



# MISSIONS

NET IMPACT UNDERGRAD VERSION

# A series of missions that help you meet the right people, build the skills and find the opportunities that get you a job that makes money and changes the world.

## **MISSION #1:** MODIFY YOUR INNER CIRCLE

### **HOW THIS LEADS TO JOBS**

Despite the fact that people may keep thousands of online “friends,” the average number of people they regularly communicate with is still around 150. One hundred fifty is a satisfyingly large number, but the number of people in our Inner Circle is often a lot smaller. These are the people who know us best. They are our partners, our best friends, our immediate family, our closest co-workers, our roommates, and our bosses. And we are disproportionately impacted by these people.

We call this foundational community our Inner Circle. It is our default setting, and even though we imagine ourselves to be masters of our own lives, we inevitably become an average of the fifteen people we spend the most time with. If most of your Inner Circle is resigned to working at unsatisfying jobs, you might subconsciously learn that all that exists in the world is work that leaves you unfulfilled. If your Inner Circle sees the world as full of opportunities, resources, and money, you will subconsciously learn that the world yields up to support worthy projects. The people whose company you keep dramatically affect what you imagine and believe as normal.

### **EXERCISE**

1. **MAKE THE LIST:** In your notebook list the 15 people that you spend your most time with. These are your inner circle the people that for better or for worse shape who we are and what we view as normal.
2. **PLUS 5:** Now, below your Inner Circle, write out:  
+  
+  
+  
+  
+  
For each + sign, put the name of someone you'd like to spend more time with, someone you'd like to one day be able to have in your Inner Circle.

3. **TRANSFORM:** This exercise is not about cold-heartedly banishing all of your friends, but rather about beginning to notice how you can alter and strengthen your inner circle while actively seeking out new potential members. In order to begin doing this, start by choosing five people within your inner circle with whom you could strengthen or transform the relationship.

For each person already within your Inner Circle write a sentence about what you'd like to change in the relationship, and then a single action you will take to help make that change--it starts with you. For the five people you'd like to spend more time with, write out why you'd like to spend more time with them, followed by a single action you will take to connect with them and build a stronger relationship.

### **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. How did you feel seeing the list of the people you spend the most time with?
2. What are you subconsciously learning about how the world works from these people? What is the 'hidden curriculum' of your friendships or network?
3. Do the people that you spend time with push you forward or hold you back? What moments do you feel in control of changing this and when do you feel like it is unchangeable? Why?

## **MISSION #2: DO A SELF INVENTORY**

### **HOW THIS LEADS TO JOBS**

We have already learned so much about what we like, what we believe in and the way we want to feel in the places we work. Of course this can change (and will), but in order to understand the power that you already have, you need to do a detailed self inventory. It is a basic but integral practice to leverage all that you have for all that you want.

### **EXERCISE:**

Here are three sets of questions to sit with, to reflect on and to launch you into the process of discovering the skills and traits that you might not have realized you already have:

1. What are some of the things you're good at and love doing? These can be specific (writing grant applications) or general (math).
2. What were your biggest challenges or some critical decisions you've made in the last five years? What character traits did you employ during these important moments? What were you able to do with the knowledge gained from these experiences?
3. What environments bring out your best self? Do you prefer office work, being outside or working from home? Do you prefer working by yourself or in groups? Do you want to be working in the city that you're currently living in or are you feeling drawn to another location?

### **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. If you were to consider for a moment that you are in the middle of your career, what skills and experiences have you developed to date?
2. Which skills have come to you easily and which ones took more time and effort? Why do you think that is?
3. What traits do you think you have that are currently undervalued, underused or hidden? What would a career look like if you doubled down on these? How would your career search change?

## MISSION #3: MIX AND MATCH

### HOW THIS LEADS TO JOBS

Our lives are made up of innumerable factors: the communities we live in, our interests and desires, our perspectives and those of our inner circle. It's essential that we organize and firmly establish all of these different aspects of our life. By mixing all of these elements together we can find unexpected opportunities to combine what we already have or want. This practice can lead to new ways of thinking, ways of mobilizing our resources and even new places to look for job opportunities.

### THE EXERCISE

Simply by virtue of who we are, each of us might be sitting on the answer to an unsolved challenge. With our unique stable of interests, life experiences, and geographies, we find ourselves at the intersection of lots of different subjects, putting us in position to cross-pollinate and create an original solution. The following exercise aims to uncover opportunities that might result from cross-discipline interests.

1. List three professional fields that excite you enough that you could give a speech about them for 10 minutes (usually a noun, e.g., wilderness education, organic farming, economics).
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
2. List three work-related activities that you love doing (usually starts with a verb, e.g., working with my hands, having one-on-one meetings, presenting to groups).
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
3. List three cities where you have lived or want to live (usually a place, e.g., Scottsdale, Arizona; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Costa Rica).
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
4. Now mix and match the nouns, verbs, and places, creating three to five combinations of these items.

What are the opportunities that could tie these seemingly random concepts together? Is there a business opportunity? A potential for an exploratory trip? Would you move to a new city? Learn something new? Reconnect with a friend you've lost touch with? Mix and match and then draw a conclusion from these lists--what next step is right for you?

