

Discovering Self and Navigating My Career Journey



Some Templates

Navigating My Career Journey

(Gaining clarity, confidence, and direction, in my professional life)

Careers are not always linear. They include twists, turns, pauses, and sometimes setbacks. But with self-awareness, mentorship, and strategy, you can chart a path that aligns with your values, talents, and long-term goals.

Take some time to examine where you are, where you want to be, and what it takes to get there—without losing who you are along the way.



Odell L. Brown, CIA, CPA, PHR

A Snapshot of Guiding Principles

North Star:

“Leaving a Legacy Behind: Inspiring others to live with faith, integrity, and purpose through mentoring and career development”.

Mantra:

“Responsive, Resourceful, and Relevant”

Who am I?

I am a child of God.
I am an intentional learner.
I value growth; I love to mentor; and
I endeavor to make a positive difference in the lives of others.



Personal Mission Statement:

“To be the best that God would have me to be, living with integrity and compassion, and making a positive difference in the lives of others through mentoring and career development”.

Purpose or Mission: My “Why”.

Passion: My “What”.

Gift/Talent: My “How”
(The Tool: What God uniquely equipped me to do.)

Top 3 Spiritual Gifts:

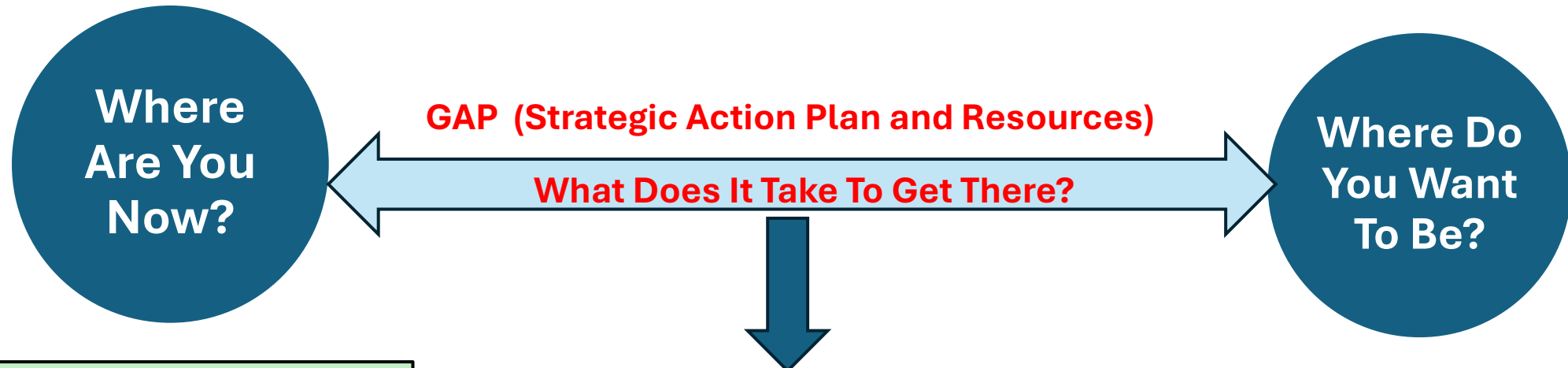
- Shepherding
- Mercy-Showing
- Teaching

Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the plans, I have for you...”*

Romans 12:6: *“We have different gifts according to the grace given to each of us.”*

Current Assessment

(Making Intentional Decisions About Your Future)



- Current job duties, strengths, and accomplishments?
- Current skills aligned with your career trajectory?
- Mindset (confident, uncertain, motivated, burnt out)?
- Experiences and/or credentials that are marketable?
- Personal obligations or life factors impacting your career?
- Personal relationships (mentors, managers, peers)?

- Skills or credentials you need to gain or improve?
- People (mentors, sponsors, connections) who can help you?
- Experiences (projects, roles, volunteer work) will position you well?
- Sacrifices required (time, relocation, comfort zone)?
- Habits needed to adopt or let go of?
- How do you respond to obstacles, rejections, or detours?
- What professional development (courses, networking, certifications) is needed?

