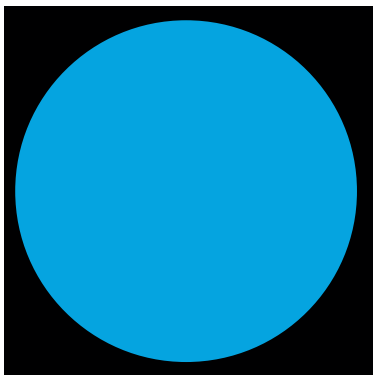
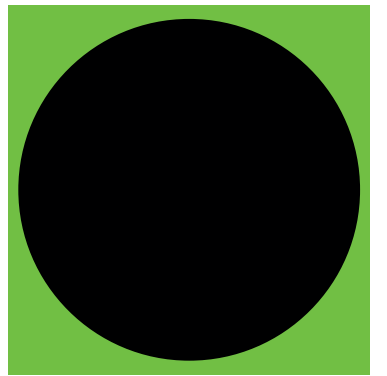




FORGE



AHEAD



Forge Ahead

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Forge Ahead

**A Creative Guide for
Mapping Possibilities
and Finding Direction**

Welcome to Your Next Frontier: Your Career Futures Kit

Congratulations! This kit is designed to help you navigate the challenges and opportunities of the future while staying true to your values, ambitions, and unique strengths. To explore what might lie ahead, we'll blend imaginative thinking with practical tools to help you chart a unique path for your life and career. Through foresight methodologies and reflective exercises, you'll gain clarity about your goals and develop strategies to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

Foresight methodologies are tools and approaches that help us think systematically about the future. They are used by innovators, policymakers, and leaders to anticipate trends, consider possibilities, and make better decisions in uncertain times. These methods are not about predicting the future; instead, they encourage critical and creative thinking, helping us to imagine and shape visions of the future that are aligned with our values and aspirations. Whether applied to career planning, personal growth, or global challenges, foresight offers a framework for understanding change and making intentional choices.

The activities in this kit are grouped into three key categories: understanding yourself, exploring future possibilities, and taking purposeful action. You'll start by identifying what matters most to you: your core values, personal identity, and non-negotiables. Then, you'll dive into exercises that map out your future, from envisioning long-term goals to anticipating the ripple effects of key decisions. Finally, you'll translate your aspirations into achievable milestones and actionable steps.

This process is about aligning your career with your values and the impact you want to make. The future isn't something that happens to you—it's something you create, in collaboration with others and in response to changing contexts and conditions. With this kit, you'll have the tools to take charge of your journey and step into your next chapter with confidence and purpose.

Your future starts here. Let's get to work!



Reflecting on Values and Visions

Non-Negotiables

Identifying Your Career Must-Haves

This activity helps you identify your core values and the conditions you refuse to compromise in your career. By clarifying your non-negotiables, you can make career decisions that align with your integrity, well-being, and long-term fulfillment.

Understanding your non-negotiables fosters self-awareness and strategic decision-making, ensuring that your career aligns with your personal and professional values. It's a vital step toward a sustainable, fulfilling, and purpose-driven career — one where you don't feel forced to sacrifice your well-being for success.

STEP 1

Identify Your Core Values

Consider the values that define you and that your career must honor. These could include:

- Ethical alignment (for example, working in socially responsible industries)
- Growth and learning (for example, continuous education, mentorship opportunities)
- Autonomy and flexibility (for example, control over your schedule, remote work)
- Community and collaboration (for example, working in a supportive team)
- Creativity and innovation (for example, having the freedom to experiment and create)

Brainstorm 3-5 values that are non-negotiable for you.

Examples of Values

Accountability	Future generations	Pride
Achievement	Generosity	Recognition
Adaptability	Giving back	Reliability
Adventure	Grace	Resourcefulness
Altruism	Gratitude	Respect
Ambition	Growth	Responsibility
Authenticity	Harmony	Risk-taking
Balance	Health	Safety
Beauty	Home	Security
Being the best	Honesty	Self-discipline
Belonging	Hope	Self-expression
Career	Humility	Self-respect
Caring	Humor	Serenity
Collaboration	Inclusion	Service
Commitment	Independence	Simplicity
Community	Initiative	Spirituality
Compassion	Integrity	Sportsmanship
Competence	Intuition	Stewardship
Confidence	Job security	Success
Connection	Joy	Teamwork
Contentment	Justice	Thrift
Contribution	Kindness	Time
Cooperation	Knowledge	Tradition
Courage	Leadership	Travel
Creativity	Learning	Trust
Curiosity	Legacy	Truth
Dignity	Leisure	Understanding
Diversity	Love	Uniqueness
Environment	Loyalty	Usefulness
Efficiency	Making a difference	Vision
Equality	Nature	Vulnerability
Ethics	Openness	Wealth
Excellence	Optimism	Well-being
Fairness	Order	Wholeheartedness
Faith	Parenting	Wisdom
Family	Patience	_____
Financial stability	Patriotism	_____
Forgiveness	Peace	_____
Freedom	Perseverance	_____
Friendship	Personal fulfillment	_____
Fun	Power	_____

Let's take a closer look at your values.

Your personal values are likely the most important to your future career, so they are represented by the smallest circle below. Label that circle "Personal." Your sense of values are also influenced by other people, groups, and systems—for example, family, friends, faith tradition or faith community, society, culture, educational experiences. Choose the three most important influences on your values and label the remaining three circles below. The closer a circle is to the middle, the greater degree of influence it exerts on your personal values.

For each category, list up to five values. It is OK if values are included on multiple lists.

The diagram consists of four concentric circles, each representing a different level of influence on personal values. The circles decrease in size from the outermost to the innermost. Each circle is labeled "INFLUENCE VALUES" and contains a horizontal line followed by five dashed lines for writing.

