

Career Transition Series

PIVOTING OUTSIDE THE UN SYSTEM

WELCOME TO

Finding Your Path in the Private Sector



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA



UNITED NATIONS



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



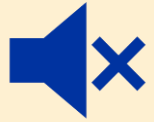
World Health
Organization

Upcoming : Career Transition Series sessions

MASTERING INTERVIEWS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Date: June 11th — visit the Career Transition Series
webpage

Zoom - Housekeeping rules



You are muted by default.



Expect to participate dropping words and questions in the chat function.



If you have any questions, please submit them through Zoom Q&A button.



The session will be recorded. The recording and presentation will be available on: [Career Transition Series webpage](#).



Teresa Callejo

Career Strategy & Development

10+ years helping global professionals gain clarity & confidence:

- ✓ Navigating growth in transitions
- ✓ Translating UN experience into market value

Teresa.callejo@hotmail.com find me on LinkedIn as well



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA



UNITED NATIONS



World Health
Organization

PRACTICE QUESTION #1

Where are you connecting from today?

From which country or city
Or which Agency?

Share in the chat.



PRACTICE QUESTION #2

**What is your energy level today?
Chose one number:**

- 5-** Very high
- 4-** Ok
- 3-** So-so
- 2-** Not so good
- 1-** I need coffee ASAP

Share your number in the chat.



Agenda

PART I

- **Identity & Transition: Who Are You Outside the Institution?**
- **Rethinking Expertise: Lessons from elite Firefighters and Apollo Mission**

PART II

- **Your Capabilities in the Private Sector**
- **Alternate Paths (Supranational bodies, Academia, and Entrepreneurship)**

Q&A

Identity Recognition



Saul Steinberg/The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank; © Condé Nast

Identity Recognition

What does working in the UN mean to you personally?

Drop one word in the chat.



Rethinking — Adam Grant

Professionals are not defined only by conviction or expertise, but also the capacity to rethink when circumstances change.

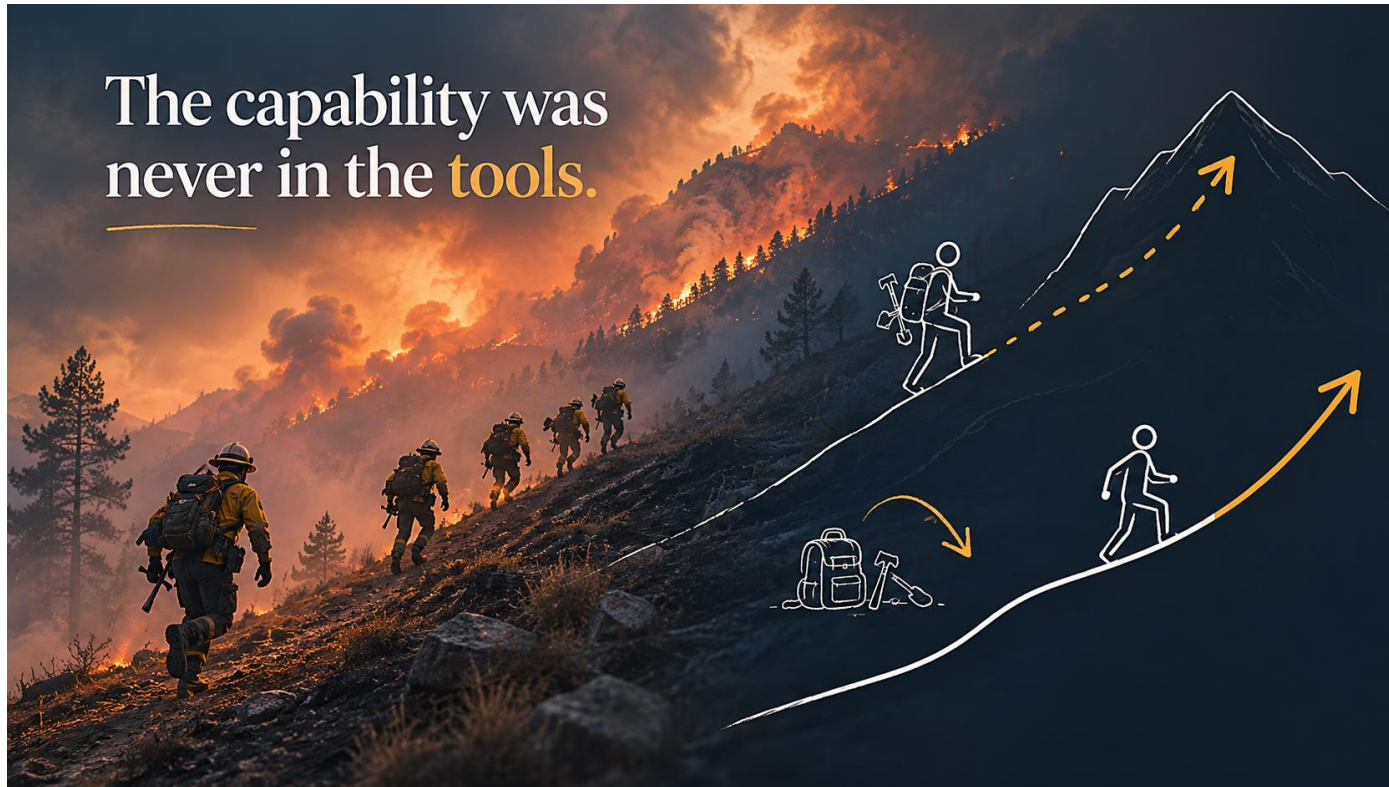
“Rethinking is not abandoning expertise; it is remaining flexible enough to update assumptions as the world changes”.

