



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Lessons From Our Mistakes:

What Experience Has Taught Us About Leveling Up Our Careers

Jenn Killham (People Strategy Consultant, TVETM)

Tony Wu (Designer, Button Check)

Adinda van Oosten (Game Journalist and Educator, Acreates)

Angela Geiss (Associate Sound Designer, NetherRealm Studios)

Fawzi Mesmar (VP of Creative, Ubisoft / Futuregames)

Trento von Lindenberg (CEO, Mouldbreaker Interactive)

Larra Snyder (Development Coordinator, Epic Games)

#GDC2024



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Dr. Jenn Killham

People Strategy Consultant
TVETM

#GDC2024

Why Are We Here?

Share What You Learn Here

March 22, 2024



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Job Search Resilience... and You

How to deal with the greatest hits of a job search (and layoffs).

#GDC2024

About



Hi, I am Tony!

Game Designer (System / Combat)

Worked in games for 10+ years.

Games I worked on:

- Diablo 3, Blizzard Entertainment
- CastleVille, Zynga Dallas
- Deformers, Ready At Dawn
- Echo VR, Ready At Dawn

Search

Focused Goals.

Specific goal setting will help create proper expectations when it comes to accomplishing that goal.

- I want to be able to successfully run a marathon in 4 hours and 45 minutes within 6 months.

My Takeaway:

Being very specific about your setting your goals and what you are looking for.

- This helped me focus on steps I needed to do to achieve my goals.

Note: *The average job search time is around five to six months.*

Rejection

N	O	P
Offer (?)	Offer Date	Note
No	N/A	Did not move forward after panel interview.
No	N/A	Did not move forward after design test.
No	N/A	Position is put on hold.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Went with another candidate.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward from application.
No	N/A	Did not move forward after lead interview
	N/A	
	N/A	Went with another candidate.
No	N/A	Did not move forward after craft interview.
No	N/A	Did not move forward after panel interview. [Ghosted]
No		Did not move forward after panel interview.

Rejection(s) Happens...

The chances are, you will not know why most of the time.

My Takeaway:

You cannot change which cards you are dealt, but you can change how you play the hand.

- This helped me push for feedback so I can learn from it.

Note: While there are no definitive stats on rejections... According to a survey of 1001 job seekers conducted by Joblist. On average, successful applicants applied for 10 to 15 jobs and received between 6 and 10 rejections.

Improvement

Be better... Daily!

It can be easy to get stuck in the downward spiral of job searches and applications.

(There are only so many job applications you can do in a day.)

My Takeaway:

Find things to work on and continue to improve yourself during down times.

- This helped me to better utilize my down time as a way improve myself in different ways.

Deservedness

Remain Positive!

It can get very hard to deal with the “success” of those around you.

My Takeaway:

Focus on the things you are accomplishing rather than the things other people have accomplished.

- This helped me focus on myself and to be happy for everyone’s success.

Recap

(F)ocused Goals.

(R)ejection(s) Happen.

(B)e Better... Daily!

(R)emain Positive!

F.R.B.R?!?!?

Yeah... that didn't make sense to me either, but you get the idea.

It's dangerous out there...

NEWS

29 Days Into 2024 And 6,000+ Video Game Layoffs Have Been Announced

We may not know what someone else is going through...
But we can be **kind** and help **support** each other!

Headlines taken from The Verge.

Final thoughts

For anyone out there that needs to hear this:

A graphic featuring the text "I am & enough." in a dark blue, serif font. The ampersand is stylized in pink with a yellow outline and a dark blue shadow. The text is set against a white background within a light yellow rectangular frame.

I am & enough.



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

How to Navigate a Job Search in a Foreign Country

#GDC2024

Hi!



