Your Personal Brand

Understand your why Factor
Understanding your Y factor is pivotal to designing a career plan that connects with your values, passions and purpose. When you’re living in alignment with your values and integrating your passions into what you do, you are excited, engaged and totally unstoppable.

Let’s start your opportunity engine now to allow you to align who you are with what you do and how you do it. The following activities will help you to truly differentiate yourself from others because you’ll be super charged with your unique promise of value. It’s time to focus on your values, passions and clarify your purpose. This will help you develop your own internal road map that points your decision-making in the right direction.

**Values**

What’s your “north star?”

Your values are like your personal compass—they provide direction for your choices and behaviours. In this three-step exercise, you’ll work towards identifying, defining, and aligning your values.

**Step 1: Identify your top five values**

- Go through the list of values in the table on the next page and eliminate words that don’t resonate with you.
- Go through the list again and place a check mark next to the values that are important to you.
- Go through the short list of values you checked and from that list, pick your top five values.
- Once you’ve identified your top five values, now rank them.
### Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accessiblity</th>
<th>Courage</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Prosperity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Punctuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
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<td>Affection</td>
<td>Directness</td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Resourcefulness</td>
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<td>Affluence</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Respect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Significance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>Sincerity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Speed</td>
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<td>Calmness</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
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<td>Celebrity</td>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Spontaneity</td>
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<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Love</td>
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<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Strength</td>
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<td>Fame</td>
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<td>Passion</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
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<td>Control</td>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Winning</td>
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</table>
List your top five values here and rank them:
You’ll complete the rest as part of Steps 2 and 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment:</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2: Define your top five values**

The words you selected are important because they mean something specific to you. It’s important to be clear about exactly what these words mean to you, as sometimes people have different interpretations of the same word. For example, two people may have selected flexibility. To one, flexibility means the ability to be nimble in work style on a day-to-day basis; to another, flexibility means the interest in adding value to different types of organizations or working on different types of projects.

Since the words you chose resonate with you, you likely have a strong association with a way of describing them that is both personal and powerful to you.

*Write a sentence to each value that defines what the value means to you.*

**Step 3: Align**

Now, perform a quick self-assessment to measure your alignment with these values. For each value, give yourself a score of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates I am really not living this value and 5 indicates I live this value very consistently.
**Validate**

Select the value that you feel is most out of alignment and most critical to your happiness and success. Focus on this value for the next 21 days. (Remember, studies indicate it takes 21 consecutive days of practicing a behaviour to create a new habit.) Each day, reflect on how you might employ that value in what you are doing. Just the act of having that value present in your mind each day will allow your subconscious to do some of the work for you as you seek new ways to be in alignment.

**Tips**
- Write that value on a piece of paper and post it where you can see it.
- Create a screen saver of your top five values with the one you will focus on changing in a different colour.
- Write that value on the top of your to-do list for the next 21 days.
Passions

What makes you come alive?

Unleashing your passions

Your passions fuel your actions. When you integrate your passions into what you do, not only are you more engaged, you create a powerhouse of enthusiasm, engagement and inspiration for those around you. In this exercise, you’ll have the opportunity to step back and think about your passions, how you can integrate them into what you do and how you can connect them with your career goals.

Document

Begin by entering your responses to the questions below:

1. What would I do with my summer if money weren't an issue?

2. What are my favourite activities?

3. Why did I choose these particular university studies?

4. What type of people am I drawn to?

5. What volunteer activity do I find compelling?
Distil

Now, take a look at your responses and ask yourself these questions:

1. Was there a connection across responses?

2. Am I connecting my passions with my studies and career goals?

3. How can I pursue a volunteer activity that’s in line with my passions?

Validate

Make a commitment to create a passion integration plan. Use the space below to document ways you will integrate your passions into your day-to-day activities and connect them with your goals.

Action 1

Action 2

Action 3
Purpose

What is your destination?

Exploring your purpose

Your purpose is your big picture, internal vision of what you would like to achieve. When you combine clear values, engage your passions and take on purpose action, you can follow your personal road map to the destinations you choose.

Document

It is important to visualize your preferred future and really consider what you want to experience and accomplish in your life and the impact it will have on those around you as well as those you may never meet. For those of you who have never been through a guided visualization activity, this may feel a little awkward at first. If so, consider repeating it at a later date when you can experience the greatest benefit. This will work best if you’re able to choose a quiet place and time where you will be undisturbed for at least 20 minutes.

Do this exercise when you’re with a friend who can read the guided visualization script on the next page. That way, you can relax and immerse yourself in the experience. Now, get comfortable. Turn off your inner cynic and let your imagination run free—barefooted.

Guided visualization script:

Congratulations!

You have graduated and have really begun establishing a life for yourself. (Pause 5 seconds.)

In the mail today, you received the invitation to your high school reunion. A lot has happened since you last saw some of your classmates. (Pause 5 seconds.)

You stop to reflect on the many changes that have occurred over the past 10 years.

It probably feels like a whirlwind. (Pause 10 seconds.)

