

# THE CAREER CONFIDENCE WORKBOOK

*A self-paced guide for clarity, pivots, and the job search.*

The goal of this workbook is to make a career move feel less like a leap and more like a series of small, testable steps. The belief underneath it is simple. Confidence isn't something you wait to feel before you act; it's something you build by acting, gathering evidence, and letting the proof catch up to the doubt. There is no single right way through a career change, so this isn't a funnel that pushes everyone down the same path. Each module is a few exercises and ends with a short checklist; work them in order, and everything you create carries forward.

*Start where you are, not where you think you should be.*

## THIS WORKBOOK IS DESIGNED FOR

Career clarity.

Career pivots.

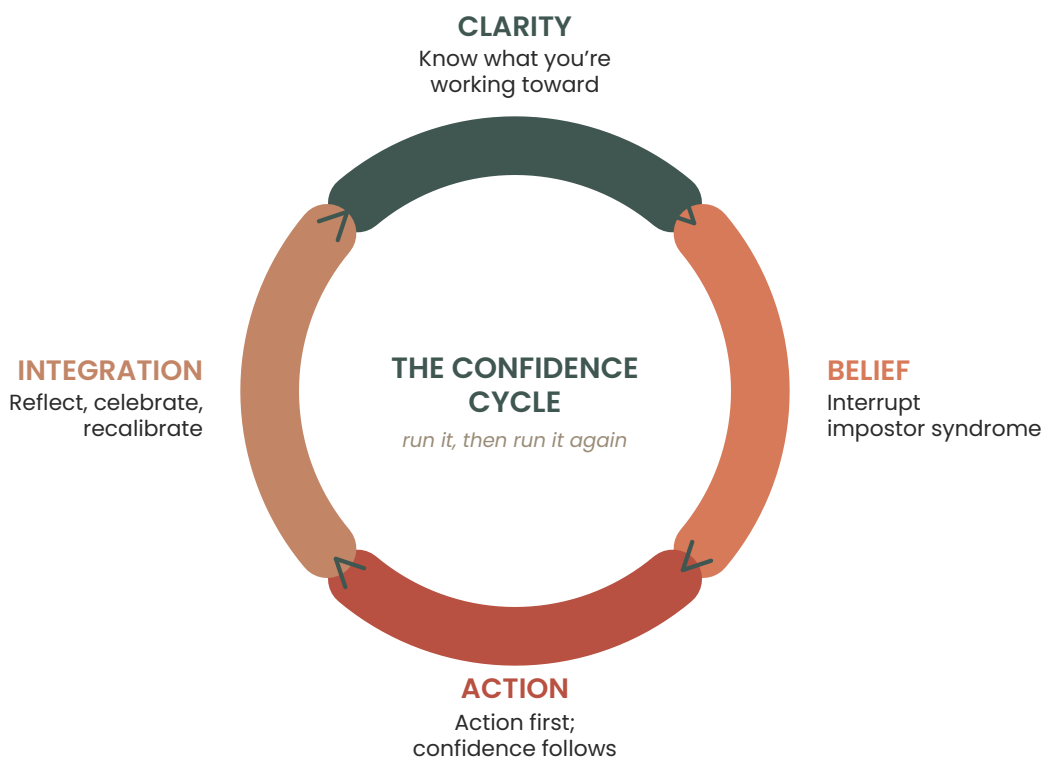
Personal brand and the job search.

## YOUR MAP: THE CONFIDENCE CYCLE

- 1 • Own Your Story.** Get grounded in who you are before deciding where you're going.
- 2 • Define Your Direction.** Define the problem you're actually solving; draft your career hypothesis.
- 3 • Read the Market.** Test your hypothesis against reality, through people, not just postings.
- 4 • Experiment & Close the Gap.** Build a small prototype and only the skills you actually need.
- 5 • Position to Win.** Resume, LinkedIn, and a career story that makes the move sound inevitable.
- 6 • Open Doors.** Map your network, make the ask, and build a rhythm you can sustain.
- 7 • Land with Confidence.** Interview with stories, negotiate from your values, start strong.

# HOW THIS WORKBOOK IS STRUCTURED

One tool runs underneath everything here: the Confidence Cycle. It's a loop, not a finish line. You run it on each module, and on anything that gets hard, then it carries you back to the start a little stronger.



## THE PATH YOU'LL WALK IT IN

**Ground · Explore · Test · Reposition**

Know yourself, then meet the market, then prototype the move, then tell the new story. Each module sits in one of these four; just follow the order.

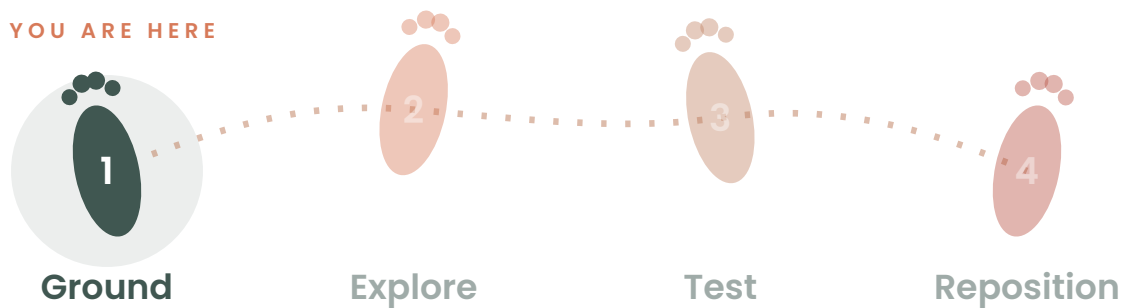
01

# OWN YOUR STORY

GROUND · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: CLARITY &amp; BELIEF

*Get grounded in who you are before deciding where you're going.*

- 🎯 **Your goal:** get grounded in your values, your strengths, and the life you're building, so every decision ahead has something to push against.
- **Why it matters:** tactical choices (which roles, which resume bullets, which salary line) get easier when they're anchored to what you actually want.
- 👣 **The move:** look backward and far forward before looking at next month.



## 1.1 CORE VALUES

A core value is a principle that matters to you for its own sake, not because it gets you something else. It's the reason a job can look good on paper and still feel wrong, or look modest and still feel right. Your values are how you decide when no one is handing you the answer.

### HOW TO DO THIS

- Don't reach for what sounds impressive. Reach for what's actually true about you, including the unglamorous ones.
- A real value already shows up in how you spend your time and what you defend when it's under threat.
- If a word feels like a "should," cross it out. A value you perform for other people won't hold up under pressure.

### A STARTER BANK — PICK, ADAPT, OR ADD YOUR OWN

*Notice which clusters pull you hardest. That pattern is a clue on its own.*

#### Autonomy & freedom

autonomy independence flexibility freedom self-direction  
spontaneity

#### Growth & mastery

growth learning mastery craft excellence curiosity challenge  
competence

#### Security & stability

stability security financial security order predictability simplicity

#### Connection & care

family community belonging friendship loyalty connection  
generosity compassion

#### Impact & service

service impact contribution justice equity stewardship purpose

#### Achievement & recognition

achievement recognition ambition status influence  
leadership

#### Integrity & character

integrity honesty authenticity courage accountability humility  
fairness

#### Wellbeing & joy

health balance peace fun adventure creativity beauty  
gratitude

#### WHY THIS COMES FIRST

Every choice ahead, which roles to chase, which resume line to lead with, which offer to take, gets easier when it has these few words to push against. Spend the time here. The rest of the workbook leans on it.

## 1.1 CORE VALUES (CONTINUED)

List 10 values that resonate, with one line on what each means to you. The list is the easy part. The cutting is the exercise.

VALUE	WHAT IT MEANS TO ME (ONE LINE)

### HOW TO CUT DOWN TO YOUR TOP 3 TO 5

- Put two values head to head. If you could keep only one, which goes? Repeat the duel until about five are left standing.
- A core value is one you'd hold even when it costs you something. If it only matters when it's convenient, it's a preference, not a value.
- Five is a working ceiling, not a rule. Three you actually live by beats ten you admire from a distance.