Career

Teacher : Deltion College

Game journalist : Acreates

International experiences

Year Exchange - HK

Internship - TW

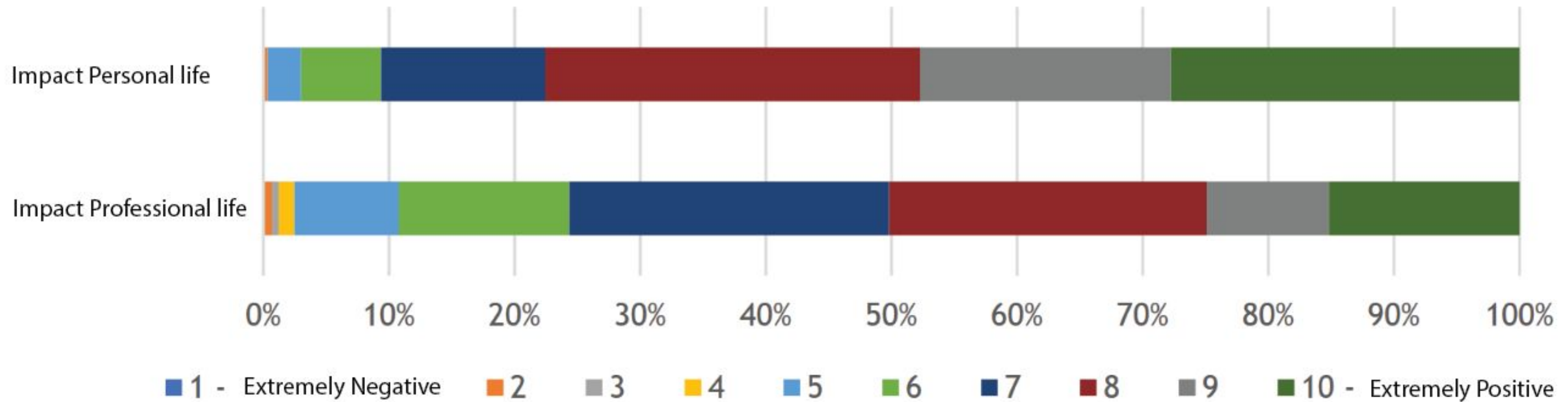
Master - DE

Work - HK

Advantages



Impact



Own Experience: Internship

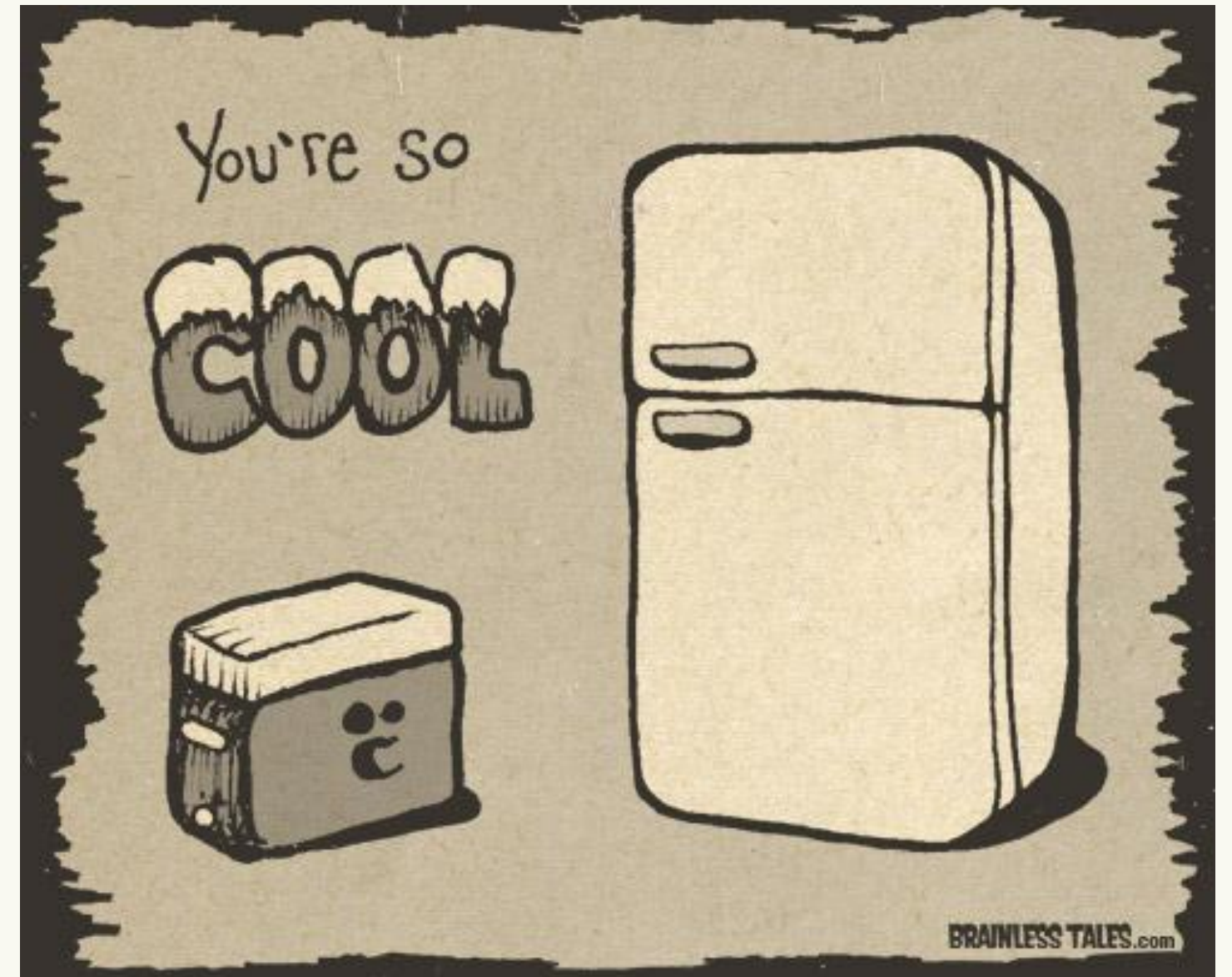
- Taiwan (First student)
- Being ignored
- Staying positive
- Paperwork
- Cultural difference



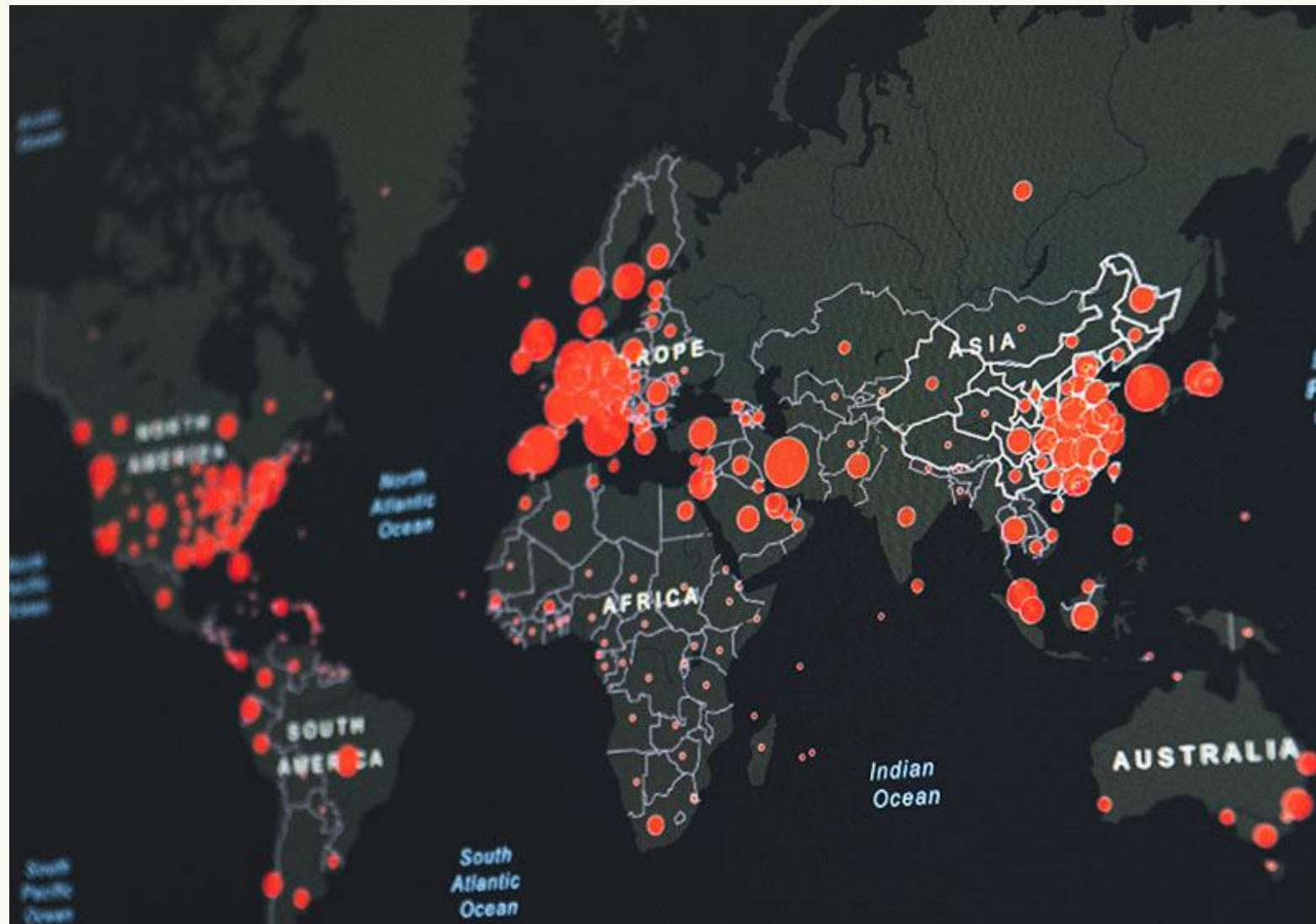
Benefits

- Personal Development
- Independence
- Flexibility
- Social skills
- Cultural insights
- Global Network

The best stories and....



