

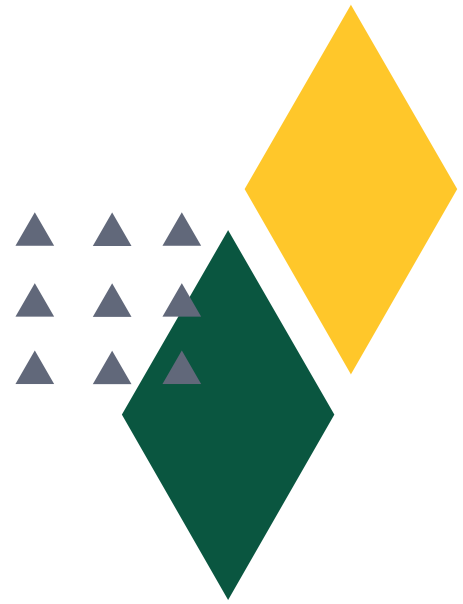


making connections

a roadmap for the career development journey

“One of the greatest values of mentors is the ability to see ahead what others cannot see and to help them navigate a course to their destination.”

John C. Maxwell



phases of a career development journey

- 1 Look Within
- 2 Plan Ahead
- 3 Take the Next Step



look within

Before you embark on a mentoring or other career development journey, start with some self-reflection. All great journeys begin within. Take some time to reflect on your likes and dislikes, your successes and blunders, your goals and fears, your talents and your areas for improvement. Who are you now? And who do you want to be?

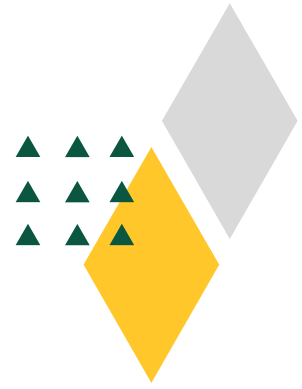
“

The world will ask you
who you are, and if
you don't know, the
world will tell you.

”

Carl Jung

start with a SOAR analysis



Look at yourself through the lens of your mentor or future employer. What do you bring to the table? Where do you have opportunities to improve? What do you anticipate as you continue on your path?

A diagram illustrating the SOAR analysis. It features three overlapping hexagons: a yellow one on the left, a grey one in the center, and a dark green one at the bottom. The grey hexagon contains the text 'STRENGTHS OPPORTUNITIES ASPIRATIONS RESULTS'. The yellow hexagon contains 'Strengths and Aspirations are internal.' and the dark green hexagon contains 'Opportunities and Results are external.' A trail of grey dots leads from the bottom right of the grey hexagon towards the bottom right of the page.

STRENGTHS
OPPORTUNITIES
ASPIRATIONS
RESULTS

Strengths and
Aspirations
are internal.

Opportunities
and Results
are external.

S Strengths

What are you great at?

O Opportunities

What's out there for you?

A Aspirations

How do you see yourself improving?