The Firefighter Story



👉 Reference: Adam Grant — Think Again (2021, Penguin Randomhouse)

What We Carry



The Apollo Story

After the mission ends



Margaret Hamilton

She thought she was writing software for the moon mission.

She was helping invent the future of software engineering.



Apollo Transferability Poll

Are you confident your UN experience is transferable outside it?

Choose one number:

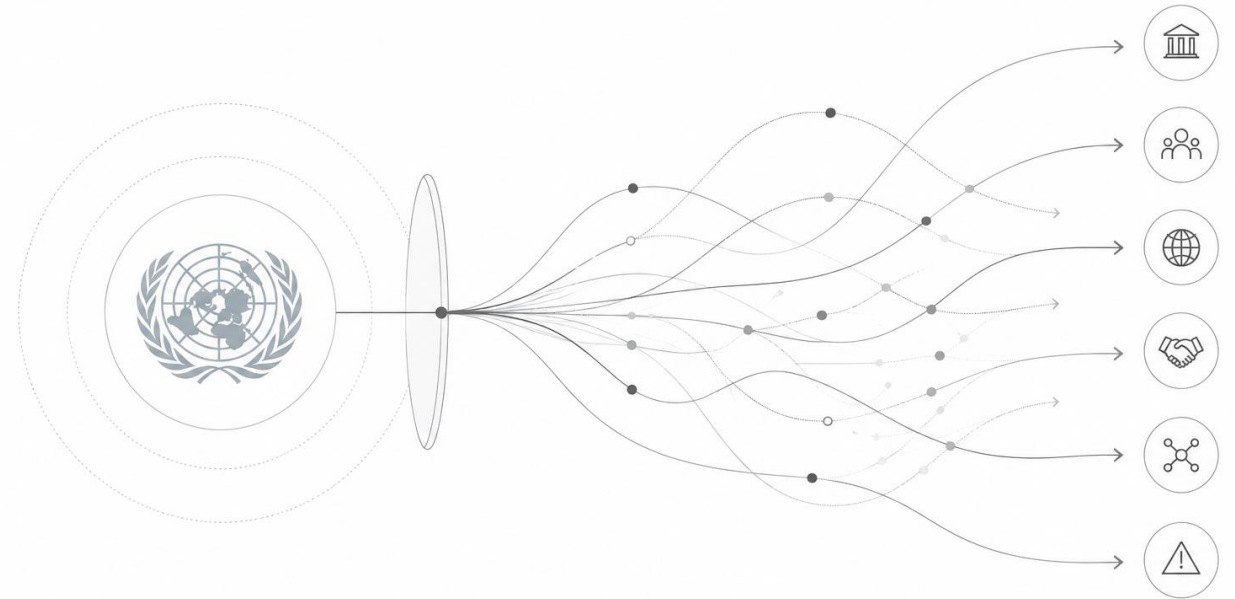
- 5**- Very confident
- 4**- Somewhat confident
- 3**- Not at all confident
- 2**- I'm starting to think it might be
- 1**- I need coffee ASAP

