCTIVENESS

Is the evidence distinct, or do you use the same CV template as everyone?

VISIBILITY

Can people find you? Do you have a strong presence? Are you a known expert in your field?

UNITY

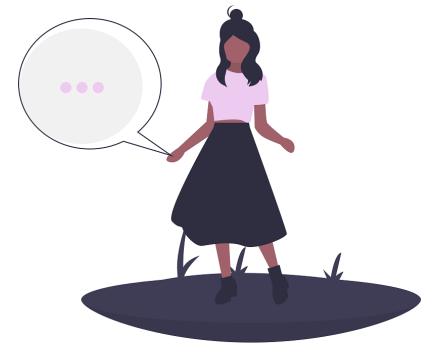
Is there some cohesion to your artifacts? Is there alignment between your social media presence?

PERSISTENCE

Do you have references that speak to your work ethic and your ability to work independently?

GOODWILL

Can colleagues endorse your abilities?



HELPFUL QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL BRANDING

ACHIEVEMENT

- What are your biggest achievements?
- What roadblocks have you successfully navigated?
- How did you do it?
- Could you teach someone else?

ABILITIES

- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What gaps have you discovered, and how are you addressing them?
- Can you describe a situation where you provided leadership?
- What did you do and what were the results?

ACCOLADES

- How do you think your manager or supervisor would describe you?
- How about your colleagues?

ACTION

- What are your short and long term goals (3/5/7 years)?
- What concrete steps do you have taken to achieve these goals?

SO LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!

With all the thought triggering questions mentioned, think about who you are as a brand and which key elements you want to put into the spotlight. Use the next page, to visualize your brand statement either in bullet points, sketches or in more comprehensive written form.



WITH ALL THESE CATEGORIES AND QUESTIONS IN MIND: WHAT IS YOUR BRAND STATEMENT / ELEVATOR PITCH?

MY BRAND STATEMENT



INCREASE VISIBILITY

We live in a communication age. Being able to communicate effectively - especially about yourself, is one of the most essential professional skills.

In fact, being able to communicate information accurately, clearly, and well-intended will open many doors for you to new and better opportunities. Nowadays, we tend to share online so much without thinking about the bigger picture and the perception we create about our personality and professional assets.

However, from time to time, we should stop and think about this: Imagine there is a billboard on the highway with your picture and your online presence on it. What would you like to see on it? What does this billboard currently tell the world about your values, your experience, your ambitions? How could you change the narrative? And how can you get in charge to be the person putting the right information on this billboard?

On the following pages, I want to share why visibility is so crucial in shaping your career and what you can do to control the narrative. We are taking a look at how HR consultants read online profiles, and we distinguish different opportunities to create and share our online presence. The goal is to create carefully curated content that supports our mission to become career smart.

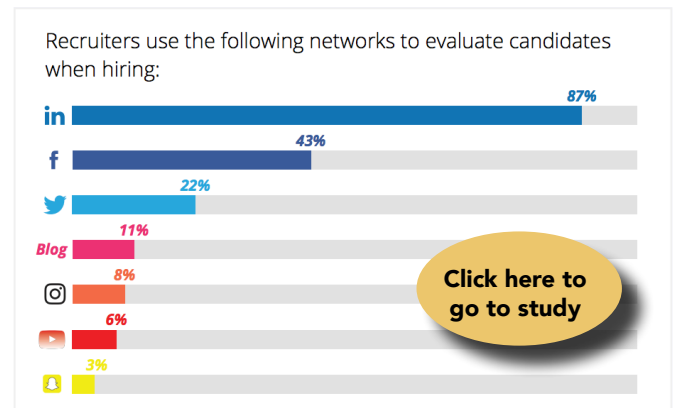


WHY CURATING YOUR DIGITAL PROFILE IS IMPORTANT

1. Your potential employer or other stakeholders such as clients will go online first to brand you. (See statistics below)
2. Your digital profile is a reflection of who you are, what you have done, and what you are up to.
3. Your digital profile offers the opportunities to take storytelling into your own hands, stressing your strengths and downplaying areas that might be not so strong.

IMPORTANCE OF VISIBILITY DURING THE JOB HUNT

A standard CV (resume) may no longer be enough to stand out from the crowd in a rapidly changing global job market. According to a survey by Jobvite (USA 2016), employers are increasingly using social media to evaluate candidates in the recruitment process. The main tools they use are LinkedIn (87%), Facebook (63%), and Twitter (22%).



SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT HOW HR CONSULTANTS SCREEN YOUR PROFILES:

SOCIAL RECRUITING IS A REAL THING!
3 IN 10 EMPLOYERS HAVE SOMEONE
DEDICATED TO SOLELY GETTING THE
SCOOP
ON YOUR ONLINE
PERSONA

24% OF EMPLOYERS
SCREEN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA
PRESENCE TO SPECIFICALLY
FIND INFORMATION TO NOT
HIRE YOU

- 80% of employers had been positively influenced by a candidate's professional social network profile. For example, if it demonstrated volunteering or social enterprise experience, engagement with relevant current events, and correct spelling and grammar.
- 78% of employers had been negatively influenced towards a candidate by their inappropriate use of social media, such as posting selfies or their drinking exploits.

The basic principles of social media marketing can also be applied to ourselves. For example, creative videos produced by candidates are playing an increasingly important role in the application process, as are blogging, tweeting, and participating in relevant online communities such as LinkedIn. So, maintaining a 'personal brand' through online and offline networking is now an essential aspect of career development.

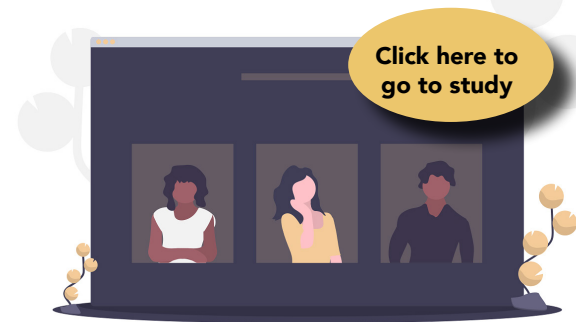
For jobseekers, this is not just about deleting a few embarrassing photos – it is about making sure that the information displayed on social networks is going to actively encourage rather than discourage potential employers. We should make all that data actively work for us.

So instead of looking at your social presence as a problem, look at it as a possibility to up your chances for employment.

According to the Career Builder survey, employers are searching for a few key items when researching candidates via social networking sites as good signs to hire:

WHAT RECRUITERS ARE LOOKING FOR

- Information that supports their qualifications for the job (6%)
- If the candidate has a professional online persona at all (50%)
- What other people are posting about the candidates (37%)
- For any reason at all not to hire a candidate (24%)



THE RED FLAGS OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE, ACCORDING TO RECRUITERS:

- Candidate posted provocative or inappropriate photographs, videos or information: 39%
- Candidate posted information about them drinking or using drugs: 38%
- Candidate had discriminatory comments related to race, gender or religion: 32%
- Candidate bad-mouthed their previous company or fellow employee: 30%
- Candidate lied about qualifications: 27%
- Candidate had poor communication skills: 27%
- Candidate was linked to criminal behavior: 26%
- Candidate shared confidential information from previous employers: 23%
- Candidate's screen name was unprofessional: 22%
- Candidate lied about an absence: 17%
- Candidate posted too frequently: 17%

YOUR PERSONAL BRANDING PLATFORMS TO INCREASE VISIBILITY

PERSONAL WEBSITES

- Medium
- Wordpress
- Squarespace
- Wix
- About.me

SOCIAL MEDIA

- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Instagram
- YouTube

DIGITAL CREDENTIALS

- OpenBadges validated by an association or university
- DeakinCo
- OpenUniversity

Next to your resume, there are other forms to present your skills and experiences. While creating an own website might sound like a lot of effort, there are different levels to approach this project. Of course, you could deep dive and develop a wordpress.org website from scratch. But you could also rely on a finished template or look at services such as about.me that offer you the possibility to present yourself without having to invest heavily - and by investing, I mean money AND time.

ADVANTAGES OF CREATING YOUR OWN WEBSITE:

- Create a portfolio of your work
- Create a platform to share your interests
- Share what you have to say in more depths

TIPS:

- Look at other blogs for inspiration
- Check out my personal tips to create a blog on sharethelove.blog
- Make a list of potential content ideas to see whether this is the right path to go

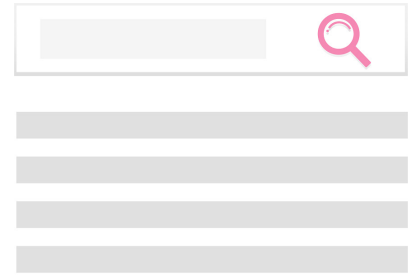
Social Media is pretty much self-explanatory. I will highlight the most essential tools to make the most out of your LinkedIn profile in a minute.