### MY TOP 3 TO 5 VALUES (AFTER THE CUT)

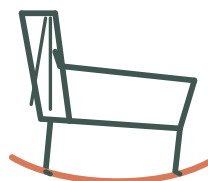
## 1.2 THE ROCKING CHAIR

You're 90, healthy, and content, looking back over your ideal life. Write freely; fragments count.

**WHO ARE YOU AS A PERSON? WHAT DO PEOPLE VALUE ABOUT YOU?**

**HOW DID LIFE UNFOLD? (FAMILY, FRIENDS, WORK, HEALTH, HOME, FUN, COMMUNITY)**

**WHAT DID THIS VIEW MAKE EMBARRASSINGLY OBVIOUS ABOUT WHAT MATTERS?**



1.3

## VISION HORIZONS

Work backward from the rocking chair to now. Present tense and specific; a sketch you'll revise beats a blank you're avoiding.

*If this much specificity feels overwhelming, that's okay, just fill in one or two boxes and come back.*

**3 YEARS FROM NOW: MY WORK AND LIFE LOOK LIKE...**

**1 YEAR FROM NOW: WHAT'S TRUE THAT ISN'T TRUE TODAY...**

**6 MONTHS FROM NOW: WHAT I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF...**

**3 MONTHS FROM NOW: WHAT'S ALREADY MOVING...**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

## 1.4 CAREER TRANSITION GOALS

Draft 2 to 3 goals that align to the professional shift you're looking to make, each with a month attached. Then pressure-test: specific? measurable? realistic? aligned with the rocking chair view?

GOAL	BY WHEN	PASSES THE PRESSURE TEST? (Y/N + NOTE)

### IF THIS WHOLE TRANSITION HAD A TITLE, IT WOULD BE:

*A one-line theme for this season. For example: "the year I stopped shrinking," or "build, don't wait."*

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- My top 3 to 5 values are written, each with a line of meaning.
- My rocking chair reflection exists in writing (a voice memo counts).
- My vision horizons are sketched: 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months.
- My chapter goals are drafted, dated, and pressure-tested, and my theme sentence exists.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- The value that surprised you most: where is it currently being squeezed in your work life?
- Say your theme sentence out loud. Does it still feel true a day later?

### NOTES TO MYSELF

# DEFINE YOUR DIRECTION

GROUND · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: CLARITY & BELIEF

*You can't solve a problem you haven't defined. Most people skip this step.*

**Your goal:** define the problem you're actually solving, then turn it into a hypothesis you can test.

**A job change** keeps the kind of work, swaps the employer or the conditions (better pay, a saner boss, a shorter commute).

**A career change** changes the work itself: a new field, a new function, a different problem to solve.

*Most reasons point clearly to one or the other. Naming which tells you how big the move really is.*

## 2.1 CAREER OR JOB CHANGE?

Common reasons people consider a change. Pick your top 3 and dig into each below.

better opportunities

more money

stability

balance

health & well-being

growth

culture fit

boredom

recognition

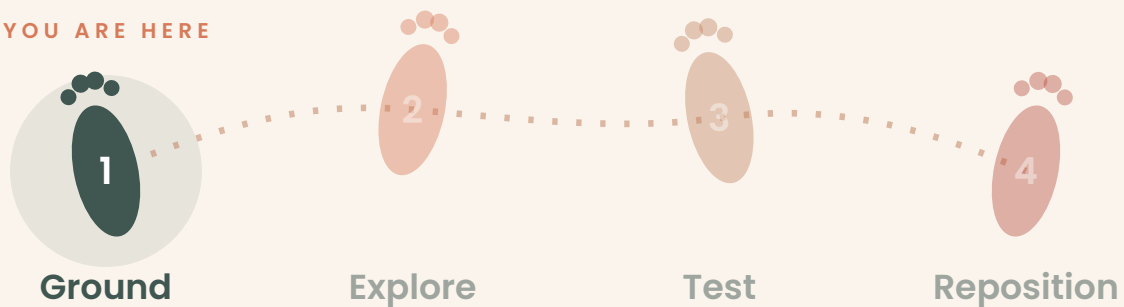
flexibility

### EXAMPLE · ONE REASON, DUG INTO

*"Growth. My current role has no path up for two more years. If I solved it, I'd be leading a team and owning a budget. In my current role I could ask for a stretch project; I know two people who made this jump from ops into a chief-of-staff seat."*