More Opportunities



Remote jobs in gaming continue to grow in 2022

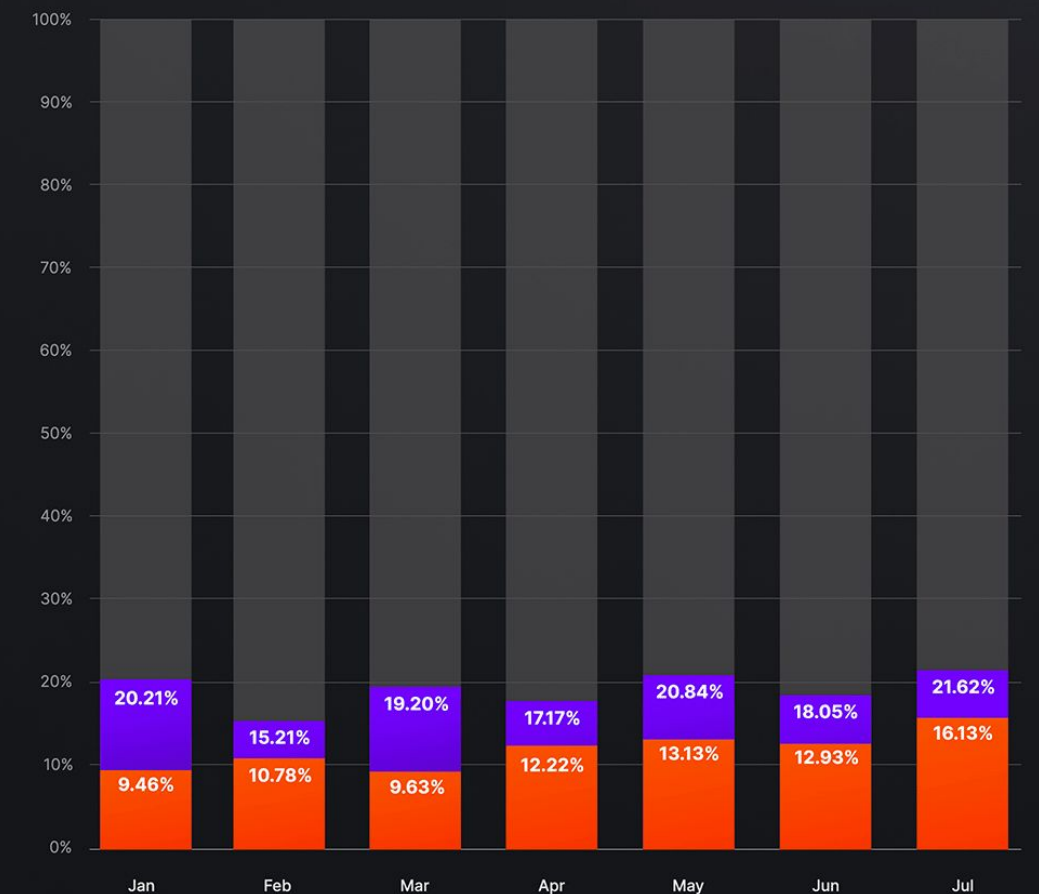
by Adam Fitch · 14/09/2022

Remote gaming jobs continue to increase in 2022

Proportion of remote gaming jobs in 2021 and 2022

2021 2022

*Data taken from Hitmarker.net between January 1, 2021 - July 31, 2022



Hitmarker

Hitmarker.net | The home of gaming jobs. @HitmarkerJobs

Understanding the Difference


Expats: Relocation, work in office, contract


Remote Workers: Relocation often not necessary, contract

Digital Nomads: Location independent, own boss

High Skilled immigrants: recruited by company, often offered a permanent visa by host.