I also want to point out the possibility to think about digital credentials. While this is profoundly connected to the chapter of establishing a future-proofing skillset, services such as DeakinCo and OpenBadges also offers you the opportunity to make those skills visible.

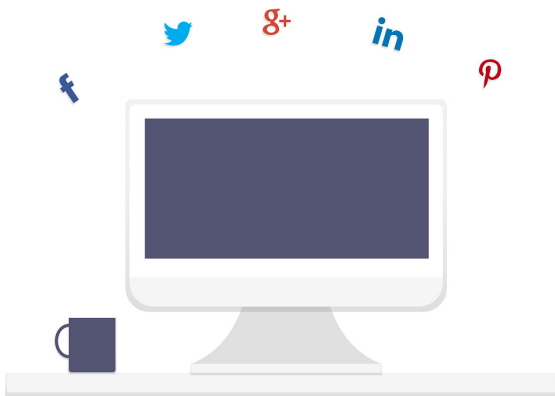
GOOGLE YOURSELF

Make it a habit to regularly google yourself to check for outdated and misleading information. Check whether the information on the first five pages matches your current state and the path you want to take. Set up a google alert for your name on google.com/alerts to not miss out on new hits coming up.

If you want to change the narrative of this personal reflection on google feed its algorithm. The best way of doing this is to write blog posts or share professional work-related status updates on all of your social media channels.



BOOST YOUR DIGITAL BUSINESS CARD ON LINKEDIN



Recruiters agree across multiple surveys that LinkedIn is the single best source for company branding. The same can be said about employee branding. LinkedIn is the marketplace where both meet to show off their expertise and what they have to offer professionally.

With more than 10 Mio. jobs postings, over 500 Million members, and 3 Million company profile, LinkedIn is one of the biggest job portals worldwide. While many countries often have their local networking service (such as XING in Germany) LinkedIn is known globally and is, therefore, an essential career tool for Expats and Expat Partners.

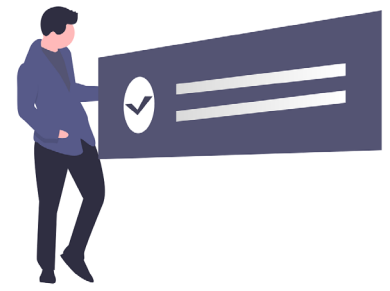
LinkedIn is heavily investing in recruiting. At the moment almost 2/3 of all revenue is coming from recruiting tools shaping it to a \$2 Billion dollar company.

WHY TO BE ON LINKEDIN

- To communicate your personal brand and unique value to potential target companies or clients
- To demonstrate thought leadership
- To become visible and findable by a person that actually want to help you with your career goals
- To demonstrate your digital literacy skills
- To use it as a research tool for the local job market
- Networking: connect with people at your target company.

BASIC RULE OF THUMP

- Keep your profile always up to date (!)
- Short & straightforward. Don't mix it up with your resume
- Add some visuals to stand out
- Complete (Picture, header area etc.) Don't leave out sections
- Reflect your personality
- Use keywords recruiters would search for



USE THE HEADER AREA WISELY

Most people forget to fill out the header area. However, that is the section recruiters pay a lot of attention to. It is also the first impression to anybody visiting your profile.

That's the part where you can put more personality into your resume. Talk about your interests and be aspirational (as my American friends would put it). Recruiters hire people and no profiles and this is your spot to stand out.



Ali Schneeman • 2nd

Passionate about client success || Proud dog mom || Competitive ex-athlete

Use the space wisely as putting your last job title in their would only be a repetition instead of new information. Ad a background picture you like and use some catchy phrases.

CHECK YOUR PROFILE PICTURE

We all know how important a well-shot profile pic is and I won't go into the obvious things here (Background, Lighting, Expression)

However human beings are self-centered creatures and from time to time it makes sense to step back and see how others are reacting to you.

I find www.photofeeler.com is doing a good job with that. You can upload your picture and others will vote how competent, likable and influential you appear in your profile pic. To gain votes you vote on other profile pics. It's fun to try out.



Tested on photofeeler

HOW TO PICK YOUR KEYWORDS

LinkedIn basically works like a search engine and recruiters are searching for specific keywords in order to find the perfect fit for their clients.