**REASON 1 — THE REASON, IN MY WORDS · WHY IT MATTERS · WHAT I COULD CHANGE NOW, AND WHO I KNOW WHO MADE THIS MOVE**

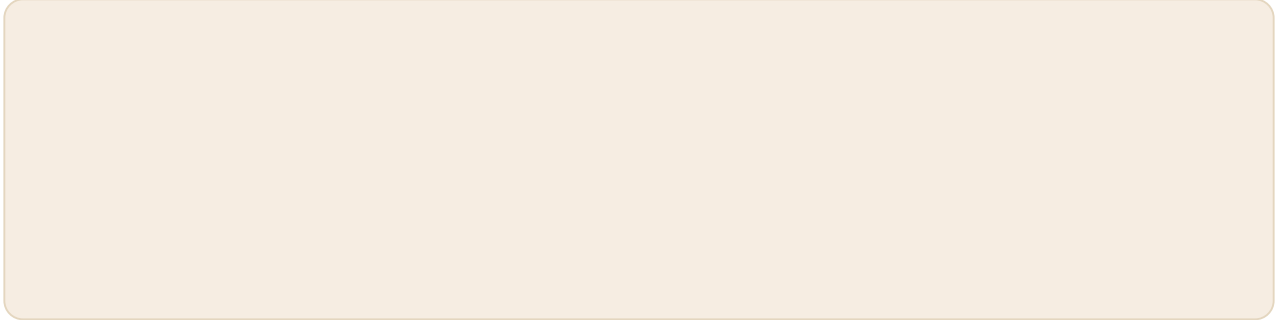
YOU ARE HERE



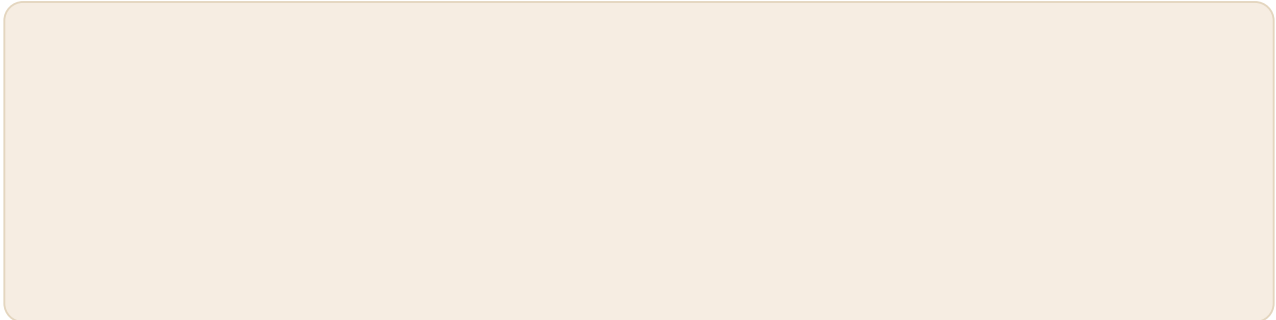
2.1

## CAREER OR JOB CHANGE? (CONTINUED)

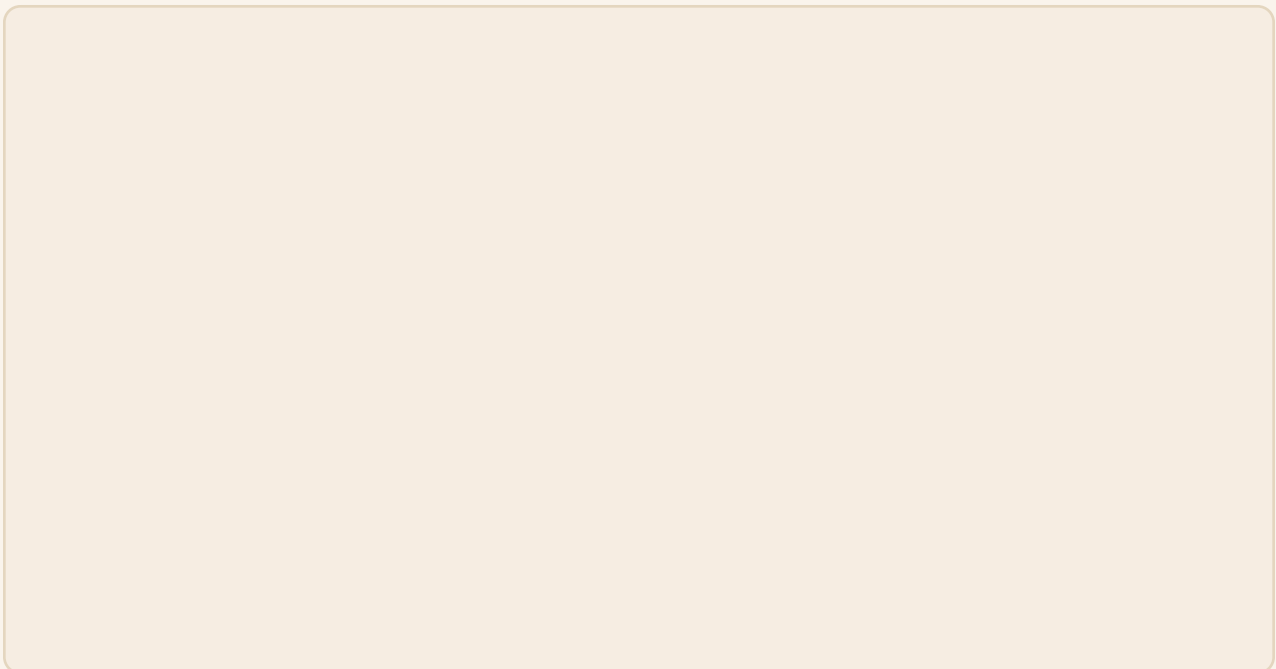
REASON 2 — THE REASON, IN MY WORDS · WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW LIFE WOULD DIFFER IF SOLVED · WHAT I COULD CHANGE NOW, AND WHO I KNOW WHO MADE THIS MOVE



REASON 3 — THE REASON, IN MY WORDS · WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW LIFE WOULD DIFFER IF SOLVED · WHAT I COULD CHANGE NOW, AND WHO I KNOW WHO MADE THIS MOVE



ADDITIONAL NOTES



## 2.2 DEAL-BREAKERS & NON-NEGOTIABLES

Values tell you what you're moving toward. This exercise names the edges around them: what a role must have, and what would end the conversation.

**A non-negotiable** is something a role must have: the floor you won't go below (a salary number, real ownership, remote flexibility).

**A deal-breaker** is something you won't tolerate: the line that makes you walk (constant weekend work, a micromanaging boss).

*Get specific. Name a number, a behavior, a boundary, something you could actually hold a role to.*

**MY NON-NEGOTIABLES: WHAT A ROLE MUST HAVE**

**MY DEAL-BREAKERS: WHAT I WON'T TOLERATE**

**THE 3 THAT ACTUALLY DECIDE IT — CROSS ONE AND I PASS (OR PURSUE) WITHOUT OVERTHINKING**

**WHERE DOES MY CURRENT ROLE CROSS ONE OF THESE LINES?**

**WHICH KINDS OF ROLES OR ORGS WOULD I RULE OUT ON SIGHT?**

## LOOKING ACROSS ALL THREE

DO I NEED A NEW JOB, OR A NEW DIRECTION? WHAT TELLS ME THAT?

### 2.3 RANK WHAT YOU'RE SOLVING FOR

These are the five dimensions of a career move. Read what each means, then rank them 1 (most important to change) to 5 (least). Your top two define the problem.

- INDUSTRY** the sector you work in  
*e.g. health, fintech, education*
- FUNCTION** the kind of work you do  
*e.g. operations, marketing, product*
- LEVEL** your rung on the ladder  
*e.g. IC, manager, director*
- COMP** pay and total package  
*e.g. salary, equity, benefits*
- STYLE** how and where you work  
*e.g. pace, autonomy, remote, company stage*

DIMENSION	RANK 1-5	ONE-LINE NOTE
Industry		
Function		
Level		
Comp		
Style		

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 2.4 TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AUDIT

A transferable skill travels across jobs because it isn't tied to one employer's tools or titles: leading people, running projects, writing clearly. The opposite is a company-specific skill, like knowing your current team's internal system.

### HOW TO DO THIS

- Scan the families below and list the skills you actually use most, in the first box.
- Star the 3 to 5 you want to KEEP using in your next chapter.
- Then translate them: the same skill is named differently in different fields.

**People & relationships** communication, coaching, conflict resolution, stakeholder management, facilitation, mentoring

**Projects & operations** organization, project management, process improvement, systems thinking, budgeting, vendor management

**Strategy & problem-solving** decision-making, analysis, change management, research, prioritization, creativity

**Communication & craft** writing, presenting, storytelling, data viz, program design, training

### THE SKILLS I USE MOST TODAY (LIST AS MANY AS YOU LIKE)

### MY STARRED 3 TO 5: THE SKILLS I'M TAKING WITH ME

### THE SAME SKILL GOES BY DIFFERENT NAMES — LEARN YOUR TARGET FIELD'S WORD FOR IT

*For example, "professional development" might be called training, learning & development, or leadership development depending on the field. Translate each starred skill into the language your target industry actually uses.*

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 2.5 YOUR CAREER HYPOTHESIS

Your hypothesis is a from/to statement: a clear, two-part frame that maps the transition from your current state to a desired future state. The “because” is what makes it testable.

*Why write one: a hypothesis is a guess you can test cheaply in Module 3 before you bet a whole job search on it. You’re not committing to the move, just naming it clearly enough to check. A guess you can test beats a certainty you can’t.*

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

“I’m testing a move from operations director at a nonprofit toward chief of staff at a growth-stage company, because my systems and stakeholder strengths have more room (and more runway) there.” · “I’m testing a move from program operations toward business operations (BizOps) in tech, because I want to solve cross-functional problems with data, not just keep the trains running.”

**MY FROM/TO STATEMENT: “I’M TESTING A MOVE FROM X TOWARD Y BECAUSE...” (A HYPOTHESIS, NOT A PROMISE; MODULE 3 EXISTS TO TEST IT)**

## 2.6 ACHIEVEMENTS & EVIDENCE

Belief isn't a pep talk; it's evidence you can point to. Before you write the limiting belief down on the next page, build the case against it. List the things you've actually done, then pull out the proof hiding inside them.

*Professional and personal, on purpose. A thing you built, fixed, led, taught, or pulled off when quitting would have been easier. The ones you're a little proud of count most, and a non-work win often proves a strength more honestly than a polished work one.*

*For example: rebuilt our onboarding from scratch (work) · trained for and ran a half marathon (personal).*

### TEN THINGS I'VE DONE THAT I'M PROUD OF (WORK OR NOT)

01

06

02

07

03

08

04

09

05

10

### MY TOP 3 — THE ONES THAT BEST PROVE I CAN DO THE WORK I'M MOVING TOWARD

1

2

3

### GIVEN THIS EVIDENCE, WHO AM I ALREADY BECOMING?

2.6

## ACHIEVEMENTS & EVIDENCE (CONTINUED)

Take each of your top 3 and mine it. The skill you used and the result you got are the raw material for your resume bullets (5.3) and your interview stories (7.1). You're not just remembering a win; you're banking evidence you'll spend later.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

*The rescue launch: I rebuilt a stalled fundraiser around three must-haves and a daily 15-minute standup. Skill I used: operational triage under pressure. Result: launched on time to 800 people, beat the revenue goal by 12%. What it proves: I lead calm when the plan is on fire.*

#### TOP STORY 1

THE SKILL I USED

THE RESULT, WITH A NUMBER IF I HAVE ONE

WHAT IT PROVES ABOUT ME

#### TOP STORY 2

THE SKILL I USED

THE RESULT, WITH A NUMBER IF I HAVE ONE

WHAT IT PROVES ABOUT ME

#### TOP STORY 3

THE SKILL I USED

THE RESULT, WITH A NUMBER IF I HAVE ONE

WHAT IT PROVES ABOUT ME

## 2.7 THE BELIEF CHECK

From the Confidence Cycle™: interrupt the impostor syndrome before it shows up.

