LEVEL 1 NAVIGATION

LEVEL 2 **NAVIGATION**

LEVEL 3 **NAVIGATION**

LEVEL 4 **NAVIGATION**

LEVEL 5 NAVIGATION

HYPERLINK

ONLINE QUIZ

Advanced Designer

Module 1: Why Design YOU?
- More Than A Job
- Great Designers
    - Be Intentionally Curious
    - Think About the Whole
    - Be Empathetic
    - Get Feedback
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- Why Journaling Works

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- Open Your World
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- Curiosity Conversations
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- Assessment
- Reflection
- What Do You Know?
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  b. Enabling Competencies
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Module 3: Why Mentors Matter

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Module 4: Exploring Career and Job Pathways

- What Do You Love to Do?
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        ▪ Consolidating Your Interviews
     o Professional Mission
        ▪ Mission Statement

Module 5 • You Are More Than A Job

- Year 2100

Module 1: Why Design YOU?

Value

1. An overview of the Designing YOU modules.
2. Key characteristics of great designers.

In the new turbulent world of work, you have a lot of options to consider regardless of whether you are in high school, university or have been working for 20 years. **So where do you start?**

Start with Designing YOU.

Designing YOU is an important tool to support making decisions big and small—it is a tool that helps you address the relentless questions and unsolicited advice about your future you're getting right now.

If you are a young adult, your others may have had the wheel for much of the journey until high school graduation. Then suddenly, after graduation, the situation changes and you need to make some weighty, often intimidating, decisions for yourself. That's why building a journey map is so critical right now. In the absence of a guide, you might be swayed by a lot of well-intentioned advice about your life decisions.

"You should go to X school"

"You should become a Y"

"You should study Z"

Here's the truth: Your world is very different from those before you. What makes you different, interesting, and valuable isn't coming from any textbook or a diploma. So now is the time to make some weighty, often intimidating, decisions for yourself. That's why mapping your journey right now is so critical. Think of the journey you map as **less a map and more of a compass**. **A compass that will point you in a direction** to explore some important questions you may be asking yourself:

1. Should I go to school or go travelling?
2. What should my next career be?
3. What competencies am I good at today?
4. Why do I like certain things and not others?

5. What is a mentor?

6. What makes me happy?

7. What big trends do I need to be thinking about?

8. How can I tell my story?

Designing YOU helps unlock the person that you'll launch into the world. We're not going to give you a simple quiz that will spit out six jobs you might be good at or tempt you with some secret to success and happiness. You're more complicated and interesting than that, and so is life.

Designing YOU is composed of a series of modules that include a series of activities. Ideally, they are done in order, but you can also jump around and explore. Each module is described below:

Module 1 — Why Design YOU?

Module 1 walks you through the seven key attributes of a product designer and why you must adopt these to become the champion of your life.

Module 2 — Exploring Who You Are

Module 2 is about reflecting on the you that you are today. It involves exploring your personality, and competencies right now.

Module 3 — Why Mentors Matter

Module 3 focuses on the team effort required to design you. We'll explore the value of your relationships and from this, you'll form your design team of experts who will support and guide you through the Designing YOU journey.

Module 4 — Exploring Career and Job Pathways

Module 4 focuses on exploring career options. First, you'll evaluate what you love to do and what you're good at, then you'll explore how to leverage it to make a living. By the end of Module 4, you will start to have a vision of the future Professional YOU.

Included in the Professional YOU is a series of *Designing YOU* Career Guides written to support your work down this path. These Career Guides are complimentary, and deal with some of the crucial questions facing anyone exploring their Professional YOU.

Each guide includes a series of career mission maps that provides examples of how you can chart a course to achieving your professional mission. If you'd like to start by exploring our range of career mission maps, click **HERE** to search our Designing YOU Mission Map Gallery.

Module 5 — You are More than a Job

Module 5 is when you will discover how your Professional YOU fits into your Whole YOU. The Whole YOU is about how you define success. You'll think about where you want to live, the people you want to be around, the importance of your bank account and other factors that matter to you.

Module 6 — Designing your Journey

Module 6 is possible after you've identified a potential destination in Module 5. The journey map will allow you to implement the Whole YOU. Every decision you make in pursuit of the destination now has a purpose.

Module 7 — Telling Your Story

Module 7 recognizes that having the best product that no one has ever heard of or cares about is called "going out of business." Your story is how you'll connect to the audience you care about and how you'll make them care about you. You'll figure out what you can offer the world and develop a strategy to communicate it.

You Are More Than a Job

In order to launch yourself into the so-called real world, it's useful to get out of your own head. Take a step back and imagine yourself as a product in a store. When you buy a product, whether it's a latte or a laptop, the people who are responsible for creating that product know exactly why you bought it. Their design decisions weren't accidents; every tiny detail was intentional.

Product designers, the people who are responsible for creating everything you use, recognize that delivering something valuable is rarely about a single feature or clever advertising. Rather, it's about the **whole product**.

Take the iPhone. The iPhone as a whole product includes the iOS software, iTunes and Apple Music, the App Store, the multimedia conversations you can have via iMessages and the million-plus apps that customize your smartphone experience. The whole product is everything a consumer needs and expects to get when they buy the iPhone, plus the promise of everything it could become.

So, let's apply the whole product concept to you. If you view yourself as a product that you'll launch, what is the **Whole YOU** that you'll release to the world? How will you make a valued contribution? How will you be different? And how will you design and build this compelling Whole YOU?

Education alone doesn't set you apart. There are millions of people who will graduate (or already have) with the same education as you. Be proud of your accomplishments but know that a piece of paper is not enough.

Think of your formal education like your physical phone: the plastic, aluminum, glass, and microchips. Your education is an important part of you, but it's certainly not the Whole YOU.

This is why your formal education needs to be combined with other "apps" that will create real **value** and make you different from people with the same coursework behind them. Discovering the Whole YOU requires a thorough understanding of the people and world around you. The Whole YOU is at the intersection of four elements:

1. What you're good at.
2. What you love to do.
3. What you can make a living doing; ~~and~~
4. How you define success.

These modules will guide you through a rigorous (and sometimes uncomfortable) journey to identify the Whole YOU at the intersection of these four elements.

Characteristics of Great Designers

Unpredictability is totally normal for a modern product designer. On the surface, the job of a product designer sounds straightforward; take a rough idea and turn it into a product that is so valuable that lots of people pay good money for it. But to do this well, product designers need to consider a lot of factors within their volatile, hyper-competitive markets:

1. Who is the target customer and why do they want to buy our product?

2. Does the current product meet the customers' needs today? What must change in the current product in order to meet those needs?

3. What are the competitors doing and how is our product different?

4. How do we ensure the world knows about our great product?

Product designers today have to work with customers at every stage. This not only results in a better product but also delivers the right product to market a lot faster.

A generation ago, people went to a college or university for four years focusing on little more than their next exam. Upon graduation, they would launch the "new" them to the world. Their first job turned into a career.

Those days are over.

If you approach life like that today, you'll be shocked and unprepared when you graduate into the hyper-competitive market. Instead, approach life like a modern product designer and work collaboratively with your customers to meet their ever-changing needs. Design a you that will meet the changing and competitive market that you're about to enter.

There are some common characteristics amongst all product designers that are both critical to being a great product designer and essential to designing you. The exercises in this guide will help you develop these characteristics.

Be Intentionally Curious

Albert Einstein said, "I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious." Experts believe curiosity is something all people are born with. Curiosity got us the wheel. Curiosity got us to Mars. Curiosity gave us the Internet. But if curiosity is innate, how are great product designers different from anyone else? Product designers are curious with a purpose. They have an insatiable hunger for new information and experience. They are **intentionally curious**.
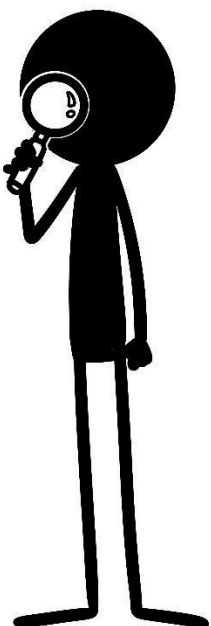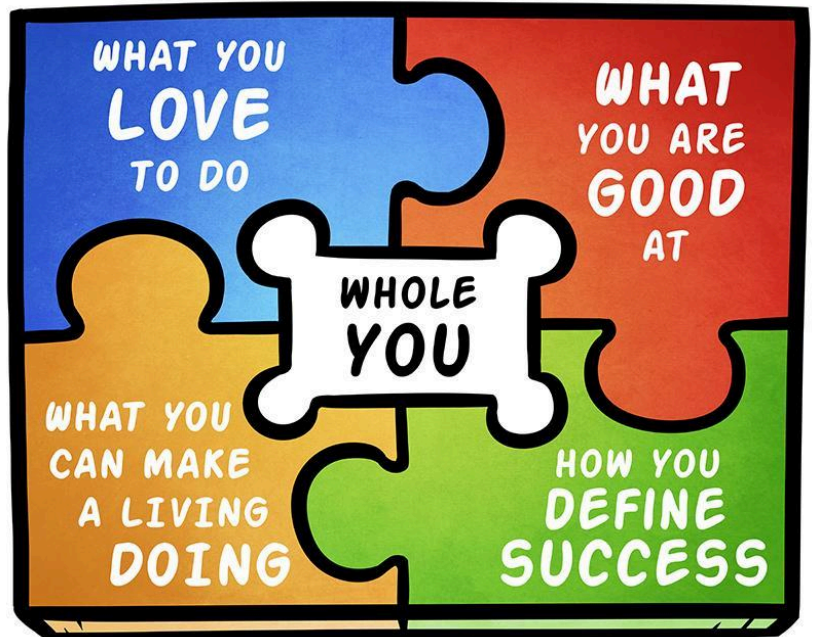
Intentionally curious people are humble enough to recognize they don't know it all. When you were five years old, you were full of questions and you didn't care that you didn't know everything. How could you? Great product designers never lost that. How could you know everything even now? Humility creates a hunger that can only be fed by answers.

Intentionally curious people look at the world (and their place in it) and see big questions: How do things work together? How do these pieces connect? How can I influence things? How can I improve things? You'll need to develop this intentional curiosity as you become the product designer of you.

Think About the Whole

Building on their intentional curiosity, great product designers not only ask questions, but they also act differently on the answers. They're thinking about the big picture; the whole as a system. Academics call this big-picture thoughtfulness **systems thinking**. Systems thinking is a pretty simple concept that's really hard to turn into reality. Systems thinking is framed around cause and effect. For human beings, cause and effect is about as rudimentary as it comes. "If I do *this*, then *that* happens." It's so basic that we rarely think about, but it's part of every decision we make.
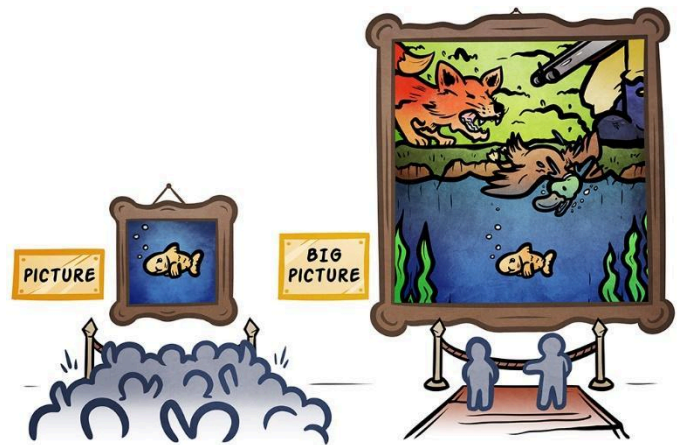
Because they think about the whole system, successful product designers recognize the first challenge is not problem solving, rather, it's problem identification. Once they figured out the root problem, they can then focus on solving it. The result is they do things that may not have an immediate effect today but will have a big impact tomorrow or a year from now.

Be Empathetic

Being a great product designer is about understanding and anticipating the wants and needs of your customers. Product designers want to walk in their customers' shoes to feel what they feel. If you are the product designer of a new tent for backcountry camping, you'll spend many nights sleeping in the cold, heat, rain, and snow, building **empathy** for your customer. As the product designer of you, empathy allows you to appreciate the perspectives of others, including employers, friends, family, and your professional network. Once you understand where others are coming from, you'll have insight into what you can do to create value for them. This is **emotional intelligence**.

Get Feedback Early (And Often)

It can be very expensive to build the final version of a product, and very risky, if you're not totally sure what it should look like, what it should do, and which features will make it a success. That's why most product designers start by building low-cost prototypes of their product, and then taking the prototypes to their customers to get immediate feedback. You can heed this advice by putting yourself out there before you are perfect. Get yourself in front of your potential customer, ask for feedback and you'll be a lot closer to understanding what perfect is.

As a product designer, it's critical you get early and regular feedback on the path you're taking from your potential customers (e.g., your future employers). For that feedback to be worth anything, you'll have to be a great listener when you hear the good, but especially when you hear the bad and the ugly. This is sometimes really hard because it's often really personal feedback. Guess what? It's not as hard as spending

four years of your life and tens of thousands of dollars studying something you're pretending both you and the world around you value. Listen early and often and act on what you hear.

Rely on Evidence, Not Simply Intuition

Great product designers know when to slow down and step back, challenge their assumptions, gather evidence, and make decisions that seem contrary to their **intuition**.

Knowing how your intuition works can help you be in control of it and not the other way around. To process all the information around us 24/7, our brain assigns decisions to two tracks—a fast track and a slow track. Our intuition is this fast-track thinking. Our intuition skips a lot of the hard thinking and automatically jumps to a conclusion. It's less about mulling things over and more about reacting to the world around us. It's great for when our ancestors were being chased by predators, but it's not always as reliable when it comes to decision-making at work or at school. Intuition is framed by what we've done before and allows us to do it all again without being bogged down by hard thinking. Hard thinking is what it sounds like: slow, but worth it.

Our intuition doesn't slow down to reflect on our biases. We all have biases because none of us have tried 99 per cent of the jobs in the world; taken 99 per cent of a university's courses; or travelled to 99 per cent of the countries in the world—let alone walked in the shoes of the people that live there. To avoid the trap of bias, you'll need to reflect and test your assumptions with real evidence. Real evidence challenges your bias and challenges your intuition.

Be Resilient

Great product designers are natural explorers, and like explorers centuries ago who were driven to find a new path to Asia, they're undeterred by tremendous risks. While those explorers didn't always find what they were looking for, their perseverance and resilience changed the history of the world. Product designers think big and don't get frustrated by the unexpected—they embrace it. This resiliency recognizes that every experience, good or bad, offers a bigger learning opportunity. Product designers aren't overwhelmed by failure; instead, they find the silver lining and build from it.

Be Accountable

A product designer cannot blame engineering, manufacturing, or sales if something goes off the rails. A product's success or failure sits singularly on the product designer. At many times in our careers as product designers, there will be no question that someone else screwed up. It may have been an engineering flaw, maybe manufacturing missed something in the production process or customer service didn't train their staff. However, product designers know they have no one to blame but themselves, because the buck stops with them. They approved the engineering design, the manufacturing process, and the training plan. Accountability means that the product designers have no one to blame but themselves.

In the life that got you to where you are today, have you ever blamed others for your shortcomings? It's not your fault you did poorly on that project; your team let you down. It's not your fault you were late for work; the bus schedule was wrong. This is the opposite of being accountable. If you're going to be your own product designer, the first step is to take a hard look in the mirror and become accountable for the current and future you.

Why Journaling Works

All the characteristics have one thing in common—great product designers are great listeners. They listen to others and themselves and they act on what they discover. Listening to yourself is tougher than it sounds. It's called **reflection** and is **critical to continuous learning**. Reflection ensures you're always gathering new information, analyzing it, and evaluating what should be done.

Reflective thinking tells you to step back, analyze, judge, and learn from both good and bad experiences. Reflection also allows you to think about the big picture and small details and how they may be related.

Over the next eight steps of *Designing YOU*, you'll be reflecting a lot with the goal of trying to connect it all together. To do this, you need to ask yourself three basic questions: What? So What? Now What? To help you, here are a series of questions to keep handy.