It is a good exercise to search for people with similar work experience. Search for the exact job title of your dream job and your past jobs. An Executive Assistant is, for instance, something completely different in Germany and the United States and you have to search for a much better translation. As a next step check out the keywords people with similar job titles are using in order to describe their job. These will be the keywords recruiters and potential business contacts will use to find your profile.

RECOMMENDATIONS - A POWERFUL TOOL TO GAIN BUSINESS CREDIBILITY

You can ask so-called 1st-grade contacts for a recommendation. Go to the profile of the other person and beneath their profile pic you can click on more. Hereby you can ask, combined with a nice note, for a written recommendation. In the best case, the other person will write it in English.

Important: The recommendation has to be written through the LinkedIn tool. You can't include written recommendations which you received for example through a mail in your profile. Only through the recommendation tool, LinkedIn is able to verify the reference.

Keep in mind that it is a two-way road: If you ask another person for a recommendation you should be ready to return the favor. You can also go ahead and write a recommendation first. This could be a nice opening to this whole topic.

ALLOW PEOPLE TO CONTACT YOU

LinkedIn is like any other business on a mission to earn some money. Therefore they are heavily pushing their membership program. Without a paid membership the function of messaging other people is restricted. Hence you should offer other ways of getting contacted.

Your profile allows you to state information such as phone number and email address. If you don't want to share your phone number with the world you can always set the settings to private so only your contacts will see your number and /or email address. (They keep changing this function so keep an eye out)

WAYS TO PUSH THE LINKEDIN ALGORITHM

1. LINKEDIN REWARDS NATIVE CONTENT

- Instead of linking to an article outside the platform, consider using the LinkedIn publishing tool to write onsite articles
- Include screenshots, high level of expertise in those articles
- Use the title to showcase your unique perspective on the topic

2. MAKE YOUR LINKEDIN POSTS EASIER TO READ

- Instead of only sharing someone else's article, add your own perspective and opinion
- Spread text out into chunks that are easier to read
- If you want to focus on what you have to say, share the link to the external article in the comment section to remain focus



YOUR LINKEDIN CHECKLIST

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR GOALS FOR USING LINKEDIN?

ARE THESE GOALS CONCRETE AND MEASURABLE?

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO MODIFY YOUR PUBLIC PROFILE?

WHAT IS YOUR STRATEGY FOR USING LINKEDIN AS A NETWORKING TOOL?

HOW WILL YOU SHAPE YOUR PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION USING LINKEDIN?



HOW TO IMPROVE VISIBILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

If you are already in a job position you are looking for the next career step within the company, increasing visibility will help you with that. Only employees who are noted by the decision-makers will include you in the selection process. The following approaches can help you to sharpen your profile as a valuable asset and to get on the list of high potentials for upcoming projects:

1. SPEAK UP IN MEETINGS

Depending on your personality, this will be either a straight-forward tip or a more significant hurdle to overcome. Meetings are a perfect way to demonstrate your knowledge within the department and also beyond. If you are struggling with speaking up in meetings, work on your self-confidence as part of preparation. Try to become a more engaging speaker, get feedback from friends and colleagues, and test out different approaches. Plan your personal agenda for the meeting beforehand and go into each meeting with a project-related goal but also with a sense of using the meeting as your platform.



2. STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BOSS

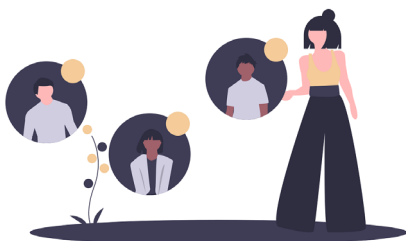
Search for opportunities even outside the yearly evaluation process to get his/her attention and ask actively for feedback. Ask for projects with higher visibility and offer yourself to bring more value to the team beyond your usual job description. Volunteer to represent your team and the work that you are doing beyond your department. Tackle a project no one else wants to do is also a great way to boost your visibility. However, watch out for potential backfires!

3. THINK STRATEGICALLY

Question projects from a company's rather than the department's perspective. Check your current work with the overall company's vision and check for more strategic approaches to solve an existing problem. Start to think strategically besides your current job profile and ask yourself: What else can be done?