### EXAMPLE:

BASED ON THE EXAMPLES GIVEN ABOVE, SOME OF THE PERMUTATIONS COULD LOOK LIKE THIS:

I could live in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and find a job working with local organic farmers to figure out the economics of taking their work to market all while having the ability to help out, get my hands dirty, and work during harvest season.

I could be a recruiter for a wilderness education company in Scottsdale, Arizona. My responsibilities could be meeting people one on one, building partnerships with other organizations, and presenting about the power of wilderness experiences at conferences.

I could get a permaculture design certification and meet other people interested in sustainable food systems at the Punta Mona Center for Sustainable Living and Education in El Caribe Sur, Costa Rica.

**GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What kinds of opportunities became visible that you would not have suspected?
2. Did you find it hard to let go of your assumptions about what was possible and what wasn't? Where did these assumptions come from?
3. Based on one new intersection or mix + match where would you look to find a job in that space or at that intersection? How is this different than where you were looking before?

**MISSION #4: CREATE A TEAMMATE LISTSERV****HOW THIS LEADS TO A JOB**

One of the most effective ways to source ideas and find job posting opportunities is through personalized Listservs--initiated by a small group of respected friends that are 'on the same page' as you. It can begin small but if you structure it right is can grow to become the #1 place you can find both jobs and introductions to the right person hiring.

**THE EXERCISE**

Choose five friends who represent the world you want to be a part of and tell them to each pick three friends to add to a Google group where you will all share events, job listings, proposal opportunities, interesting articles, pieces of advice, and all-around support. Once you have established the culture tell people to invite others to the list--but try and keep it under 30 people at first to insure you all share the same vision. Within a few months you will have a network of people that are scouting for jobs and opportunities.

**HERE ARE SOME OTHER QUICK TIPS ON HOW TO RUN A GOOD TEAMMATE GROUP:**

- \* Keep it informal—the group is for discussion and opportunities. These are more friends than work colleagues, so act accordingly.
- \* Be open to having friends introduce new list members— in fact, encourage it by setting a culture of sending introduction e-mails when a new person joins.
- \* Emphasize the community, not the e-mail list, when bringing on new members.
- \* Whenever possible, try to get together in person and meet others on the Listserv when you are in their town.

**GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. How is a teammate listserv different than other groups you are a part of? What do you like or dislike about the other groups that you are a part of?
2. What kind of culture would you want to create and maintain in this group? What kind of conversations would you be interested in hearing? How would you model this in the first few months?
3. Where do you currently hear about jobs and opportunities that don't come from mainstream sites? What kinds of things could you do with a small group of friends in order to enable you to find more job opportunities?

## MISSION #5: DEVELOP A PURPOSE STATEMENT

### HOW THIS LEADS TO A JOB

When there isn't a simple, linear and well-publicized path, we have to rely on something else to get us the confidence to know we are doing the right thing, pursuing the right opportunity, and have what it takes to get the job done. Developing a Purpose Statement will actually answer this for you. A Purpose Statement will help you find the strength to make big strides, and strong moves when you are overwhelmed with uncertainty.

### THE EXERCISE

Think about a time when you felt in control, when you felt your most powerful, the fullest version of yourself. Maybe it was crossing the finish line on a project that you put your best work into, or a moment of courage for taking a risk and speaking in public. Who was around you? How did your body feel? Close your eyes and think about that moment. Could you feel a surge of energy? Did you smile? There's no way to build a career of meaning without putting in work. Many of us fail to go after the biggest opportunities because we live lives blocked by fears and anxieties. A Purpose Statement is a simple phrase that expresses your purpose and your source of power. It helps you capture that feeling of confidence and tricks your brain into producing the chemicals you need to overcome difficult situations.

#### STEP 1: CHOOSE THE WORDS

Find a quiet and comfortable place to write a statement that expresses who you are and connects you to your inner sense of power. It should always be stated in the positive—what you want, not what you don't want. It can be a couple of sentences or even a single word. It's okay if it doesn't feel right immediately—keep working to find the words and phrases that fit.

#### STEP 2: COMMIT TO MAKING IT PART OF YOUR ROUTINE

Once you have a Purpose Statement that feels right, it's time to put it to use. Place a Post-it note on your desk, or set up alerts on your calendar, whatever works to remind you. For the first few weeks, try to use it at least 10 to 15 times a day—before getting out of bed in the morning, before working out, or before making an important phone call—speak your Purpose Statement three times, silently or out loud. Each time you say your phrase, take a deep breath and anchor yourself in that feeling of excitement, in that smile, and in that sense of inner power.

### EXAMPLE:

Billy's Purpose Statement - "I am part of the beloved community. Building a more just and sustainable world--for my family, my community, and all of creation. I am ready to follow. I am ready to lead. Nothing to it but to do it."

### GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What methods do you currently use to ground yourself so you feel ready to act when you feel overwhelmed?
2. What was that moment for you that helped you find that place of inner power that you based your purpose statement on?
3. What would you have to change in your own life to move a purpose statement from a statement to a practice?