### THE LIMITING BELIEF MOST LIKELY TO SHOW UP IN THIS SEARCH

### THE EVIDENCE I HAVE THAT CONTRADICTS IT

### MY CONFIDENCE MANTRA FOR THIS STRETCH

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- My top change-reasons are written and reflected on, including the “who do I know” row.
- The five dimensions are ranked, and my skills audit is done with 3 to 5 starred.
- My career hypothesis exists in writing.
- My Belief Check is complete: limiting belief, evidence, mantra.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Read your career hypothesis aloud. Where does your voice wobble? That word is where the work is.
- Say your confidence mantra once out loud, even if it feels silly. Notice what shifts.

### NOTES TO MYSELF

03

# READ THE MARKET

EXPLORE · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

*Test your hypothesis against reality, through people, not just postings.*

**Your goal:** put your career hypothesis in contact with the real market, and revise it with evidence.

- **Two channels:** job descriptions show what the market wants; coffee chats show what the work is actually like.
- **Expect revision:** that's the point. You're buying clarity at the cheapest price it will ever be.

## 3.1 ROLE SCAN

Collect 5 to 7 real job descriptions in your target zone. Log each one below; copy the page for roles 4 to 7.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

Role: Chief of Staff, growth-stage health tech (link). Excitement 4/5: right hand to the CEO with real cross-functional ownership; the finance modeling is the only intimidating part. Skills: executive communication, OKR planning, board prep. AI signals: JD asks for AI-assisted reporting. My strengths: ran org-wide planning; built board materials. Gaps: for-profit finance, OKR tooling. Next step: coffee chat with a chief of staff who made the nonprofit-to-startup jump.



### 3.1 ROLE 1

ROLE TITLE + LINK

EXCITEMENT (1-5) AND WHY

SKILLS THIS ROLE REQUIRES

AI SIGNALS: HOW DOES THIS ROLE MENTION AI, EXPLICITLY OR BETWEEN THE LINES?

MY TRANSFERABLE STRENGTHS FOR IT

MY GAPS

NEXT STEP TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL NOTES

### 3.1 ROLE 2

ROLE TITLE + LINK

EXCITEMENT (1–5) AND WHY

SKILLS THIS ROLE REQUIRES

AI SIGNALS: HOW DOES THIS ROLE MENTION AI, EXPLICITLY OR BETWEEN THE LINES?

MY TRANSFERABLE STRENGTHS FOR IT

MY GAPS

NEXT STEP TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL NOTES

### 3.1 ROLE 3

ROLE TITLE + LINK

EXCITEMENT (1-5) AND WHY

SKILLS THIS ROLE REQUIRES

AI SIGNALS: HOW DOES THIS ROLE MENTION AI, EXPLICITLY OR BETWEEN THE LINES?

MY TRANSFERABLE STRENGTHS FOR IT

MY GAPS

NEXT STEP TO LEARN MORE

PATTERNS ACROSS ALL THE ROLES I SCANNED (TITLES, SKILLS, LANGUAGE, SALARY SIGNALS)

## 3.2 COFFEE CHATS

Hold 3 to 5 conversations. Shape each as warm-up, then the role and org, then advice. Every conversation ends with a next step.

*Three reliable openers: "How did you get into this work?" · "What skills help someone thrive on your team?" · "If you were in my shoes, what would you explore next?" Always ask how their team uses AI day to day. And to close: "Based on what you know about my interests, who else should I talk to, and could you introduce me to one person?"*

NAME / ORG	KEY TAKEAWAYS	NEXT STEP + FOLLOW-UP DATE

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

### 3.3 SYNTHESIS & HYPOTHESIS 2.0

Step back from the roles and the conversations. What is the market telling you?

**SYNTHESIS: PATTERNS I'M NOTICING · WHAT SURPRISED ME · WHAT I WANT MORE OF · WHAT I WANT LESS OF**

**MY HYPOTHESIS 2.0 (CONFIRMED, REVISED, OR REPLACED) AND THE REASON WHY**

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- At least 5 job descriptions are logged with excitement scores and gaps.
- At least 3 coffee chats are completed and logged with next steps.
- My synthesis is filled in.
- My hypothesis 2.0 is written, with the reason.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Reread your synthesis: which pattern would you bet on?
- The most useful sentence anyone said in a coffee chat: write it somewhere you'll see it.

### NOTES TO MYSELF

# EXPERIMENT & CLOSE THE GAP

TEST · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

*Test the fit before you commit. Build only the skills you actually need.*

**Your goal:** test the fit with one small prototype, and close only the gaps that are real.

- **Flip the default:** career changers over-prepare and under-test. Do the reverse.
- **Sort your gaps:** skill gaps need a fix; framing gaps get solved for free in Module 5.

## 4.1 GAP SORT

List every gap between you and your target roles. Mark each one S or F: a skill gap (S) is something you'd truly need to learn; a framing gap (F) is something you already have but are describing wrong. Most gaps turn out to be F.

*Example. S: "no for-profit P&L experience." F: "my nonprofit title sounds junior."*

GAP	S OR F	IF S: CHEAPEST CREDIBLE FIX · IF F: WHERE IT GETS REFRAMED



## 4.2 ONE TARGETED UPSKILL

MY MOST IMPORTANT SKILL GAP (THE ONE WORTH CLOSING)

THE ONE LEARNING MOVE (COURSE, TOOL, CERTIFICATE, STRETCH PROJECT) · COST AND DEADLINE

FIELD INSIDER WHO CONFIRMED IT MATTERS (OR: CONSCIOUSLY SKIPPED BECAUSE THE FIELD DOESN'T REQUIRE IT)

ADDITIONAL NOTES

### 4.3 THE PROTOTYPE

Design one experiment runnable in two weeks of small steps.

*Formats that work: a sample artifact in the field's native format, a shadow day, a volunteer or freelance rep, a stretch assignment at your current job. High-leverage: build one small thing WITH AI in your target field's context. It closes a skill gap, tests fit, and proves AI fluency in one move.*

#### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

Prototype: build an AI-assisted board-prep workflow that turns meeting notes and metrics into a first-draft board memo; test it on two past board cycles. Reflection: energized by the building and the time math; drained by prompt fiddling; surprised the hardest part was deciding what NOT to automate; decided the chief of staff direction is right, and the workflow goes in my portfolio.

#### MY PROTOTYPE, IN ONE SENTENCE

#### WHAT IT NEEDS TO TEACH ME (FIT, SKILL, OR BOTH)

#### FIRST SMALL STEP, SCHEDULED FOR

#### PROTOTYPE REFLECTION (AFTER): ENERGIZED BY... · DRAINED BY... · SURPRISED THAT... · DECIDED TO...

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- My gap list exists, sorted S and F.
- My one upskill is chosen, scheduled, and sanity-checked, or consciously skipped.
- My prototype is built and the four-line reflection is written.
- I have at least one artifact, however rough, in the target field's native format.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Sit with your DECIDED line for a day. Does it still hold?
- Look at your artifact the way a stranger would: what does it prove about you?

