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If You're Looking for a Great Ride  
– Get in the Driver's Seat

While everyone wants a great career, most individuals are surprisingly willing to accept a good career.



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The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of a map. Several red pushpins are stuck into the map, with their sharp points visible. The map shows various lines, likely representing roads or geographical features, in shades of blue and red. The overall tone is professional and thematic for a 'roadmap' or 'strategy' presentation.

# Presentation Roadmap

1. **What is your personal career strategy?**
2. Eight principles of personal development
3. Questions and answers

“All professionals should be expected to have a personal career strategy for making themselves continually more valuable in the marketplace.”

David H. Maister

*True Professionalism*, p. 107



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# Team Exercise

What is the difference between a good career and a great career?





# Question

Does your career have to be enjoyable to be a great career?

“As the decades have passed, I have come to realize the profound wisdom of my mentor’s remarks. The message is simple: Success comes from doing what you enjoy. If you don’t enjoy it, how can it be called success?”

David H. Maister



# David Maister Survey Results

How much professionals like what they do and who they serve:

20% to 25%      I love this! This is why I do what I do!

60% to 70%      I can tolerate it.

5% to 20%      I hate this part.

30% to 35%      I like these people.

50% to 60%      I can tolerate these people.

5% to 20%      These are not my kind of people.

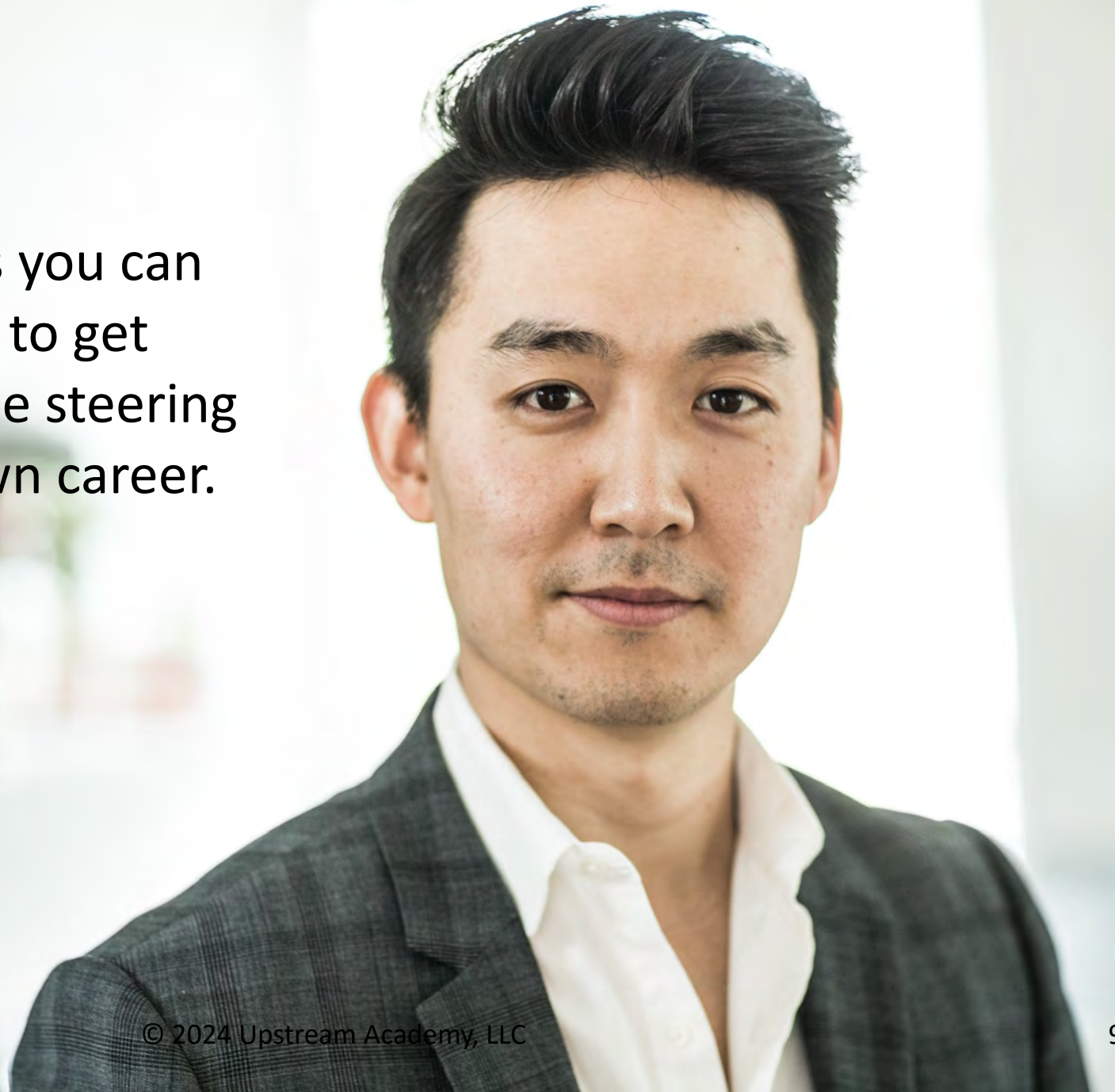
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Here are 8 things you can do (almost daily) to get your hands on the steering wheel of your own career.



