



In the Driver's Seat of Your Career as a PhD

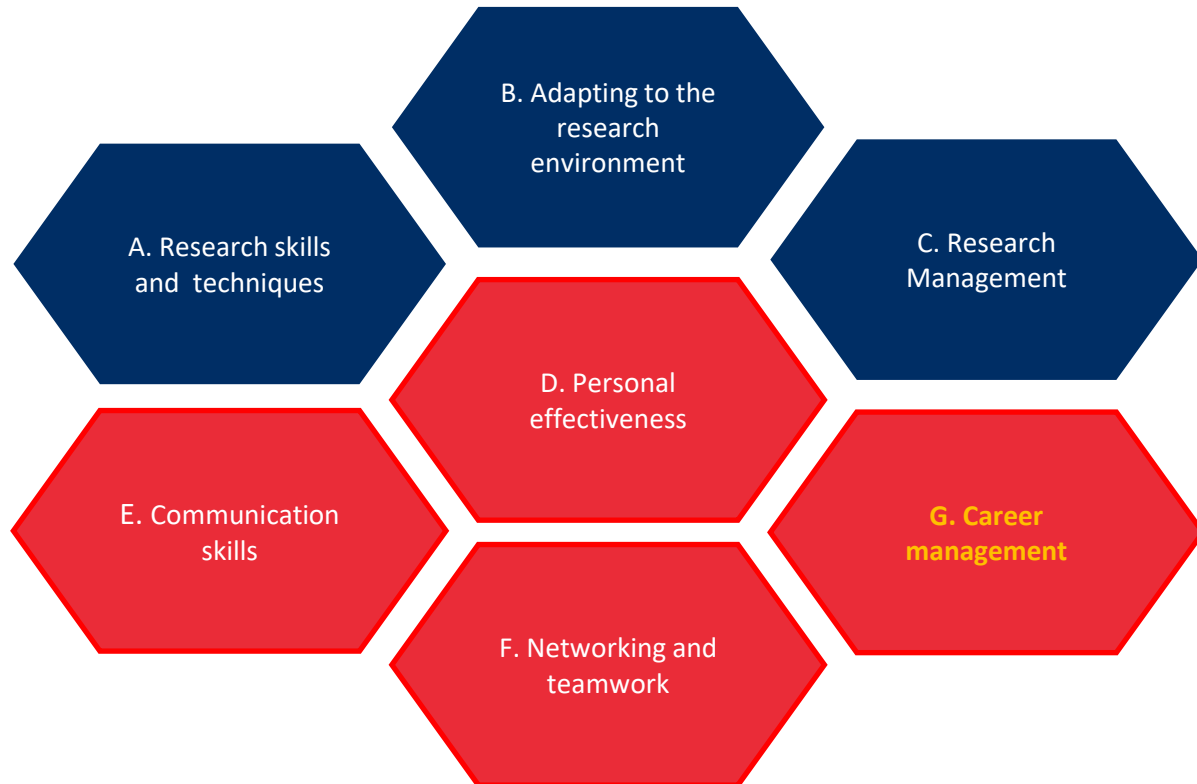
Steven De Winter
Talent Center (HR Department)

What does “being in the driver’s seat of your career” mean to you?