What?

1. What happened?
2. Why did it happen?
3. What did you do? What did others do?
4. What was your reaction?

So What?

1. What were your feelings when it happened?
2. What are your feelings now? Are there any differences? Why?
3. How do you think others feel?
4. What was the impact of what you did?
5. What worked well? What didn't?
6. What did you learn? How did you learn it?

Now What?

1. What are the implications for you and others?
2. What would you do differently next time?
3. What information do you need to move forward?
4. Why is this learning important to you?
5. How will you use this learning?
6. What actions are you going to take?

To facilitate this reflective thinking, you'll need a *Designing YOU* journal. This journal is your home base for all your *Designing YOU* work. Though there is no shortage of digital tools to capture thoughts and information (iPhone Notes, vlogs, blogs, Google Drive, or a combination), we find that an old-fashioned handwritten notebook is the most effective. There's something rewarding about filling a little book with your questions, thoughts, ideas, and interests. Notebooks can be powerful tools for reflection—especially when you go back and reread them.

There are no rules for what or how to capture information in your journal, but it's a great place to quickly jot down questions to pursue when you have time. You might be amazed at how many little thoughts pop up in a day that would simply be gone if you didn't capture them.

Value

1. You will explore what drives you.

2. You will explore how your personality influences what you like to do.

The first step in designing a new version of a product is evaluating the current product inside and out. Only at that point can the product designer assess its potential and areas for improvement. The same principle holds true for designing you.

The starting point of designing you is looking in the mirror and digging deep into who you are today. Specifically, this step explores your personality, your emotional intelligence, and your competencies. By taking stock of yourself in this way, you'll get an early glimpse of what you're currently good at.

Reflection 2.1: Asking Great Questions

Today, all great product designers ask three questions: "Why?" "What if?" "How?" For example, in the late 1990s, Steve Jobs started to consider the first question. "Why?"

1. Why is it so hard for people to enjoy their music when they're not at home?

2. Why can't people take their entire music collection with them when they travel?

3. Why is Apple only a computer company?

Jobs then started to ask, "What if?"

1. What if someone could put their entire music collection in their pocket and listen to it whenever and wherever they wanted?

2. What if I mobilized our expertise and strengths to expand Apple beyond computers?

This vision was the driving force behind finding the "How?" That's when Jobs tasked Apple's talented engineers with figuring out "how" to deliver on his vision—in 2001, the iPod was born.

What's inspiring about this approach is that all of us are capable of playing the role that Jobs played in this process. We can all ask really interesting "Why?" and "What if?" questions. It's only when you get to the "How?" that you need some specialized competencies.

One of the reasons that Jobs was such a revolutionary product designer is that he never stopped asking those great questions.

1. Why do people have to go to a physical store to get music?

2. Why do record companies have to control the distribution of music?

3. What if Apple enabled artists to distribute their music directly to their fans?
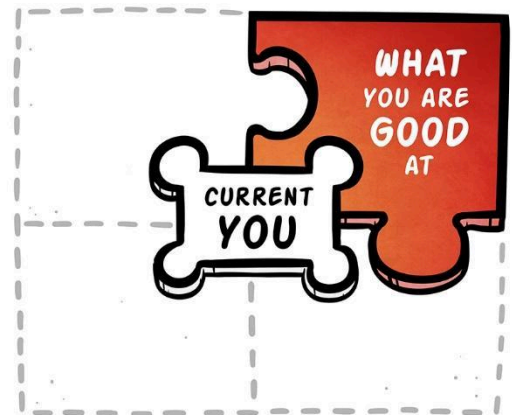
These simple questions resulted in the iTunes store and revolutionized the entire music industry. However, Jobs' insatiable curiosity led him to ask more questions about the emerging smartphone market dominated at the time by BlackBerry.

1. Why do people have one device for mobile music and one device for mobile communications?

2. What if the entire mobile phone was a touchscreen?

3. What if anyone could build an application that could be used on this new device?

The iPhone and App Store changed everything. Again.

Though we're all born with an innate curiosity, most of us have lost it along the way. Finding this curiosity is the essential first step to designing you, because it's impossible to answer the big questions in life if you haven't first explored what's inside of you (such as your personality and interests) and what's out there (such as a wide-open world of opportunities). However, to do this, you need to start questioning everything. Yes, everything.

Practicing 'why?'

Questioning everything takes practice. As a start, **take a few minutes and list five "whys."** Look around for stuff you don't understand or things that frustrate you. They don't need to be profound. The point is to start to question the little and big things inside of you and out there. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. Why does my mom always buy a Volvo?

2. Why does my smartphone battery run out so quickly?

3. Why do lawyers make so much money?

4. Why do people sit in cubicles at my dad's office?

5. Why do people say I need to have a university degree to be successful?

Activity 2.1: Finding Your Passion

We'll start by digging deeper into the things you love in order to find the source of your passion.

Think about what you love to do today. Some of your passions and interests today are a direct outcome of childhood curiosity. Whether you remember it or not, there was a time when you didn't understand the sport you now love to play or couldn't appreciate the music you now can't stop listening to. The natural curiosity that led you there is often lost as our identity forms. You can break from this comfort zone and tap into your intentional curiosity to explore the way you did as a child.

If you're lucky, one interest might turn into a full-blown passion that helps guide you on your journey map to the Whole YOU.

Start by making a list of the people, places, and things that you're passionate about or that interest you. Then, for each item in your list, ask "Why? Why am I passionate about it?" Your answer may or may not surprise you. Then, ask yourself "Why?" again, and perhaps again. For example, in the following table we imagine that two individuals have the same interest in basketball but break down their "Why?" very differently:

	Ahmed	**Meaghan**
Interest/Passion	I love playing basketball.	I love playing basketball.
Why?	It's something I'm good at.	I love the competition.
Why?	I used to spend about 10 hours a week practicing.	I love being part of a team.
Why?	I enjoyed getting better week after week and making my father proud.	I really admire and identify with some of the people in my league. I guess you could call them my tribe.

Using this reflection exercise, if Ahmed has a product designer's mentality, he might start to look for other activities that he could invest time into and become good at. Meaghan might look into other teams or clubs that she could join.

If you do this activity with each of your interests, you might start to see some patterns developing. For example, perhaps your most prominent answer to "Why?" is because the things you love to do are done outdoors, or maybe you do them all by yourself, or that they each give you a sense of escape. Curiosity about what makes you tick unlocks other paths to explore.

<mark>**Activity 2.2: Exploring What's Adjacent**</mark>

For this activity, you'll start by listing a few areas that you know a fair amount about. These topics are likely in your comfort zone and we suspect they're core to your identity.

Taking it to the next level of questioning is a little trickier. **Come up with questions about areas of your topic that you don't know much about.** You're reaching for stuff way outside of your comfort zone and your current identity. Specifically, try not to limit yourself to things you'll learn if you simply continue down your current path.

For example, you might have taken ballet for years and feel confident about what you know as a dancer. You won't worry about the few jumps or styles that you haven't mastered. Instead, you'll ask questions about the other "adjacent" areas that you perhaps haven't considered. These are areas that are linked to your areas of interest but one step away. Using the ballet example:

Topic	I love ballet
Questions	1. What is involved in running a dance studio?
	2. What makes one teacher better than another?
	3. Why can some people jump higher than others?
	4. Why are there few ballet dancers over 30?

Asking the questions is only the beginning. The product designer now goes out and hunts down the evidence for an answer. In our example, this will lead our ballet dancer to know something about how a business operates, the best practices behind coaching and the physiology of a dancer.

Finally, as you explore other aspects of what you already know, you'll slowly expand your comfort zone, your identity and your **social network** to include these areas of different but related interests. **Make note of those areas that intrigue you most.** They're prime territory for further exploration in later steps.

Activity 2.3: Open Up Your World

It's tough to be curious about something you don't know exists. But you just need to know a little before your curiosity is triggered—you'll be driven to know more. That's "priming the pump" with interesting (but incomplete) information. Fortunately, there's a huge amount of easily accessible information that will allow you to trigger your curiosity.

For this activity, find five TED talks (www.ted.com) weekly to expose you to something you didn't know. TED Talks feature experts sharing a sliver of what they know in the hopes of inspiring you. Each speaker has no more than 18 minutes to deliver their inspirational message, whether they're a Nobel Prize winner or a billionaire.

To find a talk that aligns with your interests, consider building on something triggered by the first activity. For example:

- **What?** "I love movies and books about aliens."
    - **Why?** "I'm fascinated by extraterrestrial life."
        - **Why?** "I can't believe we are alone in the universe."

Really smart people have done TED Talks on the potential of extra-terrestrial life, and really smart people have done TED Talks on just about every other topic out there. If you run out of topics that directly connect to your interests, try Googling "best TED Talks" and see what catches your eye.

Make note in your journal of what topics or questions interest you. There is always more exploring to do. You can use this table as a guide.

TED Talk	This is interesting because…

Activity 2.4: Exploring Interests One Class at A Time

In the previous activities, you've explored why you're interested in the things you're interested in and explored potential new interests. In this activity, we want you to build on both of these activities and explore the most interesting (and off the wall) university and college courses you can find.

What did the first two activities tell you about your interests? These are great places to start. Have you ever wanted to take a class on the Simpsons, rap, Lego, or zombies? They all exist. A good place to begin exploring is your own school, but remember, in the world of online education, you don't have to stop there. To kick-start your exploration, we have compiled a **list of 25 innovative courses** taught at different schools.

When you find a class that interests you, build on the "Why?" process from the first activity:

- **What?** "The Philosophy of Star Trek class really interests me."

    - **Why?** "I like that their world has moved past race and nationalism and focuses on the greater good."

        - **Why?** "I have experienced racism firsthand, so I am passionate about celebrating diversity."

            - **So What?** Maybe I should major in sociology?

As you search courses that interest you, make notes in your journal on the course, the school and "Why?". You should pay particular attention to what is offered at schools in your area. This exercise will help you better understand what makes you tick and why.

Course Name	School	This is interesting because...

Explore one class at a time

Here are some examples of the amazingly diverse and fun university courses that could open your eyes and stimulate your curiosity.

Humanities

1. The Simpsons and Philosophy
2. Philosophy and Star Trek
3. United Kingdom: To Hogwarts, Harry: An Intensive Study of Harry Potter Through the British Isles

Literature

4. Elvish, the language of Lord of the Rings

5. Rap Linguistics

6. Jay Z and Kanye West

Music & Art

7. The Beatles

8. Introduction to Turntablism

9. Muppet Magic

10. The Art of Warcraft

Social Sciences

11. The Sociology of Miley Cyrus

12. UFOs In American Society

13. Gangsters, Goodfellas and Wiseguys: North American Perspectives of Organized Crime

Science & Technology

14. The Science of Superheroes

15. Brewing Science: The History, Culture and Science of Beer

16. Lego Robotics

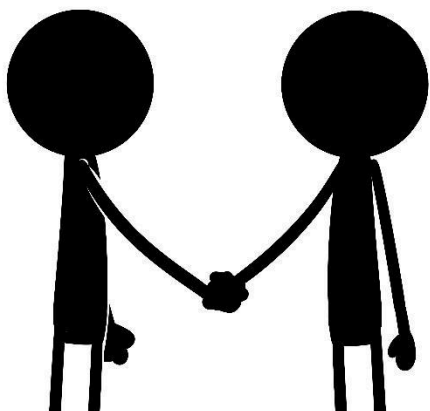17. Poker 101

18. Street-Fighting Mathematics

Physical Education and Recreation

19. Circus Stunts

20. Tree Climbing

21. Hockey: Culture and Commerce

Popular Culture

22. History of Video Games and Interactive Media

23. Calvin & Hobbes

24. American Pro Wrestling

25. Zombies in Popular Media

Activity 2.5: Start Curiosity Conversations

Remember: Effective product designers are empathetic. Empathy is caring about other people—what they do, why they do it, what they enjoy, how they got to where they are, what they regret and more. Everyone's story has important lessons that'll open your world and help in designing you. **We want you to get**

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out there and trigger your empathy and curiosity through conversations.

If you've done the previous activities, you may already have an idea of the type of person with whom you would like to speak. The ballerina could chat with a dance studio owner or a physiotherapist. If you enjoyed a TED talk about alien life, maybe call the director of a local science centre or a professor at a local university. The goal is to have conversations with people who you currently identify with (likely who are already in your comfort zone), as well as with people you may have never realized in a million years, you'd have anything in common with. The latter are the people who will push your comfort zone and force you to reflect hard on your own identity.

If you're struggling, lean on your personal network (family, coaches, teachers, neighbours). Once you know who you want to have a conversation with, come up with a reason for the conversation and make the request.

Don't worry about wasting someone's time when you request a conversation. Universally, we all love talking about ourselves. Suggest an open-ended topic with a fixed amount of time. For example: "I'm a student interested in dance and I am curious about how you became the owner of a dance studio. If you can spare 20 minutes, I'd love to hear your story."

Your secret weapon is that they've all been where you are right now. Therefore, they're inclined to want to support you. Instead of fighting for airtime to tell your story, just absorb their story.

Once you've landed the conversation, your main role is to listen, intently. Be actively interested in their story and ask good open-ended questions, like:

1. How did you become the _____?
2. What were the stepping stones to get where you are?
3. What part of your job do you like the most? The least?
4. What did you take in school? Was it relevant?
5. Is there any class you wish you had taken at school but didn't? Why?
6. What advice would you give your younger self?

Don't try to sell yourself — showing genuine interest in them is the best impression you could leave. The first couple of conversations might be difficult or even a bit awkward, but soon you'll get really good at listening and asking relevant follow-up questions. Your best questions are the ones that flow out of the conversation and are curiosity-driven. Your last question should always be, "Is there anyone else you know who I might be able to learn from?" followed by a warm and genuine "thank you."

As a final step, it's important to send a thank you note. As part of this journey reflect on whether you'd value an ongoing relationship with this person. Did you hit it off? Maybe they had such a different perspective that you'd value ongoing insight? If this is the case, in your note simply ask if you could keep in touch. Note the connection in your journal as it will be important in Module 3, when we form your Design Team. Use the following chart as a guide in your journal.

I talked to...	I learned...

Activity 2.6: Exploring Your Personality

Some of what makes you who you are is learned through your experiences, but a lot of it is coded in your personality. A person's personality evolves over a lifetime, but many of the core personality traits that you had when you were 18 will still be part of you when you're 88. That's why we're exploring your personality today.

Before we jump in, a word of warning that **this assessment should only be a starting point**. It's a window into what makes you tick right now. The point of this exercise is not to force you into a personality box, but to provide some high-level insight into what makes you who you are today. Personality is one of the most debated topics in psychology and as a result, there are many different approaches psychologists use to evaluate it. Click **HERE** for a list of additional resources we encourage you to dig into.

This assessment exercise will capture how you view yourself today based on a number of personality traits. For example, how accurate is it to call yourself "talkative" or "organized"? It's important to score yourself compared to people you know who are similar to you in terms of age and gender. It's also critical you score yourself as you are today, not how you want to be in the future, or how you wish you were right now. This only works if you're honest with yourself.

Assessment 1 Activity

For each of the questions that follow, score yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with a 1 being "Never" and 5 being "Always." There's nothing inherently good or bad about being a 1 or a 5 in any category, rather it's the mixture of all these traits that makes us who we are.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Always

Trait A	Trait B	Trait C	Trait D	Trait E
__ Talkative	__ Sympathetic	__ Organized	__ Not envious	__ Creative
__ Outgoing	__ Warm	__ Efficient	__ Relaxed	__ Imaginative
__ Bold	__ Kind	__ Systematic		__ Philosophical
__ Energetic	__ Cooperative	__ Practical		__ Intellectual

Total					

Now total your score for each trait.

Assessment 2 ONLINE QUIZ

For the second assessment, score yourself on a *reversed* scale of 1 to 5, with a 1 being "Always" and 5 being "Never."