4. BROADEN YOUR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT NETWORK

Look for a mentor within the company that can help you with gaining more visibility. Search for a person that has achieved what you are looking for, and that is highly connected within the company. Boost your networking activities inside the company by arranging lunch dates with people you usually are not working or connected with. Highlight others' achievements and become involved with other people's professional developments.

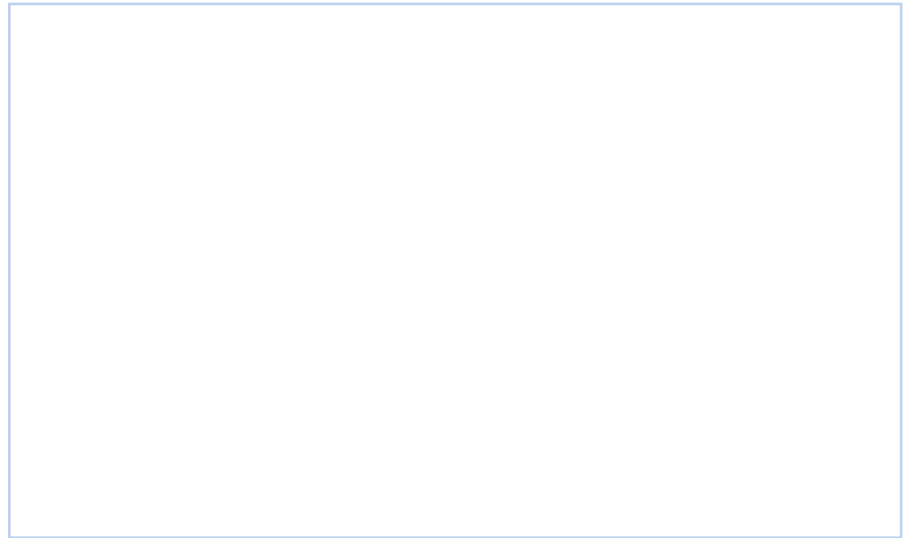


THE THREE STEPS TO GAIN MORE VISIBILITY

To summarize this chapter, let's focus on the three essential steps to gain more visibility. In the end, it is a process and something you can hold yourself accountable for:

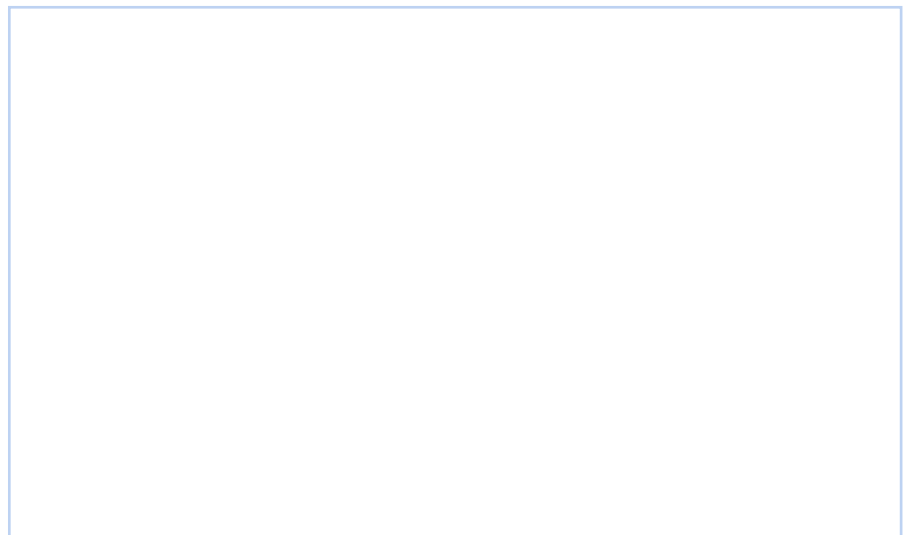
1. DISPLAY

- How are you going to display your work? Choose your preferred content platform
- What are you going to display? Go through your skills and competencies and create an e-portfolio of your assets