- Outermost Circle (Orange):** Labeled "INFLUENCE VALUES" with a horizontal line and five dashed lines for writing.
- Second Circle (Red):** Labeled "INFLUENCE VALUES" with a horizontal line and five dashed lines for writing.
- Third Circle (Red):** Labeled "INFLUENCE VALUES" with a horizontal line and five dashed lines for writing.
- Innermost Circle (Red):** Labeled "INFLUENCE VALUES" with a horizontal line and five dashed lines for writing.

STEP 2**Define Essential Working Conditions for Your Well-Being**

Your work environment plays a huge role in your success and happiness. Think about:

- Work hours and schedule flexibility (for example, no expectation to work nights/weekends)
- Commute or remote work options (for example, unwilling to commute more than 30 minutes)
- Salary and benefits (for example, healthcare, retirement contributions, parental leave)
- Workplace culture (for example, diversity, open communication, leadership style)
- Job stability and security (for example, preference for long-term positions over short-term contracts)

List the 3-5 conditions that are essential for your well-being at work.

STEP 3**Define Your Deal Breakers (What You Will NOT Compromise)**

Think about past experiences or potential scenarios that would make you unwilling to accept a job.

EXAMPLES

- *Working for a company that violates your ethical beliefs*
- *Taking a job that requires 24/7 availability or extreme overtime*
- *Accepting a salary or compensation that does not support your financial goals*
- *Working in a hierarchical or rigid corporate culture*
- *Lack of diversity, equity, or inclusion in leadership*

What are the hard lines you refuse to cross?

Reflect

After completing the exercise, take some time to reflect on your non-negotiables and how they will shape your career choices.

1. For each value you selected as a personal value, write a sentence or two about what it means to you.
2. Note the similarities and differences between the values in each circle, representing values emanating from different people, groups, and systems that affect you. Are there any surprises? How are you influenced by each person, group, or system's set of values?
3. Reflecting on the five personal values you listed in the smallest circle, what makes these non-negotiables for you?
4. Were there any surprising realizations about your career priorities?
5. Have you ever compromised on one of these non-negotiables in the past? What was the impact?
6. How do your non-negotiables align with your long-term vision for your career?
7. Are there areas where you feel more flexible than you initially thought?

Futurity Archetypes

This playful exercise helps you define an archetype (for example, The Innovator, The Idealist) that aligns with how you tend to approach the future.

Archetypes simplify complex identities and help you focus on the traits you want to embody. They provide a narrative framework to guide your choices and keep you aligned with your aspirations. Archetypes are not set in stone, but are meant to inspire reflection.

Futurity Archetype Exercise

This exercise helps you explore your preferred archetypes for engaging with the future and understand how different approaches contribute to foresight and collaboration. You may find that you resonate with more than one archetype—or that your perspective shifts depending on context. The activity encourages self-awareness and critical thinking about how we navigate uncertainty and plan for what's next.

STEP 1

Reflect

Take a few moments to think about your approach to the future. Consider:

- How do you respond to uncertainty?
- How do you plan for long-term goals?
- What is your preferred role in group projects?

STEP 2

Understanding the Archetypes

Below are descriptions of nine archetypes that represent distinct ways that people approach the future. No archetype is better than another; all offer valuable strengths. Read through the descriptions and think about which ones resonate with you most.



1. The Methodical Strategist

- You are meticulous and focused on crafting structured plans for success.
- Approach: Plans carefully for continuous improvement.
- View of the Future: Envisions the future as perfectible through deliberate planning.



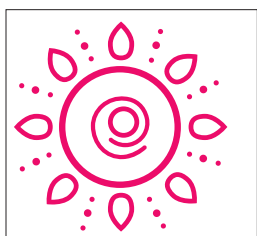
2. The Compassionate Steward

- You prioritize care and inclusivity, ensuring that everyone is supported.
- Approach: Builds inclusive, growth-centered futures.
- View of the Future: Sees the future as an opportunity for care and generosity.



3. The Charismatic Futurist

- You inspire others with bold visions and dynamic energy.
- Approach: Leads change through creativity and vision.
- View of the Future: Approaches the future as a stage for dynamic action and creativity.



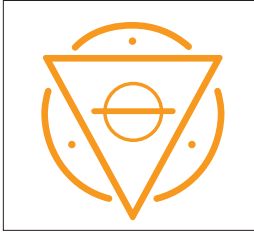
4. The Visionary Idealist

- You are driven by creativity and the desire to imagine meaningful, innovative futures.
- Approach: Envisions emotionally rich and innovative outcomes.
- View of the Future: Connects past, present, and future to create meaning.



5. The Observant Analyst

- You focus on understanding the future through logic and careful observation.
- Approach: Analyzes trends and data objectively.
- View of the Future: Interprets the future as a logical sequence of events.



6. The Challenger of Assumptions

- You excel at questioning the status quo and evaluating risks.
- Approach: Challenges assumptions to ensure preparation.
- View of the Future: Perceives uncertainty, favors scrutiny and planning.



7. The Joyful Innovator

- You embrace spontaneity and exploration, finding excitement in new possibilities.
- Approach: Explores opportunities with optimism and flexibility.
- View of the Future: Envisions the future as an adventure full of possibilities.



8. The Guardian of Stability

- You prioritize protecting what matters and maintaining stability.
- Approach: Ensures security and safeguards priorities.
- View of the Future: Sees the future as requiring vigilance and protection.



9. The Harmonizer

- You strive for balance and connection, fostering shared solutions.
- Approach: Mediates differences and promotes harmony.
- View of the Future: Perceives the future as a space for cooperation and balance.

STEP 3**Select**

Write down which archetypes feel like the best fit for you and why.

- How do your archetypes resonate with your current approach to career and life goals?
- Are there elements of other archetypes you'd like to incorporate?
- How can understanding your archetypes shape your actions and collaborations moving forward?

Futurity Archetypes & Enneagram

If you're curious about further exploring your personality and how it might relate to the Futurity Archetypes, consider taking an Enneagram test. The Enneagram is a personality framework that ascribes numbers to different types. Those numbers, 1-9, align with the Futurity Archetypes in this exercise. The Enneagram is a widely used interpretive framework for understanding personality. It is not a scientifically validated assessment, and results may vary based on which specific test you take. While some argue that Enneagram types are immutable, we use this approach more flexibly to encourage reflection and promote self-exploration.