1	2	3	4	5
Always	A lot	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

	Trait A	Trait B	Trait C	Trait D	Trait E
	__ Shy __ Quiet __ Bashful __ Withdrawn	__ Cold __ Unsympathetic __ Rude __ Harsh	__ Disorganized __ Sloppy __ Inefficient __ Careless	__ Moody __ Jealous __ Temperamental __ Worried	__ Uncreative __ Shallow __Superficial __Uninspired
Total					

Total your score for each trait. Now, find your average score for each trait by following these steps:

1. Transfer your totals from both assessments onto the chart that follows.
2. Add up the two totals to give you a grand total for each trait.

	Trait A	Trait B	Trait C	Trait D	Trait E
Assessment 1 total					
Assessment 2 total					
Grand total (assessment 1+ assessment 2)					

Reflecting on Your Personality

Researchers have studied personality traits for decades, trying to figure out what makes people tick from the inside out. The result is what's called the Big Five personality traits.

Each of these personality traits can be measured on a spectrum and everybody falls somewhere on each spectrum. If you find yourself on the lower end of one trait's spectrum (score of 2 or lower), you may be higher (score of 4 or above) on its opposite trait. The opposite of organized may be spontaneous or the opposite of trusting may be cautious.

Outgoing (Trait A): If you scored high on this trait, you're outgoing and get energy from others. Alone time for you can be boring.

If you scored low on this trait, you may be more introverted. Many introverts enjoy their downtime and look forward to being alone because being around others is emotionally exhausting—it's not that they don't like others—but it takes work to always be "on."

Trusting (Trait B): If you scored high on this trait, you tend to be agreeable, cooperative, or trusting of others. You're more likely to help others and see the good in them.

If you scored low, you may be more cautious of others.

There's a balancing act with this trait, as being highly agreeable can create situations where others take advantage of you but being cautious may lead others to think you're argumentative for the sake of an argument.

Organized (Trait C): If you scored high on this trait, you're incredibly well organized, a planner and conscientious.

If you scored low on this trait, you thrive on spontaneity and winging it.

Those who are super organized are often perceived as dependable (you're always somewhere when you say you'll be), but you may be a little stubborn and inflexible. In contrast, those who are spontaneous are happy to see where life takes them and are flexible. However, sometimes others may view you as unreliable (e.g., "so when you said you wanted me at work by 10 a.m. you really meant it?").

Nervous (Trait D): If you scored high on this trait, you're anxious and may ride an emotional rollercoaster every day—especially the not-so-good emotions such as anxiety, anger, or depression.

If you scored low, then you're an emotional rock, where you rarely experience the emotional highs and lows that others feel.

Curious (Trait E): If you scored high on this trait, you like new things and are naturally curious. You ask a lot of questions and want to dig deeper. You might be open to skydiving, doing an exchange program in another country or joining a new club.

If you scored low on this trait, you're naturally cautious. You might be happy and content at home and wonder why people would ever like to travel to the unknown. You enjoy your daily routine and breaking from it can make you unhappy. You're pragmatic, making decisions based on what you've done in the past. You may find it tough to get out of your comfort zone, but don't worry because in this guide you will work at developing your intentional curiosity.

What Now?

Now that you know how you rank for each of the traits, you can start to reflect on who you are. In which traits did you score highest and lowest? This is a good time to see if the assessment passes the "sniff" test. Do the results sound like you? If not, were you really being honest with yourself? You may want to go back and
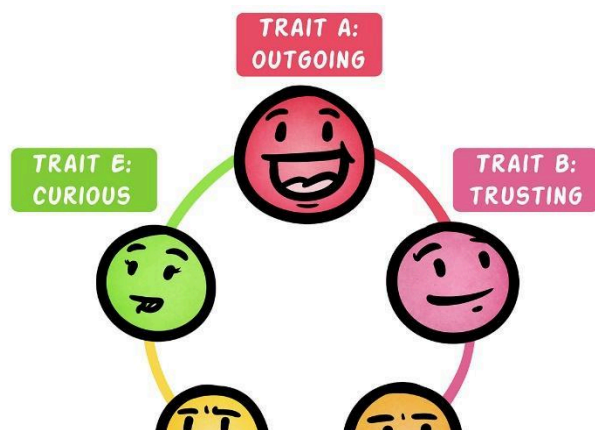
refine the assessment but be careful that you always answer the questions honestly based on who you are today and remember there is no right or wrong answer.

Once you've assessed yourself, it's useful to compare how others view your personality. To do this, **give the assessment to a close friend or family member to evaluate you.** You need them to be honest, so pick someone who you feel very comfortable with and ask them to be honest and constructive. Picking someone who'll tell you what you want to hear is a waste of time for everyone.

Once they complete the assessment for you, compare the scores and rankings with your own. Are they consistent? **If not, reflect on the reasons why.** This process—though sometimes awkward—can start to provide important insight into how others perceive you and can therefore help to figure out who you are.

At this stage, you're getting glimpses of your personality from both the inside (you) and the outside (others). **Now you can reflect on and interpret the results by writing a simple paragraph to summarize your personality.**

A big part of exploring your personality is to better understand who you are today. The intention is not to pass judgment, but to reflect and build on your strengths, while not dwelling on what you may perceive as personality weaknesses today. With that in mind, turn your personality into a concise statement in your journal (a minimum of 250 words or so). Feel free to use the language from the trait definitions or create your own.

Activity 2.7: Exploring Your Emotional Intelligence

What we typically think of as "thinking," psychologists call **cognitive intelligence**. Cognitive intelligence is composed of your ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience. For decades, this form of intelligence was considered the crucial factor that separates success from failure. It's no surprise then that our education system's primary focus is the development of cognitive intelligence (and to a lesser extent some technical competencies).

But watch out cognitive intelligence. In recent years, researchers have identified a factor that has huge influence on both personal and professional success—**emotional intelligence** (EI). Psychologist Daniel Goleman found that although cognitive intelligence is valued, it isn't particularly unique. Rather, what really can make a difference is a person's emotional intelligence. Someone with high emotional intelligence is not only adept at controlling and understanding their own emotions, but also at navigating interpersonal relationships.

Assessment 1 ONLINE QUIZ

What follows is a list of statements to score yourself on. Just as with the other assessment tools, it's important to score yourself openly and honestly based on how you are today, not how you want to be in the future.

For each of the questions, score yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with a 1 being "Never" and 5 being "Always." Again, there are no right or wrong answers, rather this is intended to get you to begin to reflect deeper on the you of today.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Always

Emotional Intelligence Traits
Trait A
_ I have control over my emotions.
_ I never give up when faced with a challenge due to a belief I'll fail.
_ I compliment others when they have done something well.
_ I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.
Total
Trait B
_ I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.
_ Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living.
_ I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.
_ I know why my emotions change.
Total
Trait C
_ I seek out activities that make me happy.
_ I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.
_ When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.
_ I arrange events that others enjoy.
Total
Trait D
_ When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.
_ I expect that I'll do well in most things I try.
_ Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.
_ When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times when I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.
Total
Trait E
_ I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.
_ I help other people feel better when they are down.
_ I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.
_ Other people find it easy to confide in me.
Total

Trait F

__ I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others.

__ I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send.

__ I can get a sense of other people by just looking at their facial expressions.

__ I never find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people.

Total

Reflecting on Your Emotional Intelligence

Let's dig into what it means to be emotionally intelligent and how you can increase your score. There are six dimensions to emotional intelligence: emotional management, self-awareness, optimism, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Emotional management (Trait A): Emotional management is the ability to think before acting. It's controlling our impulse behavior. Emotional management is at the heart of reflective thinking. It's the ability to have an internal, open, and honest conversation with your feelings.

People who can manage their emotions are adaptable and respond well to ambiguity and change. People who score low on this may wear their emotions on their sleeve more.

Self-awareness (Trait B): Self-awareness is the ability to have a deep understanding of your emotions. What are your strengths and weaknesses? What motivates you? What are your goals? What are your values?

People who score low have little appreciation of themselves or what drives them; this may lead to having a blind spot about the good or not so good elements that make them who they are.

Optimism (Trait C): Optimism is the ability to view everything from a positive place. People who are optimistic are constantly positive and this gives them their energy. This optimism is their motivation and drive.

People who score low on this may have an inclination to see the downside and always think things could be better. Their pessimistic attitude can lead to frustration and demotivation because nothing is ever perfect.

Motivation (Trait D): Emotional intelligence requires motivation. People who have this internal motivation want to achieve, regardless of external incentives. They don't need someone else to provide a reward for doing things. They're rarely satisfied with the status quo; they believe there is always a better way. Motivated people are highly competitive, highly optimistic and often see the positive side in both the good and the bad.

People who score low on this may have lower intrinsic motivation and may be more motivated by extrinsic factors such as compensation or grades.

Empathy (Trait E): The ability to read other people's emotions is central to emotional intelligence. This is the capacity to walk in the shoes of others and to reflect on this when making decisions that will impact these people.

People who score low on this may have difficulty feeling what others feel, because their default lens only shows their own reality.

Social skill (Trait F): The final component of emotional intelligence is social skill. Social skill is the ability to build and sustain relationships. Having good social skills doesn't mean being the life of the party, rather it's the view that relationships are important. It also factors in the ability to persuade and build consensus and bridges between people with diverse viewpoints.

People who score low on this may be lacking in some of the key social skills. The nuances of interpersonal relationships aren't obvious, and as a result, these people may not respond to social cues that others see.

Prepare a Summary

Reflect on your emotional intelligence. Based on the results of your self-assessment, where are you strong? Where is there an opportunity for improvement? **Based on your reflection, write a paragraph (a minimum of 250 words or so) to summarize the results of your emotional intelligence assessment.** It's important to remember that we all have areas of our emotional intelligence that we could improve upon. Here's a sample:

My Emotional Intelligence

The emotional intelligence assessment placed me incredibly high on personal motivation. This quality seems to ring true from my childhood onward and continues to drive me today as a student and as a professional. When I add in my high optimism, I feel like I can do anything! As I had suspected, there is a lot of room for improvement in my self-awareness. Interestingly, I seem to exhibit polar opposite scoring on empathy. It seems that I understand other people's emotions much better than my own. There could be an opportunity for me to reflect on how I go about understanding and communicating with others in order to better understand myself.

What do you know?

Now, we're going to change gears a little and explore what you can do.

As a starting point, it's important to differentiate "knowing" vs. "doing." To do so, we first need to nail down a few definitions: information, , skills, and competencies.

Information: Facts about a person, place, or thing. It's the stuff that fills most textbooks. Google's mission is to organize the world's information. Information is important, but it's not unique. Everyone has access to the same raw information. As a result, information in the age of Google is a commodity. What's valuable is what you do with this information. This is .

 : when raw information is applied to a specific context and used to solve a problem. For example, your history class taught you the American Constitution. This was designed to ensure power was not concentrated in a single person or group because of the risk of abuse of power. This is the raw information, and everyone can access it.   is your ability to recognize that the raw information about the U.S. Constitution is worth considering when designing your new student council constitution. Your   enables you to propose that your student constitution should separate the powers between the president and the elected council to offer a system of checks and balances, ensuring accountability.

  has its limitations because it's conceptual. Knowing this is a good idea is one thing but building consensus amongst 50 other members of your student council is another. That takes skill.

Skill: building on your   to solve a real-life problem. If   is about "knowing," a skill is about "doing." For example, "knowing" how a person can ride a bike is very different than having the skill to actually ride a bike.

To succeed in implementing your student council idea, you need the skills to persuade the majority of council (and school administration) that your idea should be approved. This requires you to be both very well organized and have excellent communication skills. It's this "doing" that results in evidence of a skill and has the potential to be unique.

Your combination of aptitude, ability, , and skills to complete a job or task is called **a competency**. Some competencies are innate; some of us are born to be better at certain things than others. Mostly, however, these are developed and refined. What competencies we choose to excel at is where Designing YOU comes in. The right competencies will allow you to adapt and transform as fast the as the world around us.

When you think about competencies there are two major types: **job-specific competencies** and **enabling competencies.**

Job-Specific Competencies

Job-specific competencies are the competencies you need to complete a specific job, whether it be welding, teaching, engineering, or soccer. These incorporate **role specific** competencies, for example, the competencies required to be an accountant. They also include **industry specific competencies**, for example, the competencies required to be an accountant in the oil & gas sector. Historically, job-specific competencies were the most valued by employers as they were essential to generating short-term economic value. For many professions, from accountants to skilled trades to engineering common currencies have emerged in the form of competency frameworks. These frameworks define both a common language and mechanisms to assess the competency.

The challenge is job-specific competencies are highly contextual and in today's fast paced world possess an increasingly short lifespan. In the past, a trade learned as a teenager could be developed and refined through a lifetime of experience and maintain its value. Today, job-specific competencies often become dated and demand continual training to maintain their value.

The result is today, most employers are searching for people who can adapt and pivot in a constantly changing environment.[1] For example:

- By 2022, globally **75 million jobs will be displaced** across the leading 20 economies, while **133 million new jobs will be created** in emerging sectors.
- It is estimated that in the next few years, **50 per cent** of people globally will need to be reskilled or upskilled.[2]
- Calgary Economic Development forecasts that **half of the jobs** performed by Calgarians today could be at risk of automation over the next 20 years.

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[1] For more information on the evolving nature of talent and its impact on Calgary, refer to the Calgary on the Precipice Reports at LearningCITY.ca

[2] World Economic Forum (2018). Future of jobs report. Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018

If there was a single competency that will define your future, **it's called adaptability**.

Enabling competencies (sometimes called soft-skills or transferable-skills) are what enable you to **adapt and adopt new job-specific competencies**. Enabling competencies are the **competencies for life.** Enabling competencies include dimensions such as problem solving, collaborating, communicating, reading and digital literacy. A study sponsored by Calgary Economic Development found that **2/3rds of all competencies** for jobs ranging from engineering to social work were enabling competencies. Enabling competencies are the rocket fuel that will power every Calgarian in the new economy.

Fortunately, there's a lot of research into which competencies are most valued by employers. We did some research to better understand what competencies employers look for specifically when hiring new graduates. Our results were very consistent. From those results emerged **25 enabling competencies**, in six categories. **We call these the *Competencies for Life*.**
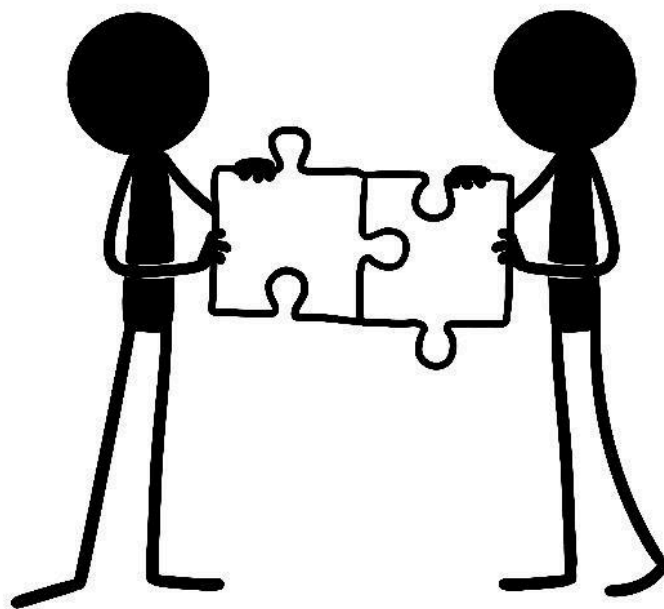
Problem Solving

Self-Reliance

Collaboration

Communications

Core Literacies

Core Workplace Skills

The *competencies for life* are highly valued by employers. In fact, these competencies are the dominant focus for most employers. They're valuable because they're used in so many different situations and they're hard to teach (especially in a short period of time). Employers want evidence that someone they hire has a strong foundation of the most important competencies. From there, employees can refine and improve those competencies on the job.

Now go explore each of the 25 *competencies for life* as part of Designing YOU. This website has an entire section dedicated just to exploring these and why they are essential to enabling you to adapt on your terms, not someone else's.