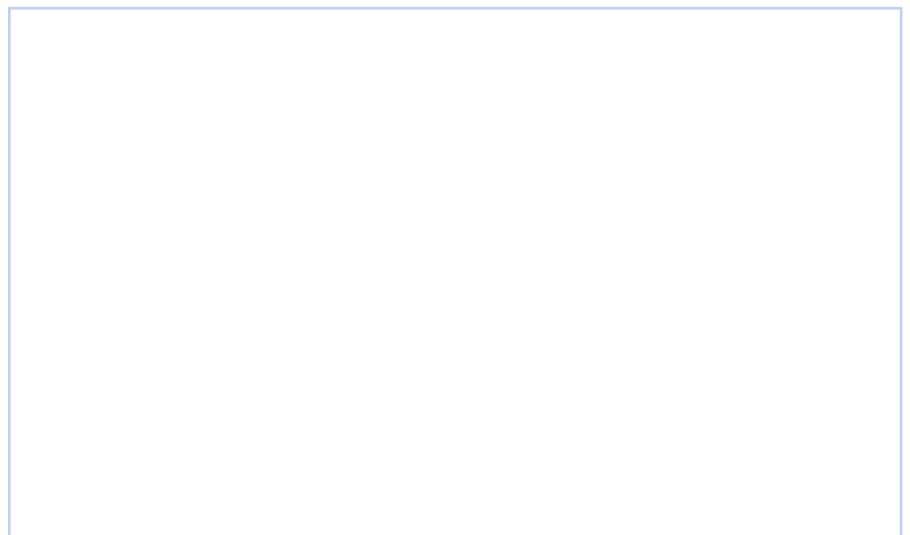
2. PROMOTE

- How do you get people to see it? Choose your preferred social media channels



3. ASSESS

- Is it paying off? Use timelines and measurables dates. Check whether your efforts strengthen your network and increase the quality of your professional contact base.



BECOME A NETWORKING EXPERT

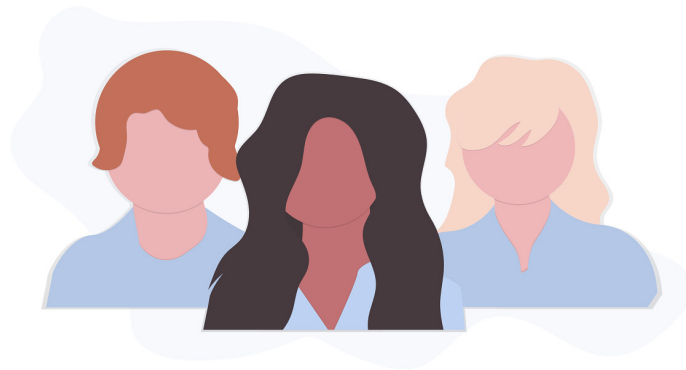
Networking can be a very daunting activity. I guess we can all agree that there is a huge benefit in networking - not only to evolve professionally but also to meet new friends or widen your horizon and get new ideas. However, many people shy away from making this first step and actually reach out to the other person across the room. Here is an overview of the benefits and most common concerns when it comes to face-to-face-networking.

PRO

- Makes you more memorable
- Creates leads
- Provides information that keeps you up to date
- Allows you to build trust
- Can help you to solve problems just by talking it through out loud and hear another person's perspective.

CON

- Can be daunting
- Can be difficult to strike up a conversation
- Fear of rejection
- Being ignored
- Time & energy-intense



START YOUR NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

I hope this list shows you that whatever concern you had about networking so far that you are not alone. Most people are not naturally savvy in networking and actually do fear the personal encounter. If you are feeling the same way, keep on reading to learn about where to go for networking and how to work on your interpersonal skills to make it easier for you.

Ok so let's imagine you are in an excellent place to start networking. The first question is where to go to. Obviously googling for networking events in the area can be a great starting point. However, I also made the experience that those events have ended up being very cheesy and filled with people busy handing out business cards without being really interested in the other person's story.

So what locations could you think of to network? Here is a list of places I found useful over the last couple of years:

WHERE TO NETWORK

- Clubs such as gyms and sporting activities
- Corporate events
- Conferences
- Volunteering
- Professional associations (highly recommended)
- Social events
- Presentations and award evenings
- Training courses
- Community gatherings

ONLINE NETWORKING - THE NEW NORM?

In today's digital world, online networking is equally as important - if not more so - than face-to-face networking.

Online networking can be quick, effective, and most of all, global. For those that experience face-to-face networking as challenging, an online approach can be a great starting point to get the ball rolling. Think about contacting people within your city via social media (LinkedIn is a great start). Introduce yourself and explain why you think a phone call, online chat, or even a personal meeting would be beneficial to both of you. Make the most out of the scalability of the internet and spread out. In case you just moved cities or countries do not only reach out to locals but use networking to stay in touch with your home base and keep your network up-to-date with your current developments.