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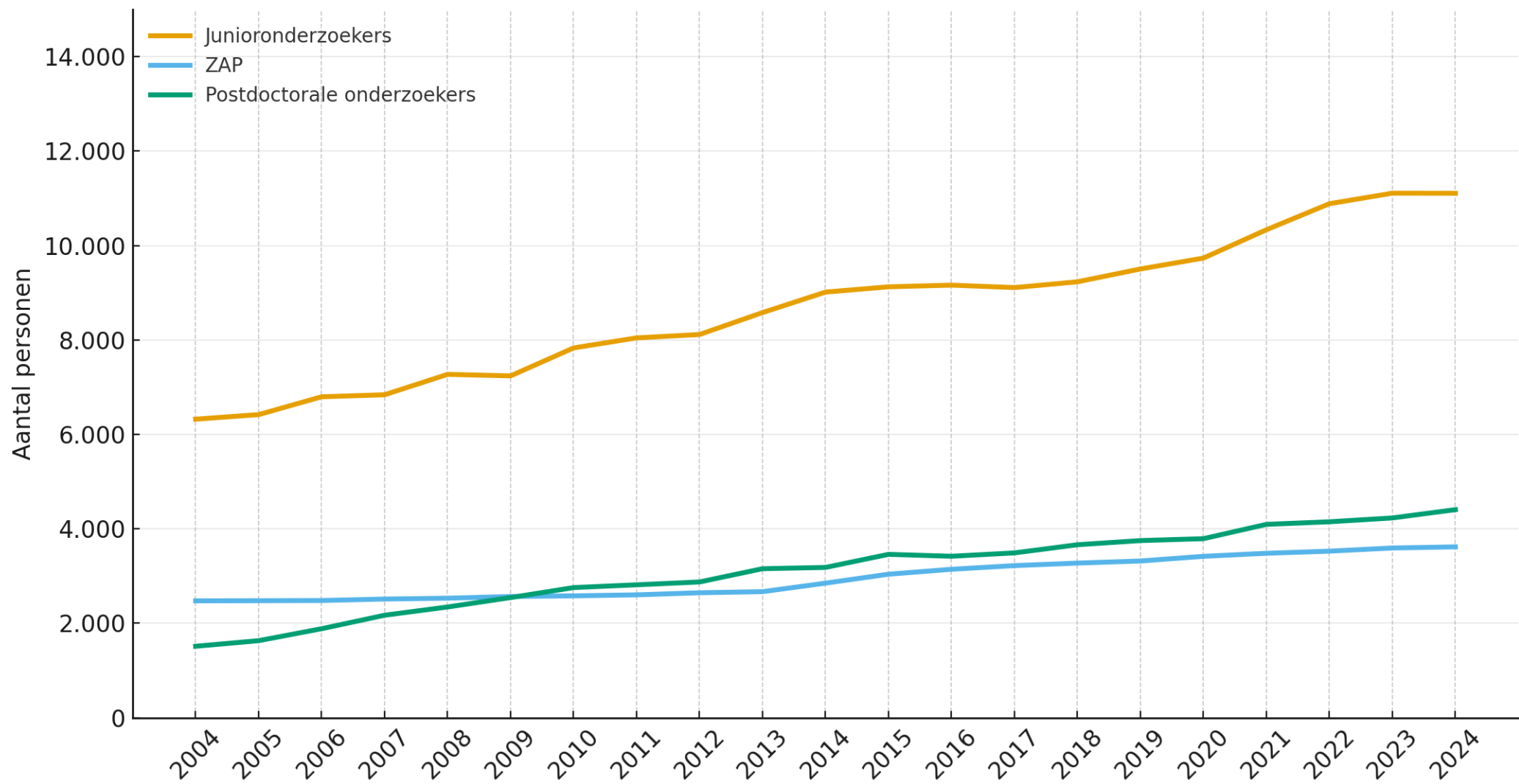
Your development, your career management



1. Appreciate the need for and show **commitment** to lifelong **learning** and continued professional **development**.
2. Take **ownership** for and **manage** one's **career progression**, set realistic and achievable career goals, and identify and develop ways to **improve employability**.

Why is this
relevant for
me?