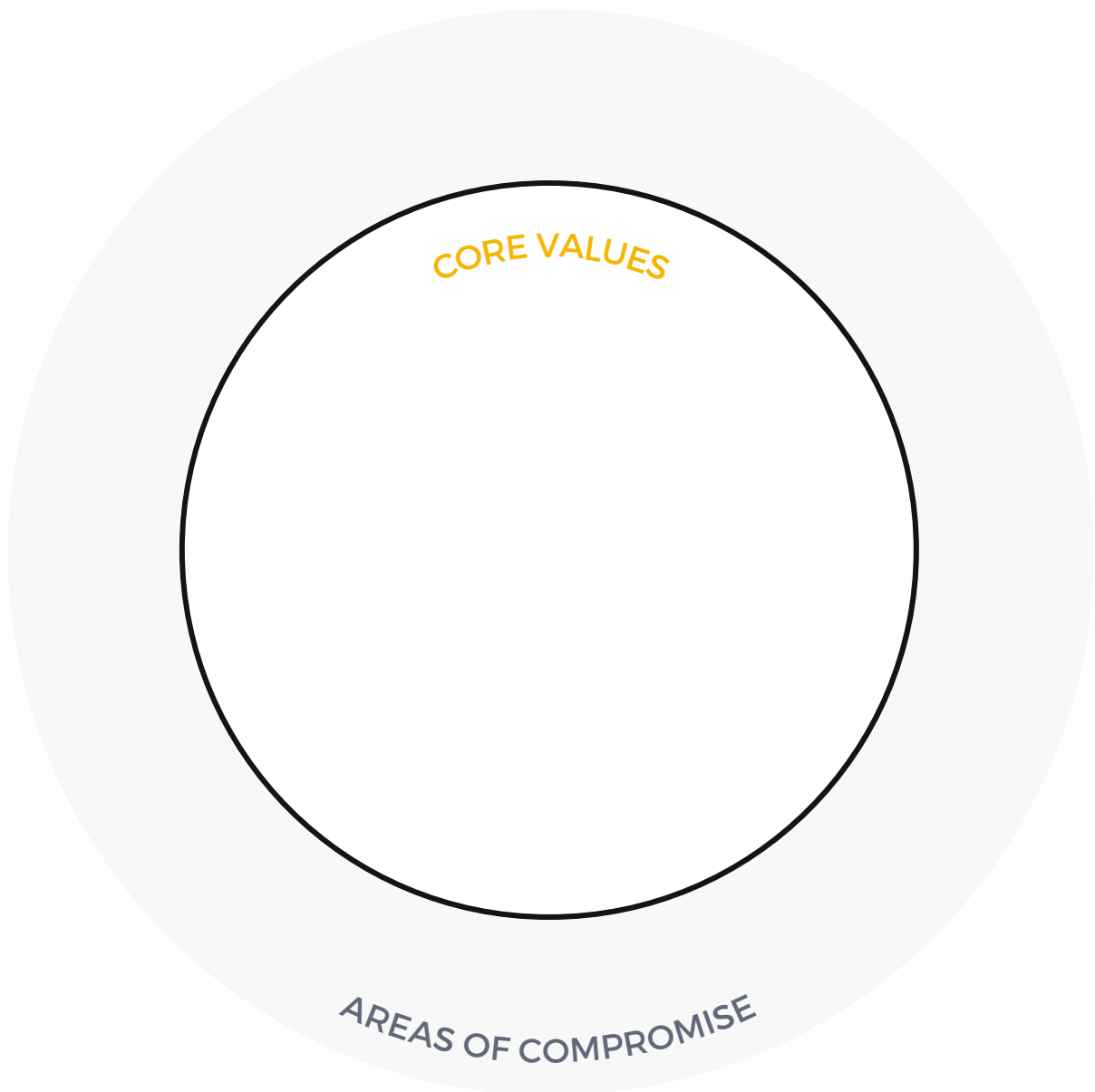
R Results

What will it take to get there?