### NOTES TO MYSELF

# POSITION TO WIN

REPOSITION · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

*Tell a story so clear the move sounds inevitable: on paper, online, and out loud.*

**Your goal:** rebuild your materials and your spoken story in the language of where you're going.

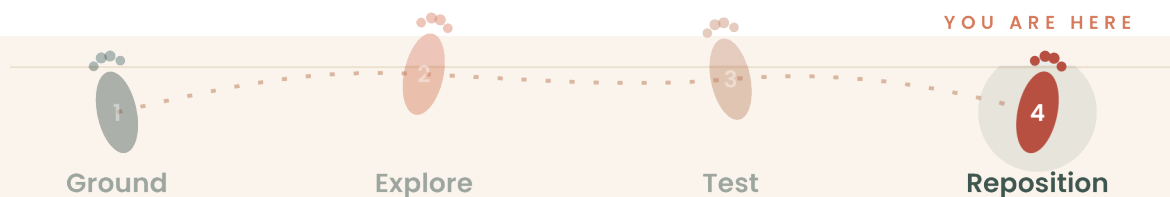
- **The portfolio:** Reach roles get about 20% of your effort. Target roles get 60%, your main lane and your first resume. Safety roles get 20%, your floor.
- **Translate, then polish:** the same work has different names in different rooms; your Target lane sets the language.

## 5.1 THE JOB SEARCH PORTFOLIO

Sort 8 to 10 real roles. Reach: high-stretch, some requirements met (~20% of effort). Target: skills match the description (60%). Safety: highly qualified or overqualified (20%). Then choose ONE (max two) Target lanes; the lane decides which resume gets built first.

ROLE + ORG	BUCKET (R / T / S)	WHY

MY TARGET LANE(S), CHOSEN



## 5.2 TRANSLATE YOUR SKILLS

Pull your starred skills from Module 2. The same work has different names in different rooms; translate before you polish.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

Ran board prep and org-wide planning · Executive operations and strategic planning cadence · Coordinated programs across sites · Cross-functional program management

WHAT I CALLED IT THERE	WHAT THEY CALL IT IN MY TARGET FIELD

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

5.3

## RESUME + LINKEDIN REBUILD

Work the Resume and LinkedIn checklists at the back of this workbook and recruit one sharp-eyed reader: a friend, a peer, or AI as second reader. Priority order: headline, summary or About, then the five bullets that carry the move.

*Use AI as co-editor, never author. let it find gaps and keywords; the voice stays yours. Claim AI with tool, task, outcome: "Built an AI-assisted board-prep workflow that cut memo drafting from 3 hours to 40 minutes" lands; "familiar with AI tools" does not.*

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

Cut onboarding time for new hires by 40% (5 weeks to 3) by building a self-serve onboarding hub and training 12 team leads to run it. · Kept a \$2M operating budget on track across 6 departments by introducing a weekly risk review that leadership actually attended.

### THE FIVE BULLETS THAT CARRY MY MOVE (X-Y-Z: ACCOMPLISHED X, MEASURED BY Y, BY DOING Z)

### RESUME STATUS + LINK · LINKEDIN STATUS (HEADLINE LIVE? ABOUT LIVE?)

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 5.4 THE STORY, OUT LOUD

Draft your 90-second career story, then SAY it: voice memo, mirror, friend. Written-only doesn't count.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

I help leadership teams turn messy priorities into shipped work, pairing calm systems with honest coaching, so executives spend their energy on the decisions only they can make.

### MY 90-SECOND CAREER STORY

### MY PERSONAL BRAND STATEMENT: WHO I HELP, HOW, AND WHAT CHANGES

### TIMES SAID ALOUD SO FAR (TALLY)

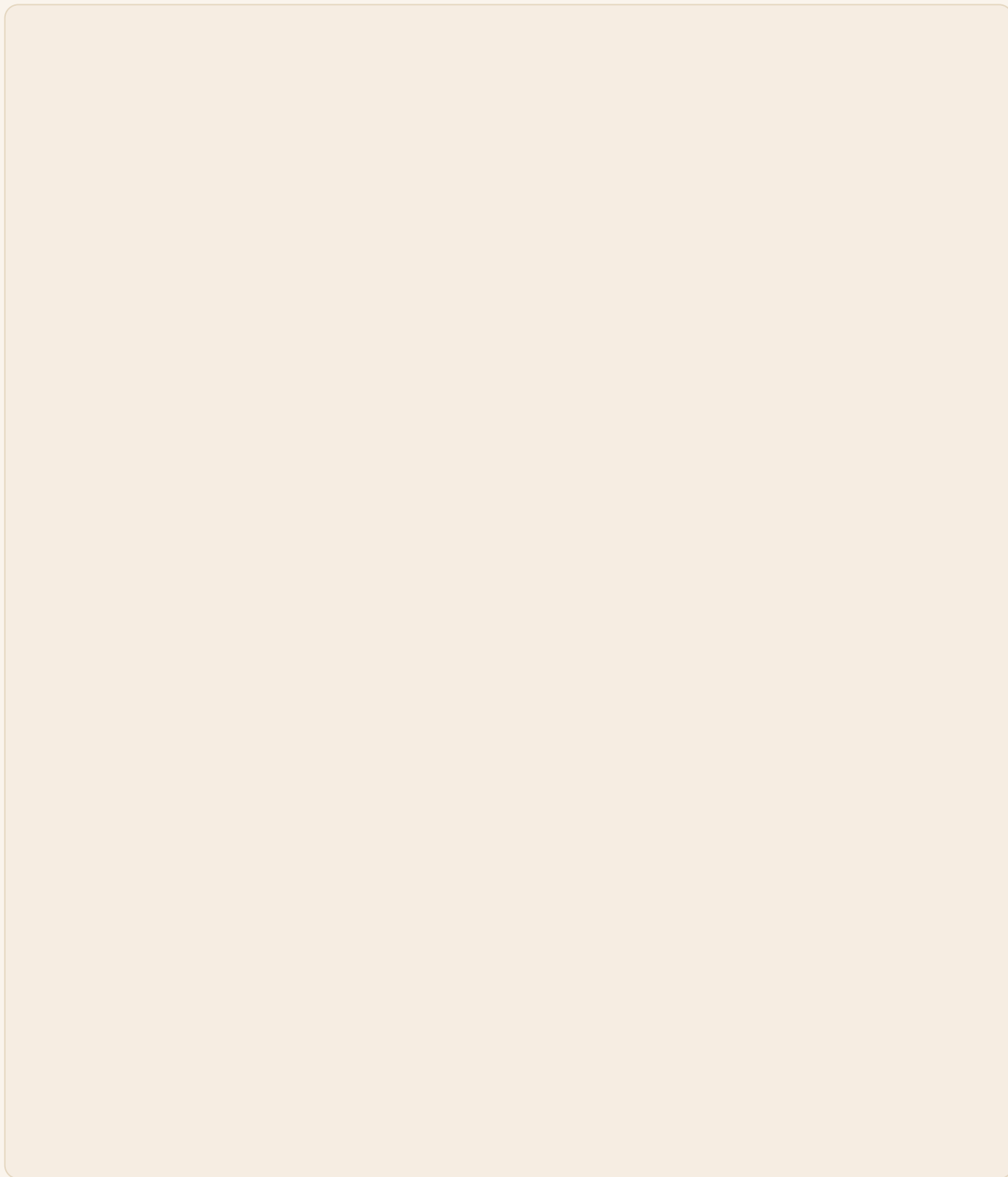
## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- 8 to 10 roles are sorted Reach / Target / Safety, and my Target lane is chosen.
- My starred skills are translated into the target field's language.
- My resume (Target-lane version) is rebuilt and reviewed.
- My LinkedIn headline, About, and top experience section are live, not drafted.
- My 90-second story has been said out loud at least three times, once to a human.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Record your career story and play it back once: where do you rush or apologize?
- The one claim you still don't quite believe: write the evidence for it before moving on.