By understanding your Enneagram type, you may gain deeper insights into your strengths, tendencies, and approach to the future.

How It Works: Each Enneagram type corresponds to one of the Futurity Archetypes, offering a complementary perspective on how you engage with planning, visioning, and collaboration.

Next Steps: After completing an Enneagram test, revisit this exercise to reflect on how your type connects to the archetypes you identified with in our exercise. This can provide additional inspiration for your personal and professional growth.

For More Information:

www.cynthiaselin.com/futurity-archetypes

www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-descriptions

Letter to Future Self

Writing a letter to your future self is a reflective exercise that connects the present with your long-term goals. This personal time capsule helps you to articulate your aspirations and create dreams for what's to come.

This exercise emphasizes the importance of self-reflection in planning for the future. It teaches you how to think long-term while remaining anchored in your present values and goals. Revisiting your letter at a later date can serve as motivation and provide an opportunity to check on your alignment with your original intentions.

STEP 1

Setting the Context

Before you begin writing, take a moment to reflect on your current situation:

- What excites you most about your life right now?
- What are the biggest challenges you're currently facing?
- How do you envision your future self looking back on this moment?

Write these thoughts down as a preamble to your letter to help ground your reflections.

STEP 2

Begin Your Letter

Start your letter with a warm greeting to your future self. For example:

- "Dear Future Me," or "Hello, [Your Name] from the Future,"
- Mention the date and where you are in life right now to set the scene.

STEP 3

Reflect on Key Themes

Use the following prompts to guide your writing:

Your Career Goals

- What specific career milestones do you hope to achieve in the next year (or chosen time frame)?
- Are there skills you want to develop, or roles you aspire to?
- What would success look like to you?

Your Personal Goals

- What relationships or connections do you want to nurture?
- What personal milestones (for example: health, learning, travel, hobbies) do you hope to achieve?
- How do you hope to grow emotionally or spiritually?

Your Fears and Concerns

- What worries or uncertainties weigh on your mind?
- How do you hope your future self has overcome these challenges?

Your Hopes and Aspirations

- What excites you most about the future?
- What kind of person do you hope to become?
- What kinds of impact do you want to have on others or the world?

Advice to Future You

- What advice would you give to your future self?
- What words of encouragement would you offer if the journey has been tough?
- How can your future self stay true to your current values and goals?

STEP 4

Closing the Letter

Conclude with a note of hope or a challenge for your future self.

- Example: “No matter what happens, always remember why you started,” or “I hope you’re smiling as you read this. Keep going!”
- Sign the letter with your name and the current date.

STEP 5

Save Your Letter

Decide how you want to revisit your letter:

- Seal it: Write the date when you’ll open it and store it in a safe place.
- Save it digitally: Use a file or email service to send the letter to yourself on a future date.
- Print it: Keep a printed copy in a journal or notebook.