TRAINING YOUR INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

The foundation of successful networking is training on your interpersonal skills. But what are those skills specifically?

Let's see!

VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING SKILLS

Watch your volume, pitch, speed, and tone when delivering communication. Likewise, it is all about active listening skills when receiving communication, meaning: no interruptions, paying attention, and providing visual clues that show that you are listening. Try to move judgment on what you have heard aside and respond with curiosity.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

We are talking about facial expressions and hand gestures. Maintain eye-contact without staring and check your posture. Raising awareness about your current facial expressions and posture (that we are often not aware of) is the first step for improving your first expression. It's about the signals you are sending out AND interpreting the signals that you are receiving.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to recognize and manage emotions in yourself as well as your dealings with others. The goal is not to separate feelings from thinking but to combine those. People with high Emotional Intelligence tend to be good listeners and come across as caring and considerate. They react calmly in stressful situations.

The expert Goleman (1995) distinguishes between five domains of Emotional Intelligence. Knowing about them is directly linked to improving your interpersonal skills.

1. *Self-awareness: Knowing your own emotions*
2. *Self-regulation: Managing your own emotions*
3. *Self-motivation: The inner drive that goes beyond external rewards*
4. *Empathy: Recognition and understanding other people's emotions*
5. *Social skills: Managing relationships*

DIMENSION	DEFINITION	CONNECTION TO NETWORKING
Self-awareness	Knowing your own emotions	Creating awareness about being uncomfortable will help you to manage it
Self-regulation	Managing your own emotions	
Self-motivation	The inner drive that goes beyond external rewards	Networking should be of mutual value and not only about your own interests. Show that your desire is of mutual interest
Empathy	Recognition and understanding other people's emotions	Overcome your own shyness as you know the other person is most likely feeling the same
Social skills	Managing relationships	Focus on your interpersonal skills

The better you are dealing with those five dimensions - the smoother networking will go for you as you are improving your first-time impression.

ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

I want to get a bit deeper into the skill of active listening as it sounds easy but actually needs a lot of practice. In coaching, active listening is a vital skill that you need to demonstrate in every session to help the client. A powerful listener is someone who is able to focus on what another person is saying without getting distracted. A powerful listener has intense focus. A powerful listener is present in the moment of the conversation. In our everyday life, we tend to be terrible active listeners. We tend to take conversations between our private relationships for granted and do not pay much attention. However, how often do you catch yourself waiting desperately for your friend to finish his sentence so that you can step in and respond? It requires putting our own needs aside to listen to another. As a consequence, you are assuming right from the beginning where the other person will go with his talk and prepare for it without listening actively anymore. We are judging right from the start even before the sentence has been finished.

So let me share some coaching tools to help you with your active listening skills:

RECOGNITION

Show that you understand by nodding with your head, occasional agreeing sounds and don't forget to smile and keep eye-contact. All those things will let the speaker know that you are listening.

MIRRORING

Mirroring the facial expressions and body language of the speaker creates intimacy and comforts the other person.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Drop in positive words from time to time, such as "absolutely," "indeed," or "interesting."

PARAPHRASING

Repeating what has been said by the other person in your own words as proof that you have listened.

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The more open questions (beginning with What & How) you are asking the other person, the easier it will be to enjoy a fluent conversation. If you are talking to a person who is insecure or seems not interested in the conversation, an open-ended question can work wonders. Instead of asking "Do you like living in Chicago?" try "What do you like about Chicago?" Instead of asking "Do you also hate the cold winters here?" try "What is your remedy for these cold days?" Instead of "Do you like your job?" try "How did you end up in this career path?" or "What excites you about your job?"

Open-ended questions signal that you are genuinely interested to learn more and that you give the other space to answer.

HOW ACTIVE LISTENING SHOWS RESPECT TO OTHER PEOPLE AND MAKES YOU MEMORABLE AS A PERSON

As humans the very nature of being understood and heard is connected to our sense of self worth. When you are speaking, you have something of value to say and you want to say it to contribute and to be heard. If you are not listened to or even ignored, this hits at the heart of who you are and your self esteem.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT

Remember that networking is not about what you can get out of the other person but to explore who this person is and how you can help to improve the situation. Building trust in networking is widely essential. Avoid going around the room, quickly handing out as many business cards as possible. Doing that means that you are immediately filtering the room after entering distinguishing between apparently worthy contact and unworthy connections. However, without getting to know the other person, there is no way to do filtering without missing out on great opportunities. So remember not to judge people too quickly - especially when dealing with cultures you are unfamiliar with.