 HandyVisas


Visas ▾ Travel Certificates Requirements & Policies ▾ Embassies News  OVManager

Get your travel visa for any global destination


Find out up-to-date entry requirements and apply online in minutes




United States




Australia




New Zealand



Tanzania




Turkey



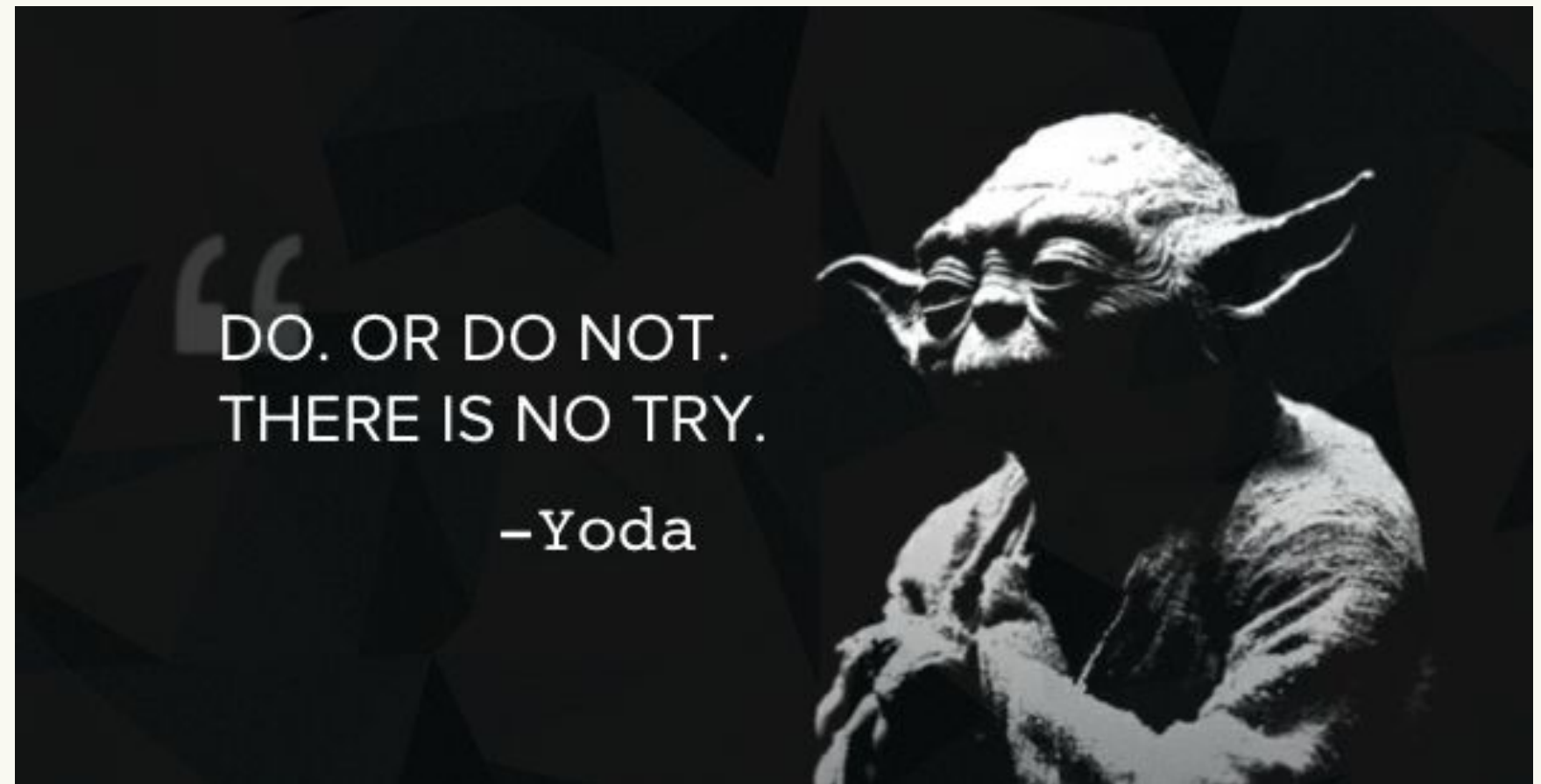
Mexico

MARCH 18-22, 2024 #GDC2024

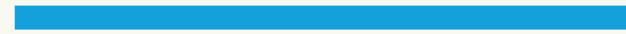
The GDC logo is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of the letters 'GDC' in a stylized, colorful font. The 'G' is green, the 'D' is yellow, and the 'C' is red. The letters are outlined in black and have a slight 3D effect.

Résumé or CV

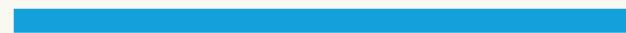
- Personal information
- Photograph
- Length
- Structure
- References
- Paper size



Internal



External



Strength and Weakness

- Education, certifications
- portfolio strength
- Personality traits
- Language proficiency
- Financial situation



Strength and Weakness



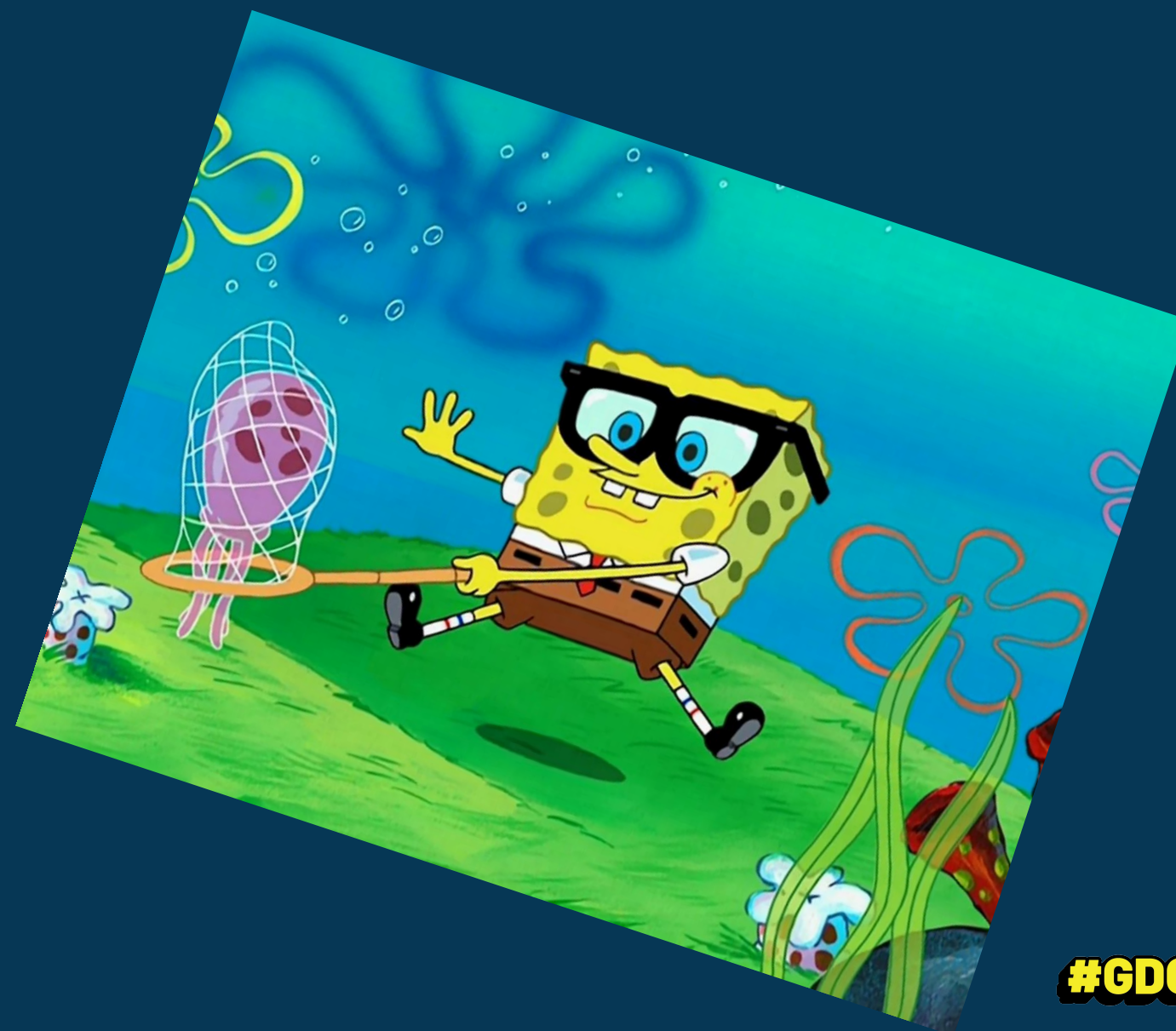




MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Life Lessons from the Hunt

(the job kind)



#GDC2024

Who am I?

Hi, I am Angela!

Associate Sound Designer

Details:

- Self-taught
- Career changer:
 - theatre, teaching English, music, sound design
- NetherRealm Studios



Lessons Learned:

➔ Due Diligence: Research ←

➔ Due Diligence: Network Maintenance ←

Expect Nothing, Prepare for Everything

Be your ambitious, passionate, genuine self.

When you put the extra effort in, it will show.



Due Diligence: Research

Know the company you apply for

- What are they known for?
- What games do they make?
- Have you heard anything about them before?
- What are *you* looking for in a job?

Preparing questions accordingly:

- LinkedIn, Company website, google, social media, current/past employee opinion...

Due Diligence: Network Maintenance



Networking

Reach out

Support (cr

Hot take: M
communicat



Due Diligence: Network Maintenance

"People like to work with other people they trust and know [...] So your reputation is very important and the **more people you're friends with the better.**" - Greg Lester

"I base my decisions a lot on their portfolio and their personality. Also since Stockholm is a gaming hub, **knowing people in the industry and getting recommendations is a shortcut** to getting hired." - Jason Ng

Talk to people, build relationships

"Putting out work, exploring things that I enjoy, being visible in various online spaces as much as possible, and then just talking to people and building relationships. **Those are three things that have gotten me literally every job I've ever had.**" - Ulysses at Sea

"But since Indonesia's game industry is still pretty new 80% of the devs are small indies and our job as sound designers are not really that known here so **you must either have a very convincing portfolio or connections**" - Vincent Welax

Relax

Dodge the easy bullets, the tell-tale signs, and leave the others in the hands of fate - there's nothing you can do about those anyway.