- Ideal role, industry, or work environment?
- Success (title, salary, work-life balance, impact, purpose)?
- Lifestyle you want your career to support?
- Passion aligned with your career goal?
- Long-term professional legacy or contribution?
- Want to lead, manage, specialize, or pivot into something new?

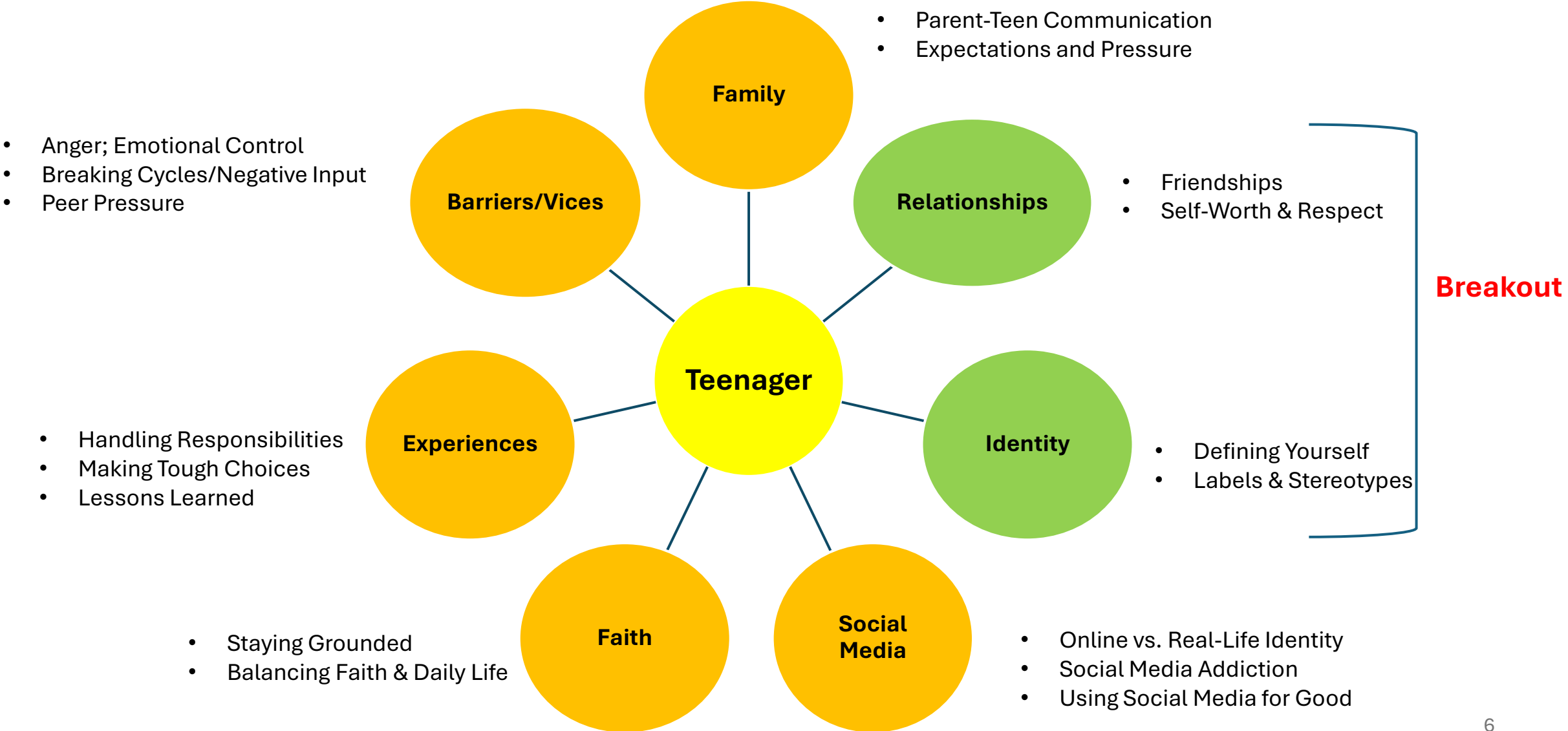
What is My Current Mindset (Career-Wise)?