If the 25 *competencies for life* are highly valued by employers, where does that leave job-specific competencies? Does it mean that I don't need to focus on tasks like computer programming, accounting, or Computer Aided Design (CAD)? Of course not. An accounting firm wants you to have accounting competencies. These job-specific competencies are the types of competencies that colleges and universities are good at making sure you possess. They offer entire programs designed to give you job-specific competencies. You need to have depth in some job-specific competencies to offer specific value to an employer. But ultimately, it's your problem solving, self-reliance, collaboration, communication, core literacies and work workplace skills that make you adaptable and valuable.

While a degree in engineering/medicine/social work confirms that you have the job-specific competencies of an engineer/doctor/social worker, how do you prove that you have exceptional thinking, communication, interpersonal and organizational competencies? These competencies are often developed both inside and outside the classroom. You use them in your part-time job, you use them in your club, and you use them in your volunteer activities. It's critical to be able to provide evidence of your enabling competencies. Don't just tell me, show me. We dedicate a later chapter to the role of evidence and storytelling.

The value of job-specific competencies depends on the task and the job. Some jobs require specific competencies. This is why they'll ask you for evidence that you have them. Evidence may be in the form of a piece of paper, such as a certification that you have the competencies to be a welder or a brain surgeon. Others require proof of previous work experience. This is all simply code for "we need someone who can offer evidence they have done this task in the past."

Learning as a Climbing Wall

Career path discussions inevitably lead to the question, "**what should I study at school**?" This is an important question that *Designing YOU* will help answer.

The problem is most people think about learning as a ladder, where people are all climbing together from a common starting point to a (more of less) common destination. For about 150 years that may have been the case, but today, learning is best viewed as **a climbing wall**, where you can start anywhere and it never ends. On this climbing all is everything from formal education to sports to arts to books to podcasts to work experience and Ted Talks. What is best about today's climbing all is you can go up, down or sideways. There is no single route, and it never ends. The climbing all is about stimulating curiosity and exploring.

If used well, formal education can b one of the greatest tools ever invented to stimulate curiosity. As you learned in Step 1, colleges and universities offer courses on almost anything you can think of. The experts who teach those courses are typically passionate about both the topic and the success of students in their field.

Some post-secondary programs may narrow your path because you must specialize early on in your education. If you're certain you want to be an engineer or a nurse, you are fortunate to have clearly defined degree programs. But few students are certain of their destination as they start their post-secondary education. Go explore and don't feel pressured to commit to a specialized path until you're ready. Take that political philosophy class, that class on marine biology, the class on comic books or music history. You'll like some and dislike others, but by "playing the field" you'll open your world and start to narrow it down at the same time. Remember, exploring different paths and zigzagging is part of designing you. So, take the time to explore.

Taking a variety of courses in your first or second year of post-secondary can save you money in the long run. School is not cheap, so before you invest in a specialization be sure it fits in your plan

The role of formal education in life is evolving. Someone who is 18 today could live to be 120 and have a 60-year career. Do you think the   you acquire when you're 20 will still be totally relevant when you are 80? Post-secondary education is no longer a single stage early in your life. You will likely return repeatedly to enhance and diversify your competencies over a lifetime. This lifelong engagement could involve taking a single course occasionally, completing a more involved certificate or even taking one or more graduate degrees.

The "what should I study?" question brings us to the heart of the T-shaped YOU: "**Should I specialize in an area that provides task-based competencies or one that provides enabling competencies?"** The good news is that regardless of your program choice, you will be enhancing your competencies. Some degrees, such as engineering, nursing, and business, may spend more time on task-based competencies while other programs like science, arts, and the humanities may focus more on developing generalist, enabling competencies.
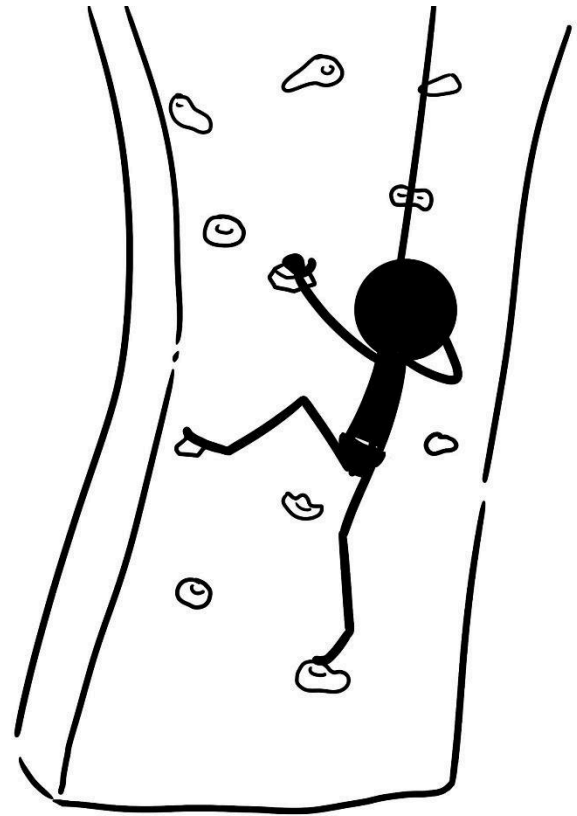
All education is important to developing the T-shaped YOU. Be conscious of what competencies you are developing, so that you can fill any gaps in your formal education through summer jobs, community activities, sports, or other components of the whole you. If you worry that there's only one path to a specific career, look at the diversity of real people's stories in this book as examples of where different degrees could take you.

Heather studied English literature and became a farmer and an author. Jim studied outdoor education and became a project manager. Chris and Stefan studied science and became entrepreneurs. So, the real question to ask is, "**what is the goal of your formal education?**" As you get further into *Designing YOU*, you will start to better identify your goals and the role that formal education can play in achieving them.

If you are questioning whether your chosen field of study is still right for you, explore your options to change paths. Your school will be able to help you navigate such a change. You might be surprised at how easy it is to shift to a new program area. And take comfort in the fact that you are not alone. Between 50-70 per cent of students will change their major at least once, and many will change at least three times before they graduate. If you're worried that it will be hard to change, consider how hard (and costly) it will be to stick to a path you know is wrong for you.

<mark>Activity 2.8: Assessing What You Can Do</mark>

It's time to identify your strengths in each of the big five competencies and provide evidence to back it up. Replicate the following table in your journal and use it to list all the competencies you currently have under the respective header. Come up with at least three competencies for each heading. The most important part of this exercise is to list the evidence of each skill. That evidence may be in the form of a certificate or associated work experience; it's the proof that you can do what you say you can do.

For example, Cindy contends that she has excellent leadership competencies (part of interpersonal competencies). Her evidence is that she was head bartender at the university pub with six staff reporting to her and experienced no staff turnover. Marco believes he has excellent written communication skills. He has strong evidence of this since he publishes a popular blog for students at his university.

The goal of this reflection is to ensure you have captured a full inventory of your current competencies. We find most young adults get hung up on their job title and don't recognize their competencies that are regularly on display. Based on the example of Cindy, this is why most resumes only list the job of a bartender, rather than the fact that this job is evidence of very specific, valuable competencies (e.g., leadership).

Remember, as this is part of the Current YOU, ensure you capture only the competencies you currently have, not the competencies you aspire to have or wish to develop. There will be an opportunity to consider the future later. This self-assessment is also an introduction to the importance of **evidence-based** storytelling (which we dedicate Module 7 to).

Your Current YOU Competencies	Your evidence
Analytical competencies (3)	

Analytical Thinking Contextual Agility Creativity Curiosity Perseverance Takes Initiative Problem Solving Reflection System Thinking Time Management	
Foundational competencies (3)	
Collaboration Conflict Resolution Emotional Intelligence Influence Integrity Relationship Curation	
Interpersonal competencies (3)	
Effective Listening Reading Literacy Verbal Communication Written Communication Numeracy Financial Literacy Civic Literacy Technology Literacy	
Professional competencies (3)	
Define Workplace Goals Manage Organizational Resources Inspire and Lead Others Professional Identity	
Job-specific competencies (3)	
The competencies required to complete a specific task or job.	

Reflecting on Competencies

Again, it's important to reflect on the results of your self-assessment of your competencies. Referring to the table you just created, reflect on the competencies you currently possess; also reflect on the evidence that you have to demonstrate these competencies. **Record a short description of your competencies in your journal.**

Once you have completed this, review it with family, friends, and any current mentor(s) you may have.

Module 3: Why Mentors Matter

Value

1. Explore why your relationships are essential to helping design you.

2. Compete activities to help you identify mentor candidates.

Why Designing You Is A Team Effort

As a product designer you don't need to know it all, but you do need to take insight from a well-assembled team of experts. For example, there's likely a product designer somewhere responsible for designing the next generation of taximeters to better track and record the cost of a cab ride. The obvious members of their design team are owners of taxi companies, taxi drivers and experts in the design of the previous taximeters. There is no doubt that this team could design a much better meter than the last one. But what if their team also consists of an Uber driver, an Uber user, and a smartphone specialist? Do you think they'd design a different product? Who you surround yourself with influences what (and whom) you design.

As they say, it's not what you know, it's who you know. Over the course of your lifetime, you'll cross paths with thousands of different people, but you'll rarely recognize the potential value of each of these relationships. We all spend 15 to 20 years in a classroom focused on developing our   and spend relatively little time explicitly developing personal and professional relationships. A rule — yes, a rule — of Designing YOU is that **you won't succeed in achieving your goals alone.** It's a team effort, so you'll need to really think about who you need on the design team.

Activity 3.1: Relationship Audit

We want you to map who you know and what they know. This exercise will help you recognize the value of your relationships and the best step in forming your design team.

Recreate the following table in your journal and fill it in with the results of your work. Start by brainstorming people you know. For example, it could be your mom, dad, friend, professor, and boss. Start with your inner circle of close family and friends, then consider "what do they know?" and "what is their area of expertise?" It may be professional (e.g., Sandy is a zoologist) or it may be a hobby or passion (e.g., Ying likes to fix old cars).

Next, think about who they may know. It doesn't have to be someone specific, rather it can be a role. For example, Sandy is a zoologist so she must know other zoologists, zookeepers, and the management at the zoo where she works. She's also travelled lots in her job, so she must know other people who have travelled.

Similarly, Ying likes to fix old cars so he must know people to buy old cars from, other mechanics and people like him who love old cars.

Optionally, instead of using the table, you may want to map your network by using a big piece of paper or an online tool; put yourself in the middle and map out as many of your relationships as you can.

Either way, this exercise isn't about being precise; it's about recognizing the potential untapped value and depth of your existing relationships. Once you have completed your map or table, you will use this information to start **forming your design team**.

Name	What they know	Who they may know

Forming Your Design Team

The success of mentoring in school is hit and miss. Some universities and colleges assign mentors to all first-year students. These normally start and finish with the first cup of coffee. But mentoring is an essential part of designing you. However, mentoring needs to be a team effort – we call this your **design team.**

Your design team is a group of trusted advisors who are in it for the long term. Everyone on your design team has a defined purpose based on what they know—their expertise. When designing a product, an engineer is on a design team for a very specific purpose, as is the team member from sales and the member from manufacturing. All these people understand their role and focus their expertise in that area. You need to build your design team with this same intentional mindset. Your team's advice and expertise will help you explore and get beyond the obvious. This may include advice on everything from school to part-time jobs to volunteer opportunities and what clubs to join. To do this, we recommend you assign your advisors to one of four categories, with each of them playing defined roles. They include the Whole YOU Mentor, the Professional YOU Mentor, the Personal Advisor, and the Real-World Experts.

Whole You Mentor

A Whole YOU mentor is a trusted advisor with whom you'll have a highly personal relationship. A Whole YOU mentor is someone who is committed to coaching and supporting you for an extended period. This commitment normally involves meeting about once a month for coaching.

A mentor's relationship bridges both personal and professional themes, allowing them to provide objective and balanced advice. It's important that your mentor shares similar values and goals to you as their advice is based on their experiences and values. This person is often a role model in that they may have a similar background and have overcome obstacles to achieve their goals. They are one of the few people that get you and understand the difficult decisions you'll face.

Candidates: This is the most significant decision you'll make in the creation of your design team. It's a big decision for both you and your Whole YOU mentor. This person likely already has an extended relationship with you both personally and professionally. For example, he or she may be a work colleague or a family friend you hit it off with. It would be someone who wouldn't be surprised by this request as they are likely acting as an ad hoc mentor already. However, it's important that you choose someone whose advice and guidance you feel comfortable accepting as part of making your own decision. For this reason, family or people who may be too close to you personally may not be an ideal fit for this role.

Professional You Mentor

This is your professional sponsor and someone with broad professional experience who'll open doors and provide you opportunities. It's not essential that they be from your field of interest, rather, they should have an existing relationship with you and be personally vested in you.

Their sole focus is your professional advancement. It's essential that they believe in your professional potential, as they'll be vouching for you in order to advance your professional goals.

The main difference between your Professional YOU and Whole YOU mentors is your interaction with your professional mentor is far less frequent, potentially only a few times a year, and their only concern is your professional advancement. They offer you their professional network and reputation along with their expertise in a field or industry.

Candidates: Family friend, work manager, teacher, or professor.

Personal Advisor

A personal advisor is typically a close family member or a friend. They're in your comfort zone and understand where you've come from and where you want to go. They're your personal and emotional sounding board and they're around through the inevitable ups and downs of designing you. Your personal advisor is your emotional rock. Just remember they're not your professional mentor; it's unlikely they'll possess the required expertise in your field.

Candidates: Family and friends.

Real-World Experts

Real-world experts are short-term members of your design team and are essential to exploring what's out there for you.

Real-world expertise comes from people who have lived through an experience that you want to have, and they've already got the failures and successes to prove it. If, for example, a product designer wanted to expand their product into the Chinese market, he or she would need some very specific expertise for a short period of time to offer insight on how to launch in China.

For designing you, real-world expertise is about engaging a broad and diverse range of people for a discussion on their area of expertise. These interviews may be related to better understanding the specific dynamics of an industry (e.g., fashion); or it may be related to better understanding a specific job (e.g., journalist); or it may be related to exploring the dynamics of company size and scope (e.g., what's the difference between working for a big global company compared to local start-up).

Candidates: Extended network, people outside of your own personal and professional network.

Selecting Your Design Team

Now that we've established everyone's roles, the next question is who do you want on your design team?

Replicate the following table in your journal to narrow down candidates for your design team, referring to the network you mapped out in an earlier exercise. It doesn't matter if you know them directly at this stage. The key is building and refining this preliminary list of candidates. The Whole YOU Mentor and Personal Advisor will likely be from your existing networks. Some of the other candidates will emerge as you progress through the rest of the guide.

Name	Relationship to you	What they know	Design team role

What Can You Make A Living Doing?

Now that you have a handle on the Potential YOU, it's time to figure out whether there's an opportunity to make a living in any of the areas where you show potential. This is where we find the Professional YOU. We've intentionally chosen the phrase "make a living" because of its ambiguity. What you need to make a living is different from what someone else needs to make a living. We'll get further into that in the next step when we tackle your personal definition of success. Regardless, whether you can make a living or not is based on whether there are (or will be) opportunities.

In this model, you will explore three key questions:

What is a job?

This may seem like a silly question, but it's harder than you may think. For **all jobs**, you need to consider three key questions.

What functional job do I want to do?

The functional job is the actual job you want to do day in, day out. For example, there is no such thing as a "marketing job" or a "engineering job" or a "human resources job". In fact, for almost every broad area you may have identified in the Potential YOU, there are hundreds of different jobs.

What industry do I want to work in?

Industry characteristics have a **huge influence over the day-to-day for most jobs.** For example, the job of a marketing manager for a public library may be like night and day compared to a marketing manager for a company that sells drilling equipment to mining companies. Similarly, within the same industry, there are diverse functional jobs all in marketing. Working in an external **marketing agency** for that public library is going to be a different experience compared to working within the library's internal marketing unit.

If you're like most people and you're uncertain, then be sure to include opportunities in your mission map to get diverse industry experiences. Find those opportunities through things like internships, summer jobs, and volunteer work. You may even find out that an industry you assumed was boring actually lights your fire. At the very least, you'll be able to put your assumptions to the test.

What's the type or size of organization do I want to be part of?