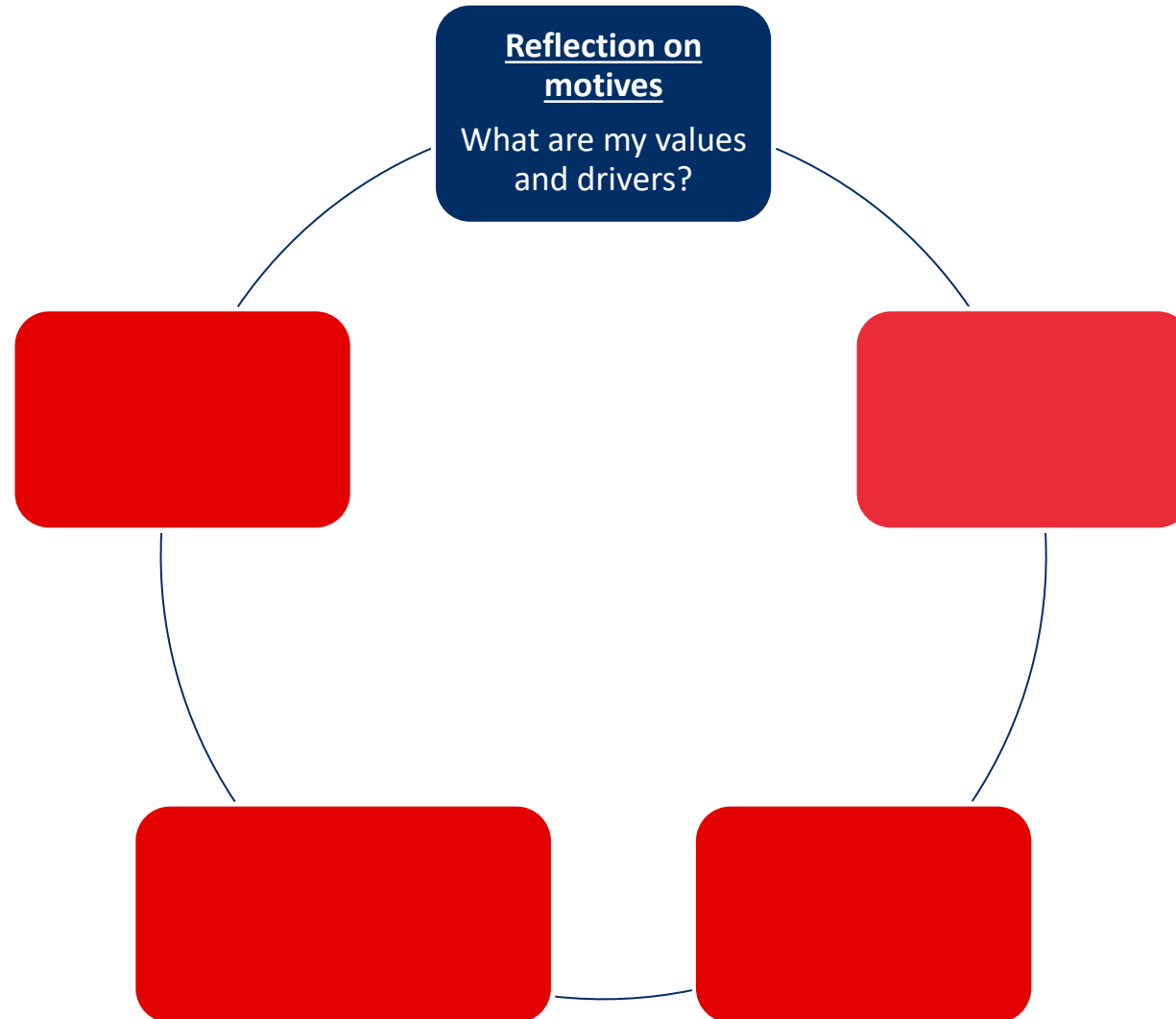


88%

**The majority of
doctoral holders
leave the academic nest.**

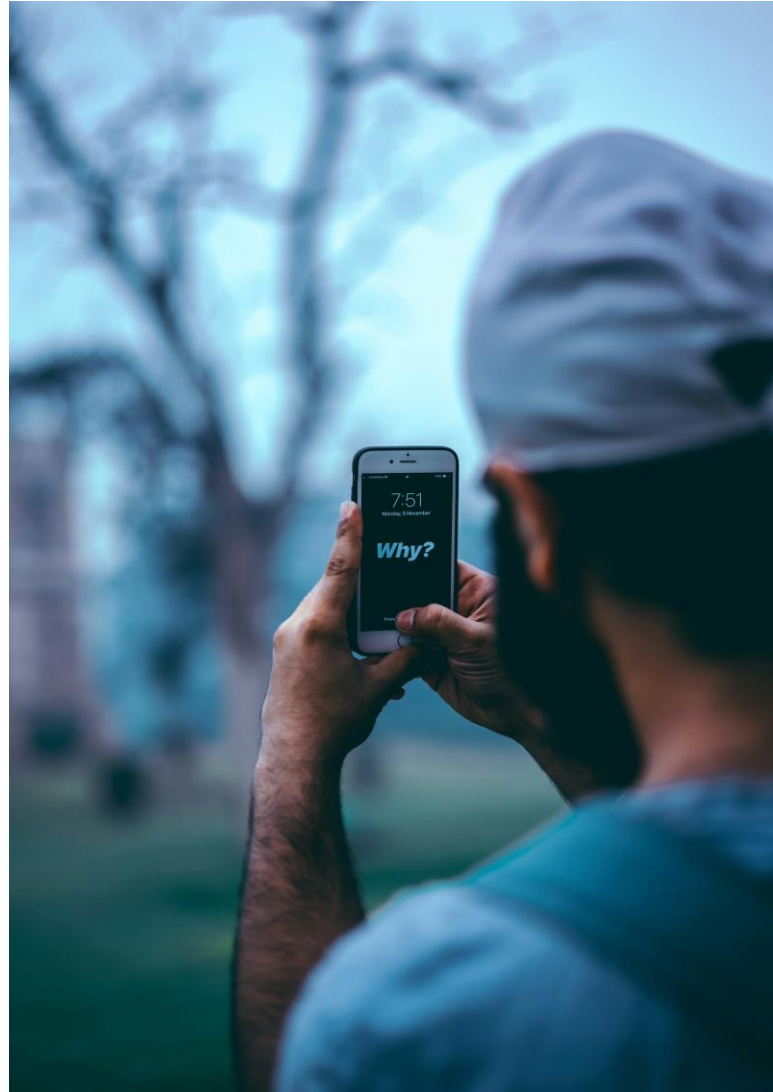
**What does working as a PhD
researcher mean to you?**

Why is it important to focus on career management?