- **Focused and Driven:** Clear on goals; intentionally moving in the right direction.
- **I'm coasting:** Comfortable; not challenged; postponing growth.
- **I'm Rebounding:** Recovering from a setback; planning a comeback.
- **I'm Exploring:** Curious about new options; open to possibilities.



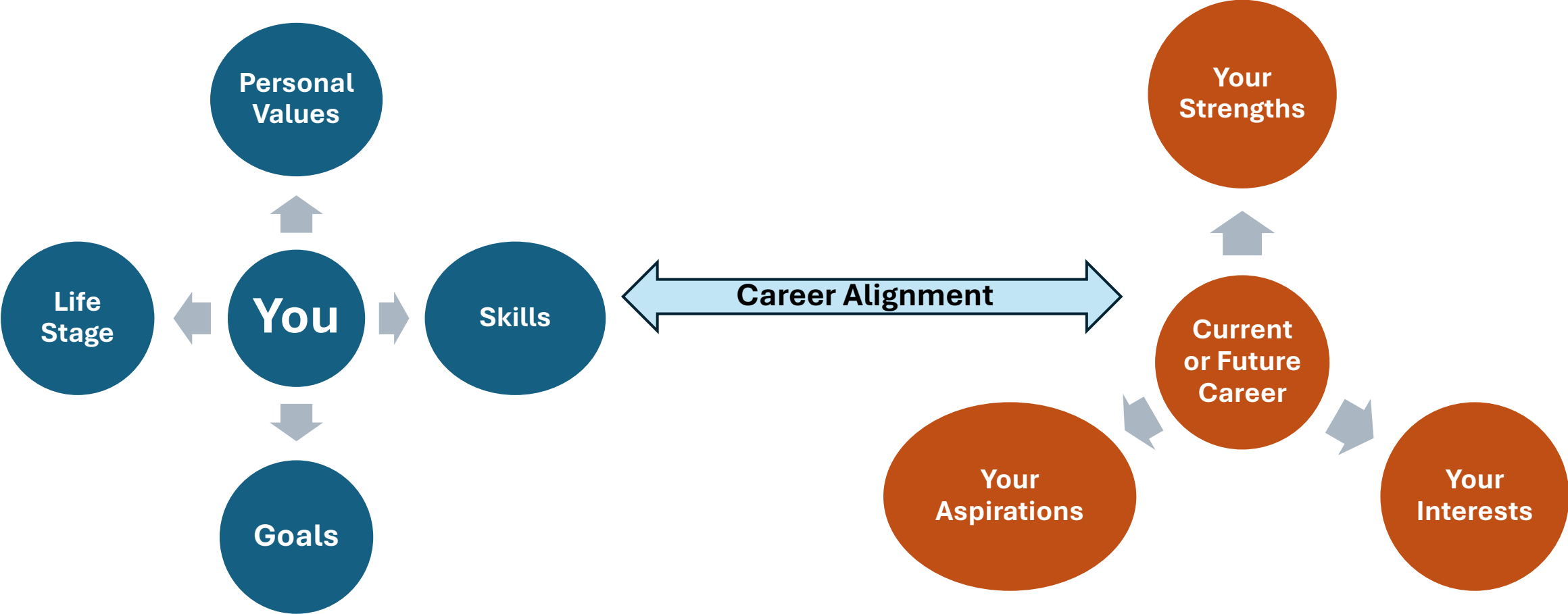
- **I am Okay:** Generally content
- **I am Stuck:** Stagnant; unclear about next steps; not sure what to do.
- **I am Reinventing Myself:** Making a bold change—switching fields, industries, roles; rebranding personally.
- **I Need to Reset:** Recognize burnout imbalance or misalignment; ready to pause or redirect.
- **I'm Building Momentum:** Feeling progress; learning new skills; gaining confidence.