EXIT A CONVERSATION SMOOTHLY

Whether it is making the first step, approaching strangers or finding a suitable topic to talk about. Everyone has their own pain point when it comes to networking. So observe your own behavior when going out to meet new people and define what is most struggling for you to find a cure.

In my case, I find it hard to exit a conversation. It feels harsh to me to turn my back towards someone just to make contact with another person. However, if you don't stop the conversation at one point in time, you won't make much out of the evening (in case you are not just talking to your maybe future husband or friend).

Become creative in finding ways to exit a conversation without feeling awkward. Common techniques are browsing the room for someone you might now or excusing yourself to get a snack or something to drink.

"I am getting myself another drink - please excuse me." or " I have spotted someone over there and want to say hello before he leaves - please excuse me."

Chose something that feels right to you in this particular situation and test out different versions. The more experience you are gaining, the more you will feel comfortable in exiting a networking conversation that is either not fruitful or not engaging any longer.

YOUR NETWORKING CHECKLIST

- Smile & make eye-contact. Check your „resting-bitch face“ expression
- Arriving early can help to not feel intimidated
- Show genuine interest in other peoples' stories
- Prepare your elevator pitch upfront
- Bring business cards even if you have no business. Do you think it's old-school? Yes! But it's still the easiest way to stay in contact with the broader demographics
- Remember names and use them within the conversation to establish a relationship
- Be proactive. If you are wondering whether you should approach someone and hesitate - the right answer is always yes!
Train your interpersonal skills. Some people are naturally gifted others need to practice.
- Excuse yourself to make conversations with others
- Be patient with follow-ups: Sometimes it can take two years for a contact to get back to you but make sure you are somehow connected in the first place (e.g. LinkedIn)



PUTTING ALL THE PARTS TOGETHER

DISC MODEL - I AM

- GREEN
- YELLOW
- BLUE
- RED

MY PERSONAL GOAL FOR SELF-BRANDING IS: _____



MY BRAND STATEMENT IN THREE WORDS:

MY BRANDING PLATFORM WILL BE:

THE NEXT NETWORKING EVENT I WILL BE ATTENDING:

ON THAT EVENT I WANT TO DO:

SOME FINAL NOTES

Congratulations for making it till the end of this ebook. It really shows your determination to push your career forward and start a new professional chapter in your life. If you are living the global life, it comes with many learning curves that sometimes hijack our career focus for some time. One of the most asked questions in my coaching sessions is therefore „How do I deal with the gap in my CV?“

I hope this guide was helping you with this question, showing you what you already added on to your 21st-century skillset. Just think about your growth in intercultural communication or the broad range of soft skills you have acquired dealing with unforeseen challenges along the way in an unfamiliar surrounding.

I hope that the last chapter showed you that we are the master of our own story and that it depends on us how we will tell this story. You alone are in charge of putting the spotlight in the right corner and present yourself from an angle that makes people want to know more about you and your potential. Be aware of your mimic and gesture when telling about your life and career so far and show the beauty of it!

The modern workplace comes along with so much change, and the focus on soft skills only highlight that no one can know for sure what will be expected except flexibility, open-mindedness, creativity, and a spirit of „let’s do this“. I am very positive that you are already carrying these attitudes with you! Do not let worrying about a career break spoil this for you! Do not lose confidence in yourself because you missed on acknowledgment by former bosses or colleagues! You got this, and the only thing that is needed is: reminding ourselves about the potential we are already carrying, developing a curiosity to learn about new skills along the way, and demonstrate in a clear manner what it is that we want for our next career step!

I wish you all the best along the way! Get in touch with me if you want to deepen the conversation! Email me to info@sharethelove.blog or contact me via my social media or website.

You got this!



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Katharina von Knobloch

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THE 4 STEPS TO CAREER SUCCESS

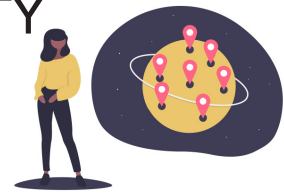
1

SET YOUR CAREER INTENTION:
WHAT DO YOU WANT?



2

GAIN INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE:
MASTERING GLOBAL MOBILITY



3

GROW EMPLOYABILITY:
BECOMING COMPETITIVE



4

BECOME VISIBLE & CONNECTED:
STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