#### NOTES TO MYSELF



*Doors open through people. Build the search engine that runs on relationships.*

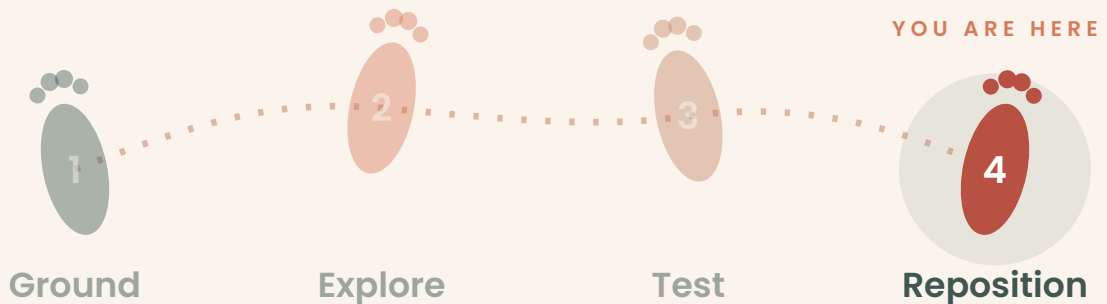
**Your goal:** build a search that runs on relationships: map your people, make a specific ask, and set a rhythm you can sustain.

- **The order matters:** most people apply cold, then panic-network. You'll do the opposite.
- **Sustainable beats heroic:** weekly numbers sized to your real capacity, plus a No List to protect them.

### 6.1 THE CONFIDENCE CIRCLE

*The Cycle is your practice. The Circle is your people.*

Eight roles, two for each stage of the Cycle. See the model here, then name who plays each one on the next page.



6.1

# THE CONFIDENCE CIRCLE

Who plays each role for you? Name a person for each seat, or leave it open as a seat to fill. An empty seat is not a failure; it is the clearest signal of where to spend your energy this month.



● CLARITY

Mirror

Questioner

● BELIEF

Cheerleader

Truth-teller

● ACTION

Connector

Sponsor

● INTEGRATION

Ally

The Inspiration

## READING YOUR CIRCLE

Which seats feel full? Lean on those people.

Which feel empty or thin? That is where to aim.

Which one role do you most need this month?

## 6.2 THE ANNOUNCEMENT

Draft the message that tells your network what you're looking for (specific role types, specific orgs). Send to Inner Circle first; they're the warm-up rep.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

After seven years leading operations at a nonprofit, I'm making a deliberate move into chief of staff and business operations roles, ideally at a growth-stage company (health, climate, and education tech are favorites). If you know a chief of staff or BizOps lead, or a team that's hiring one, I'd love an intro. And if I can return the favor, name it.

### MY ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE

SENT TO INNER CIRCLE ON (DATE) · WIDER VERSION POSTED / SENT ON (DATE)

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 6.3 RHYTHM, TRACKER, NO LIST

MY WEEKLY NUMBERS (TAILORED APPLICATIONS / NETWORKING TOUCHES / ONE VISIBILITY REP)

MY TRACKING SYSTEM (TEAL, SHEET, THIS DOC) + LINK

MY NO LIST: WHAT I'M DELIBERATELY NOT DOING THIS SEASON

WEEK	APPS SENT	TOUCHES	CONVERSATIONS BOOKED	NOTE TO SELF

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- My three-ring map has names, links, and an ask per person.
- My announcement is sent to my Inner Circle; the wider version is drafted.
- Two full weeks of rhythm are logged: 4+ tailored applications, 4+ touches, 2+ conversations booked.
- My No List exists and I've honored it at least once.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Open your tracker: the data is never as bad as the dread. What does it actually say?
- The outreach you're most avoiding: send it now, imperfect. Then notice how it felt.

### NOTES TO MYSELF

# LAND WITH CONFIDENCE

REPOSITION · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: INTEGRATION

*Walk in prepared. Negotiate from your values. Start strong.*

**Your goal:** walk into interviews with stories instead of claims, negotiate from your values, and close the chapter deliberately.

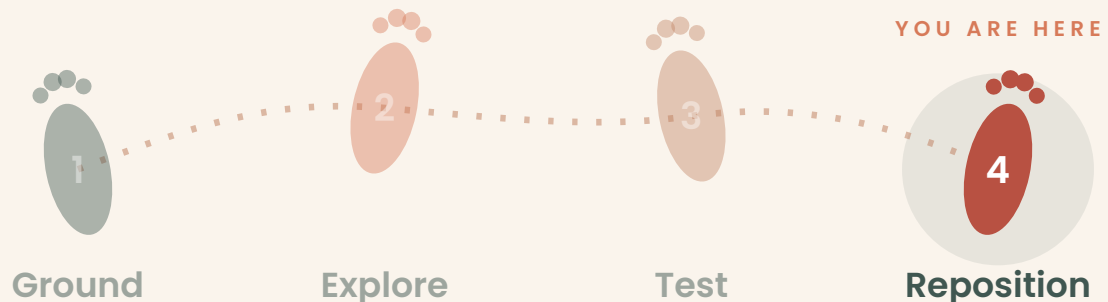
- **The standard:** rehearse your STARR stories until they're boring to you; boring to you reads as confident to them.
- **The second R:** Reflection (what you learned, and how you've applied it) separates a good answer from a senior one.
- **Expect the AI question:** "How do you use AI in your work?" Your Module 4 build makes the answer a story.

## 7.1 THE STORY BANK

Five STARR stories, written tight. The second R (Reflection) is what you learned and how you've applied that insight since. Copy the format for stories 3 to 5.

### EXAMPLE · A COMPOSITE CLIENT, NOT A TEMPLATE TO COPY

Story: the rescue launch (proves operational leadership under pressure). Situation: flagship fundraiser 6 weeks out, 3 workstreams behind. Task: get it back on track without burning out a lean team. Action: rebuilt the plan around 3 must-haves, cut 2 nice-to-haves, set a 15-minute daily standup. Result: launched on time to 800 attendees, beat the revenue goal by 12%. Reflection: the team didn't need more hours, it needed fewer priorities. I now open every project by naming what we won't do.



## 7.1 STORY 1

STORY NAME + THE STRENGTH / JD PATTERN IT PROVES

SITUATION

TASK

ACTION

RESULT

REFLECTION: WHAT I LEARNED + HOW I'VE APPLIED IT SINCE

ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 7.1 STORY 2

STORY NAME + THE STRENGTH / JD PATTERN IT PROVES

SITUATION

TASK

ACTION

RESULT

REFLECTION: WHAT I LEARNED + HOW I'VE APPLIED IT SINCE

ADDITIONAL NOTES

## HARDEST QUESTIONS

MY HARDEST QUESTIONS AND MY SCRIPTED ANSWERS: THE LAYOFF, THE GAP, "WHY THE PIVOT?", AND "HOW DO YOU USE AI IN YOUR WORK?"

### 7.2 THE MOCK

MOCK DONE WITH / ON (A FRIEND, A PEER, OR RECORDED SOLO + DATE)

MY TWO WEAKEST STORIES, REBUILT HOW?

ADDITIONAL NOTES

## 7.3 THE NEGOTIATION SHEET

MY RANGE, WITH SOURCES

MY LEVERAGE LIST (EXPERIENCE, CONNECTIONS, CERTIFICATIONS, COMPETING INTEREST)

MY NON-SALARY ASKS, RANKED (START DATE, PTO, DEVELOPMENT BUDGET, FLEXIBILITY)

MY OPENING SENTENCE, WORD FOR WORD

IF RELEVANT: MY RUNWAY NUMBER + TRANSITION LOGISTICS (UNEMPLOYMENT, INSURANCE), REVIEWED WITH

CLOSING REFLECTION: WHAT I'M WALKING AWAY WITH, AND HOW I'LL RUN THE CONFIDENCE CYCLE ON THE NEXT HARD THING

ADDITIONAL NOTES

## YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MODULE WHEN

- Five STARR stories exist, plus scripted answers to my hardest questions, including the AI question.
- One full mock is done and reviewed; my two weakest stories are rebuilt.
- My negotiation sheet is complete: range, leverage, non-salary asks, opening sentence.
- My closing reflection is written.