You are mentally and emotionally preparing yourself for the conversations you will have with your classmates and friends. You are eager to share your achievements that gave you the greatest sense of accomplishment. You are eager to share what you’re doing now and what you hope to do in the next five years. (Pause 5 seconds.)

You are thinking about your first full-time job out of school. (Pause here for 5 seconds.)

Were you ready? (Pause for 10 seconds.)

Remember getting your own place and realizing all the freedom you had and all the bills that were now yours to pay. (Pause 5 seconds.)
Perhaps you are in a committed relationship. Married? Family? Or maybe you’re considering the possibilities. What are you looking forward to sharing about your life? (Pause 15 seconds)

What have you learned from negotiating and navigating life, work and the world? (Pause 15 seconds.)

What are you doing now? (Pause 10 seconds)

Who is in your life? (Pause 10 seconds)

What impact are you having on those around you? (Pause 15 seconds)

What is next for you that will create the impact you hope to have on your work, life and world? (Pause 15 seconds)

When you have finished reflecting, take several deep breaths, open your eyes and stretch. Once you are fully ready, document what you will be saying about the life you are leading and the impacts you aspire to have.

Capture here your journey back to the future:

You can either document all your thoughts or capture key elements. Write it in first person with an active voice, as though you were telling the story to another person right now. “I am...” “I have...” “I enjoy...” “I will...”
Distil

Capture key ideas and elements

1. What has been important to you?

2. Who is on this journey with you?

3. What you are doing that fuels your passion?

4. What are you working toward/have accomplished that gives you a sense of purpose?

5. Where you are headed next?

Validate

Look at your responses. Do you see your values, passions and purpose showing up in your visualization?

Use different colour highlighters to help you put all the fuel possible into your opportunity engine. For example, consider highlighting:

Values in blue  Passions in green  Purpose in yellow

Are all the colours represented?

Did you learn anything new that you would add to your values, passions and purpose that are needed to meet your highest aspirations?
**Build your brand and make an impact**

Giving back is an outward expression of your values and purpose and an opportunity to demonstrate your super skills. Giving back is good for society, it’s empowering and inspiring for you and those you will influence and it’s an important part of successful branding! In this exercise, you’ll identify the philanthropic options that will be most meaningful to you.

**Document**

Clarifying your unique strengths, values, passions and purpose gives you great direction and criteria for what to say “yes” to and what to say “no” to when faced with the many opportunities and requests you will encounter over a lifetime. Let the work you have done to this point in your branding journey be your guide to choosing how you will use your time.

I want to use this giving back opportunity to:

- ... Showcase a strength
- ... Develop a new skill
- ... Align with my values
- ... Employ my passions
- ... Fulfil my purpose

**Distil**

Use the questions below to help you begin to find a cause that’s right for you.

**Skills/Strengths:**

*Which of the super skills you identified would you like to showcase or which skill was missing that you’d like to build?*

**Values:**

*Look at your values. Which cause(s) might connect with those values?*

**Passions:**
Think about your passions. Think about what type of cause might connect with those passions. What organizations may align with those causes?

Goals:
What is your goal for an internship or the job you would like to have when you graduate?

Purpose:
What might move you toward your internal vision for the future?
Refer to the two examples below:

**Example 1**

**Skills/strengths:**
Relationship-building, collaboration

**Values:**
Respect, excellence, discipline, caring for others, generosity

**Passions:**
Animals (pets)

**Goals:**
Ideal first job out of school: working with a healthcare organization, working on developing therapies that help people

**Purpose:**
To lead a national initiative that influences the provision of alternative healthcare services to underserved and disadvantaged people

**Potential organizations:**
local non-profit veterinary clinic, dog rescue organisation, non-profit clinic for the homeless

**Potential roles:**
Welcome reception, greeting clients, working as part of a team to make animal issues visible, working across organizations getting them to collaborate

**Example 2**

**Skills/strengths:**
Managing people, teaching, coaching

**Values:**
Teamwork, winning, competition, optimism, growth

**Passions:**
Sports, entrepreneurship

**Goals:**
First internship: working for a consulting firm that has high tech start-ups as clients, or working for a start-up

**Purpose:**
To launch a successful business that employs my love of sports and leverages my technical expertise for online delivery and engagement; To deliver team and leadership training services based on sports theory

**Potential organizations:**
School extracurricular sports programs, local small business associations, etc.

**Potential roles:**
Starting a sports organization at school, teaching and coaching students on different projects, managing a small project for an entrepreneurial organization

**Validate**

Now it’s time to act for impact. Commit to at least one action below to get you started on your road to giving.

- Check websites and phone or tablet applications for opportunities based on interests, causes, needs, skills and locations that are in alignment with your values, purpose, passions, potential roles and goals outlined previously.
- Call or visit the organizations that sound like the best fit.
- Volunteer for a day, a project, or a week to gift your service and test the fit with the volunteer opportunity. Even if it turns out not to be the best fit for you, both you and those receiving your service will have benefitted and it will get you one step closer to clarifying what you want to do.
- Check your state and city website for additional opportunities in your area. Many large employers have volunteer programs that can also link you to opportunities that will be a fit for your interests. Do some homework on an employer you’d like to work for and see if they have volunteer opportunities that you can join.