Career development competencies (M. Kuijpers)

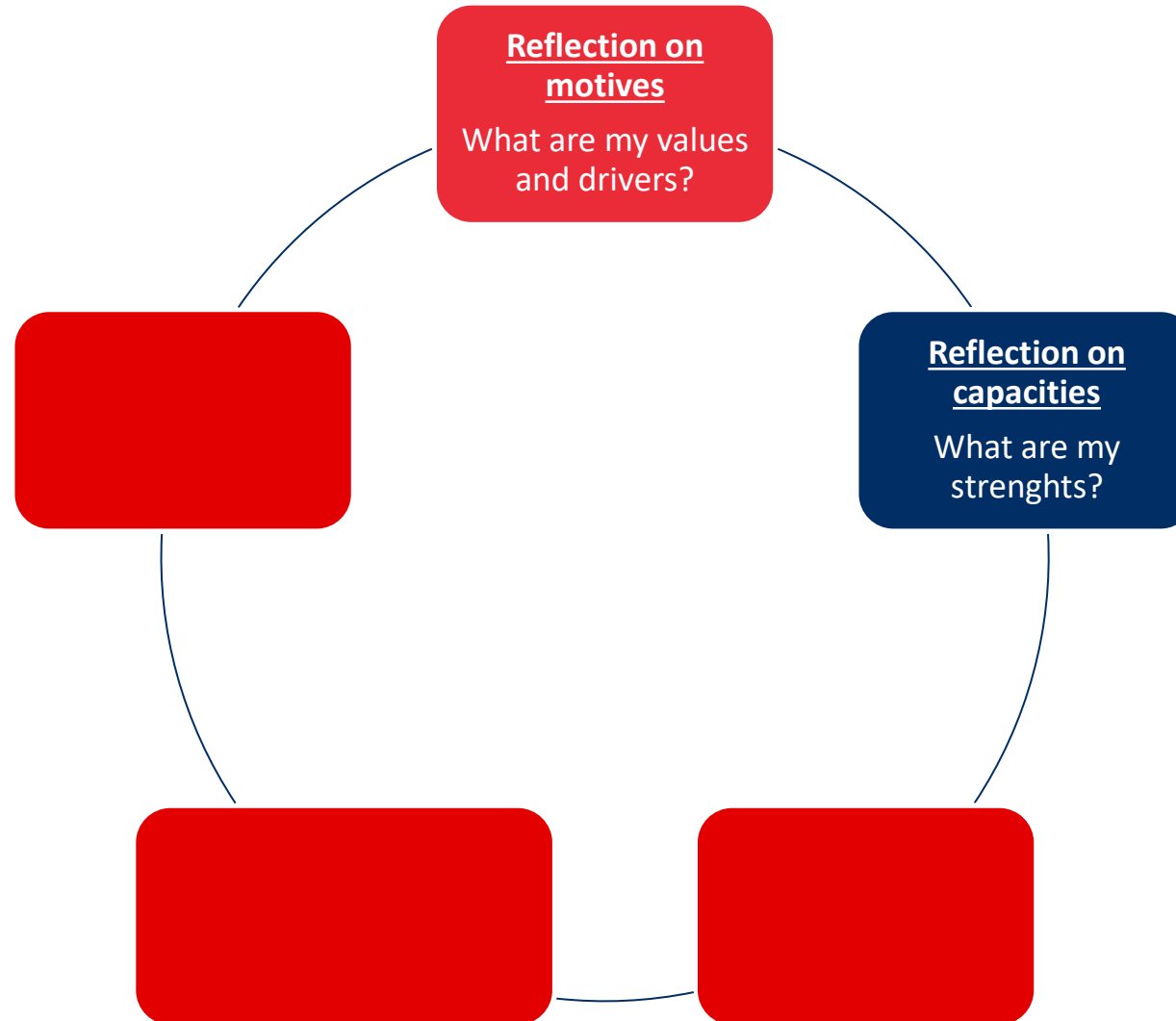
**Start with
the WHY**



‘Start with the WHY’

Take your answer about what doing a PhD means to you as a starting point and ask yourself ‘Why is this important to me?’ (3 x).

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What skills are you obtaining by doing your PhD?

(that you also **enjoy** putting into use)