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# 1. Learn to Do Difficult Things



What does this quote mean to you?

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it comes dressed in overalls and looks like work.”

Thomas A. Edison



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If you can convince yourself that you can do difficult things, you have already won half the battle.

While many things each day are out of your control, you do control your own effort, attitude and desire.



## 2. Play to Your Strengths

It's a false assumption to believe that everyone can learn to be really good at everything.

Take the time to discover your strengths and be sure to play to your strengths throughout your career. This principle is easy to buy into, but difficult to implement.







“A talent or strength is any recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied.”

Donald O. Clifton



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The definition of a strength is  
consistent near-perfect  
performance in an activity.



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The predefined pattern of firm operations often makes it very difficult for an individual to play to his or her strengths.



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The most impactful goals will be those that stretch you in areas of personal strengths. These stretch goals will often feel exciting versus oppressive, challenging versus demoralizing.



# Group Discussion

How does learning to do hard things ultimately maximize your ability to play to your strengths?

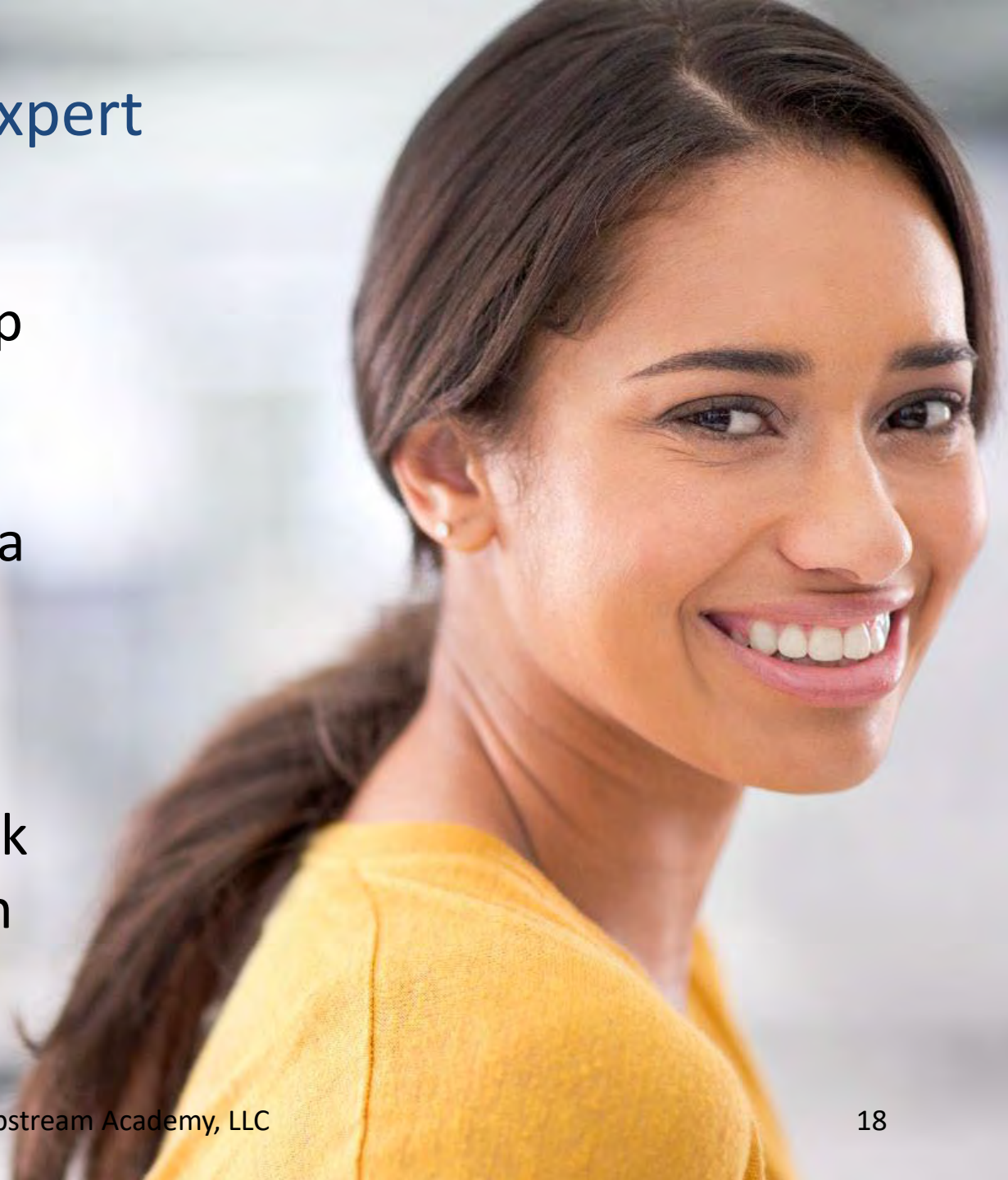




### 3. Strive to Become an Expert

Too often, individuals end up in their careers becoming generalists. On a scale of 1-10, they become a 5 or 6 in a lot of different things.

You will have the most successful career, if you work to become an expert (8-9) in one or more areas.





# Questions to Consider

- In what knowledge or practice could I become the best in the firm, market area or country?
- Is this an area that plays to my strengths?
- Who are the known experts in this area?
- Is this something I can take to volume?

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# Questions to Consider

- How steep is the learning curve and what are the mile markers along the way?
- Are there special processes, procedures, or benchmarking data that could be developed?
- What articles would I write or presentations would I give, if I were an expert in this field?

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## 4. Leave Your Comfort Zone

You seldom experience any growth when you stay in the middle of your comfort zone.

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to ask too little of yourself. It's important to learn that all personal growth comes when you get outside of your comfort zone.



A man with dark hair, wearing a dark pinstripe suit, a light blue shirt, and a dark tie, is shown in profile, looking thoughtfully out of frame. His hand is resting on his chin. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting.

One of the biggest barriers to your career will be spending too much time doing things you already know how to do.



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# Group Discussion

What are some examples of staying in a comfort zone?