Share your number in the chat.



Reframing the Private Sector

Outside the UN your capabilities are highly differentiated.



The story of Pierre _ Herminia Ibarra

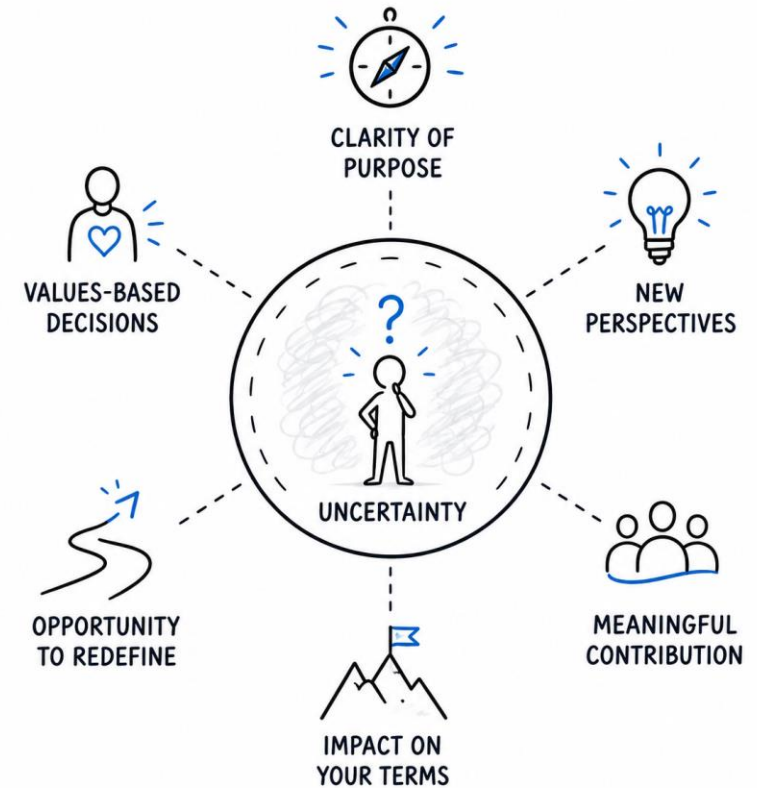
🔗 Reference: *Herminia Ibarra— Working Identity* (2023, Harvard Business School Press)



Jean-Jacques Sempé/The New Yorker Collection/
The Cartoon Bank; © Condé Nast 1984

Agency and Choice

“While uncertainty can feel uncomfortable, it can also become a form of freedom — an opportunity to redefine how you want to contribute”



Clarity Through Movement

**The next step will not define
the rest of your life!**



Possibility Opening

If your next step did not need to define the rest of your life...

- What would suddenly feel more possible?

Feel free to answer in the chat.



Capability Framework

Capability is the ability to consistently create value across different environments, situations, and roles

- What problems can you solve?
- What complexity can you navigate?
- What systems can you coordinate?
- What uncertainty can you operate in?