- Rob Bridgett, *100 Unusual, Novel and Surprising Ways to be a Better Sound Designer in Video Games*

Thank you!

And a special thank you to:

Ulysses at Sea, Jason Ng, Maxwell
Jeffries, Greg Lester, Vincent Welax, and
airwiggles.com

@holyeggshells
angela-geiss.com





MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Up Next

#GDC2024



Fawzi Mesmar
Creative Leader / Author
VP Global Creative at Ubisoft
Board of Education at Future Games



@Fawzimesmar
Fawzi.zone





MARCH 1






MARCH 18-22,







MARCH 18-22, 2024

A meme featuring a close-up of Yoda's face. He has a slight, knowing smile and is looking directly at the camera. The background is a blurred forest scene. The text "FAIL YOU WILL" is at the top and "FAIL FAST YOU SHOULD" is at the bottom, both in white with black outlines.

FAIL YOU WILL

FAIL FAST YOU SHOULD

**SENDS YOU AN EMAIL
TITLED "JOB OFFER"**

REJECTION LETTER

SET
GOAL

MAKE
PLAN

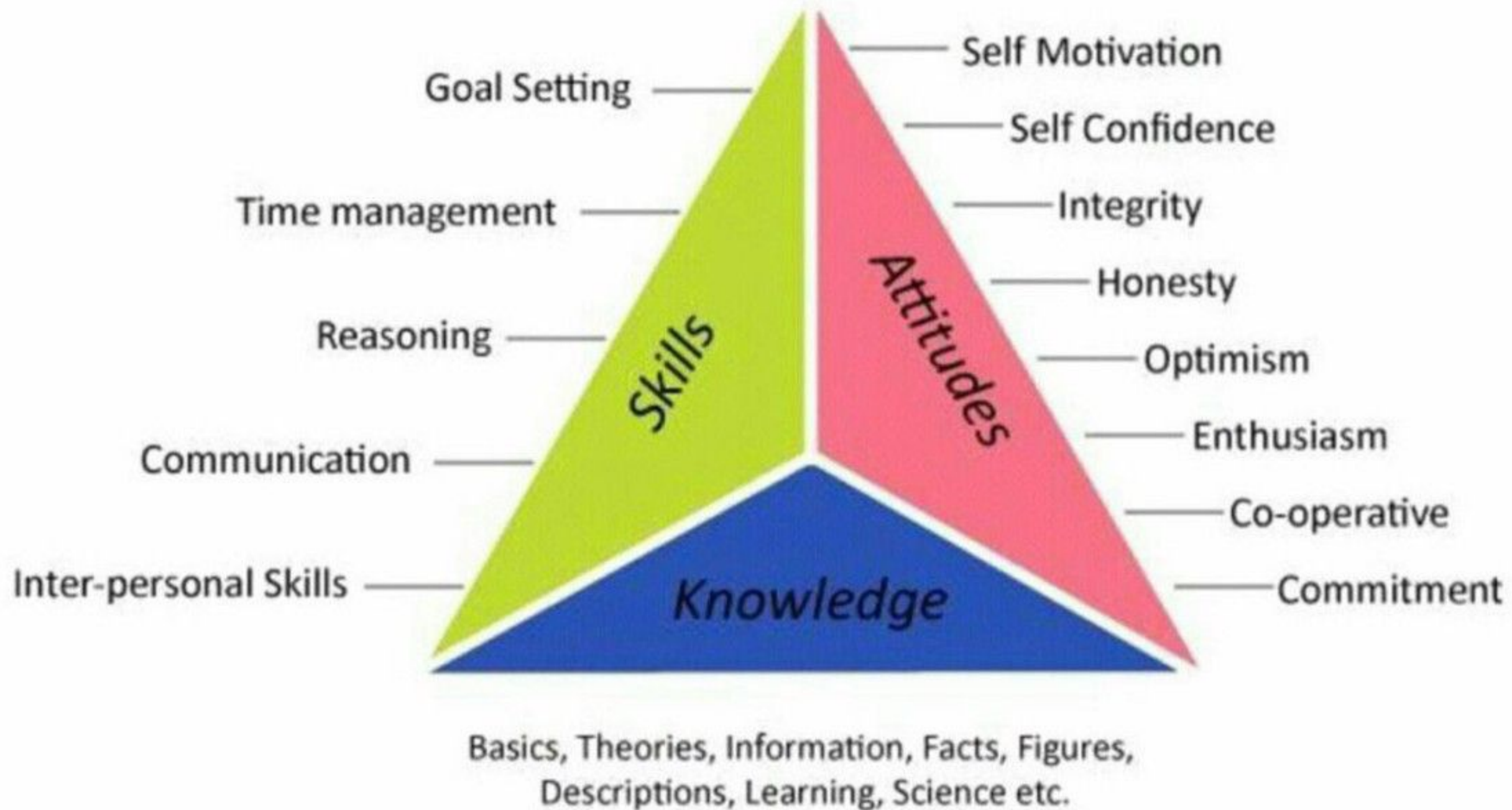
GET
TO
WORK

STICK
TO IT

REACH
GOAL



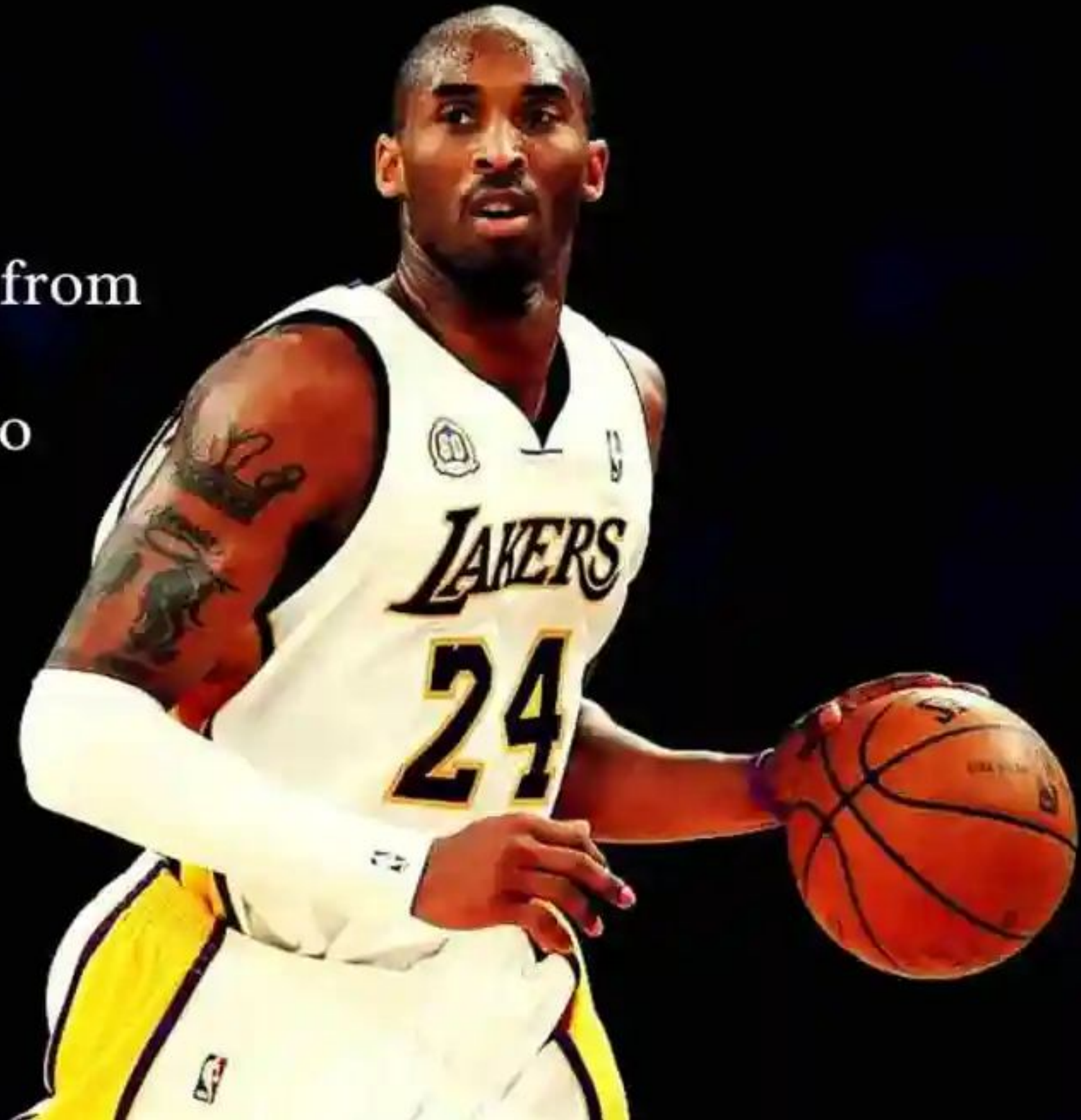
Triangle of Success





“Great things come from
hard work and
perseverance. No
excuses.”

— Kobe Bryant



A vibrant pink watercolor splash with irregular, feathered edges, serving as a background for the text.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Thank you!

Contact me on:
[@fawzimesmar](#)
[fawzi.zone](#)



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The Importance of Being Authentic

And Landing the Job that's Right for You

Trento von Lindenberg
CEO, Mouldbreaker Interactive



#GDC2024

There's no magic solution



My mistaken approach to interviews



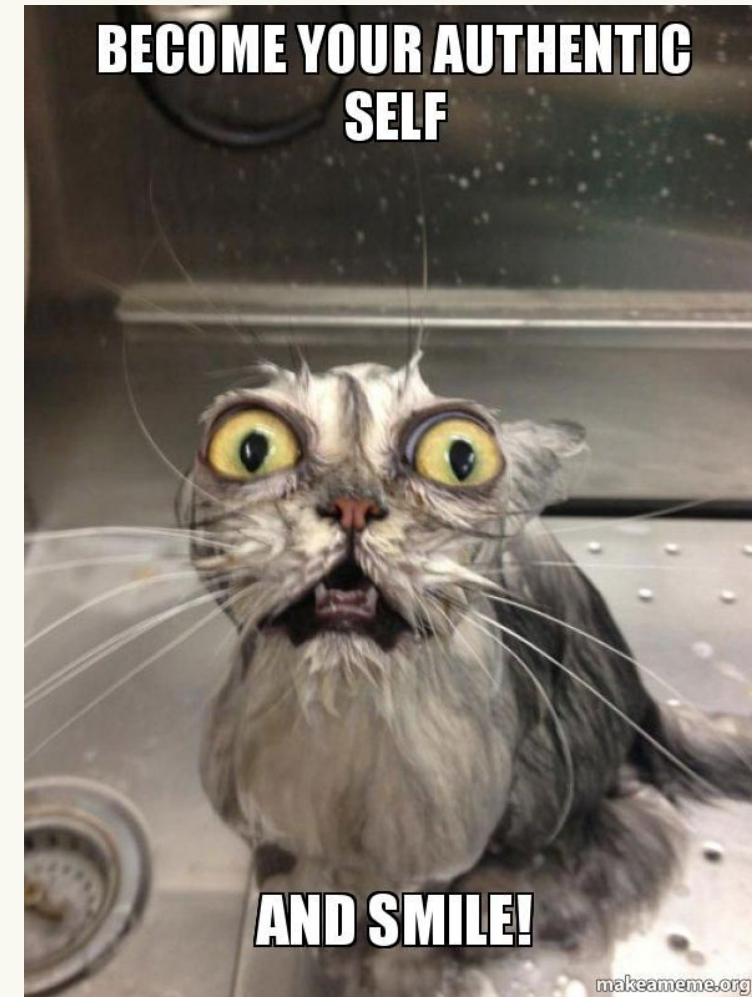
I was desperate for a job

And so, I landed somewhere I didn't *really* want to be.

My new approach (2023 onwards)