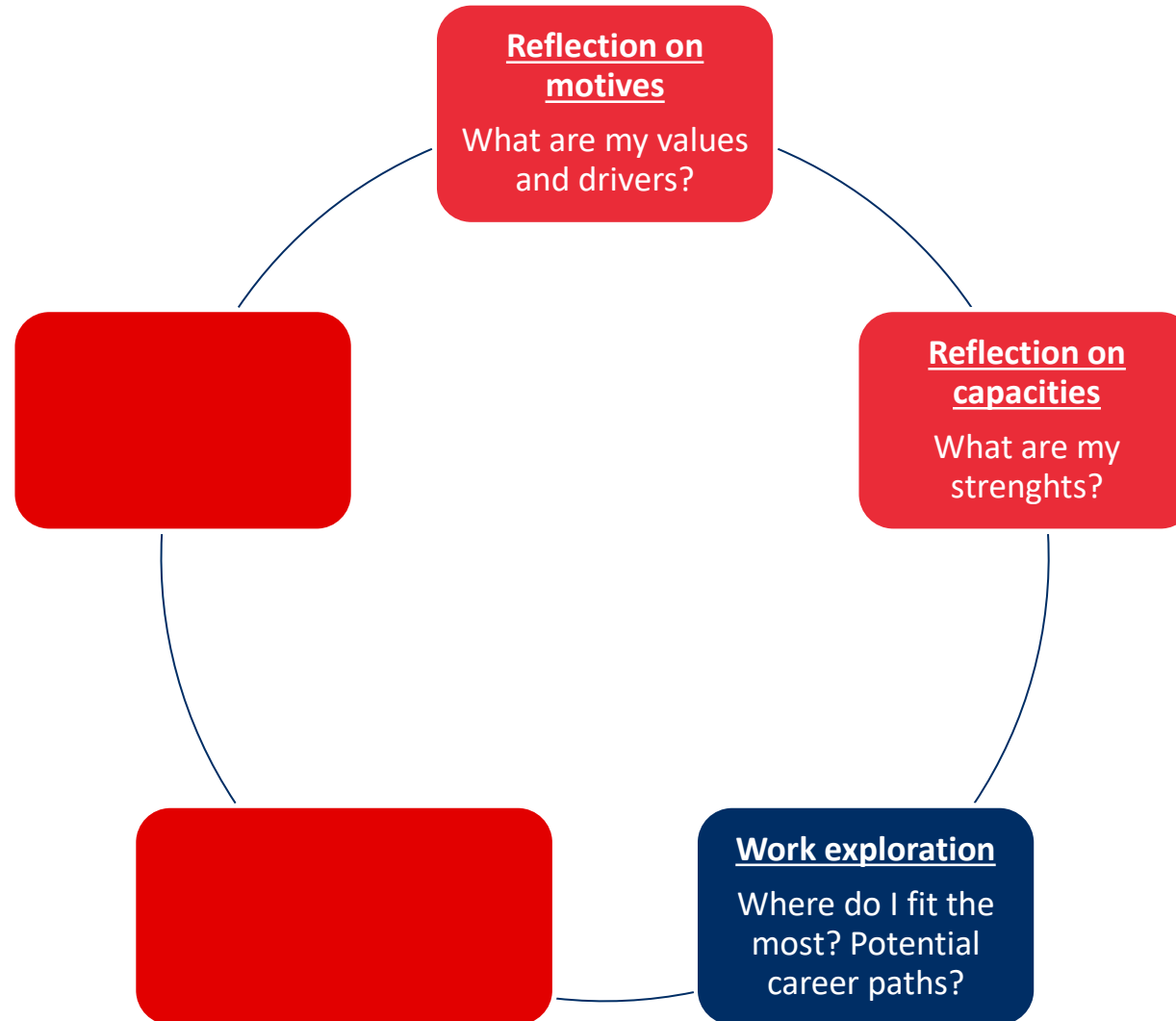
What skills are you obtaining by doing your PhD (that you also enjoy putting into use)?



Thinking

- What drives me in life?
- What are my ambitions & (career) values?
- What are my strengths?
- What are my learning opportunities?
- What drains my energy?
- What makes me lose track of time?
- What do I enjoy in my work environment?
- If I could solve one problem in the world, it would be..
- ...

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Think of three people that you might want to reach out to, people who are doing something that inspires you or who are working at a company that you like: what questions would you like to ask them?

(Contact one of them right after the session 😊)

What are the best parts of your day?

Reflect on one moment this (or past) week where you felt most energized. What were you doing? Who was with you?

Make it specific





So a lot of options

But how do I find my perfect match?



So a lot of options

~~But how do I find my perfect match?~~

“... reject the myth that there is a single, perfect job out there waiting for us to discover it and instead, **identify our multiple selves** – a range of potential careers that might suit the different sides of our character.”

From ‘How to find fulfilling work’ – Roman Krznaric, School of Life



So a lot of options

~~But how do I find my perfect match?~~

→ How do I identify a (range of) **potential career(s) that might suit** (the different sides of) **my character**



Thinking



Doing



We spend most of our waking lives at work in occupations most often chosen by our inexperienced younger selves. And yet we rarely ask ourselves how we got there or what our jobs mean to us.