Like industry context, an organization's size and scope affects the daily job of a marketer. For example, a sales manager for a small start-up technology company with $1 million in revenue is likely responsible for creation, communication, and delivery. In contrast, a sales manager for a company with 50,000 employees, operating in 100 countries and generating $3 billion in annual revenue may be responsible for selling a single product in a single region (maybe even to a single client).

To help you answer these questions we have developed a series of Designing YOU Career Guides. These career guides are available **HERE** and a searchable **database** or career mission maps.

You'll need to tap into that **intentional curiosity we talked about earlier**. **Great research starts with asking great questions**. The three questions above, can be broken down into an infinite number of smaller questions for you to explore. Below are some **thought-starter questions** to help you start exploring.

1. What are the different types of careers in this field?

2. How is this field changing? What's driving this change?

3. What parts of this field are growing the fastest?

4. What type of education do I need to be successful in different jobs in this field?

5. What are the most important competencies for different jobs in this field?

6. What's the starting salary for the job I want in this field?

7. Do people stay in this field their entire careers?

8. What are the common entry-level positions in this field?

9. How does the locale impact careers in this field?

10. What international opportunities may exist in this field

Answering these (and many other) big questions can't be rushed, so go slow and expect this part to take weeks or months to complete. Don't forget that predicting the future is hard and few of us get it right, so when doing your research, use **the principle of triangulation**:

Activity 4.1: Principle of Triangulation:

Step 1: Do your Homework

A good starting point for exploring the Professional YOU is to search through the huge amount of employment information available. Your secondary research sources will include:

o   Government reports (e.g., employment studies, census data)

o   Annual reports of companies, periodicals (e.g., newspapers)

o   Other media (e.g., podcasts)

o   Scholarly journals

o   Commercial information (e.g., American Marketing Association)

o   Credible online publications (e.g., Scientific American, Fast Company).

Your employment research will allow you to identify entire industries, educational programs, companies, and jobs you've never heard of. All this research will lead you to form the detailed questions you need answered as you develop the Whole YOU and help you identify assumptions you want to test by talking to experts.

For example, research around the topic of mathematics may soon lead you to see that there's a burgeoning field called data mining that requires a deep understanding of math. A little more digging may tell you the

types of industries and companies, from global giants to Silicon Valley start-ups, that can't hire data mining experts fast enough. You'll then be able to use this type of information to explore what exactly a data miner does: What type of education do you need? Is it a short-term or long-term opportunity? Beyond mathematics, what other competencies does this role need? If you're someone who is both good at math and loves math, this small amount of information might have helped identify the Professional YOU.

Below are **five basic rules** for using this type of information to identify potential opportunities related to what you love to do:

1. Always start by using existing information rather than relying on your intuition or biases.

2. Ask your network and design team for advice on places where you can start looking.

3. Don't take existing information as an absolute. It's always contextual to a time and place.

4. Only use the information if the original source is credible.

5. Become a regular consumer of market intelligence, especially in your areas of interest. For example, this may be following news about companies in your areas of interest or general trends.

You're going to do some research to give you a richer understanding of the things you love, as well as uncover insights into the professional opportunities in those same areas. Refer to your Potential YOU list, where you identified the things, you're both good at and love. Remember, these don't have to be career or job related, as they're simply a starting point for your exploration.

Based on this information, replicate the following table in your journal and identify the Professional YOU—the intersection of the Potential YOU (what you love to do and what you're good at) with professional opportunities. **Keep notes on the sources of your information and the nuggets you find.** The invaluable part about existing information is that it can be a trigger to stimulate more questions. **Jot down these questions in the table in your journal; these are the questions you need to focus on when you proceed to the next phase and plan for your informational interviews.**

You can continue to add to the table as you do additional research. Here's a sample table to see where the Potential YOU meets opportunities:

Identifying the Professional YOU		
Potential YOU	**Potential opportunities**	**My questions**
Math	Data analytics	How much can I get paid? What type of education and experience do I need? Do I need to move?
Outdoors	Wildlife conservationist	What type of education is required? Are there internships available? Is it dangerous? Where are these jobs?

Job postings are easy to find online and are invaluable for identifying emerging opportunities and trends in the areas that you love. They can also expose you to the types of jobs that exist in your areas and companies of interests. Also:

1. It's simple to collect a large and diverse sample. Review **a minimum of ten job postings** in a specific area you love to ensure an effective comparison.

2. Many job postings are archived and are accessible via www.archive.org/web, so you can assess trends over time.

3. The extra work you put in to summarize the job postings can help you identify trends and themes that may not be obvious to others.

When you're summarizing job postings, it's helpful to collect information on several major areas of employment that you're interested in. Use a spreadsheet program such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets to track the answers to the following questions:

Company Details

1. Industry

2. Size of company (e.g., number of employees)

3. Location (the location may reflect culture, language, and compensation)

Job Details

1. Title

2. Level of position (titles can be misleading)

3. Responsibilities (e.g., does it mention what they'll be doing?)

Qualifications

1. Education (do they specify a major?)

2. Professional experience (years and type of experience)

3. Professional credentials (does it mention specific credentials are required?)

4. Industry engagement (does it mention if active involvement in a professional association is important?)

5. Personal attributes (does it mention the importance of any specific interpersonal or communication competencies?)

6. Are each of the qualifications "required" or "preferred"?

Below is a sample of a summary table of job postings related to the job of a sales manager.

Professional Mission	Major Themes	So What?

Sales Manager	75 per cent require a university degree.	I must complete my university degree, but the specific major or minor appears to be a secondary consideration.
	All jobs ask for previous experience in sales with the majority asking for a minimum of five years.	I need to break into sales while in school to build evidence of expertise.
	50% ask for sales experience in a specific industry sector. Only 10% specify themes associated with organization size and scope. In this case, it was related to experience managing a global sales force.	I should get diverse sales expertise in different industry contexts and target to narrow this expertise down within five years.
	70% ask for experience in managing a sales team.	I need to learn CRM! I'll look for online CRM training.
	60% ask for experience using customer relationship management (CRM) software.	It remains unclear how a sales manager role will evolve over the next decade.

The problem with relying on existing information is that you don't get to ask questions or dig deeper on topics that may only be interesting to your combination of competencies and personality. To get this level of understanding, you'll have to talk to people with the answers. Steve Jobs believed that you had to understand your customers so well that when you showed them what you built, they would exclaim, "Of course we need that!" You must get to that same level of   about your customer: your future employer or field of work. There's only one way to do that—talk to them face to face. **You should do at least five informational interviews to guide you towards the Professional YOU.**

These interviews are far more in-depth than the curiosity conversations in **module 1**, so you'll need to approach these with rigour and discipline. These interviews have a variety of purposes, including to:

1.   Expand and strengthen your professional network and add new members to your design team.

2.   Explore industries and specific companies related to what you love to do.

3.   Explore specific needs/jobs that are, or will be, in demand within these industries.

4.   Evolve a clearer picture of a Professional YOU.

5.   Develop and refine your professional communication skills.

Who Should I Talk To?

From your existing search information, you should have a growing list of questions. **The key at this stage is to identify interview candidates with the expertise and experience to answer these questions.**

The most obvious place to start is with your design team. Your list of who to interview will evolve as you do more interviews, since a key question you'll ask in each conversation is for an introduction to additional candidates for a future interview. In this regard, interviews and the intentional curiosity that drive them are

a life-long project. Each conversation must trigger two key outcomes: more questions to ask and more candidates to ask them to. Therefore, the "who" is like an avalanche that picks up speed and keeps growing.

How your design team can help you with informational interviews	
Role	**Potential expertise**
Whole YOU Mentor	The greatest role your Whole YOU mentor (or people you've identified as possible mentors) will play is guiding your preparation for your interviews; specifically, who you should talk to and what you should talk to them about.
Professional YOU Mentor	As opposed to the Whole YOU mentor, this mentor primarily focuses on the Professional YOU, and they'll be able to offer specific guidance in the areas of industries, companies, and fields for you to consider in your informational interviews. This could give you a sense of the direction of the industry and what competencies might be required today and in the future. Moreover, they can offer important guidance on linking "who" you interview to "what" their expertise is (and therefore what you should ask them).
Personal Advisors	Like your Whole YOU mentor, engaging your personal advisors during the preparation process is important. Because they have personal relationships with you, they'll offer important guidance on evaluating your list of what you love and what you're good at, and perhaps introduce you to people you wouldn't have considered.
Real-World Experts	Real-world experts are likely the largest group of your initial interview candidates. Remember, the "real world" is diverse and may involve factors like industry, fields, size, and type of company, so ensure your sample is broad and captures many of these factors. Go back to your journal and identify companies that you read about in your searching. Then use Google, LinkedIn, and people you know to see if you can get an interview with anyone at the company.

When you've refined your list of interview candidates, it's imperative you explore their background prior to interviewing them. A lot of people use **information interviews** to get answers to questions they could have found online. That is a waste of time and energy for both sides. Instead, you'll spend your interview time digging into the more interesting areas of their life and career. This will make the interview more engaging and valuable for both sides. People like people who are interested in them, so do some basic research that shows evidence of your genuine interest. LinkedIn, blogs, and Twitter are logical places to start to answer some of the basic questions that follow.

How Do I Book an Interview?

The first rule of an informational interview is respect. In most cases, you'll be the lowest priority in their email inbox or voicemail list. To cut through this clutter you should consider the following:

1. **Connect through a mutual contact.** For example, "Wendy Smith suggested I contact you because of your expertise in..."

2. **Make it personal.** Demonstrate you know something about them through your digging. For example, "I see you also studied accounting at the University of…"

3. **Be clear on your ask.** For example, "I am considering a career in X and would like to have 30 minutes of your time to ask you about how you progressed in your career." This does two things; it puts a clear constraint on the request (30 minutes), and it reinforces that the interview is about them (not you).

4. **Be persistent and keep asking.** As you're the lowest priority thing in their inbox you'll likely have to send a couple of reminders. Be polite and persistent and if they say no, ask them for anyone else that they could suggest. This will ensure you'll have a return on your effort.

5. **Make it easy for them**. Offer to work to their schedule and meet them at their office or anywhere they'd like to meet. This interview is for you—not them. Don't be surprised if the interview is a month or more out. Professionals are busy people!

What Should we Talk About?

Each candidate brings expertise to a conversation, so it's important that you focus each conversation individually.

Everyone you'll have conversations with will have one thing in common; their time is at a premium. Since you're the one who asked for the interview, you're in control and need to ensure it's focused.

One useful approach to determine what you're trying to learn from these interviews is to identify the assumptions you're making about the field, industry, or job, and then use the interviews to test these assumptions. For example, your earlier work may have uncovered architecture as a possible career path based on your interest and skill in art. To dig deeper into architecture, you would list a set of assumptions and how you might validate them. For example:

Assumption	Validation
Architecture sounds like an interesting field to work in.	Interview a series of architecture professionals to learn more.
I need an architecture degree to work as an architect.	Search past job postings. Interview non-architects in the field to understand alternative paths (drafting, computer design, interior design).
Most architects are independent and manage their own business.	Interview architect professionals at different career stages to understand potential career paths.
Architects will still be in high demand in the coming decades.	Interview architects working for innovative firms.
Architecture is mostly about being a good artist.	Explore what courses are required. Interview architects about the competencies they use every day.

The modest goal of many early-stage interviews is to learn more about an industry, position, or person (e.g., what types of jobs are available to biology graduates and do they sound interesting). You can't immediately come up with a well-articulated value proposition. You'll have to start several layers away, peeling back more about the areas that you love, the jobs and problems that exist, and the future of the industry. As you peel back a layer with each round of interviews, you'll expand your   and put yourself in a position to develop a series of deeper questions for the next round of interviews.

Below are some questions to answer using existing information about your interviewee before you go on the interview. For an extended list click HERE.

Education

1. What is their level of schooling?

2. What was their major, if any?

3. What school(s) did they go to?

Career trajectory

4. What was their first position after school?

5. What companies have they worked at?

6. What roles have they held?

7. What company do they work for (or run) now?

8. How has their company performed? What news releases have they published?

9. What are some of the major trends in their industry?

Personal

1. Where have they lived?

2. What interests do they have outside of work?

3. What volunteer or charitable activities are they engaged in?

4. What is their family status (e.g., married, children etc.)?

Extended List (for hyperlink above)

Question Thought Starters   ━

Think of this like a shopping list of questions; you'll never get the opportunity to ask anywhere near this many questions in an informational interview. Decide which questions are most important for you and are aligned to the expertise of a given interview candidate.

Exploring Their Career

1. How long have you been in your current job?

2. How long have you been with your current company?

3. What does your current role entail? What does a typical day look like?

4. Do you manage other people in your role?

5. What kind of decisions or issues are you often faced with in your job?

6. What type of training or education prepared you for your current role?

7. What is the toughest situation you've ever been faced with professionally?

8. What other groups or departments do you interact with in your current role?

9. Do you interact directly with customers?

10. Does your job involve regular hours, or can they vary?

11. What is the best part of your current role?

12. What is your least favourite part of your current role?

13. What type of education do you recommend for your job? Would you recommend graduate school (e.g., MBA, MSc) for this role?

14. When you reflect on your career so far, what would you do more of? What would you do less of?

Exploring Their Career Preparation

1. When you were at my stage, how much planning did you do for your career/life?

2. How does your career relate to your formal education?

3. Is your formal education essential to your career?

4. What courses at school best prepared you for your career?

5. If you could go back to school and start all over again, would you do anything differently?

6. How important are grades for getting into your field?

7. What are the best university/college programs in your field?

8. Did you do a co-op or internship in college/university? Would you recommend this? Why?

9. Did you work part-time when you went to school? Would you recommend this? Why?

10. Are there specific extracurricular activities that might help me prepare for a career in this area?

11. What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?

12. What kinds of things did you do before you entered this occupation?

13. Which aspects of your background are most helpful?

14. What other jobs can you get with the same background?

15. Based on our discussion, what other field or industries would you suggest I consider?

16. Would you recommend anyone in your network I should reach out to for a discussion?

17. Which professional journals and publications should I be reading to learn about this career?

18. Are there any professional or industry associations I should consider joining?

19. Are there volunteer activities I should consider that would support my entry into this field/industry?

20. What would you recommend I do to keep up to date on trends in this field/industry?

21. Do you have any written job descriptions of positions in this field/company?

22. Would you take a short look at my resume/LinkedIn profile and make any recommendations on how I could improve it to be better positioned for success in your field/industry?

23. Are you willing to answer more questions, by phone, email or in person, if I need additional advice in the future?

Exploring Their Professional Field (e.g., Accounting) or Industry (e.g., Retail)

1. What are the different types of careers in this field/industry?

2. Is this field changing? If so, what is driving this change?

3. Is the field growing? Why? Why not?

4. In what industries is this field growing the fastest?

5. In what cities is this field growing the fastest?

6. What type of education do they require in this industry?

7. What are the most important competencies demanded today in this field?

8. What is the starting salary in this field?

9. What is the best thing about working in this field?

10. Do people stay in this field for their career, or do they tend to leave?

11. If they leave, what are the common reasons?

12. What do the common entry-level positions in this field generally entail?

13. When you look at people who have succeeded in this field, what characteristics do they tend to have?

14. What would you suggest is the most important thing someone entering this field should know?

15. If you were going to do it all over again, would you enter this field again?

16. To progress in this field, is moving cities required?

17. What international opportunities exist in this field?

18. What do you wish you'd known before you entered this field?

Exploring Their Non-Professional Life

1. How do you define success?

2. How do you balance your professional and life goals?

3. Have you ever had to decide to pursue financial gain in your career at the cost of other elements of your life? If so, what compromises did you have to make?

4. Have you ever had to move to advance your career? Was this a difficult decision?

5. Do you find you've been able to balance friends and family with your professional goals? At any time, did you have to sacrifice one or the other?

6. What are your hobbies or interests? Does your job relate at all to these interests?

7. Have you found stress in your career? If so, what do you do to manage this stress?

How Do I Conduct an Interview?