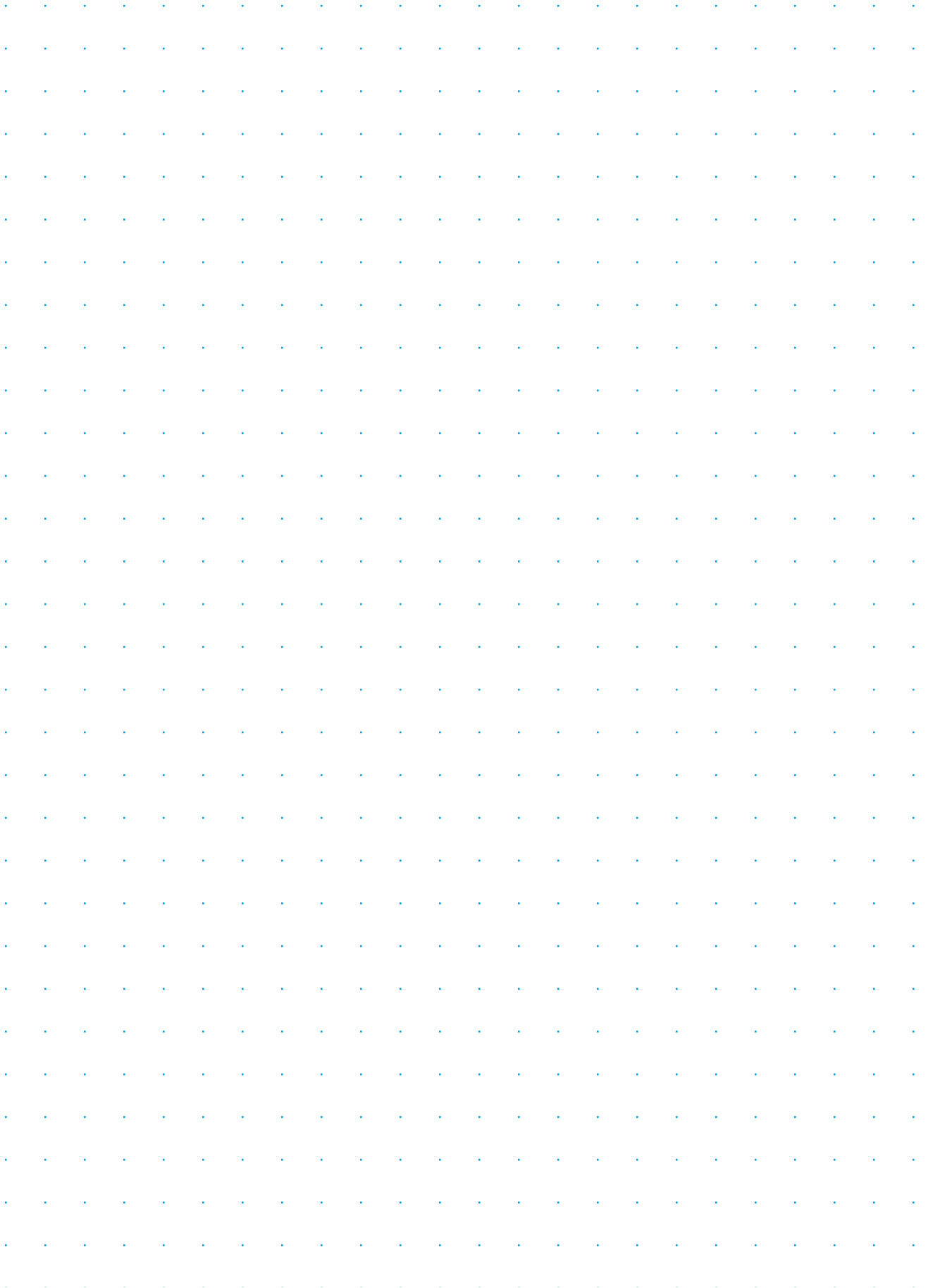
Reflect

When you revisit your letter, ask yourself:

- Have I achieved the goals I set out for myself? If not, why?
- How have I changed since writing this letter?
- What can I learn from my past self’s hopes and fears?

write your letter here and cut it out to save

Date





Mapping Futures

Causal Layer Analysis

Causal Layer Analysis is a foresight tool developed by Sohail Inayatullah to break down complex challenges into four layers:

- **Surface Level:** Immediate concerns and visible issues.
- **Systemic Level:** The broader systems and structures influencing those issues.
- **Worldview Level:** The beliefs and perspectives shaping those systems.
- **Myth/Metaphor Level:** The deeper narratives and stories underlying the worldview.

This exercise helps you examine the deeper structures influencing an issue by exploring multiple layers of meaning. By analyzing surface-level symptoms, underlying causes, worldviews, and core myths, you can develop a more comprehensive understanding of complex challenges and potential solutions.

Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) encourages critical thinking and deeper reflection by pushing beyond surface-level understandings of an issue. This method enhances big picture thinking and fosters a broader perspective on how structures, beliefs, and narratives shape the future. By engaging with CLA, you develop the ability to uncover hidden assumptions, challenge dominant paradigms, and explore innovative solutions that may not be immediately visible.

STEP 1

Identify the Problem

Define a challenge or issue that you want to explore in depth. This can be a career-related dilemma, a societal trend, or a systemic challenge.

EXAMPLE

Overwhelm with the deluge of news and information encountered through social media platforms, and potential impacts on people's mental well-being.

STEP 2**The Four Layers of CLA**

1. Litany (Surface-Level Symptoms)

- This is how the problem is commonly discussed in everyday conversations and media.
- It includes statistics, trends, or complaints about the issue.

EXAMPLE

Social media is exhausting. There's too much negativity, misinformation, and constant updates.

2. Systemic Causes (Underlying Structures)

- What structures, policies, technologies, or economic systems drive the problem?
- These might include business models, government policies, and technological infrastructures that sustain the issue.

EXAMPLE

Social media platforms use engagement-driven algorithms that prioritize sensational content, leading to information overload and emotional fatigue.

3. Worldview (Cultural and Ideological Assumptions)

- What perspectives, beliefs, and cultural narratives support the problem?
- Consider societal expectations, dominant ideologies, and generational attitudes that may reinforce the issue.

EXAMPLE

The belief that staying informed means consuming as much news as possible, combined with a culture of digital immediacy, creates pressure to be constantly online.

4. Myth/Metaphor (Deep Narratives and Symbols)

- What underlying stories or metaphors shape our understanding of the issue?
- These are the subconscious frames through which people experience and relate to the problem.

EXAMPLE

"Drowning in information"—news consumption is framed as an overwhelming flood, making individuals feel powerless rather than in control of their knowledge intake.

STEP 3**Reframing and Solutions**

Once you have mapped out the layers, explore how shifting perspectives at deeper levels could lead to meaningful change.

- How can policies or systems be adjusted to reduce the problem?
- What kinds of deeper cultural shifts would help to address this challenge?
- What new metaphors could replace disempowering narratives?

You might map this process of transformation to the four causal layers, thereby tracing connections between everyday surface-level experiences and deeper systems, symbols, and ways of modeling and understanding the world.

EXAMPLE

- **Litany Shift:** *Encourage mindful media consumption rather than total disconnection.*
- **Systemic Change:** *Design social media algorithms to prioritize well-being and diverse perspectives over engagement metrics.*
- **Worldview Shift:** *Normalize selective news intake and taking breaks without guilt.*
- **New Metaphor:** *“Curating a balanced media diet”—news is something we consume with intention rather than being force-fed.*

Reflect

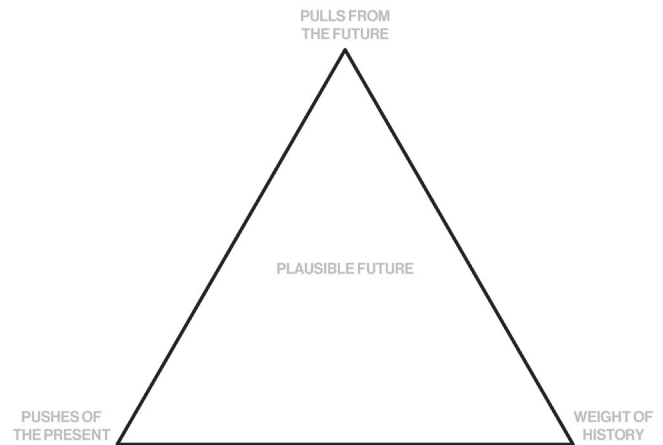
- How does analyzing different layers change your understanding of the issue?
- What new perspectives or insights emerged during this exercise?
- How might this approach be applied to other career or societal challenges?