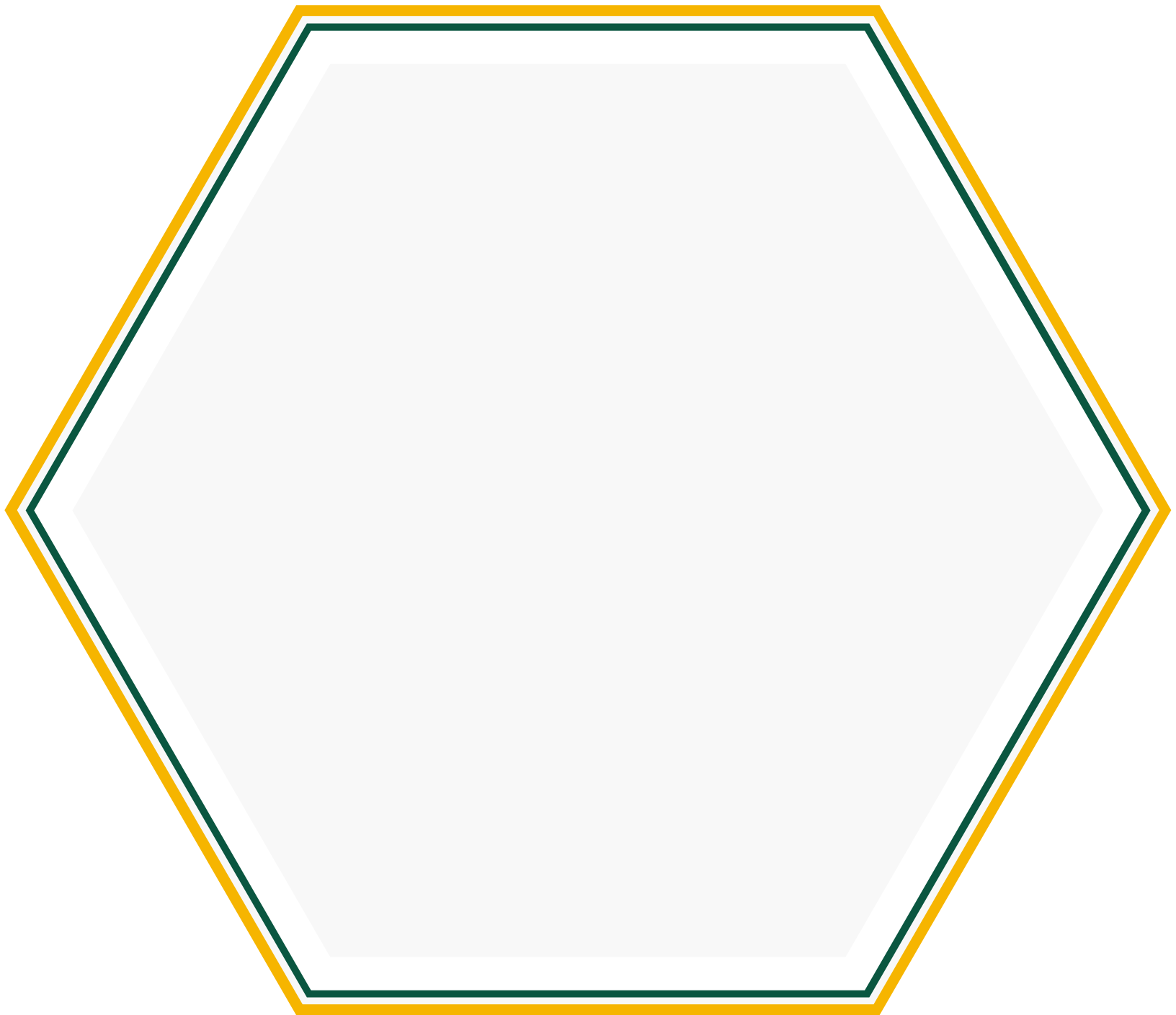
identify your core values

What are your non-negotiables? Your deal-breakers? Could you work for a company that was misaligned with your own values? What ideals do you hold most dear? Honesty? Ambition? Philanthropy? Diversity? Balance?



define it

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? What do you want to be doing? Review some job postings for positions of interest and jot down your thoughts. What would you identify as the most important aspects of your desired career path?



A vertical column of various geometric shapes including hexagons, triangles, and diamonds in colors like dark green, yellow, grey, and dark blue. Some shapes contain smaller patterns of dots or triangles.

2 plan ahead

Keeping the various aspects of your self-reflection and assessment in mind, begin to transition from looking within to looking ahead. Using what you know about yourself, begin to identify the necessary steps to get you from where you are to where you want to be.

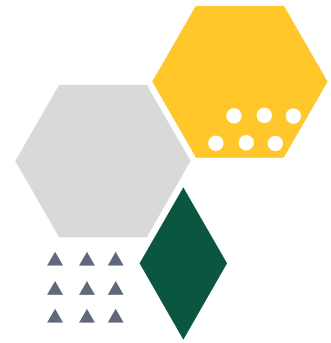
“

Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.

”

Alexander Graham Bell

build your resume



What information might you want to include in your resume?



There are a variety of options for resume formats and styles. Check out the NDSU Career Center for more examples: career-advising.ndsu.edu/resumes

Your turn! Think about your various experiences thus far and make a list of all of the credentials you may want to include in your resume. If you find yourself short in an area, think about ways you can grow those qualifications. Discuss with recruiters or mentors what they might look for on a resume.

Career Goals + Objectives



Work Experience



Special Skills, Achievements, Awards



Certifications, Professional Memberships



Volunteerism, Civic Service, Community Engagement



practice your interview skills

Think about your experiences and how you might answer the following questions in an interview. Do you get stuck on any? If so, what can you do to change that?

Tell me about the toughest decision you had to make in the last six months. What were the results of your decision?

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?

Tell me about a time you made a mistake. How did you respond and what came of the situation?

Tell me about a time you had to deal with an angry customer, client, or colleague. How did you handle the situation?

Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your boss. What were the outcomes?



Give an example of a time when you performed well under pressure. How about a time when you didn't perform as well?