As part of the preparation for each interview, develop a discussion guide that includes the background information you learned about the interviewee and some questions to start off the interview. Remember that this is a guide, not a script, checklist, or questionnaire. You want to facilitate a discussion more than conduct an interrogation. To ensure both you and the interviewee get maximum value from this process, we recommend you consider the following both in developing your discussion guide questions and conducting the interview:

Build rapport: People like to know you've taken an interest in them, so do your homework. Are they alumni of your school? What do you have in common with them? Do they like sports? Building rapport is about building a minimum-level of trust and empathy to facilitate a much deeper conversation. Enthusiasm can go a long way toward showing someone that you care and are interested in what they have to say.

Keep it simple (but focused): The KISS rule (keep it simple, stupid) may be easy to say, but it's difficult to do. You'll want to talk about a lot of things, but interviews should be organic. To get the most from your interview, note these suggestions:

1. **Start with general questions** and then move into more specific questions later. For example, you may want to ask them what made them decide to become a _____.

2. **Start with topics that the interviewee would find familiar**. Most people like to show others how smart they are, so let your interviewee talk about his/her expertise.

3. **Start with open-ended questions and only use close-ended questions if required**. The risk of a close-ended question is getting a simple yes or no response with minimal value. Your goal is to stimulate your interviewee's engagement and keep him/her talking.

4. **Don't stray from the goal of the discussion**. Given time constraints, it may lead to spending 25 minutes talking about baseball or their time at college and five minutes on the actual subject of the interview.

Listen. Listen. Listen. Great interviews build on what your interviewee says, which is impossible if you aren't listening. So, absorb what they say. If you do, your interviewee will sense you are engaged, and the interview will be much more rewarding for both of you.

Keep probing: Probing is intentional curiosity in real-time. When you respond to a comment by asking them a more specific question, you're probing. For example, if an interviewee tells you that the best decision they ever made was to do a co-op degree, don't just leave it at that. Ask them, "Why was the co-op so important to you?" Then you may ask about their specific co-op experience and the competencies they developed.

Record the interview (with approval): Every smartphone has a digital recording capability. Recording every interview provides you the ability to go back and listen to the interview to catch any nuggets of gold. If you're not recording an interview, you'll have to take notes which stifles the natural conversation. Remember to always ask your interviewee for approval in advance and put the recording device on the table so it's transparent.

Be respectful: You aren't only interviewing someone; you're also building your personal brand and network. This professional has given you their valuable time. If you find that the interview is naturally going longer, ask if they'd be able to extend the interview by a specific amount of time. If they have time and are enjoying the discussion, they'll almost certainly say yes.

Invest in the future: Ideally, this interview is not simply a one-off. Following the interview, ensure you send a note thanking the interviewee for their time. Personalizing the note by identifying some key themes they highlighted demonstrates your engagement and reinforces the value of the time they spent with you. In your note, ask if they'd be open to keeping in touch so you can get in touch with any additional questions.

Consolidating Your Interviews

Within 24 hours of each interview, sit down with the recording and make notes in your journal. The goal of the notes is to identify major themes that emerged from the interview. A 30-minute conversation can cover a variety of topics, but some topics or themes float to the top. these key themes for each interview. Each theme is interesting unto itself, but it's the merger of these themes that transform them from merely interesting to the evidence you're looking for to define the Professional YOU.

This interview process is dynamic, and each interview should be treated as a building block. Each interview will raise new themes or questions that you'll want to explore and test in future interviews. It's important to consider the **rule of three**: If a theme or issue emerges from three credible sources, then you can have confidence there's a factual basis to it. This theme or issue should then move from the "interesting pile" to the "evidence pile." The evidence pile is what you'll use to start refining the Professional YOU.

Consider this only a start

Ideally, this interview is not simply a one-off. A core objective of this process is for you to **build your professional network** and identify mentoring candidates.

Step 4: Defining your Professional Mission

There are three stages to defining your professional mission:

Activity 4.2: What's Your "What"?

For the first stages, let's go back to the original three questions we asked.

1. **What** functional job do I want to do?

2. **What** industry do I want to work in?

3. **What** size of organization do I want to work for?

Your research should have inspired you to be able to **answer at least two of these three questions.** In addition, you should have a sense of priority. Replicate the table below in your journal.

Here is the challenge—you need to project yourself 10 years into the future. These aren't just questions for next week or next year… but a 10-year target.

The 10-Year "What"	Your Mission	Priority
I want to be a…		
I want to work in….		
I want to work for…		

Here's a sample.

The 10-Year "What"	Your Mission	Priority
I want to be a...	Director of Business Analytics	1
I want to work in....	Professional Sports	2
I want to work for...	An NHL Club	3

Activity 4.3: What's Your "Why"?

The limitation with the above exercise is that it tells us what you want to be, but not **why anyone would want to hire you** compared to other candidates. Therefore, the next step requires you to articulate "why you?" compared to others. This will allow you to create your unique value proposition—in other words, what makes you the best choice for the job. Remember, you're projecting 10 years into the future here. To do this, complete the table below:

Your Professional Mission	
For...	Who's your target industry or company?
That...	What's their specific need that isn't being met?
I am...	What's your functional job?
Who...	What's your specific competency that'll satisfy their need?
Unlike...	Who are your competitors who are also trying to satisfy this need?
I...	What unique competencies and experience do you have that'll differentiate you from all the other employees?

Here's a sample of how these questions might be answered.

Your Professional Mission	
For...	An NHL franchise.
That...	Needs to leverage both data and dynamic content.
I am...	A curator of innovative and targeted content.
Who...	Is both a data scientist and an artist.
Unlike...	Those who are either data analysts *or* creative specialists.
I...	Am a seasoned professional in data analytics with a degree in fine arts.

In answering these questions, consider the things you love to do and what you're good at combined with real opportunities in the marketplace for you to make a living. If all those elements are there, you've just defined your professional mission! If you have trouble answering these questions, it probably means that you'll have to go interview more people or find some additional information.

What If I Get Stuck?

Remember, getting to the point where you can articulate your professional mission is hard but important. **Don't be in a rush to move on and don't be frustrated if you conclude you don't have any unique value yet.** At the start of this journey, this is understandable.

Activity 4.4: Articulating your 10-Year Professional Mission Statement

Now, you'll condense your answers to the **six professional mission questions** into a concise **10-year professional mission statement**. **Keep it under 100 words.** Your mission statement offers a simple description of the future you. Having this mission statement allows you to check if you're spending your precious and limited resources (time and money) on a meaningful purpose.

Here's the trick to an effective mission statement: It can't be constrained by history, the status quo, your comfort zone, or your current identity. Your 10-year professional mission Statement is about defining your professional identity; it will be a big part of your personal identity.

At this stage, you don't have to fully understand how to achieve your mission, but you should be able to see some of the major milestones along the way. Below is an example:

"In 10 years, I will be a director of marketing for a major fashion brand. I will be an expert in branding, market segmentation and emerging industry trends. I will be a sought-after public speaker and a mentor for emerging talent in fashion marketing."

Defining your 10-year professional mission is hard and it's a house of cards. When it all comes together it feels great, but sometimes the littlest, unexpected thing (good or bad) can disrupt it all.

Activity 4.5: What if?

For this reason, we encourage you to **map out at least three** 10-year professional missions based on **three distinct "what if" scenarios** by replicating the table below. When you're considering the possibilities for your "what ifs," be aspirational. For example, "what if" in one of your scenarios you stay in the city you grew up in, but in another scenario, you move to New York? What if in another scenario, you decided to stay agency side for the next decade? But in a third scenario, you decided to go to a large multi-national company? The system-wide implications of one "what if" may be massive or small, but through "what if "planning you can start to understand life's trade-offs.

The goal of reflecting on these "what ifs" isn't intending to paralyze you, but to inspire you. Instead of being crushed when circumstances get in the way of achieving your chosen professional mission, you'll know that it was only one of many possible scenarios.

"What If" Scenario A:_____	"What If" Scenario B:_____	"What If" Scenario C:_____

Value

1. Explore your broader values and life goals.
2. Integrate your professional mission with your larger goals to define your Whole YOU mission.

In Module 4, you developed your professional mission statement. If the Whole YOU were defined solely by your career, you could stop here; but few of us are defined by a paycheque.

It's time to transform the Professional YOU into the Whole YOU. To do this, you will reflect on a very abstract (and contentious) concept: success. There's no generic definition of success. It's difficult to define because it's unique to you and considers many factors in your life. Your definition of success is rooted in your experiences, your personality, your values, and your relationships, and it will continuously evolve with you.

Success is about understanding and juggling your values and priorities in life. When you think of success, what values do you think about?

Money? Family? Friends? Career? Wellness? Community? Social justice?

Reflecting on your values is a critical dimension of designing you, as your values guide the things in life that are important to you and filter out what aren't. Your values tell you what's right and wrong; they're your moral compass. And because they are yours, there is no right or wrong answer when you're asked what your values are.

Reflection 5.1: It is the year 2100

Before we dig deep, we're going to do a little time travelling and allow you to reflect on your definition of success. To envision your future, we need you to enter our *Designing YOU* time machine and fast-forward 80 or so years…

It's somewhere around the year 2100 and your family is excited about your upcoming 100th birthday celebration. You're going to be giving a speech in which you reflect on your life's successes.

What has made you most proud?

Is it your family?

Is it your career accomplishments?

Did you change your world through creativity?

Did you change your world by making your friends and family laugh?

Did you change your world through the work you did in your church community?

Did you leave a tremendous amount of money to your children and the community?

Only you can reflect on what success means to you.

Like today, in 80 years from now people don't want to sit through a long speech, so get to the point and keep it under 500 words. Reflect on 100 years and your proudest successes in life. Here's a sample:

My First 100 Years

As I reflect over the past 100 years of my life, I find that I am overwhelmed with pride, gratitude and of course, amazement. I am fortunate to have lived an inspired life alongside an incredibly supportive and loving partner, travelled to every continent in our beautiful world, surrounded myself with fulfilling relationships with family and friends, and, through my work, had a profound impact on my community.

I'm honoured to be considered a community builder and have devoted my life's work to providing opportunities to as many people as I can. The ability to end my career as a respected teacher is a true blessing. The connections today with my past students, fellow colleagues and late mentors will be cherished to my dying days.

Throughout this journey, I could not have asked for a better co-pilot than my loving partner. Together we have raised a beautiful family, travelled the world, and placed our efforts, to the best of our abilities, toward bringing haves to those who have not. In the 75 years we've been in one another's company, we have consistently challenged ourselves and our families, all while feeding our undying love for adventure, laughter, and of course, delicious food. We're so fortunate now to live part-time here in Canada amongst our loved ones where we're able to commit our undivided attention to their support and growth—and back in our second home, in France, when the blasted winter comes again, where we're able to write and soak in the azure sea.

Today, on the centennial of my birth, I am humbled to say that I have lived a life with an abundance of love, inspiration, and growth—and for me that is success.

The point of writing your 100th birthday speech is to allow you to distance yourself from today and step back and look at life more holistically.

Activity 5.1: What do you Value? ONLINE QUIZ

The goal of this exercise is to build on your speech and explore your values further. To do this, review the list of statements below for you to score yourself on; remember, it's important to be honest with yourself and to score what you really think today (as opposed to how you think others would want you to respond).

 For these statements, score yourself on whether you agree with this statement using a scale of 1 to 5, with a 1 being "Never" agree with it and 5 being "Always" agree. Go slow and feel free to make changes as you work through the list. At the end, find your total for each factor.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Always

Success Factors

Factor A

__ My friends and family are the most important thing in life.

__ Intimate relationships are the most important thing in life.

__ I value true friends before everything else.

__ Having respect and admiration from others is most important.

Total

Factor B

__ I have nothing if I don't have my physical well-being.

__ I wouldn't sacrifice my weekends and holidays for a job or money.

__ I value my personal leisure before everything else in life.

__ I have nothing if I don't have my mental well-being.

Total

Factor C

__ I am professionally ambitious.

__ I believe my career defines my success.

__ It's important for me to be considered professionally successful.

__ I want to be influential and respected in my area of professional expertise.

Total

Factor D

__ It's important for me to live close to my family.

__ I wouldn't move cities regardless of the professional opportunity.

__ I know where I want to live the rest of my life.

__ Where I live is more important than anything else.

Total

Factor E

__ I need inner peace.

__ Spiritual well-being defines who I am.

__ Having a sense of meaning is the most important thing in life.

__ My spiritual beliefs are central to me as a person.

Total

Factor F

__ Being financially prosperous is most important to me.

__ Money is the most important factor when I am assessing potential careers.

__ Financial success is critical to my future.

__ My view of success won't come cheap.

Total

Now that you've totaled up each success factor, let's see what questions they raise.

Relationships (Factor A): What role do relationships play in your life? Are they central to you or are they secondary to other factors?

Health & Leisure (Factor B): How important is your leisure time and your physical and mental wellbeing to you? Would you trade this for other factors, such as professional or financial success?

Professional (Factor C): What role do professional, or career goals play in defining your success? Are they paramount to your view of success or are they simply a means to achieving goals that are more important?

Place (Factor D): How important is the city or region in which you live? For some, they could never see themselves moving away from their home; but for others, where they live is secondary to pursuing other opportunities in life.

Spiritual (Factor E): What role do spiritual factors play in your life? How may this priority influence your future life decisions?

Financial (Factor F): Are you a person with very expensive goals in life and will you do whatever you need to do to see them through?

 Now reflect on the results of your assessment. What factor was the highest? Which was the lowest? Why are some more important to you than others? What are some examples of how these factors influence your decisions today?

If these success factors always worked in harmony, there likely would be little reason for this program. But that's not how life works. In fact, the tension between these factors is at the heart of the Whole YOU. For example: achieving incredible financial success might conflict with relationship success - could the dedication to work get in the way of family? When you think about success, what is most important to you? What is least important? **Make a journal entry answering these questions about your values and how they affect your definition of success.**

The Whole YOU: Where the definition of success meets my Professional YOU			
	Importance	How does this support my Professional YOU	How does this conflict with my Professional YOU
Professional			
Relationships			
Health & Leisure			

Place			
Spiritual			
Financial			

It's time to test whether the Professional YOU is consistent with this definition of success. For example, if the Professional YOU requires you to move to New York City and work on Wall Street, does that conflict with your success factors of Place and Relationships? If the Professional YOU imagines you working for a non-profit in a developing country, does that conflict with your Financial or Place factors? If the Professional YOU draws you away from your mountain home, does that conflict with skiing as the key to your Health & Leisure?

As an exercise, create a table in your journal like the one that follows. For each success factor, record whether it's "very important," "important" or "not important" based on the assessment you just did. Then identify how the Professional YOU helps you achieve success for each factor. Finally, identify how the Professional YOU might conflict with each success factor.

Once you've filled in the table, it's time to reflect. In your journal, consider the following scenarios:

1. Does the Professional YOU allow you to achieve your broader definition of success?

2. Or is it in such conflict with how you want to define success on your 100th birthday that you must go back to the exploration stage and look for another Professional YOU?

If the second point is your conclusion, don't be disappointed! While you may feel like you've wasted a few weeks or even months pursuing a Professional YOU that didn't match your view of success, many of your peers would've gone decades before realizing they had sacrificed most of the success factors in their life. It's better that you try again now than lead a life of regret.

Designing you is difficult because it involves so many different and often moving parts. In the remainder of this guide, we focus a disproportionate amount of time on one part of your life—your professional life. In doing so, we aren't suggesting that your success must be driven by the Professional YOU. Rather, we find that at the life stage of a young adult, professional success emerges as either an important input or an important output to other success factors. For example, if you define living in a ski town ("Place") as your highest priority, this will have significant implications on your profession as a surfing instructor or an accountant. Similarly, if you define making a million dollars a year as your highest priority, it'll narrow down the professional paths that'll support this priority. **Remember, recognizing how these different parts of the Whole YOU are interconnected is what separates a systems thinker from everyone else. This is particularly critical when you move forward defining your journey in Module 6.**

The final exercise in Module 5 is articulating the Whole YOU in a mission statement. A **Whole YOU mission statement** is core to product design because it offers a simple and concise description of your future product. This ensures that you are spending your precious limited resources (time and money) on a meaningful purpose. The Whole YOU mission statement is the litmus test for all future decisions. That is the power of a mission statement

Here's the trick to crafting an effective Whole YOU mission statement: It shouldn't be constrained by history and the status quo (nor your comfort zone and your current identity). **A Whole YOU mission statement is about defining a new identity that will anchor the future Whole YOU**. **It's a point on the horizon that provides you guidance and a destination.** At this stage, you don't have to understand how to achieve your purpose. The Whole YOU mission statement simply provides guidance on how you should spend your limited time and money.