Future Triangle: Balancing Aspirations, Reality, and Challenges

This exercise helps you to analyze the forces shaping your career trajectory by identifying the Pulls from the Future, Pushes of the Present, and Weight of History. By mapping these forces, you will gain a clearer understanding of the opportunities, constraints, and dynamics influencing your career decisions. The Future Triangle allows you to see how past influences, present conditions, and future possibilities interact, helping you to make informed career choices and identify strategies for progress.

In this exercise, you will consider three elements:

- Pulls from the Future: Aspirations and visions drawing you forward.
- Pushes of the Present: Current opportunities and trends supporting progress.
- Weight of History: Barriers and constraints holding you back.



This method reveals how different forces interact, helping you to understand what's shaping your future. It can be applied to careers, personal decisions, and broader societal challenges. By identifying these forces, you can strategize actionable steps toward your goals. This structured reflection can reveal hidden opportunities, highlight potential barriers, and clarify the necessary steps to align your career path with long-term aspirations.

STEP 1

Define Your Career Goal

Begin by writing down your desired career outcome. This could be a broad aspiration (for instance, become a speech therapist) or a specific step (for instance, apply for a graduate program in speech-language pathology).

EXAMPLE

Career Goal: *Become a speech therapist specializing in early-childhood language development.*

STEP 2**Identify the Pulls from the Future**

The “Pulls from the Future” represent the aspirations, trends, or opportunities pulling you toward your goal. These may include emerging industry trends, personal ambitions, technological advancements, and societal needs.

Questions to Consider:

- What excites and inspires you about this career path?
- What future trends in this field are creating new opportunities?
- How do you envision success in this field?

Write down 3-5 future forces that are pulling you toward your goal.

EXAMPLE

- *Increasing demand for speech therapists due to growing awareness of speech and language disorders in children.*
- *Advancements in assistive communication technology and AI-driven speech therapy tools.*
- *The opportunity to make a life-changing impact on children struggling with language development.*
- *Potential to specialize in bilingual speech therapy to serve diverse populations.*

STEP 3**Identify the Pushes of the Present**

The “Pushes of the Present” represent the strengths, resources, and trends supporting you right now. These might include personal skills, professional networks, access to education, and current industry needs.

Questions to Consider:

- What skills, knowledge, and experiences do you currently possess that support your goal?
- Who or what in your life is encouraging or enabling you to move forward?
- What industry trends or economic factors are working in your favor?

Write down 3-5 factors that are pushing you forward today.

EXAMPLE

- *Support from mentors and faculty in the field who provide guidance and networking opportunities.*
- *High demand for speech therapists in schools, hospitals, and private clinics.*
- *Access to online courses and certifications that enhance specialized skills (for instance, working with autism spectrum disorders).*

STEP 4**Identify the Weight of History**

The “Weight of History” represents the habits, challenges, and constraints that may slow you down. These could include personal limitations, systemic barriers, industry challenges, and past experiences.

Questions to Consider:

- What past experiences and habits might be holding you back?
- What external factors make it difficult to achieve your goal?
- Are there any limiting beliefs or challenges you need to overcome?

Write down 3-5 challenges that may act as constraints.

EXAMPLE

- *Limited financial resources for additional certifications or specializations.*
- *A history of struggling with public speaking, or a lack of self-confidence in clinical settings.*
- *Difficulty balancing academic demands with personal responsibilities.*

Reflect

- How can you strengthen the “Pushes of the Present” to accelerate your progress?
- What steps can you take to better align with the “Pulls from the Future”?
- How can you overcome or mitigate the “Weight of History”?
- What strategic actions will help you to balance these forces?

Futures Wheel

This exercise helps you explore the potential impacts of your career choices by identifying immediate, secondary, and long-term consequences. By using a structured thought process, you can better anticipate challenges, opportunities, and unintended effects of your career path.

The Futures Wheel, developed by Jerome C. Glenn in the 1970s, is a tool for visualizing the ripple effects of a decision:

- First-Order Effects: Immediate outcomes of a decision.
- Second-Order Effects: Indirect results caused by the first effects.
- Third-Order Effects: Long-term or systemic changes that might emerge over time.

This tool helps you think critically about the consequences of your choices, especially when navigating uncertain or complex situations. It highlights the interconnected nature of decisions and helps you anticipate unintended outcomes.

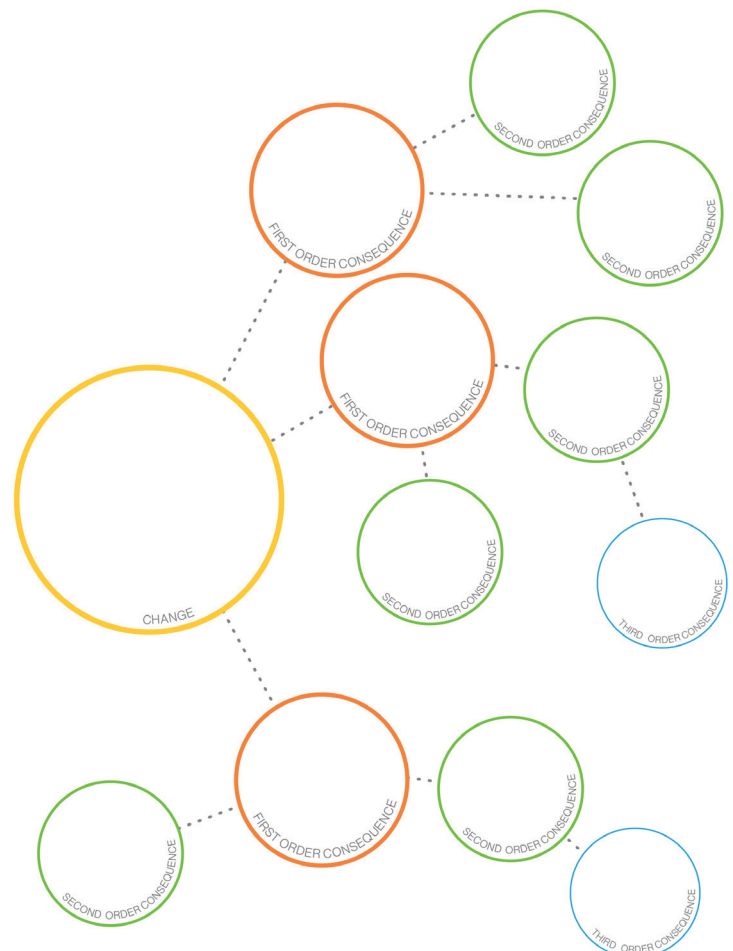
STEP 1

Define Your Career Decision

Write your core career decision in the center of the Futures Wheel. This could be a broad decision (for example, “Become a geologist in a national park”) or a specific next step (for example, “Apply for a national park geology internship”).