Capability Recognition

Most UN careers repeatedly build five major capabilities:

Complex coordination

Operating under uncertainty

Regulatory and political navigation

Large-scale operational management

Stakeholder trust



Mission Language vs. Market Language

The capability stays the same →

- **The language changes.**

Humanitarian Coordination

- **Logistics under pressure**
- **Resilient operations**
- **Decision-making in fragile environments**

Political Affairs

- **Geopolitical analysis**
- **Stakeholder diplomacy**
- **Crisis management**
- **Stakeholder alignment**

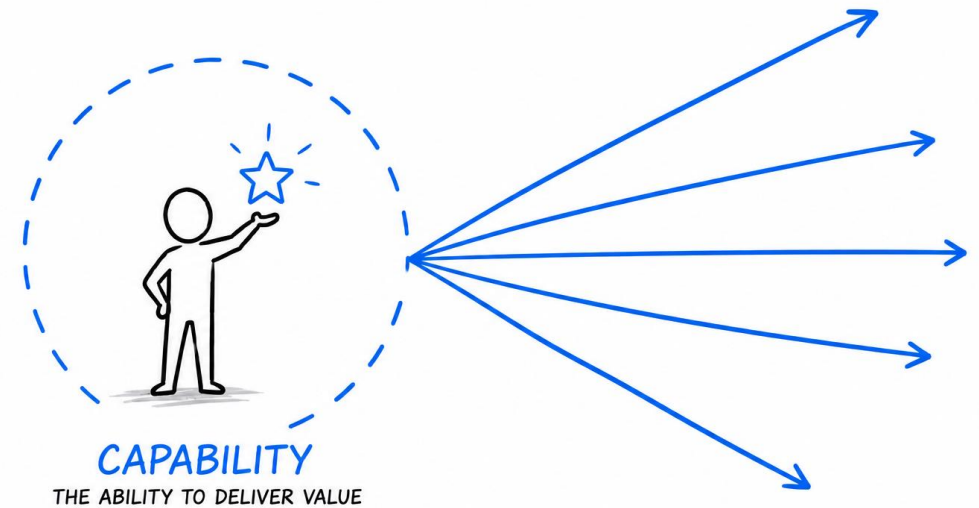
Programme Management

- **Large-scale operational coordination** →

Across multiple actors and systems

I. UN areas in "the private sector"

Where might your capabilities be most valued next?



I. UN areas in "the private sector"

Economic, Social & Development

Political, Peace & Humanitarian

Management & Administration

ITECNET

Legal

Public Information & Conference
Management

Logistics & Supply Chain

Safety & Security

Science

Economic, Social & Development

- **Systems transformation**
- **Stakeholder coordination**
- **Public-private coordination**



Sectors that buy Economic, Soc. & Dev

- **Transformation now requires institutional intelligence**
- **Need for policy knowledge**
- **Operational transformation**

SECTORS

Management Consulting
Impact Consulting
Sustainability Consulting
Development Finance
Climate Finance

Example Economic, Soc. & Dev

UN PROJECT **Youth Employment Initiative**

- **Boston Consulting Group**
“Senior Knowledge Analyst”
- **Systemiq**
“Strategy Manager”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Political, Peace & Humanitarian

- **Crisis management**
- **Geopolitical navigation**
- **Logistics coordination**



Why Sectors Buy Political, Peace & Hum.

Instability has become economically relevant. There is a need to operate under uncertainty.

- **Crisis management**
- **Geopolitical navigation**
- **Logistics coordination**

SECTORS

Industry & Logistics
Finance
Technology
Energy

Example Political, Peace & Humanitarian

UN PROJECT **Humanitarian Syria Crisis** **Response**

- **McKinsey & Co**
“Senior Consultant, Geopolitics”
- **EY Parthenon**
“Advisor Geostrategic”
- **Amazon**
“Regional Expansion Lead”
“Emerging Markets Ops Manager”
- **Maersk**
“Regional Operations Manager”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Management & Administration

Growth fails when operations cannot scale effectively.