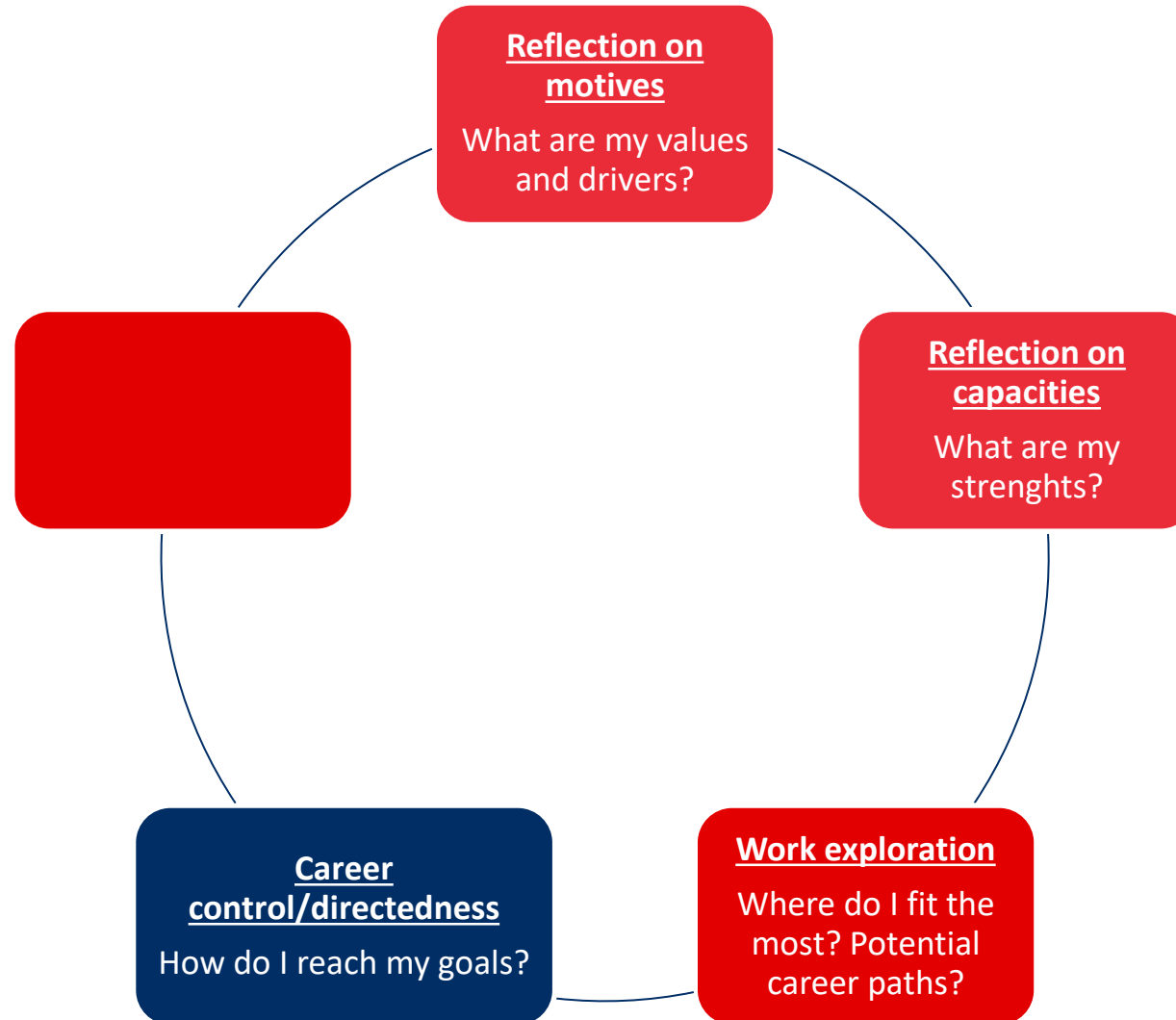
Alain De Botton, *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work*

A scenic landscape featuring a winding asphalt road that curves through a hilly area. On the left, a grassy hillside rises, with a few silhouetted figures standing on its peak. A person in a blue shirt and dark shorts is running along the road, moving away from the viewer. The road is bordered by a white metal guardrail on the right. In the distance, a town is visible, bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting long shadows and creating a hazy atmosphere. Several birds are seen flying in the sky. The overall scene is peaceful and inspiring, suggesting a journey or a path forward.

The secret to getting
ahead is getting started.

Mark Twain

Why is it important to focus on career management?



Career development competencies (M. Kuijpers)



By far the biggest mistake people make when trying to change careers is to delay taking the first step until they have settled on the destination...