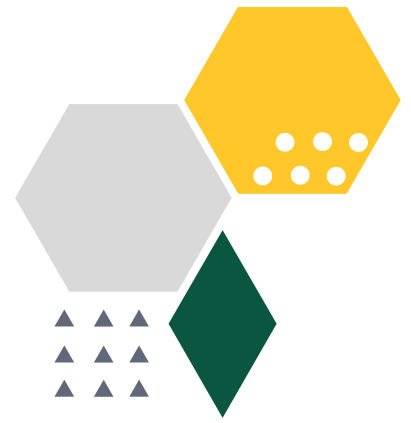
What are some of your leadership experiences? What does leadership mean to you?

Describe a project you've managed. What did you do well? What obstacles did you face?

Describe a time when you saw a problem and took the initiative to fix it, rather than waiting for someone else to do it.

Tell me about a time you set a goal for yourself. How did you go about making sure you would achieve it?

analyze your aspirations



What are your short-, medium-, and long-term goals? Do you know? Refer back to your self-assessment. How will you align your personal and professional ambitions with your values and core beliefs? Take some time to think about what you'd like to accomplish in the near future... and as you progress in your career. What are your top priorities? Flexibility? Continual growth and challenges? Business ownership? Creating lasting impact in the lives of others? Being able to give back in meaningful ways? Think both big-picture and specific... and name any goals that come to mind within the following three timelines.

CURRENT GOALS (DURING COLLEGE OR WITHIN THE NEXT 1-2 YEARS)

A large, empty light grey rectangular area intended for writing current goals.

EARLY-CAREER GOALS (WITHIN THE NEXT 3-10 YEARS)

LONGER-TERM GOALS (10+ YEARS)

A vertical column of various geometric shapes including hexagons, diamonds, and triangles in shades of green, yellow, grey, and dark blue. Some shapes contain smaller patterns of dots or triangles.

3 take the next step

Standing at the start of your career journey, you can only see part of the path. Inevitable twists and turns lie ahead, and you don't yet know what's around the corner, over the hill, or beyond the horizon. Take note of the lessons you learn along the way and use them to forge ahead in your journey.

“ In the end, she became more than what she expected. She became the journey, and like all journeys, she did not end. She just simply changed directions and kept going. ”

R.M. Drake



one step at a time

As you gain more insight into the qualities you naturally possess and those in which you may need more practice, consider some of the ways you can hone these skills.



Use personality assessments to better understand areas in which you can improve

Meet with managers in other organizations or industries to gain insight

Study the characteristics of people you deem to be effective leaders and hone in on their common traits

Read reputable works on effective management styles

Identify managing mentors in your organization

Think about the aspirations and desired results you identified in your SOAR analysis. What training and development opportunities could help you reach them? What personal and professional skills can you hone through various classes, conferences, workshops, volunteering, or other means to help close the gaps between your resume and your job goals. Brainstorm possible opportunities you could explore...



step up

As you move from your college experience and into your career, you will have opportunities to move "up" into roles with more responsibilities, bigger challenges, and so forth. These can be daunting transitions, especially for those taking on leadership and supervisory roles. The good news is, great managers aren't born—they're made. Consider the following traits of good managers and leaders. Think about how you would rate these abilities in yourself today... and how you can work consistently to improve upon them for the future.

Execution



CONSISTENT



ORGANIZED



OBJECTIVE



COMMUNICATIVE



DECISIVE



CONFIDENT



KNOWLEDGABLE

Relationships



INTUITIVE



MOTIVATING



EMPATHETIC



ENGAGING



OPEN-MINDED



SUPPORTIVE



ENCOURAGING

Integrity



TRANSPARENT



RELIABLE



TRUSTWORTHY



RESPONSIBLE



ACCOUNTABLE



ETHICAL



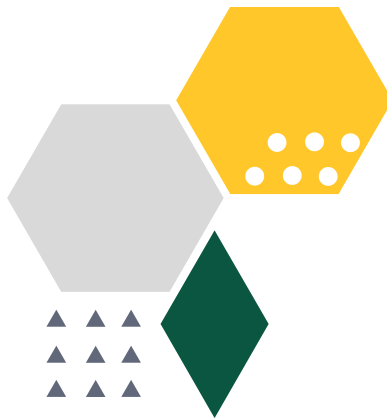
COMMITTED

“

**The future depends
on what you do
today.**

”

Mahatma Ghandi



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