- **Global coordination.**
- **Resource management.**
- **Institutional scaling.**



Why Sectors Buy Management & Administration

The market needs scalable operations and management of those operations

SECTORS

Consulting

FMCG

Industry

Logistics

Infrastructure

Example Management & Administration

UN PROJECT

Multi-country UN program in
West Africa

- **Amazon**
“Regional Ops Manager”
- **Unilever**
“Supply Chain Transformation
Manager”
- **Siemens**
“Regional Ops Director”
- **Coca-Cola**
“Emerging Markets Ops Lead”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Digital transformation is now core organizational survival.

- **Governance + technology integration.**



Why Sectors Buy ITECNET

**The market needs technology as
as operational infrastructure**

SECTORS

Technology

Healthcare

Finance

Industry

Logistics & infrastructure

Example ITECNET

UN PROJECT

Coordinate digital systems during Ebola response

→ **Microsoft**
“Global Program Manager – Cloud Ops”

→ **AWS**
“Technical Program Manager – Emerging Markets”

→ **Siemens**
“Digital Transformation Manager”

→ **Maersk**
“Regional Tech Ops Lead”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Legal

Regulation increasingly shapes market access.

- **Regulatory risk.**
- **Institutional interpretation.**
- **Compliance.**



Why Sectors Buy Legal

The market needs legal-risk management and regulatory knowledge

SECTORS

Technology
Finance
Energy
Industry

Example Legal

UN PROJECT

legal coordination around sanctions compliance and humanitarian exemptions for Russia-Ukraine crisis after 2022

→ **JPMorgan Chase**
“Global Sanctions Compliance Executive”

→ **Shell**
“Senior Counsel – International Regulatory Affairs”

→ **Stripe**
“Regulatory Compliance Manager” or “Public Policy & Reg Affairs Lead”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

RESCUE QUESTION

What is your energy level AT THIS TIME?

Chose one number:

- 5-** Great, keep going
- 4-** Ok, I'm hanging in
- 3-** So-so, eager to finish the session
- 2-** Feels not-so-relevant
- 1-** I need coffee ASAP

Share your number in the chat.



Public Information & Conference Management

Trust and communication now influence commercial value.

- **Narrative management.**
- **Legitimacy.**
- **Global stakeholder engagement.**



Why Sectors Buy Information & Conference M.

The market needs strategic communications, diplomacy and external relations

SECTORS

Technology

Media

Consulting

Healthcare

Finance

Example Information & Conference M.

UN PROJECT
communications and
interpretation operations for
COP26

→ **Nike**

**“Director Global Purpose
Comms.”**

→ **Dentsu Group / Publicis Groupe**

**“Global Localization Lead”
“Cross-Cultural Comms.
Strategist”**

→ **Open AI, Google DeepMind,
Anthropic, Meta AI**

**“AI Linguistic Evaluator”
“Language Quality Lead”
”Trust & Safety Policy Specialist”**



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Logistics & Supply Chain

Execution is impossible when logistics fail.

- **Resilience.**
- **Operational continuity.**
- **Complex supply chain management.**



Why Sectors Buy Logistics & Supply Chain

The market needs resilient global operations.

SECTORS

Tech

E-Commerce

Manufacturing

Infrastructure

FMCG

Example Logistics & Supply Chain

UN PROJECT

coordinating food and medical supply delivery during a humanitarian crisis

→ **Amazon**

“Regional Supply Chain Manager”
“Emerging Markets Ops Lead”

→ **Maersk**

“Regional Logistics Ops Manager”
Global Localization Lead”

→ **DHL**

“Supply Chain Resilience Manager”
“Logistics Lead”

→ **Flexport**

“International Ops Manager”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Safety & Security

Organizations cannot grow sustainably without resilience.

- **Risk protection.**
- **Contingency planning.**
- **Security operations.**



Why Sectors Buy Risk & Security

**The market needs risk mitigation
and resilience**

SECTORS

**Consulting
Infrastructure
Energy
Logistics
Technology
Aviation**

Example Risk & Security

UN PROJECT

security for personnel evacuation
from Afghanistan in 2021

- **Chevron**
“Regional Security & Risk
Manager”
- **Tesla**
“Security Operations Manager”
- **Delta Airlines**
“Corporate Security & Ops
Resilience”
- **Deloitte, Mckinsey**
“Global Risk Advisor Man.”
“Rist & Resilience Consultant””



Remember these might be senior-level
functions, look for the team underneath

Science

Innovation increasingly depends on technical intelligence.