Herminia Ibarra, Working Identity



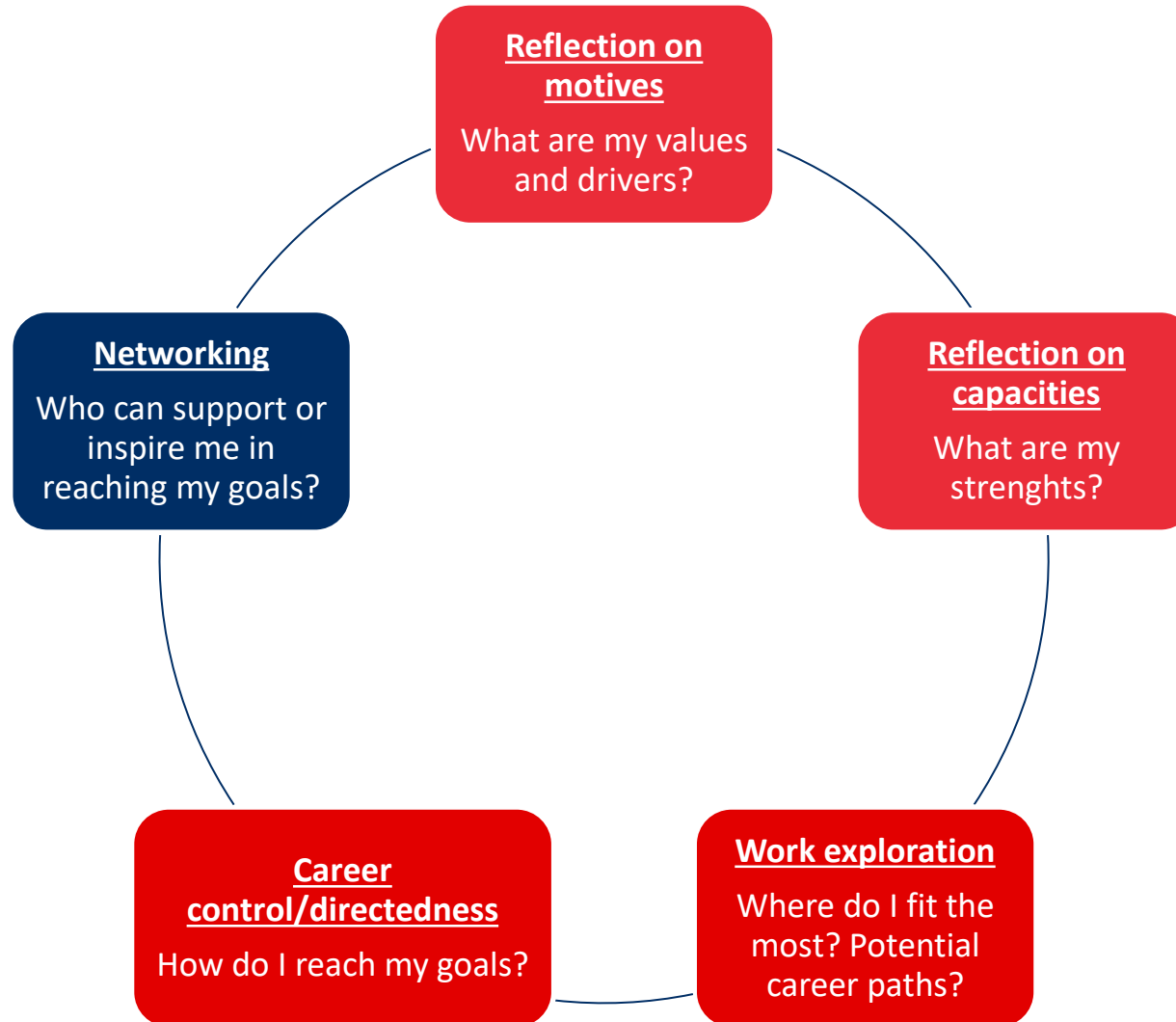
Doing

- Radical sabbaticals
- Branching projects, volunteer work
- Conversational research

But also

- Open up to additional learning opportunities (teaching, board membership etc.)
- Attending workshops
- Investing in your interests/ hobbies
- Getting out there

Why is it important to focus on career management?



Career development competencies (M. Kuijpers)

What jobs do the PhD holders you know do outside of academia?



What jobs do the PhD holders you know do outside of academia?

A myriad of options!