In *Designing YOU*, we suggest you focus on a 10-year mission. We have found that 10 years offers a guiding light on the horizon without being as far off as a 100th birthday party. A 10-year mission should incorporate all your success factors. Your 10-year mission should be an ambitious goal that is not constrained by the Current YOU. This is the time to dream big and think about the Whole YOU! To kick-start your thinking, here are some sample Whole YOU mission statements:

Sample 1

"In 10 years, I will be a vice-president of sales for an NHL team and a respected leader in professional sports marketing. I will be a leader in my community and actively engaged in my commitment to youth sport. I will complete an Iron Man triathlon every year as a commitment to my health and wellness."

Sample 2

"My 10-year mission is being a medical doctor, conducting cutting-edge research, and helping improve the lives of others around the country, and around the world. I will complete multiple residencies around the world and learn from the leading experts on health issues. I will form deep relationships with colleagues, have empathy for patients and always keep the greater good as my guiding light."

Sample 3

"In 10 years, I will be the CEO of a software company. Against all odds, I will do this while spending most nights with my kids and continue to deepen my relationship with my spouse. I will pursue an MBA, which is critical to my professional goal, and stay active to manage stress and my health. I understand that my personal friendships might have to take a backseat for a while to achieve my 10-year mission, but I'm willing to sacrifice some financial success to achieve success in my relationships."

To develop your 10-year mission statement, build it from the bottom up. Start by completing mini mission statements for each of your success factors as illustrated in the table below, which you can replicate in your journal. Your 10-year mission is like a house of cards. When the cards/success factors are aligned it's remarkable, but if you disrupt one card, you risk the integrity of the entire house.

Since changing one card can completely alter the house, we encourage you to map out at least **three different mini mission statements** for each success factor based on three distinct "what if" scenarios. The complexity of your definition of success means there are several possible paths to achieving your 10-year mission.

When you're considering the possibilities for your "what ifs," be aspirational. For example, "what if" in one of your scenarios you stay in your hometown but in another scenario, you move to Australia? How could this ripple across your plan? "What if" in one of your scenarios you pursue your passion for social justice and join a non-profit agency, but in another scenario, you follow this passion in your leisure and volunteer time?

 The system-wide implications of one "what if" may be massive or small, but through "what if" planning you can start to understand life's trade-offs as you frame these mini purposes.

As part of the "what if" reflection, engage your design team for input. Everyone on your team has made decisions in life based on what might happen if they took (or avoided) a certain path. This is an opportunity to benefit from their hindsight.

Success factor	"What If" Scenario A:_____	"What If" Scenario B:_____	"What If" Scenario C:_____
Professional			
People			
Place			
Financial			
Health & Leisure			
Spiritual			
Other			

Following consultation and reflection, it's time to choose which scenario energizes you. At the end of the day, only you can choose which path to take. Following a journey map is important, just be open to the fact that there will be off-ramps worth exploring as you discover the world personally and professionally.

The next step is to transform these individual success factors into a concise 10-year mission statement around 200 words long. This Whole YOU mission statement should be aspirational in tone and reflect what you want to become in 10 years. It's a critical guiding light for the Whole YOU that is the ultimate outcome of *Designing YOU*. This 10-year Whole YOU mission statement gives shape and direction to your future and your future identity. It'll also act as a yardstick to measure your progress and allow you to reflect on your identity.

Finally, your 10-year mission evolves with you. Ten years is a long time and during this time the world will change and so will you. **For this reason, consider your 10-year mission statement as only a hypothesis that you keep testing and refining.**

The final stage in the 10-year mission journey is to go "live" with your preliminary 10-year mission statement by discussing it with your design team. If you aren't comfortable with sharing your 10-year mission statement, it's probably because you're not fully comfortable with it. Sharing and reflecting is a critical aspect of this journey. You'll go through multiple revisions and refinements of your 10-year mission statement. Once you're confident in it, it's time to go to **Module 6,** where we focus on getting you from where you are now to where you want to go tomorrow.

Module 6: Design your Journey

Value

1. Understand the five building blocks required to deliver on your mission.

2. Explore and be inspired by 150 different mission maps.

3. Complete your 10-year mission map.

Your 10-year mission is aspirational and ambitious. It's a little scary, but it's supposed to be. The ambitiousness in your 10-year mission highlights gaps between the you of today and you in ten years. If your mission is the destination, then the gap is the journey—it is the actions required to reach your destination.

The journey map to get you from here to there involves a series of complex and interdependent activities. In this section, you'll develop a mission map as the first step in exploring your mission.

What are the big five building blocks of a mission map?

To create your mission map, you'll first need to understand the big five building blocks essential to Designing YOU:

1. Education & learning

2. Employment experiences

3. Volunteer experiences

4. Contextual experiences

5. Relationships

Education and learning refers to traditional forms of education (like university or college) and other forms of lifelong learning ranging from professional development courses to awesome podcasts and books.

Questions to explore:

1. What should I study at school?

2. What specific courses should I take?

3. Do I need to go to graduate school?

4. What certifications will I need?

5. What podcasts should I listen to?

6. What books should I read?

Employment experience means every job you'll ever have—full-time and part-time alike—that contributes to your skill development. While in school, this could include co-op terms, internships, and part-time and summer employment.

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Questions to explore:

1. What type of internships or co-op positions should I take while in school?
2. What could be my first job when I graduate?
3. How can I get employment experience so I can become able across all four career clusters?
4. How much time should I spend in various jobs?

Community experience includes all those volunteer and extracurricular activities that contribute to your competency development. This might include involvement in clubs, teams, or community organizations.

Questions to explore:

1. How can volunteer roles support the development of my key competencies?
2. How can volunteering support my networking?
3. What types of organizations align with my values?
4. Do I want to assume a leadership position in an organization?

Contextual experience includes international experiences, industry experiences, organization size and scope, and travelling experiences.

International experiences: Paid or unpaid international work experience.

Questions to explore:

1. What are the benefits to doing a semester abroad?
2. How can working internationally contribute to my job-specific competencies?
3. How is working internationally different than working in Canada?

Industry experiences: Specific industry sector experiences throughout your career.

Questions to explore:

1. How could my choice of industry sector change my job?
2. Are there many jobs in this industry in the place I want to live?
3. I'm not very technical; does this mean I'm at a disadvantage if I want to work for a technology company?

Organization size and scope: The size of an organization can have a significant impact on the scope and depth of a role.

Questions to explore:

1. How does working for a startup help me?
2. What are the benefits and risks of me building an entire career in a single large company?
3. Should I take a job at a large global multinational organization to meet my goal of working internationally?

Travelling experience: International experience and exposure to diverse cultures can contribute to your personal and professional development.

Questions to explore:

1. How can travelling internationally contribute to my competency development?

2. If I take time out of my career to travel, am I risking being passed by people who don't?

3. Can I blend my desire to backpack around the world with a desire to work internationally?

Relationships capture three major categories—mentors, networking, and personal relationships.

Questions to explore:

1. How can mentors help me get ahead?

2. How can my professional network contribute to competency development?

3. How can I ensure I maintain successful and fulfilling personal relationships while still pursuing my professional mission?

The mix of building blocks will vary based on your mission. When you reflect on your prevision research and interviews you will probably see important trends associated with different building blocks. To help you, refer to the **Designing YOU Career Guides or mission map gallery**. These provide the required competencies for almost 150 career paths. **Each map is a summary based on interviews and surveys of real people and their real experiences.** Each sample mission map is composed of the following sections:

- **Job Title & Sector:** Pay attention to the sector or industry.

- **Job Description:** What this hypothetical person does in their role.

- **Salary Range:** What this position earns in Canada in 2017 dollars.

- **Priority Competencies:** The competencies required to be an "expert at," "great at," and "good" at in year 10 in this position.

- **The Tip:** Something so important about this person's role they had to tell you about it.

- **Building Blocks:** This section is broken down by the five building blocks and examines how each contributed to this professional's competency development.

Remember, there is never just one single map to get from here to there. **Consider the sample mission maps more of a compass than a map** They won't tell you exactly how to get from here to there, but they'll point you in the right direction, tell you where to start and offer example attractions along the route.

Below is a sample mission map for a creative director at a marketing agency.

Creative Director – Marketing Agency

SALARY RANGE (2017): $ 105,500–$230,000

My job is to drive results for our clients through persuasive creativity. Our agency clients often come to us with a tangible business goal, for example: "We're launching a new product and we need to sell 1 million units within 10 months." Then it becomes my job to build a vision for bringing this product to market in the most creative, distinct and effective way possible. To bring my vision to life in a marketing program, I draw upon the talents of designers, copywriters, art directors, videographers, content producers, and so forth. You'll see my work everywhere: digital ads, TV, Instagram campaigns, packaging, media festivals, etc.

> **The Tip:** Find your professional community and engage in it actively while in school. Every professional has been where you are and wants to help. Book a coffee with one person a week and ask them this single question: "What is the one thing you'd tell your 18-year-old self?"

PRIORITY COMPETENCIES:

Strategic Marketing
- Develop & execute a positioning strategy
- Develop & execute a brand strategy
- Conduct a competitive analysis
- Conduct an environmental scan
- Develop & apply a segmentation strategy

Research & Insight
- Demonstrate empathy & curiosity
- Leverage contextual knowledge
- Ability to analyze data
- Leverage research to support consumer insights
- Presentation & report-writing skills
- Use analytics tools

Product Management
- Measure return on investment (ROI)
- Manage a budget
- Manage projects

Sales & Channel Management
- Conduct sales presentations
- Develop merchandising strategy

Communications & Branding
- Develop & execute a media plan
- Sponsorship & community investment
- Leverage earned media
- Leverage event & experiential marketing
- Leverage influencer marketing
- Develop a promotional strategy
- Knowledge of media psychology
- Apply marketing within a CSR framework

Content Curation & Design
- Apply visual design fundamentals
- Conduct content research & curation
- Develop original content
- Apply creative production processes
- Develop content schedule & plan
- Use design tools

BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

Education & Learning:	
• Bachelor of Fine Arts (design) • MBA/MFA – York University program • Design/digital media technical certificate • Complete Lynda.com courses via LinkedIn • Continuing education at college of art and design, and private design and art courses	I found great creative directors are great strategists. Great strategists know that design is a means to an end, not an end by itself. My education straddles both design and strategy. I won a Cannes Lion award and a Retail Industry of Canada award for the fastest-growing retailer campaign.
Employment Experiences:	
• Freelance designer while in school	To be a creative director is about understanding the business of design. For me, this includes

The next step in developing your mission map is a **gap analysis** so we can plot your journey. **Complete the mission map table below**, which considers four questions:

1. What are the specific priority competencies (both job-specific and enabling) required to achieve your 10-year mission?

What is your evidence these priorities are important (e.g., interviews, research)?

What is the required level you'll need to achieve in 10 years?

What is your best guess of your level today?

The third and fourth columns represent your professional gap. **There should be A LOT of gaps. Your mission map will allow you to close these gaps over time.**

Priority Building Blocks	Evidence this is Important	Required Level in 10-Years	My Level Today
Data analytics	7 of 10 interviews. 70% of job postings.	Expert	None

Activity 6.2: Consolidating Your Mission Map

This is it. Now that you've been inspired by the sample mission maps, it's time for you to connect the dots and put it all together in a concise and actionable plan. To develop your mission map, refer to the building blocks above. In the sample below, data analytics was identified as a gap. **To close this gap, we identified four possible building block activities.** Executing these activities is your mission.

You might find it useful to create a checklist based on the activities you've identified as key to your mission. For a mission map checklist designed to be accomplished during a four-year university program.

Linking to the Building Blocks

Building Block Gap	Building Block Activities Required
I need to become an expert in data analytics.	Education: Do my minor in statistics.

	Employment: Internship or summer job at sport marketing agency.
	Community: Join analytics club at school.
	Relationship: Secure a mentor who is immersed in analytics.

Mission Map Finale

You've put in the work and now it's time to write down your mission map in your journal. Follow the template below. This information includes the concise 10-year mission statement from earlier and the building block activities from Table 2 above.

What is your final 10-year mission statement?

What are the priority building blocks you'll need to achieve your mission?

Expert	Great at	Good at

Now map out priority building block you'll need to achieve your mission. In the near-term (years 1-3) these should be more refined. For example, these may include specific courses or volunteer opportunities you'd like to pursue. In the longer-term (years 7-10) your building blocks will be more aspirational.

Experiences	Years 1-3	Years 4-6	Years 7-10
Education & Learning Experiences	`		
Employment Experiences			
Community Experiences			
Contextual Experiences			
Relationships & Mentors			

Adapt and Change

During our interviews with working professionals for this series, we'd ask a common question: "What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?" The most common answers were to be proactive and develop a plan but also **embrace opportunities** when they come. In other words, always **be prepared to adapt and change** as you grow and learn.

This principle of evolution is essential. Your 10-Year mission in your 30s will look very different from the 10-Year mission in your 20s. Regardless of where you are on your 10-year mission map, don't sit back. Life inevitably will throw you a curveball. You'll find new competencies, new interests, opportunities, and relationships. But that's why this journey is so important and fun.

Adapting, learning, and growing are your only options. At certain times in your life, your mission may be most important, and at other times it may be your relationships, your health & wellness, or your spirituality. How and where they each fit in depends on how you define success at any moment in time. Stepping back and reflecting on everything else important in your life gives you a solid foundation to make those big (and small) decisions in life.

Recall, you considered several "**what if**" scenarios before arriving at your 10-year mission. That same exercise is practical throughout your life. When you're faced with a change in life, use it as a reason to wonder "what if?" and revisit your 10-year mission. If you have a job opportunity on the other side of the world, consider what your 10-year mission might be if you went for it. If you lose your job in a recession, consider "what if" scenarios around going back to school, or starting your own business, or taking time off with the kids. "What if" is your best tool against sticking to a path simply because you're already on it.

Value

1. Understand why delivering on your mission is about the intersection of what you can do and the story you tell.

2. Start by transforming your unique value proposition into your portfolio.

Every product designer must face the fact that the seemingly "best" product doesn't always win. In fact, it could be argued that the "best" products rarely win. Usually the "best" product that also has the best story wins. Sometimes, the "good enough" product with the best story trumps the "best" product with no story.

The final critical dimension of designing you is effectively communicating to your audience (potential employers) that your product (you) creates the most value for them. You'll do this using the art and science of persuasion.

For great product designers, launching a successful product is not only about having the best features; it's about your audience believing your product offers them the greatest benefit and value and then having them act on it. This is an essential goal in *Designing YOU*. As you launch YOU, you want to have your audience line up in anticipation of the value you'll bring to them or their organization.

Activity 7.1: Why You?

At the heart of your story is the reason your audience should be interested in you. For most products or services, you buy, you're persuaded not by the **features**, but by the **benefits.** Think about any car advertisement. Yes, it may mention features like fuel efficiency or horsepower, but what the ad is really selling are the benefits of freedom, status, safety, and convenience. It's these benefits that'll ultimately persuade you to buy one car over another. When you're designing you, you must translate the features of the Whole YOU into concise benefits. This is your answer to "Why you?" The following table demonstrates the difference between features and benefits.

Features vs. Benefits	
Focused on features	**Focused on benefits**
I worked in a retail sales position at a Nike store for three years. In this job, I developed my sales and customer service skills.	As a Nike sales representative, I had to embody the Nike brand to our customers. At Nike we don't "sell," rather we focus on the unique needs of each customer. Over my time at Nike, I developed my skill at exploring customer needs and aligning these needs to our product offerings. Evidence of my skill is the fact that I was the leading salesperson at my store for two of my three years.