## 5. Value Constructive Feedback



One of the most helpful things you will receive throughout your career is open and honest feedback.

Work diligently to nurture sources of constructive feedback.



It's very difficult for people to progress rapidly, consistently, and meaningfully if they don't receive constructive feedback regarding their performance.

Constructive feedback helps an individual to know which behaviors to continue and which behaviors to change.



“If you really want to be more effective at anything...you have to find a way to get constructive feedback. The absence of complaints is not a dependable indicator of the absence of opportunities to improve.”

David H. Maister




# Group Discussion

Discuss successes you've experienced in getting your team to accept and use constructive feedback to improve.





## 6. Become a Trusted Advisor



Many within our profession call themselves trusted advisors. In reality, too many are record-keeping historians and not forward-thinking trusted advisors.



# Decide Which Role You'll Play

## Historian

- Is mostly reactive
- Spends majority of time with clients looking at past 12 months
- Acts as sounding board only when asked
- Performs the same services year after year with little variation
- Is not willing to be vulnerable
- Runs the meter with almost every client interaction

## Trusted Advisor

- Is mostly proactive
- Spends majority of time with clients looking forward, not backward
- Regularly offers fresh ideas
- Consistently recommends innovative solutions
- Functions in a brainstorming role
- Regularly invests time to understand clients' unique needs

## 7. Learn to Act for Yourself

Avoid the tendency to complain about circumstances or situations. Don't jump on others' bandwagons. Learn to act for yourself.



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Become accountable.  
Self-accountability is  
doing what you say you  
will do, to the very best  
of your ability, on time,  
and without any  
reminders.



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## 8. Spend Time in Quadrant II

Quadrant II includes activities that are important, but not urgent. Stephen R. Covey calls this the “Quadrant of Quality.”

Quadrant II is where you do long-range planning, anticipate and prevent problems, empower others, broaden your mind and abilities, and invest in your future.





# Covey's Quadrants

		URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	I	CRISES PRESSING PROBLEMS DEADLINE - DRIVEN PROJECTS MEETINGS	II PREPARATION PREVENTION VALUES CLARIFICATION PLANNING RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
	III	INTERRUPTIONS SOME PHONE CALLS SOME MAIL SOME REPORTS SOME MEETINGS PRESSING MATTERS MANY POPULAR ACTIVITIES	IV TRIVIA BUSYWORK SOME PHONE CALLS TIME WASTERS IRRELEVANT MAIL PLEASANT ACTIVITIES WEB SURFING

# Where Do You Need the Most Work?

1. Learn to Do Difficult Things
2. Play to Your Strengths
3. Strive to Become an Expert
4. Leave Your Comfort Zone
5. Value Constructive Feedback
6. Become a Trusted Advisor
7. Learn to Act for Yourself
8. Spend Time in Quadrant II



# Group Discussion

Which of the eight principles is the most challenging to embrace? What steps can you take to improve in that area?





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Thank you!

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