### REFLECT BEFORE MOVING ON

- Perform one story out loud as if to a panel: where did it sag? Rebuild that beat.
- Reread your closing reflection: what would you tell the person who started Module 1?

### NOTES TO MYSELF

# QUICK CHECKLISTS

Condensed companions for Module 5 and beyond. Full versions available at [www.rupadevrihan.com](http://www.rupadevrihan.com).

## THE MODERN RESUME CHECKLIST

- Lead with a short professional summary and your top 2 to 3 highlights, not an objective statement.
- Write results, not responsibilities: real numbers, percentages, or scale wherever you can.
- Start bullets with strong, varied verbs; keep them short and scannable.
- Show growth: expanding scope, leadership, and impact over time.
- Mirror the job description's keywords without copying it.
- Include name, email, phone, and LinkedIn; skip the photo and mailing address.
- One clean column, no heavy graphics: simple layouts pass ATS systems.
- Save as PDF with a clear file name (FirstLast\_Resume.pdf).
- Use AI to compare your resume to the job description and flag gaps; final language stays yours.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

## THE LINKEDIN CHECKLIST

*Adapted from the full checklist by Rupa Dev Rihan & Bliss Hansen.*

- A recent, high-quality headshot and a background photo that fits your brand.
- A headline that goes beyond your job title: value, direction, keywords.
- An About section that tells your story and names results, not just traits.
- Experience that mirrors your resume, with first-person context and metrics.
- At least 5 skills for your target roles, a customized URL, and public visibility.
- Featured section: pin your portfolio or your Module 4 artifact.
- Engage weekly: comment on industry content so you stay visible.
- Ask for 2 to 3 recommendations aligned with where you're going.

## THE AI FLUENCY CHECKLIST

- I have 1 or 2 AI tools I use often enough to demo on the spot.
- I use AI as co-editor for tailoring materials; the final language is mine.
- I've built one small thing with AI in my target field's context (Module 4).
- I can claim it in one line: tool, task, outcome, with a number.
- The artifact is visible: LinkedIn Featured section or portfolio.
- I can answer "How do you use AI in your work?" with a story, not a claim.
- I know what I deliberately don't automate, and I can say why.
- I never paste confidential or personal data into public AI tools.

### ADDITIONAL NOTES



# THE ACTIVE SEARCH PLAYBOOK

BONUS COMPANION · RUN THE CONFIDENCE CYCLE WEEKLY

*A weekly system for the active search, for after your materials are ready.*

The seven modules got you positioned: clear on who you are, what you're moving toward, and how to say it on paper, online, and out loud. This playbook covers the active search itself. It's organized around three areas of focus and one tracking habit, run on the weekly rhythm of the Confidence Cycle™.

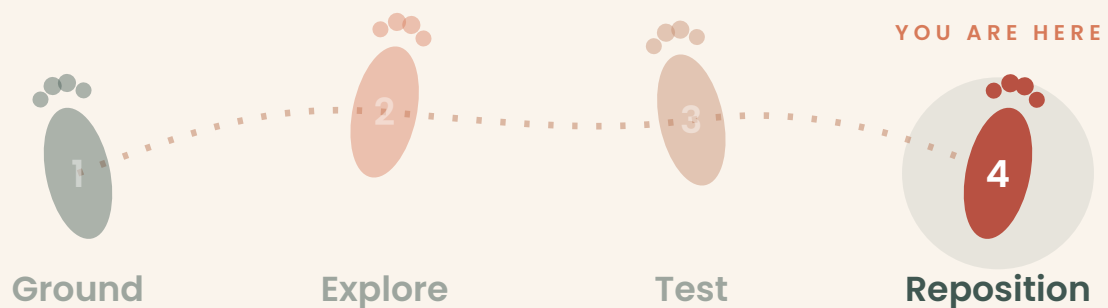
## THE THREE AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Be Findable.** Make it easy for the right roles and people to find you.
- **Start Conversations.** Reach the people who lead to interviews.
- **Apply With Intention.** Screen roles for fit, then apply to the ones that pass.

## BEFORE YOU START

Have these in place first. Each one points to the module that builds it.

- One target role named, with one or two Progression lanes, not three. (Modules 2 and 5)
- A results-driven resume built for that lane, numbers over duties. (Module 5)
- LinkedIn live and mirroring the resume, headline and About included. (Module 5)
- At least one portfolio piece you can point to, your Module 4 artifact counts. (Module 4)
- Five STARR stories drafted, each tied to a strength and a pattern. (Module 7)
- A salary range with sources, plus your total-comp picture. (Module 7)
- A tracker ready, and a weekly rhythm sized to your real capacity. (Module 6)



# WORK FROM YOUR STRENGTHS

## THE ACTIVE SEARCH PLAYBOOK

A job search has a few habits that help everyone. Beyond those, the best search is the one that runs the way **you** naturally work. Forcing yourself into someone else's routine drains the energy you need to keep going. So start from your strengths and build the search around them.

### A FEW THINGS ARE UNIVERSAL

- Track lightly, so you can see what's working. Patterns are hard to spot from memory.
- Follow up. Most replies come from a second or third touch, not the first.
- Talk to people, not just postings. A lot of hiring happens through people first.

### THEN LEAD WITH YOUR STRENGTHS

- **If you lead with relationship building**, make the search social: warm intros, coffee chats, and people you already know. Let conversations, not applications, carry it.
- **If you lead with strategic thinking**, start from the goal and map the routes in: which companies, which decision-makers, which path to each.
- **If you lead with getting things done**, give the search a clear structure: a short list, a weekly rhythm, and steady reps you can check off.
- **If you lead with influence and ideas**, put your point of view out where people see it: posts, a portfolio, and bold, specific outreach.

### WHERE I GET MY ENERGY, AND THE ONE WAY I'LL MAKE THIS SEARCH MORE ME



# BE FINDABLE

FOCUS 1 · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

Hiring is increasingly skills-first. A clear, findable profile and one piece of real work bring opportunities to you, not just the roles you go after. Set this up early, since it keeps working the whole time you're looking.

## THE THREE PIECES

- **LinkedIn.** A headline past your title (value, direction, keywords); an About that names results; five or more target-role skills; your Module 4 artifact pinned in Featured; a weekly comment to stay visible.
- **Portfolio.** One place that shows the work: a simple site, a clean PDF, a repo, or a case study. Your Module 4 pilot is a good first piece. Link it from LinkedIn and your resume.
- **Personal brand.** Your 90-second story from Module 5, said the same way in your headline, your About, and in conversation. Clean up the public trail so what people find matches your story.

## MY VISIBILITY SETUP

- LinkedIn updated to my Target lane: headline, About, and top experience.
- One portfolio piece live and linked from my profile and resume.
- My brand statement reads the same across profile and conversation.

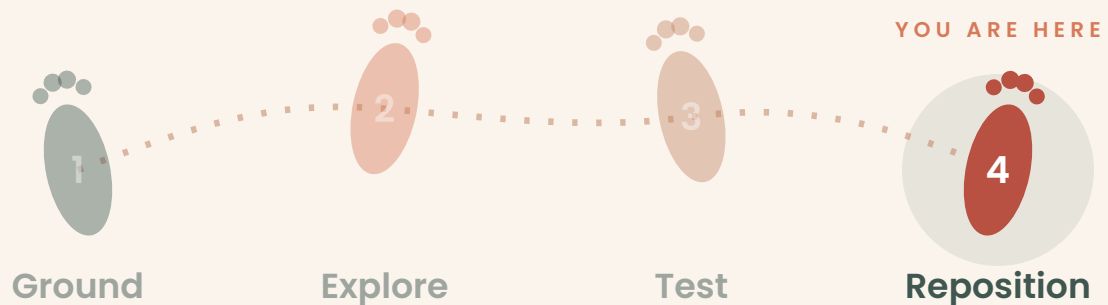
### MY PORTFOLIO LINK

## WHERE TO LOOK

Start broad: [LinkedIn](#) · [Indeed](#) · [Glassdoor](#). Mission-driven: [Idealist](#). Startups: [Wellfound](#).