Activity 7.2: Translating features to benefits

In this exercise, we want you to answer the "Why you?" question by outlining your benefits. Replicate the following table in your journal**. In the first column, identify the features of the Whole YOU. In the second column, note whether these are current**

features or ones you're still working toward. In the third column, translate these features into the benefits for your audience. In this case, your audience is the target organization or industry you articulated in your professional mission from Module 4. An easy approach to this is to simply state the feature followed by "and this means…" For example, "I am on the student council executive team (the feature) and this means I have proven leadership in managing both people and budgets (the benefit)."

To fill the fourth column, you need to find your empathy. Remember, the role of the Professional YOU is to create value for others, so you need to **enter the mind of your audience and prioritize your features and benefits.** What feature and benefit is an absolute need—a showstopper? Refer to the outcomes of **your informational interviews** so you can properly prioritize your features and benefits. Reflect on the language your interviewees used. How did they articulate the benefits they required? Did they describe a need for creativity, or problem solving, or people who can work in diverse teams, or employees who can get the job done with high-level instruction rather than detailed directions? It's critical in your story to describe the benefits in your audience's language. This is the value of empathy.

Here's an example to get you started:

"Why you?"			
The Feature	**Current?**	**The benefit to your audience**	**Priority**
Bilingualism	Yes	Canadian companies need to be able to communicate in both English and French. My bilingualism achieved through French immersion and studying abroad eliminates the need for a translator.	2
Finance background	Yes	By gaining three years' experience in finance before graduating with my marketing degree, I can understand the perspective of finance professionals, plan effective budgets, and ensure the greatest possible ROI. This makes me an effective strategic marketer and allows me to reduce inevitable future tension with financial professionals, board members and CEOs.	4
University club executive	Working toward	Through various executive roles for the Student Marketing Society, I've developed the abilities to lead, coordinate and provide both long-term and short-term visions; identify and draw out the unique talents of those I work with; and work effectively on a team with diverse viewpoints.	1
Theatre background	Yes	By spending six years in junior high and high school performing two plays a year, I've learned how to speak in front of a crowd and tell great stories. This public speaking acumen and ability to articulate myself despite pressures of a crowd helps me confidently represent the company at conferences and events.	5
Self-taught guitar player	Working toward	By taking the time to teach myself how to play guitar, I've developed a new creative muscle. Multiple modes	6

		of creativity inspire my professional work where I am regularly expected to be creative and inspired.	
Nationally competitive athlete	Yes	As a competitive athlete for 18 years, I learned the importance of being disciplined, of setting achievable goals and of being committed despite physical and mental exhaustion. These world-class competencies are now applied to my professional work.	3

This table of features and benefits is critical for creating your story. **It's worth sharing this with your design team and getting feedback.** Others will often see benefits that you miss and be able to help you prioritize the benefits that you have.

Implicit in "Why you?" is "versus someone else." Your "Why you?" must be unique, otherwise you won't stand out from the crowd. Think about being "unique" as having something that is rare relative to your competitors (e.g., others applying for the same job). Being rare is critical since otherwise you're a commodity. Being a commodity means competitive products are virtually identical. You need to ensure you can deliver a unique collection of benefits that others cannot deliver.

At this stage you may be thinking, "I'm too young to be unique. Well, maybe, but we highly doubt it. A person with a sociology degree who has taught English in Asia, volunteered on a crisis help line, and started their own non-profit is totally different from their peer who has the same sociology degree, is a gifted musician, has published a research paper and has worked with autistic children.

Your answer to "Why you?" isn't tied to a single feature or benefit. The complex combination of your many features and benefits will make you unique, rare, and difficult to replace. As you consider your features and benefits, ensure you look at the Whole YOU. Can your relationships and reputation (a features) open valuable doors for your audience (a benefit)? Are your competencies something that took you a long time to acquire, thereby ensuring others can't easily learn them? As we've pointed out, your degree or diploma is likely just a feature, and not a very rare one. The reality is, the more multifaceted your features and benefits are, the rarer you are.

If you aren't satisfied with your current features and benefits, then it's time to start acquiring more. If you know your audience wants a specific benefit you don't have, figure out how you can add it.

Your Story

Think of your answer to **"Why you?"** as the basis of a really good story. To write your story, you don't need to be an award-winning novelist or salesperson. Your story simply needs to incorporate five key elements that make great stories great.

A great story doesn't speak to everyone; it speaks to your audience —

Few stories are universal. When you try to appeal to everyone, you typically end up watering down your message. That's why the best stories are targeted to a specific audience. Understanding and empathizing with your audience is at the heart of your story.

A great story keeps them engaged —

Andrew Stanton, one of the master storytellers at Pixar Animation Studios, says the secret to a great story is caring. The easiest way to make your audience care about your story is to talk to them about something

they already care about: a problem they have. What is their problem and how will you solve it? Once they care, you've got them hooked.

A great story makes a promise —

A story's promise may be to thrill you, to entertain you or to make you laugh. Your story's promise is to solve a problem. The bigger the problem that you can solve, the more your audience cares. The core of your story becomes the promise that you have the features and benefits to tackle an important problem and help them succeed.

A great story paints a picture with details —

Great writers can transport you to a different place or time by providing details so complete that you can see, hear, and feel where they have transported you. The evidence of your features and benefits provides the details in your story. Without detailed evidence that you can solve their problem and deliver on your promise, the story falls flat.

A great story becomes their story —

Your story must go viral. You need others talking about you and referencing the benefits you can deliver. This is far easier said than done because these storytellers must deeply believe in your story before they stake their reputation on you. If you can get people to believe in you, they will amplify how many people hear it.

A great storyteller is trustworthy —

A story is only as good as its storyteller. At an early stage in your professional life, you may lack significant credibility among your audience. This is why your design team is imperative to telling your story. The more-established members of your design team possess one thing you can't help but lack—time. Time enabled them to build a trusted network. You can't be your only storyteller.

Your Portfolio

As product designer, a key decision you'll make is where and how to sell your product. This decision has big implications on a product's success. It's not an accident that when you're in a particular store or mall you often come across the exact product you're looking for. It's because the product designers were one step ahead of you. To find just the right spot for their product, the product designers did a bunch of research to learn where people like you shop and what things you tend to buy. This helped them decide how and where they want to sell their product to you.

In the context of selling you, think about how and where you want to sell yourself. Do you want to use an online social platform that already has your target audience engaged (e.g., LinkedIn), or do you want to build your own website, or do you want to use a combination of platforms? Wherever you choose to host it, we recommend you develop a **portfolio**.

Your portfolio is a dynamic and public collection of experiences, materials, relationships, and evidence that proves that you're rare, valuable, and able to deliver benefits to your target audience. It follows the old adage, "Show, don't tell." Building your portfolio demands a blend of all the work you've done in *Designing YOU*.

We highly recommend you build your portfolio on a dynamic online platform, such as LinkedIn. With LinkedIn, you have a portfolio that is intuitive, relevant, has no cost and is used by more than 90 per cent of

employers when hiring. LinkedIn as a platform has a variety of advantages, and because one in three people in North America are already on it, it's the most likely place your target audience is already hanging out.

Developing your portfolio on LinkedIn takes some time. Your portfolio is typically the first impression anchor, and it sticks with influential people. You need to ensure it tells your story directly to them and offers evidence of your features and benefits.

For any organization, big or small, hiring the right people is critical to their success. They aren't only risking their financial resources on salaries, but a bad hire means that the important problem they wanted solved isn't getting solved. Therefore, your portfolio is not only intended to position your features and benefits, but also designed to minimize your audience's risk.

Here is some of the evidence you should incorporate in your portfolio:

1. Letters of reference
2. Examples of school project outcomes
3. Examples of previous work-related outcomes (with permission)
4. Work and volunteer experience
5. Academic transcripts
6. Performance evaluations
7. Awards
8. Photographs/videos/graphics
9. Articles/blogs you've written

<mark>Activity 7.3: Collecting Evidence for Your Portfolio</mark>

To get an understanding of the evidence you can add to your portfolio, refer to the features and benefits inventory you did earlier, and complete the table that follows in your journal. The goal is to identify the evidence available to support your claim of having a particular feature or benefit. For example, what evidence do you have that you can lead a team? What evidence do you have that you're a self-starter? What is your evidence that you are creative? Or a good programmer? Or good with the elderly?

Consider the best way to share each piece of evidence. A bullet point in your work experience? A document you can upload to LinkedIn? A link to an article about your accomplishments? Or is it too sensitive to share publicly, but could be shared verbally? Is it so specific to a particular role that it's best shared as a story in an interview?

It's important to remember you can use multiple pieces of evidence to support a feature or benefit. Providing more evidence for the priority features and benefits minimizes your audience's risk and enhances your probability of success.

Priority Feature	Priority Benefit	The Evidence	How to Share

One of the best things about identifying evidence is that it lends itself to telling your story. Consider the following four questions (and example answers) to turn your evidence into a mini story that you can tell at job interviews, networking events or when you meet with your design team.

Turn your evidence into a mini story	
Question	Example
What was the situation?	I was the Vice President of Events for the Chemistry Society at my university. Employer and student attendance at our annual career fair had declined 20 per cent a year for the past two years. Student satisfaction for this event dropped to 74%.
What was the task?	I was challenged by the society's executive and faculty advisor to increase employer and student attendance by 20 per cent this year.
What was the action?	I formed a joint student and employer advisory team. The team broke the event into two separate events (fall and winter). The fall event was a networking breakfast event. The winter event was a summer job placement event.
What was the result (both organizationally and personally)?	The result was we doubled employer attendance and tripled overall student attendance. Student satisfaction increased to 96%. Through this activity I developed my planning competencies including time and budget management. I also developed my interpersonal skill in management of the advisory team.

Portfolio Tips

Your portfolio on LinkedIn is alive and will evolve. After you've done the initial profile creation, you can tailor your LinkedIn portfolio to your specific story with your own visualizations of evidence. It's important to build your portfolio continuously as your experience and evidence grow. This may include updating your connections by networking with friends, family, peers, fellow students, or anyone whom you feel comfortable publicly listing as a professional relationship.

Once you have completed your portfolio, we recommend taking the following actions on LinkedIn:

1. Join a minimum of two groups.
2. Engage in discussion forums, always in a professional manner.
3. Collect and analyze data and trends you notice while viewing other people's profiles.

4. Ask for introductions through your design team to get connected to others and expand your network. But when you do, ensure you always network professionally and be sensitive to your first impression.

5. Grow your network by searching your email contacts and finding people you may know.

6. See where alumni of your school are working and reach out to learn more about their company or industry.

7. Share updates with your network—such as interesting articles, links to videos or presentations. Consider the quality over quantity rule and ensure it is relevant to your audience and your own positioning.

When engaged in these activities, remember your audience and the impact of a first impression on your reputation. Recognize that everything you say and do is a building block of your reputation. What you say or do either becomes an asset to get you where you want to go, or it's a liability and becomes a barrier to achieving the Whole YOU. Consider LinkedIn as one giant room where influential and important people (e.g., your future boss) hang out to evaluate who they may want in the future on their team. If you really were in that room, you'd probably be super sensitive to how you look and what you say. Just because it's digital, doesn't mean it's any less influential. In fact, every little thing you do in a digital world becomes even more influential to your reputation because it can follow you around for a long time.

Extra tips when using LinkedIn

Job search

1. Find jobs by keyword, title, company, function, industry, years of experience and date posted using the "advanced" search feature.

2. Sign up for email alerts on your saved searches to get automatic notifications about new jobs that meet your criteria.

3. If you're interested in a company, visit the profiles of people in the department you'd like to join as well the HR/recruiter. LinkedIn shows these contacts who have visited their profile, so this is a way to potentially get your profile in front of important people.

Company information

4. Learn more about a company's products and services, latest news, employees, job opportunities and more.

5. See how you're connected to each company through your 1st-, 2nd, and 3rd-degree connections.

6. See data on employees, including where they worked before and after that company.

7. Follow companies you're interested in to get updates from them on your LinkedIn homepage.

LinkedIn resources

8. Join groups relevant to your professional interests: alumni groups, industry groups, geographic groups and more.

9. Use groups to make connections, find job listings, establish thought leadership, and keep your information current on trending issues and topics.

Remember the basics

While your portfolio is flexible and adaptable, you'll still need to develop some other basic elements. Consider it as one tool in your toolbox. The other basics include a professional cover letter (that can be adapted into an email) and a resume. There are wonderful resources online and at your university, college,

or public library on how to prepare these materials. Seek out the help that is available and package everything you did for your LinkedIn story into a more traditional cover letter and resume that tells your story well.

Module 8: The Final Word

Value

1. You are almost at the finish line.
2. Review where you go from here as you begin the next stage of Designing YOU.

Congratulations! You have designed a Whole YOU that you can be proud of. You've set course for a 10-year mission that'll let you achieve your very personal definition of success. In this final step, we offer some of our closing thoughts on needing to view the journey of *Designing YOU* as a state of mind.

If you go to your phone's App Store or Google Play store and look at the apps that are installed on your smartphone, you'll notice each of them are at version 7.15 or 10.32 or 6.56. These products never stopped improving. This concept of continuously adapting to a changing environment is what makes products successful over the long-term.

Don't be content with the first version of the Whole YOU that you launch. Your 10-year mission must constantly evolve with you. You'll inevitably change as you add new competencies, new interests, new relationships, and new goals. Things around you will also change new opportunities, new threats, and new responsibilities. The work you have done to get to this point is important not only because it got you from there to here, but it also paved the path for how to get from here to wherever you might want to go in the future.

Adapting, learning, and growing is your only option. At certain times in your life your Professional YOU may be important, and at other times it may be your relationships, your health & wellness, or your spirituality. How and where they fit in depends on how you define success at any moment in time. However, don't lose sight of what you wrote for your **100th birthday**. Use this as your ultimate litmus test. Reflecting on the whole you gives you a solid foundation to make those big (and small) decisions in life.

Life is inevitably full of ups and downs. Your ups include achieving your personal and professional goals, like completing your first triathlon, or meeting that special person or finding your dream job.

The unavoidable downtimes are why resiliency and perseverance are core attributes for product designers. If a new product flops, they take everything they learned from that failure and feed it into designing their next product.

There are few people who don't, at some time in their professional lives, find themselves bored at a job, underemployed or altogether unemployed. Sometimes, losing a job may have nothing to do with you but you became a casualty of something you had little control over.

When great product designers have a product that flops, they park their ego at the door and reflect on why it failed. This same reflection needs to happen when you find yourself out of a job. The shock of being unemployed can do a number on your self-esteem (not to mention your bank account). After you get through the shock and perhaps anger, you need to ask yourself "Why?" What can you do to put yourself in a better position going forward? What part of the Whole YOU needs improvement?

For you, maybe losing your job had nothing to do with you and more to do with the struggling company or shrinking industry you're in (although you chose to work at the company or in that industry, so you're not completely blameless). On the other hand, maybe losing your job had everything to do with you. Did you fall

behind on your competencies? Did you get complacent? Did you tip the scales toward other success factors, ignoring the Professional YOU?

The best time to plan for the downs is during the ups. This includes revisiting your 10-year mission annually and questioning whether the current version of the Whole YOU helps you achieve that purpose. It also means ensuring you have a buffer in your real bank account as well as your relationship bank accounts. If you start to sense that an unscheduled and unwelcome career change is in the cards, it's critical that you revisit the Whole YOU. Prepare to re-launch yourself into the world with all the energy, planning and reflection that you did when you launched the Whole YOU v1.0.

Taking a professional break is not incompatible with your Professional YOU, in fact, we believe it's essential. What exactly a "professional break" is will be up to you. Just like most of what we talk about in *Designing YOU*, taking a break should be incorporated into your 10-year mission. If you want to go backpacking for six months, go to Florence to study art history or volunteer in Africa, then go ahead and add it to your plan. This will force you to figure out the financial implications long before it's time to take the break. Reflect on this but know that we encourage you to plan for professional breaks. You'll find that well-timed breaks do wonders to help you evolve the Whole YOU.