Interview the
Interviewer

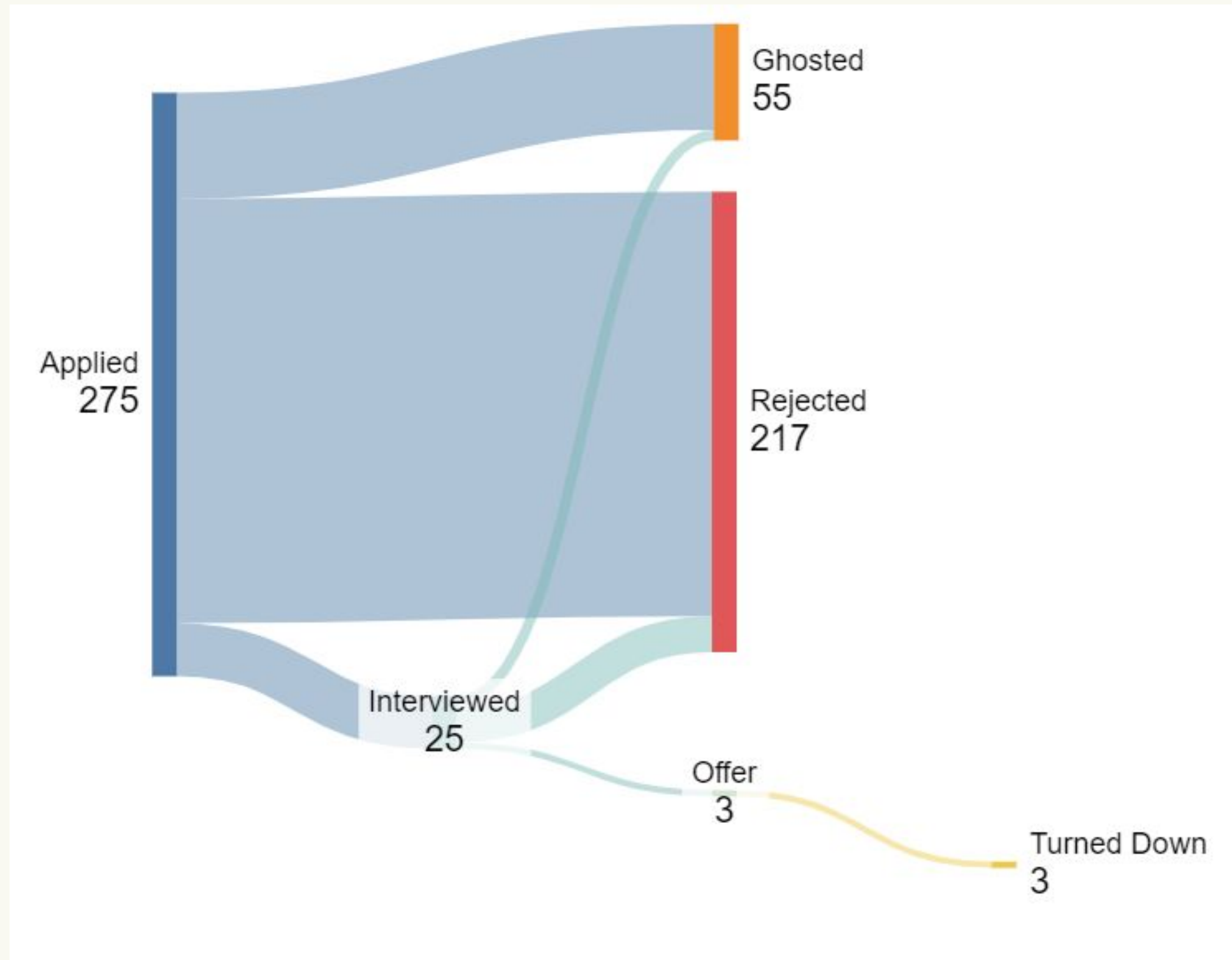


Be authentic

Interview the Interviewer

I turned down *three* offers during my job search...

In *this* economy!



Being authentic means...

Telling the truth

- And be honest with what matters to you

Sharing your flaws

- And being able to articulate your growth

Knowing yourself

- And being willing to be vulnerable

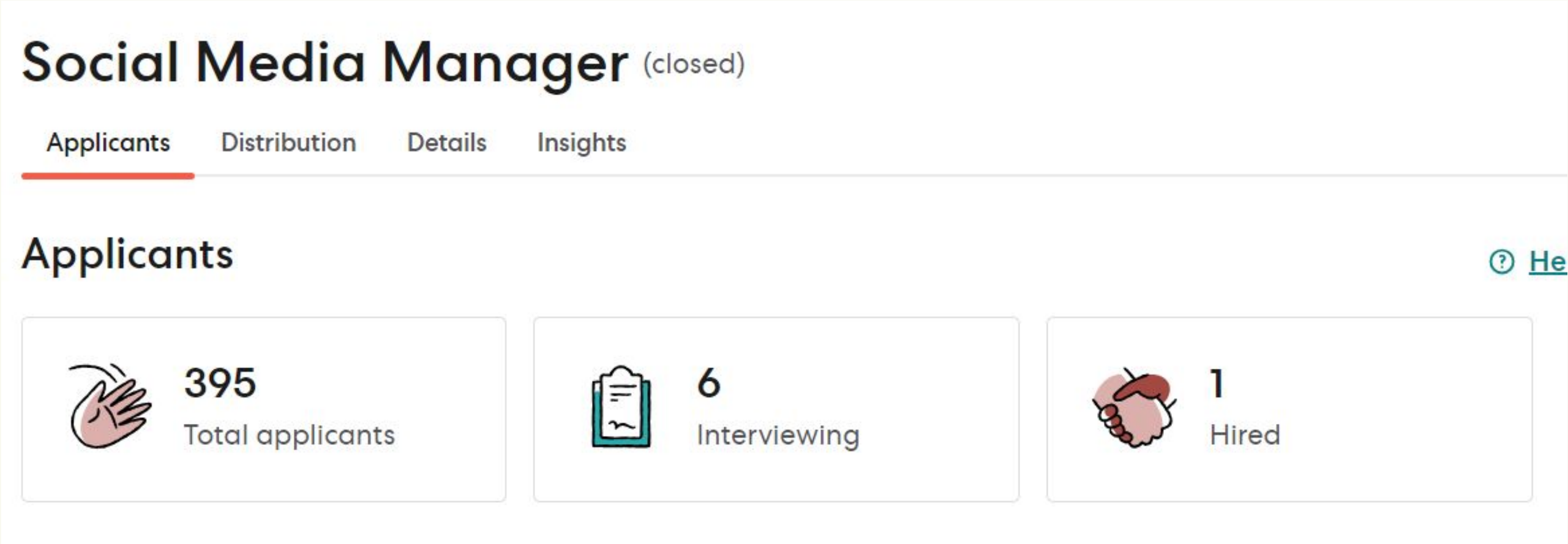
People hire people

I know that's a tough ask.

Being vulnerable hurts

But it is necessary.

Only *one* person can get hired



And that's why being authentic *really* matters

Be authentic not to get hired, but to **get hired in the place that's right for you.**

Thank you!



MOULDBREAKER
INTERACTIVE

The Mouldbreaker Team



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

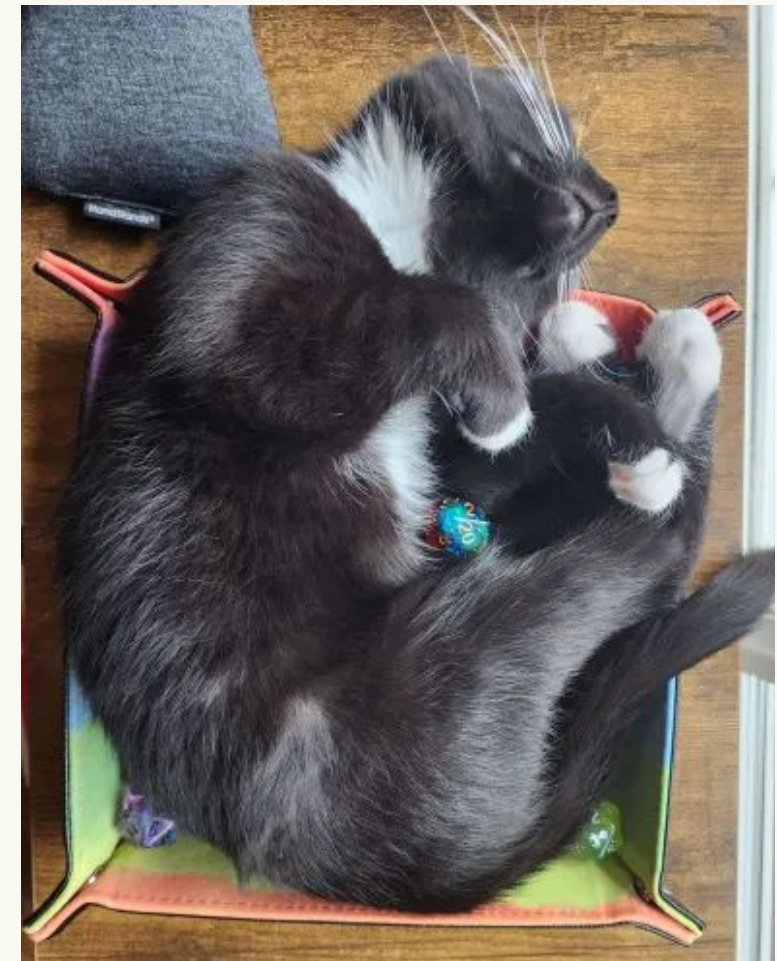
Don't Just Stray From the Path- Abandon It

#GDC2024

Hiya, I'm Larra (she/her)

Things about me!