EXAMPLE

Career Decision: Work as a geologist in a national park.



STEP 2**Identify First-Order Effects**

First-order effects are the immediate, direct outcomes of your career choice. These typically affect you personally or influence your immediate work environment.

Write 3-5 direct consequences of your career decision.

EXAMPLE

- *Gain hands-on experience studying rock formations and erosion patterns.*
- *Relocate to a remote area with limited infrastructure.*
- *Work in a physically demanding outdoor environment.*
- *Engage with the public through educational programs and tours.*

STEP 3**Identify Second-Order Effects**

Second-order effects are indirect consequences that stem from the first-order effects. These might include changes in lifestyle, skill development, and career trajectory.

Write 3-5 indirect consequences that may emerge from the first-order effects.

EXAMPLE

- *Expanding expertise in conservation and environmental geology could open opportunities for future work in government.*
- *Remote living conditions might require adjusting to a new lifestyle and work-life balance.*
- *Engaging with the public could strengthen communication and education skills, potentially leading to science outreach roles.*
- *Developing deep knowledge of park geology could lead to consulting opportunities for tourism or research projects.*

STEP 4**Identify Third-Order Effects**

Third-order effects are the broader, long-term implications of your decision. These might include industry-wide trends, societal impacts, and how your career evolves over time.

Write 3-5 long-term or systemic consequences that may emerge from your career decision.

EXAMPLE

- *Increased expertise in conservation may position you as a policy advisor on land preservation laws.*
- *Public engagement experience may lead to opportunities in science journalism, museum curation, or educational media.*
- *Networking with government and environmental organizations could provide long-term career security in research or advocacy roles.*
- *Changing climate conditions may shift priorities in geological research, requiring adaptability to emerging environmental challenges.*

Reflect

- What unexpected opportunities or challenges emerged through this exercise?
- How do the second- and third-order effects align with your long-term career vision?
- What adjustments might you need to make to prepare for these future impacts?

Three Horizons Framework

The Three Horizons Framework is a strategic foresight tool for envisioning change over time. Developed by futurist Bill Sharpe, this tool helps us to explore how systems evolve over time and to identify pathways towards a better future. It encourages thinking beyond the present to envision transformational change.

Horizon 1 (H1): Today's Reality

Focuses on the current system—what's working, what's not, and the challenges we face today. These are the structures, practices, and assumptions that dominate but may be losing relevance as the world changes.

Horizon 3 (H3): Aspirational Futures

Represents bold, visionary ideas about the future we want to create. H3 challenges us to think about new systems, innovations, and ways of working that could lead to transformative change.

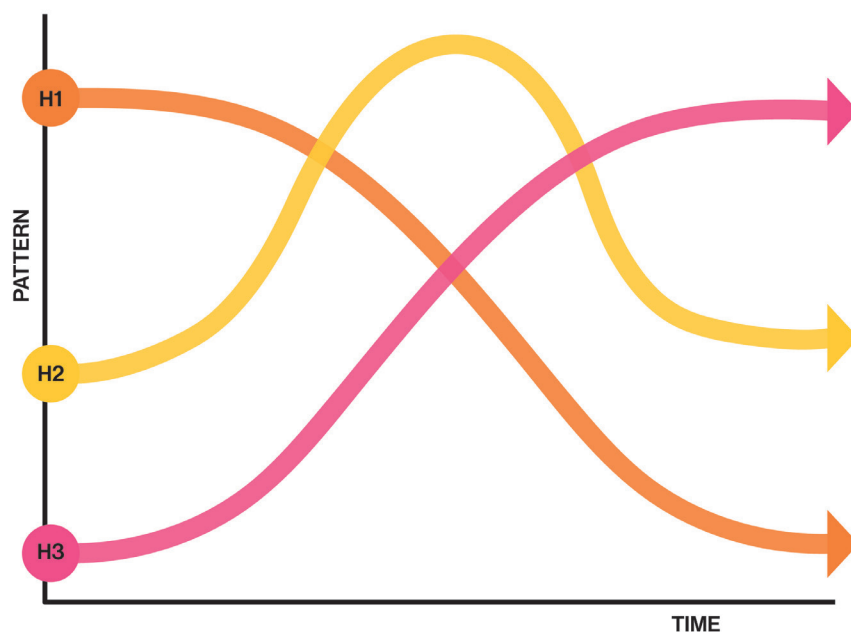
Horizon 2 (H2): Transition Zone

This is the messy, in-between space where innovations and disruptions from H3 start challenging the dominance of H1, requiring transitions and adaptations.

In this exercise, you will apply the Three Horizons framework to planning your own future:

- *Horizon 1: Your current reality, including your strengths and challenges.*
- *Horizon 2: Emerging opportunities or disruptions that could shape your near future.*
- *Horizon 3: Long-term aspirations and a vision of the future you want to create.*

This methodology shows us how change unfolds over time and emphasizes the importance of aligning short-term actions with long-term goals. It's widely used in organizational planning, but is equally powerful for personal development.



Three Horizons Framework for Career Planning

This framework helps you think strategically about your career path by distinguishing among present challenges, near-term changes, and long-term aspirations, while also considering broader industry trends, economic shifts, and technological disruptions that may influence your trajectory.