A Teenager's World



Career Alignment

(A Big Picture Perspective)



Leads to greater fulfillment and job satisfaction

Navigating My Career Journey

Consider this:

- You will never discover who you were meant to be if you use another person to find yourself.
- You will never know what you can do by using what someone has done to measure your ability.
- You will never know why you exist if you use someone else's existence to measure it.
- You cannot become what you are born to be by remaining what you are. You are full of potential.
- Your potential is much greater than what you are right now.
- Your life will lack purpose and focus until you discover your wings.



- **Purpose:** What gives you wings? What's your "why"?
- **Values:** What do you believe in? What guides you?
- **My Story:** What motivates you? What gives you perspective?
- **Career Aspirations:** What/who do you want to be or do?
- **BOD:** Who's on your Board of Directors? Are you chair of your own board?
- **Resources:** What's available to you? What books do you read?
- **Barriers:** What/who holds you back? What do you need to let go of?

What I Value Most About Work

(Decision-Making Example)

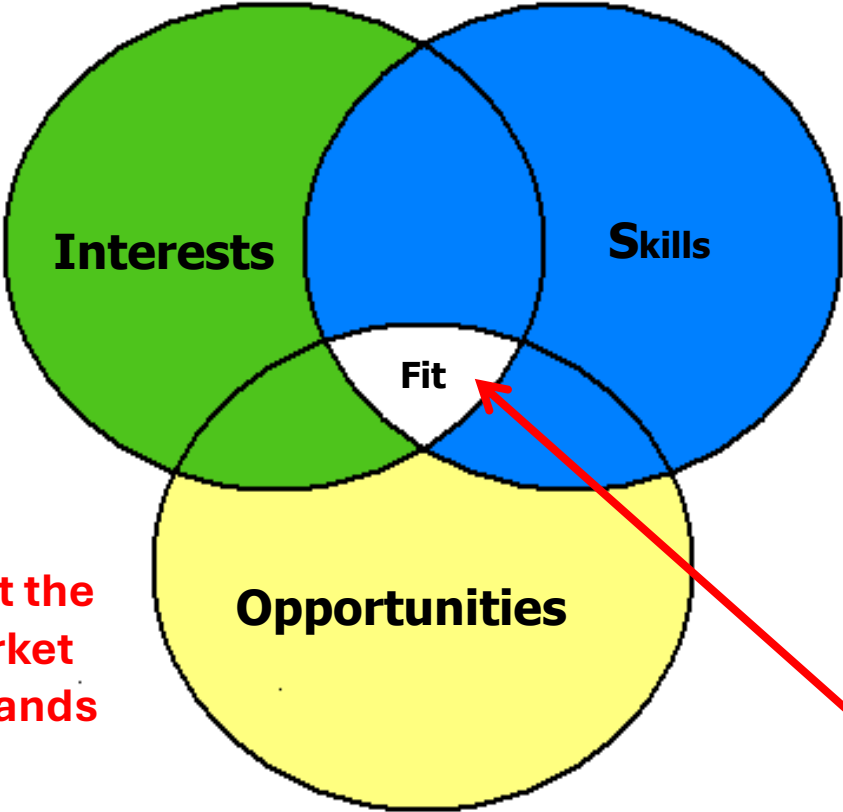
Value	Ideal Rating	My Rating	This Company	Some Questions to Ask or Ponder
Nature of Work	10			What will I be doing? Do I like what I will be doing?
Work Environment	10			Have I visited the office? Have I interned there? What impressions do I get? Will I be challenged? What do employees say about the work environment?
Company Culture	10			What is it like working there? What's being said about the company culture? How reputable is the company? What about its leadership? What is the work ethic?
Training and Development	10			How are employees being trained? Is there an emphasis on training and development?
Compensation	10			What is the starting pay? Is there overtime? What benefits are there? Are employees generally happy with the company benefits?
Growth Opportunities	10			Are there opportunities for advancement? Are there career paths? Are people moving along? Is the company successful? Have there been layoffs, etc.?
Travel	10			Is there travel? How often? Where? What flexibility is there?
Gut Feeling	10			What does my gut/instincts tell me?
Total	80			