- **Technical rigor.**
- **Evidence systems.**
- **Policy-science integration.**



Why Sectors Buy Science

The market needs technical expertise & evidence systems that shape business strategy

SECTORS

Healthcare

Pharma

Climate Tech

Energy

Agriculture

Manufacturing

Example Science

UN PROJECT

coordinating security scientific and operational support during the global **COVID-19** response

- **Syngenta, Bayer**
“Global Sust. & Scientific Affairs Manager”
“Climate & Agricultural Systems Lead”
- **3M, BASF**
“Director, Sustainable Innovation”
“Global R&D Strategy Manager”
- **Moderna**
“Director, Global Scientific Affairs”
- **Tesla Energy, Siemens Energy**
“Energy Systems Strategy Manager”



Remember these might be senior-level functions, look for the team underneath

Apollo Transferability Poll

Are you confident your UN experience is transferable outside it?

Choose one number:

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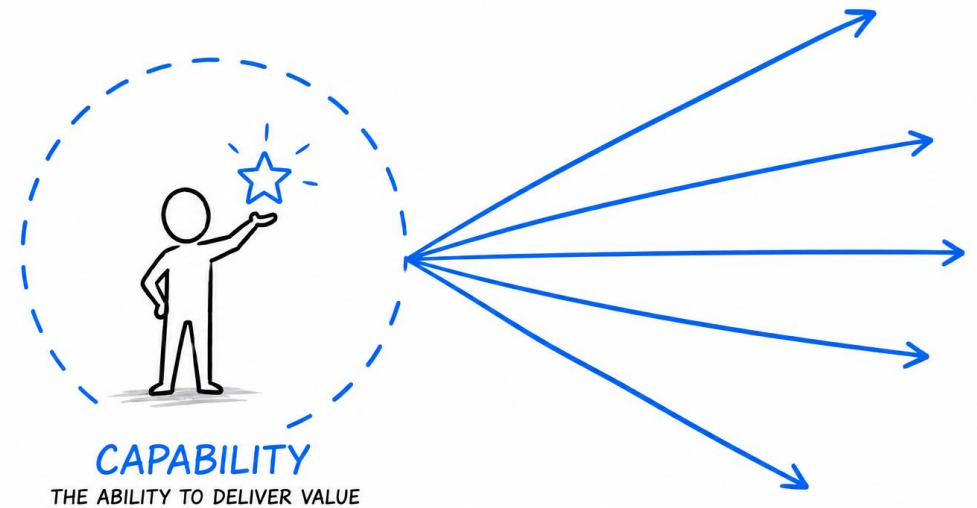
Recap of Roles in the Private Sector