- I've had 4 careers before games
- I have two kittens -
 - Fiddlesticks and Nocturne
- I love to play TTRPGs & boardgames
- I have anxiety, ADHD, and sometimes have Imposter Syndrome
- I'm a Development Coordinator for Fortnite Battle Royale



OH NO... NO!



**“What do you
want to be
when you
grow up?”**

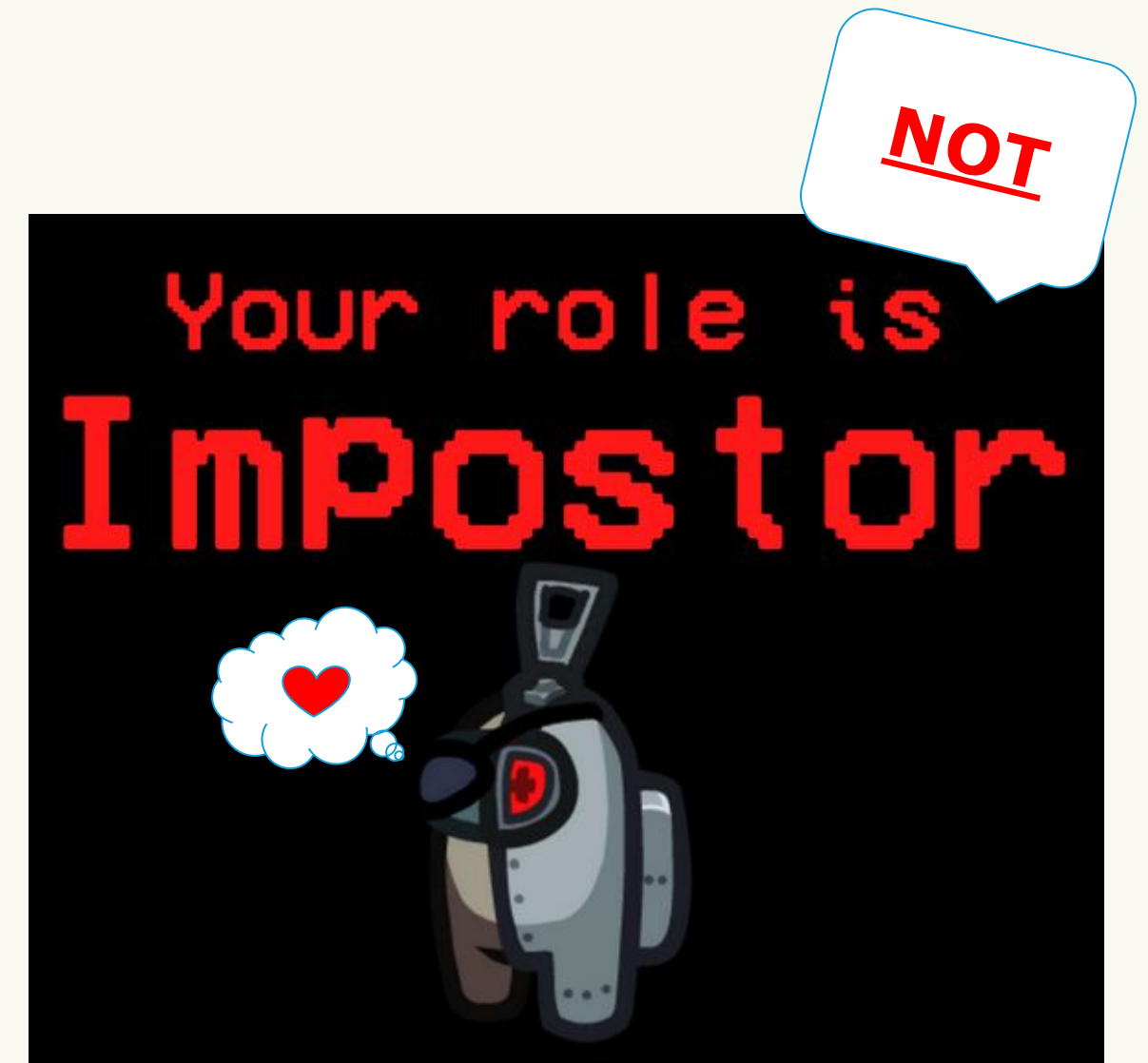
Sometimes It's Not You

- Find your best fit
- Not all advice is good
- Get a second opinion
- Don't let anyone push you out of something you love



Check-In Questions

- Is this space a good fit for me?
- Does being around this group make me happy?
- Are my responsibilities right for me?
- Do I feel supported?
- Is this situation sustainable?





**“What do you
mean you love...
MORE THAN
ONE THING?”**

Only You Know Your Best Path

- Ask vulnerable questions
- Keep dreaming and exploring
- It's okay to change your mind
- It's okay to be different





**“You said
WHAT to
WHO?”**

The Most Important Thing About You... is You!

- Don't tie your identity to your job
- Engage with People not Titles
- Connect genuinely with others
- If you move on to something else you'll still be remembered



Favorite Tip: Care 10% Less

- No one will notice but you
- You'll be better at what you do
- You'll be less stressed
- It's still high level effort
- It's sustainable



Mental Health & Safety

No single job or title is worth more than your wellbeing



National Sexual Assault Hotline
Hours: Available 24 hours

1-800-656-4673



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Special Thanks

James Laird, Alex Koeberl, Carl Varnado, Luke Piazza, Dennis Gilham,
Eddie Espinoza, Rob Percival

#GDC2024



MARCH 18-22, 2024
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Lessons From Our Mistakes:

What Experience Has Taught Us About Leveling Up Our Careers

Dr. Jennifer Killham (People Strategy Consultant, TVETM)

Tony Wu (Designer, Button Check)

Adinda van Oosten (Game Journalist and Educator, Acreates)

Angela Geiss (Associate Sound Designer, NetherRealm Studios)

Fawzi Mesmar (VP of Creative, Ubisoft / Futuregames)

Trento von Lindenberg (CEO, Mouldbreaker Interactive)

Larra Snyder (Development Coordinator, Epic Games (Contract))

#GDC2024