Self-employment

Consultancy

Policy making/ advising

(higher) education

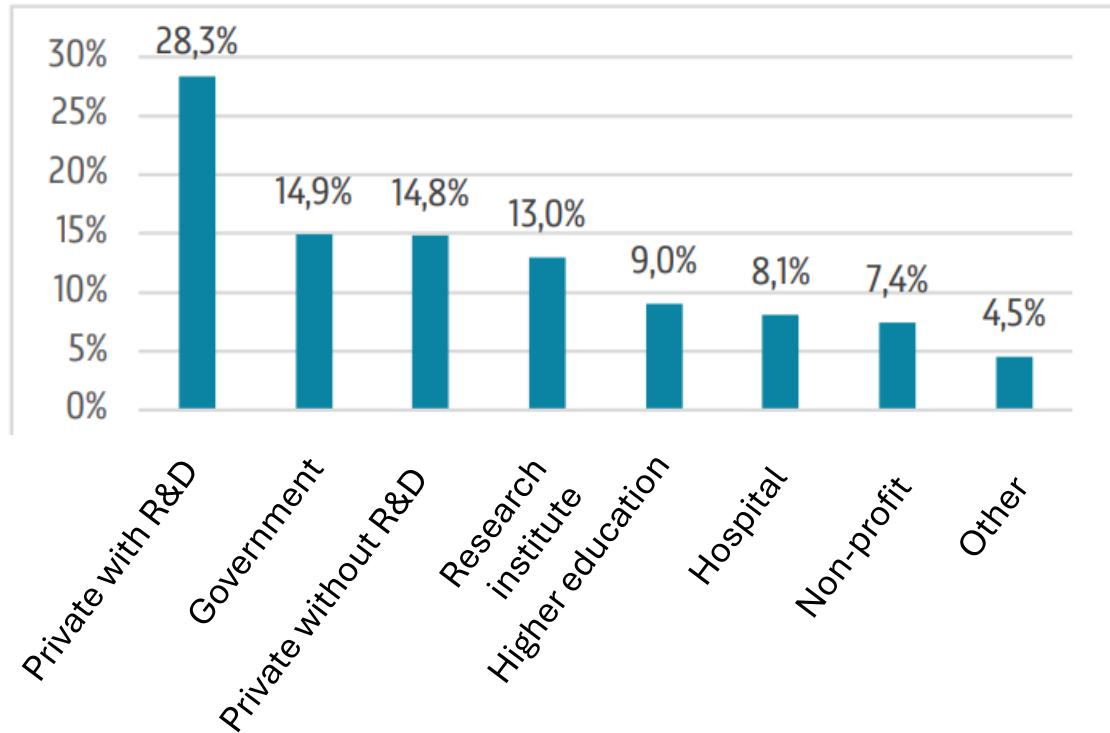


Non-profit

R&D

Government

Figure 1: Share of PhD holders per non-academic sector in their first job after obtaining a PhD, 2017 (N = 1535)



- academic track
- non- profit
- R&D
- Governmental work
- (higher) education
- self-employment
- private sector: working at a big international company or @SME's
- **... anything you want!**

But also:

Luck is no accident; it is a case of planned ‘happenstance’



We are here to help:

Courses

- Grow your future career
- Write an effective non-academic cv and cover letter
- Inside a company
- Applying for a job
- My personal development plan as a PhD researcher
- Welcome to the real world
- From self-insight to career impact

→ Enroll via SisA Selfservice

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The Antwerp Doctoral
School
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...

Our offer

Talent Center



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To build your professional network



Training

To make your career future proof



Individual career coaching

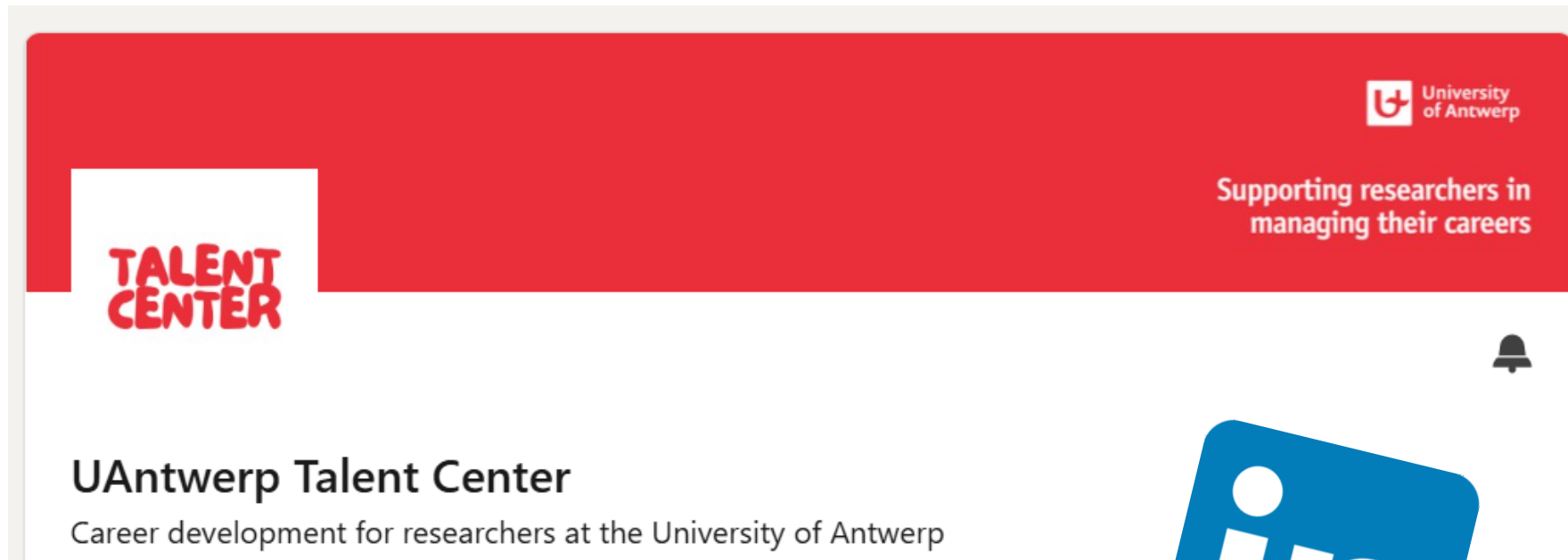
To guide you in making informed career decisions

How to find us?



talentcenter@uantwerpen.be

Stay up to date!



The screenshot shows the top section of a LinkedIn profile for the UAntwerp Talent Center. It features a red header bar with the University of Antwerp logo and the text 'Supporting researchers in managing their careers'. Below the header, the profile name 'UAntwerp Talent Center' is displayed, along with the tagline 'Career development for researchers at the University of Antwerp'. A notification bell icon is visible in the top right corner of the profile area.

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/uantwerp-talent-center/>



**What are you going to do today that
your future work self is going to thank
you for?**

Thank you & good luck!