Horizon 1: The Present (Where You Are Now)

- Assess your current career position, skills, and immediate challenges.
- Identify systemic barriers, industry trends, or workplace dynamics that may affect your ability to progress.
- Consider external factors such as job market shifts, economic conditions, and industry changes affecting career stability.
- Ask yourself: What larger forces—such as corporate restructuring, automation, or economic downturns—are influencing my career today?

EXAMPLE

I am currently working as a newsroom assistant, handling research and logistics but not getting direct production experience. Budget cuts and the decline of traditional broadcast news make career advancement more competitive. I need stronger industry connections and on-camera confidence to stand out in a shrinking job market.

Horizon 2: The Transition (Near-Term Changes & Innovations)

- Identify upcoming industry shifts, emerging technologies, and evolving professional expectations that could shape your career opportunities.
- Consider new skills, credentials, and experiences that will be essential in adapting to these changes.
- Evaluate how social, economic, and policy changes may influence your career mobility.
- Ask yourself: What are the major trends that will affect my field in the next few years? (In our example, these might include AI-driven content creation, the expansion of streaming services into the news sector, and shifts in audience behavior.)

EXAMPLE

In the next few years, I need to develop technical skills in editing and scripting. With the shift from traditional news to digital platforms, I must gain expertise in multimedia production and audience engagement through social media and streaming services. Automation in journalism means I should focus on roles that require strong human judgment and creativity.

Horizon 3: The Future Vision (Long-Term Career Goals)

- Define your ultimate career vision while considering long-term transformations in your field.
- Think about how your future career roles might evolve with advancements in technology, changing norms and expectations, and economic, cultural, and behavioral shifts.
- Consider broader global factors such as changes in law and regulation, environmental changes, and demographic shifts.
- Ask yourself: What is the long-term trajectory of my industry, and how can I position myself to be relevant and impactful in a future landscape?

EXAMPLE

I aim to be a senior producer at a major broadcasting company, creating impactful news segments that inform the public and hold people and groups in power accountable. To get there, I will develop strong leadership, storytelling, and digital media expertise. However, I must also prepare for the possibility of industry consolidation and shifts toward independent or decentralized news networks. Understanding business models for media sustainability will be critical for long-term success.



Creating Pathways

Milestone Marker

This tool helps you break down long-term goals into smaller, achievable milestones. By tracking progress, you stay motivated and accountable.

This methodology emphasizes the importance of incremental progress. Breaking large goals into smaller steps ensures continuous momentum and avoids overwhelm. It also provides a framework for reflection, enabling you to reassess and adapt as you move toward your ultimate objective.

STEP 1

Define Your Ultimate Goal

- What is your ultimate career goal or long-term objective?
- Write this goal in clear and specific terms.

EXAMPLES

- *Become a lead designer at a top-tier firm.*
- *Complete a PhD in environmental science and publish impactful research.*

STEP 2:**Identify Milestones**

Break your goal into smaller, actionable steps. These milestones should act as checkpoints to measure your progress.

- Milestone 1: What is the first actionable step you need to take?
- Milestone 2: What comes next?
- Milestone 3: Continue outlining steps in a logical sequence until your goal feels manageable and achievable.

EXAMPLE

- *Research graduate programs and make a list of five to apply to.*
- *Complete applications and request recommendation letters.*

STEP 3**Add Deadlines**

Assign a realistic deadline to each milestone. Having a timeline helps you to stay focused and accountable.

EXAMPLE

- *Milestone 1: Research graduate programs - Deadline: February 15*
- *Milestone 2: Complete applications - Deadline: March 30*

STEP 4**Identify Challenges and Resources**

For each milestone, consider potential challenges and how you can overcome them.

EXAMPLE

- Challenge: Limited time to work on applications.
- Strategy: Dedicate two hours every Saturday morning.

Identify resources or people who can support you.

EXAMPLE

- *Reach out to mentors for guidance on program selection.*
- *Use online resources or workshops for application writing.*

STEP 5**Reflect and Adjust**

Periodically review your progress:

- Are you meeting your deadlines?
- Do your milestones still feel relevant and achievable?

Adjust your plan as needed to account for new opportunities or challenges.

Reflect

- What did you learn about your goal by breaking it into milestones?
- Are there specific steps that feel especially challenging? How can you address these?
- What progress have you made toward your goal so far?

A large grid of small blue dots arranged in approximately 20 rows and 30 columns, providing a space for handwritten notes or reflections.

Personal Career Visioning

This exercise helps you to clarify your long-term career aspirations and align them with your personal values, skills, and interests. By articulating a vision for your future, you create a roadmap that guides decision-making and professional growth.

This methodology encourages self-reflection and goal-setting. By envisioning your future career, you cultivate intentionality, resilience, and adaptability. A clear vision provides motivation and direction, helping you navigate uncertainty while staying true to your values.

STEP 1

Defining Your Career Vision

Take a moment to imagine your ideal career 5-10 years from now. Consider:

- What kind of work are you doing? (Industry, role, responsibilities)
- What impact do you want to have in your field or community?
- What kind of work environment energizes and supports you?
- What does success mean to you, personally and professionally?

Write a paragraph describing your ideal future career in detail.

EXAMPLE

The year is 2040. I am a senior policy advisor focusing on climate change mitigation strategies. I work at an international organization, advising governments on sustainable energy transitions. My role allows me to shape policies that lead to real environmental impact and to mentor younger professionals in the field.

STEP 2**Identifying Your Core Motivations**

Reflect on the key drivers behind your career aspirations:

- Passions: What topics, industries, and problems excite you?
- Skills: What strengths do you want to develop or leverage?
- Values: What principles guide your decision-making and fulfillment at work?
- Lifestyle: What kind of balance between work and personal life is important to you?

Write down 3-5 core motivations that influence your career vision.

EXAMPLE

- *Passionate about policy change and sustainability.*
- *Skilled at research and strategic thinking, but want to improve public speaking.*
- *Value integrity, collaboration, and long-term impact over short-term gains.*
- *Need a balance between deep-focus work and time for family.*

STEP 3**Mapping the Path to Your Future**

Break down the journey toward your career vision into milestones:

- Short-term (1-2 years): What immediate steps can you take to gain relevant experience, expand your network, and build skills?
- Mid-term (3-5 years): What achievements and roles will move you closer to your ideal future?
- Long-term (5+ years): What does professional fulfillment look like at this stage?