Interviewee's Perspective

Finding the Right Job

Job Fit

What you enjoy



What you are good at

What the market demands

Hiring Manager's Perspective

(Finding the Right Person)

Job Role:

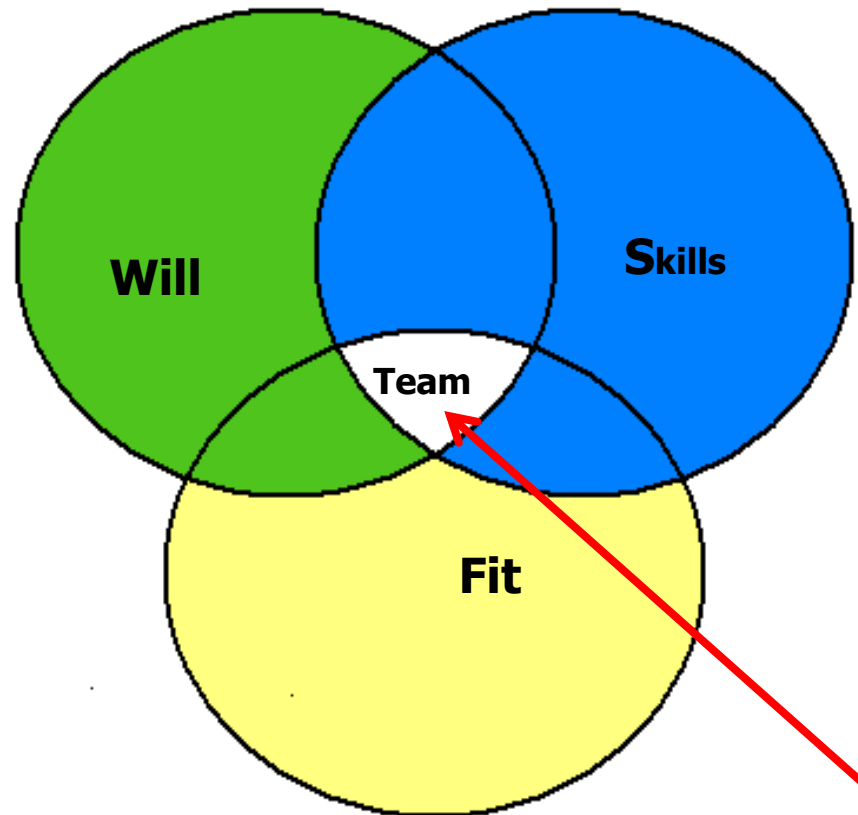
What they do:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Other Things to Note:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Team Fit



Hiring Managers Want to Know:

- Will: Will you do the work?
- Skills: Can you do the work?
- Fit: Will you fit in (team, department, company, etc.)?

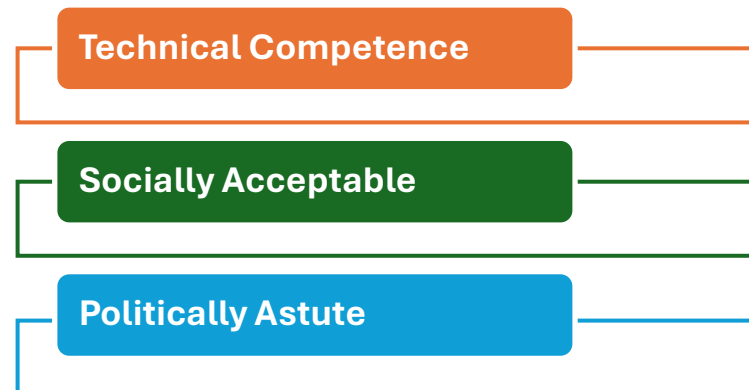
Essential Job Skills:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Three Pillars of Professional Success

Over the years, I've emphasized the importance of maintaining three (3) foundational attributes for long-term success: **Technically Competence**, **Socially Acceptable**, and **Politically Astute**.