Research a role and its pay first: [My Next Move](#) · [CareerOneStop](#).

Full, current list by field at [rupadevrihan.com/resources](http://rupadevrihan.com/resources)





# START CONVERSATIONS

FOCUS 2 · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

Conversations are what turn into interviews, and a lot of hiring happens through people before a role is ever posted. So reaching out to people matters as much as applying. Work your three-ring map from Module 6.

## 1 WHO TO REACH

- **Inner circle first.** They know you, they'll be honest, and they're the easiest place to start.
- **People recently moved into the role you want.** More reachable than executives, recently in your position, and their teams are often growing.
- **Alumni and former colleagues.** Shared history makes people more willing to help, and a referral moves you past the queue.

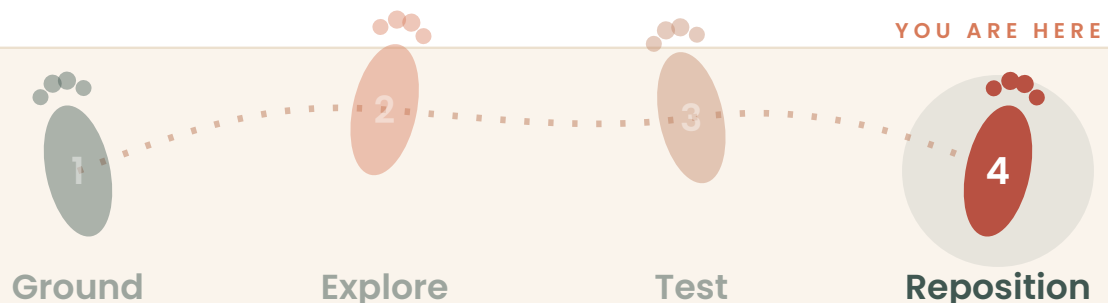
## 2 HOW TO REACH THEM

- Reach out for insight, not favors. The first ask is a conversation, not a job.
- Be specific. Name the role you're exploring and ask one clear question. Skip "I'd love to connect."
- End a good conversation by asking for one or two introductions.
- Send a thank-you that adds a thought, not just "thanks for your time."
- Follow up a few times, spaced out, then let the thread go. Many replies come from a follow-up.

## MY SUSTAINABLE WEEKLY TARGETS

Set numbers you can keep up week after week. A steady pace matters more than a short burst. Revisit these in your monthly review.

VISIBILITY TOUCHES · CONVERSATIONS STARTED · INTENTIONAL APPLICATIONS





# APPLY WITH INTENTION

FOCUS 3 · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: ACTION

Before you spend time on a role, screen it. If it fits, tailor your materials and apply. If it doesn't, move on. There are plenty of postings, so put your effort where it can pay off.

## THE FIVE-CHECK FIT SCREEN

- **Title.** The same title can mean very different jobs. Check ownership level, team size, company stage, complexity.
- **Scope.** Find the core of the role. If you're explaining away every requirement, the fit probably isn't there.
- **Constraints.** Comp, location, remote policy, travel. These decide whether it's worth your limited energy.
- **Evidence.** Can your resume prove the top three things they need? If tailoring would take hours, that's a fit signal, not a resume problem.
- **Company is not the role.** Ask whether the job fits your next move, not just whether you like the name.

## ROLES I'M SCREENING THIS WEEK

ROLE + ORG	PASSES? (Y/N)	NOTE

- **When it passes:** tailor the top third (headline, summary, first bullets) to the posting's language; focus on your Module 5 Progression lane; a few well-targeted applications do more than a pile of one-click applies.





# TRACK WHAT HAPPENS

THE TRACKING HABIT · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: INTEGRATION

Tracking each stage shows you where your search is working and where it stalls. It's tedious, but it often makes the difference, because it tells you what to fix instead of leaving you to guess.

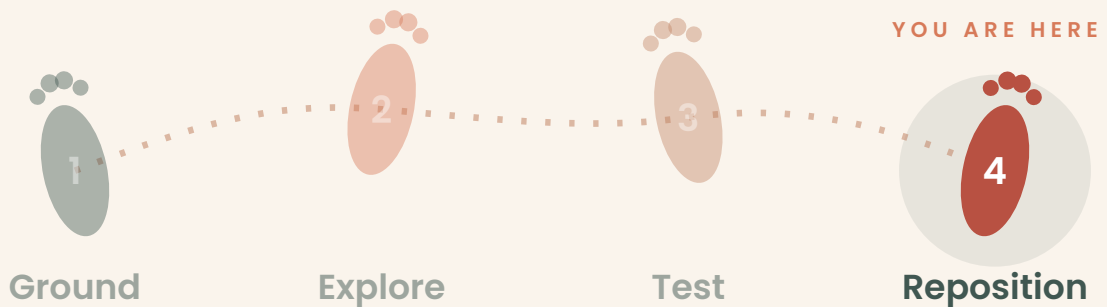
## WHAT A STALL IS TELLING YOU

- **No replies** points to visibility or targeting: the right people aren't seeing you, or you're aiming at the wrong roles.
- **Replies but no screens** points to positioning: your materials aren't making the case yet.
- **Screens but no finals** points to interview practice: the stories need sharpening and rehearsal.

Change one thing at a time, try it across about five applications, and read the result.

## MY CONVERSION TRACKER

WEEK	SENT	REPLIES	SCREENS	INTERVIEWS	FINALS / OFFERS	WHAT I'LL CHANGE





# ONE WEEK, ONE TURN OF THE CYCLE

THE RHYTHM · THE CONFIDENCE CYCLE WEEKLY

You don't need long days. A few focused hours, Monday to Thursday, with a reset on Friday, is enough. A predictable structure lowers the stress of searching and helps you keep going.

## THE WEEK, MAPPED TO THE CYCLE

- **Clarity (Monday).** Set this week's targets across the three areas of focus, and the numbers you can sustain.
- **Belief (before each block).** Settle first: the Confidence Cycle worksheet, your mantra, one piece of evidence against the loudest doubt.
- **Action (Mon to Thu).** Be Findable: one visibility task. Start Conversations: send, follow up, hold calls. Apply: screen, then tailor and submit a few that fit.
- **Integration (Friday).** Review the numbers, change one thing, and note one win. Keep practicing your stories during the week so they feel natural by the time you interview.

## MY FOCUS AND THE ONE THING I'LL CHANGE THIS WEEK



# THE MONTHLY REVIEW

THE RHYTHM · CONFIDENCE CYCLE: INTEGRATION

Every four weeks, step back and look at the full picture. It's a spiral, not a circle: you return to Clarity with a month of real data, not back at the start.

## RUN THE CYCLE ON THE MONTH

**CLARITY** — IS THE TARGET STILL RIGHT? WHAT DO THE NUMBERS SAY ACROSS THE THREE AREAS OF FOCUS?

**BELIEF** — WHICH DOUBT HAS BEEN SHAPING THE MONTH? WRITE THE EVIDENCE AGAINST IT.

**ACTION** — WHAT WILL I DO MORE OF, DROP, OR REBUILD NEXT MONTH?

**INTEGRATION** — THIS MONTH'S LESSON, IN ONE SENTENCE.

## MY NO LIST THIS SEASON

What I'm deliberately not doing while I search. Protecting your energy helps you keep going long enough to land the right role.

*This playbook works on its own. A few things are easier with another perspective: your career story, a mock interview, negotiation. 1:1 coaching, including a professional resume rewrite, is available at [www.rupadevrihan.com](http://www.rupadevrihan.com).*