List specific actions for each time frame.

EXAMPLE

- *Short-term (1-2 years): Complete a certification in energy policy, attend two industry conferences, and publish an article on sustainable energy.*
- *Mid-term (3-5 years): Transition into a leadership role within a policy research organization, expand professional network, and mentor junior analysts.*
- *Long-term (5+ years): Become a senior advisor or director, influencing high-level policy decisions and collaborating with international organizations.*

STEP 4**Identifying Support and Resources**

Think about the people, tools, and opportunities that can support your journey:

- Who can mentor and guide you, or connect you to opportunities?
- What organizations, professional groups, and networks can you engage with?
- What resources (books, courses, certifications) could enhance your skills?

Write down at least three resources and connections that can help you.

EXAMPLE

- *Connect with a mentor in my industry through LinkedIn.*
- *Join a professional association for policy advisors and attend monthly meetups.*
- *Take an advanced course on negotiation and public speaking.*

STEP 5**Addressing Potential Challenges**

Anticipate obstacles and create strategies to navigate them:

- What barriers might stand in your way? (for example, lack of experience, uncertainty, financial limitations)
- How can you work around these challenges? (for example, seeking mentorship, gaining certifications, refining job search strategies)

List 2-3 potential challenges and how you plan to overcome them.

EXAMPLE

- *Challenge: Limited public speaking experience. Strategy: Join a Toastmasters club and practice presenting in meetings.*
- *Challenge: Lack of connections in the policy field. Strategy: Attend networking events and schedule informational interviews.*
- *Challenge: Balancing career growth with personal life. Strategy: Set clear work-life boundaries and schedule non-work activities in advance.*

Reflection Questions

- How does your career vision align with your values and aspirations?
- What strengths do you already possess that will help you achieve your goals?
- How might your vision evolve over time, and how will you remain adaptable?

A large grid of small blue dots arranged in approximately 20 rows and 40 columns, providing a space for handwritten answers to the reflection questions.

Mentor Map

This exercise helps you to map your personal and professional networks, identifying key individuals who provide support, mentorship, and opportunities. By visualizing your connections, you can recognize strengths, gaps, and areas to expand your network for career growth.

Understanding your network helps you leverage relationships for feedback, guidance, and accountability while also identifying ways to support others. A strong, intentionally constructed network enhances career opportunities, fosters community, and provides a foundation for long-term success.

STEP 1

Understanding Network Support

Career success is rarely a solo journey. Networks provide:

- Substantive Feedback: Input on work, projects, and ideas
- Access to Opportunities: Guidance, mentorship, and introductions
- Emotional Support: Encouragement, connection, and understanding
- Accountability: Helping you stay on track with your goals
- Role Models: Examples of success and inspiration
- Community: A sense of belonging and shared purpose

Think about people in your life who play these roles and how you can also offer support to others.

STEP 2

Build Your Network Map

Using the template on the next page, create a network map with yourself at the center.

Create branches for the following categories:

- Substantive Feedback: Who gives you constructive feedback on your work? (for example, mentors, colleagues, editors)
- Access to Opportunities: Who opens doors or connects you to opportunities? (for example, family members, peer mentors, friends)
- Emotional Support: Who supports you emotionally? (for example, friends, family, peers, and others)
- Accountability: Who keeps you accountable to your goals? (for example, accountability partners, coaches, and colleagues)
- Role Models: Who inspires you? (for example, professionals, leaders, historical figures)
- Community: Where do you feel a sense of belonging? (for example, groups, professional associations, local networks)

For each branch, list 2-4 names or groups of people.

Forge Ahead Mentor Map

PROVIDING

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

RECEIVING

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

FEEDBACK

PROVIDING

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

RECEIVING

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

OPPORTUNITIES

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

ACCOUNTABILITY
FOR WHAT REALLY
MATTERS

YOC

DU

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROVIDING

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

RECEIVING

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

PROVIDING

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

RECEIVING

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

COMMUNITY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

ROLE MODELS

WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHO ARE YOU A ROLE MODEL TO?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 3**Identify Gaps and Opportunities**

Once you have mapped your networks:

- **Identify Strengths:** Which categories are well-populated with people who actively support you?
- **Spot Gaps:** Are there categories where you need more support or connections?
- **Think About Reciprocity:** Who in your network could you support? What do you have to offer others?

Reflection Prompts:

- Where do you feel your network is strong, and where could it grow?
- What steps can you take to strengthen relationships or fill gaps in your network?
- How can you contribute to the growth or success of others in your network?

STEP 4**Next Steps and Action Plan**

Create an action plan based on your reflections:

- **Strengthen:** Identify 1-2 relationships to nurture further.
- **Expand:** Name 1-2 areas where you need new connections. Brainstorm potential individuals and groups to approach.
- **Give Back:** Identify at least one person you can support and describe how you plan to do so.
- **Wrap Up:** Revisit your network map regularly as your career progresses. Networks evolve over time, and being intentional about both receiving and offering support is key to sustained growth and success.

Congratulations!

Facing the future takes bravery. To know that your future won't arrive as a straight line, but will unfold more like a landscape of roads, detours, and surprises is the first step.

The time you've invested in yourself with this workbook has helped you to see farther, imagine harder, and prepare for uncertainty with intention. The tools that you've practiced — from visioning your career path to writing a letter to your future self — can be revisited again and again as you navigate what's ahead.

You now know that the future is not something that simply happens to you; it is something you actively shape through your choices and the values you carry forward. With this mindset, you are now equipped to notice what matters most, to explore possibilities with curiosity, and to chart your own way with greater confidence and creativity.

We hope you are now more open to wonder, and have a deeper sense of all that you are capable of!

Forks Up! Forge Ahead!