The combination of **technical competence**, **social acceptability**, and **political astuteness** creates a well-rounded, impactful professional. Each of these pillars is essential, especially in today's multifaceted environments where success depends not only on what you know, but also on how you relate to others and navigate systems.



Technical Competence

Mastery, Growth, Precision, Reliability

(Being technically sound gives you a seat at the table):

- Continuous learning (stay current in your field: courses, certification, industry reading)
- Problem-solving (finding innovative, efficient, and accurate solutions)
- Results-oriented (deliver high-quality outcomes that provide value)
- Data-informed (use facts and analytics to drive decisions)



Socially Acceptable

Respect, Empathy, Communication, Presence

(How you treat people determines how long they'll walk with you—even if they initially admire your skills):

- Emotional Intelligence (EQ: Understand and manage your emotions and those of others)
- Cultural Awareness & Inclusion (be sensitive to diverse backgrounds and perspectives)
- Authenticity (Be approachable and genuine)
- Conflict Resolution (Address issues directly, calmly, and respectfully)
- Relationship Building (Build trust and mutual respect with others)



Politically Astute

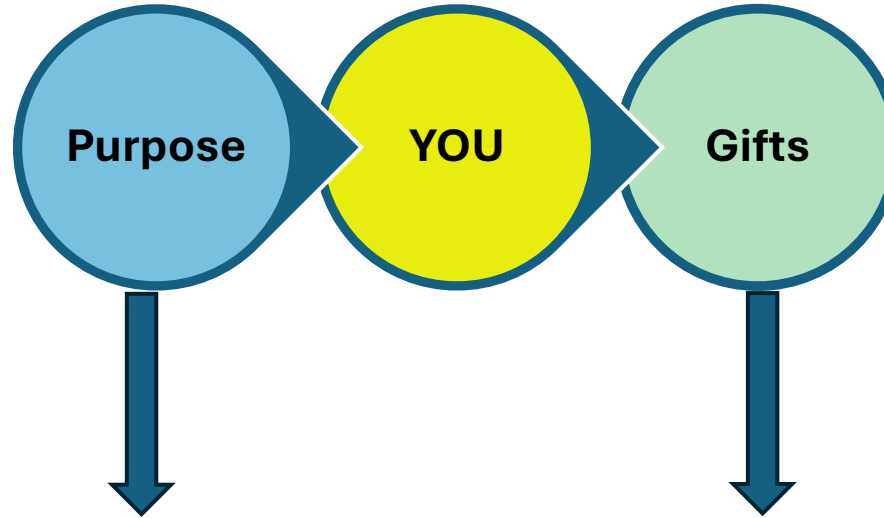
Influence, Awareness, Strategy, Integrity

(It's not just what you know—it's what you do with that knowledge in a system of people, processes, and power):

- Reading the Room (Understand timing, tone, and temperament)
- Strategic Positioning (Know when to speak, listen, or align)
- Power Dynamics (Recognize who really influences decisions)
- Advocating for Others (Use your influence to elevate and support others)



Purpose and Gifts



Your Mission (‘Why’ God gave the gift to You):

- Your ‘Why’
- Your Calling
- Your Reason
- Who You Are
- How You Impact Others
- What Gives You Wings

Your Tools (‘What’ God equipped you to do):

- Your ‘What’; Your ‘How’
- Spiritual Gifts (given by the Holy Spirit)
- Talents
- Gifts
- Learned Skills
- Passions
- Hobbies
- Interests

Discovering Your Life Purpose

- **Here's a formula that works:**
 - Who you are
 - What you do
 - Who you do it for
 - What they want or need
 - How they change as a result of what you give them

Benefits from Mentoring