9 UN AREAS • EXAMPLES OF ROLES IN THE PRIVATE & PUBLIC SECTOR



2. Alternate paths in the Market

1. Regional and Supranational bodies
2. Academia
3. Entrepreneurship
4. Multilateral Banks (covered in CTS previously)

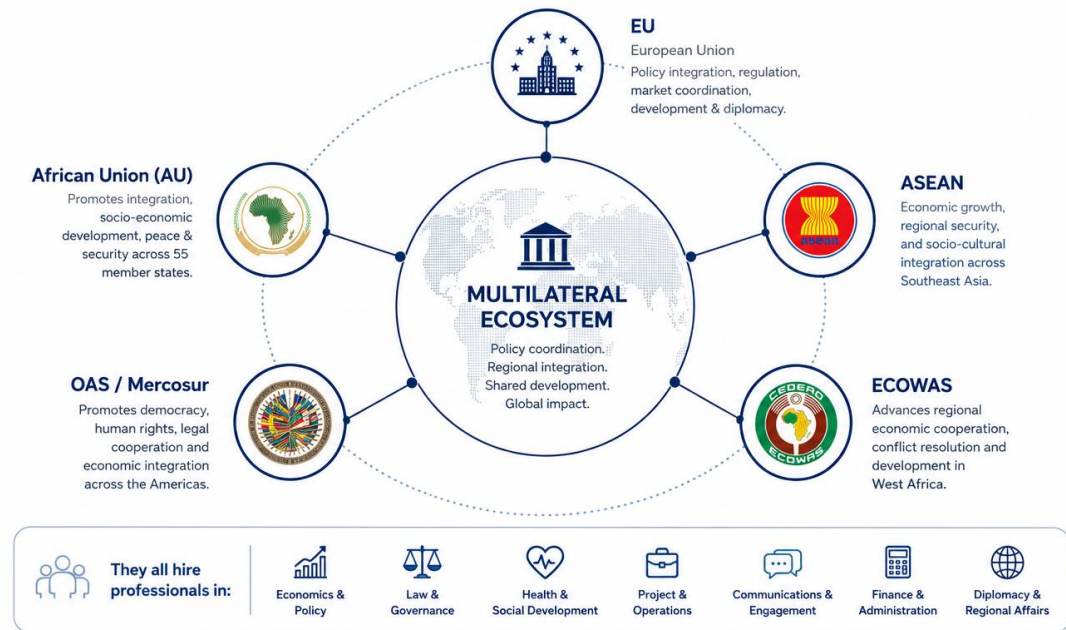


I. Regional and Supranational bodies

- **EU**
- **African Union (AU)**
- **ASEAN**
- **OAS / Mercosur**
- **ECOWAS**

A Global Network of Regional & Supranational Institutions

Different regions. Shared purpose. Many pathways.



The capabilities developed inside the UN belong to a much larger multilateral ecosystem.

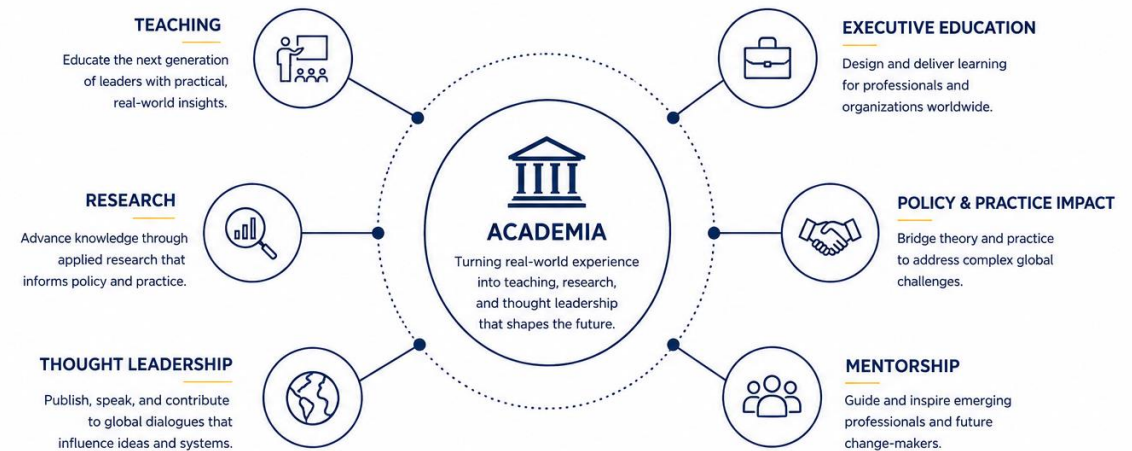
Your experience can move across institutions, regions and impact areas.

2. Academia

- **Public policy schools**
- **International Affairs programs**
- **Executive Education**
- **Applied research institutes**

THE PATHWAY OF ACADEMIA

A place where experience becomes knowledge, and knowledge creates impact.



ACADEMIA TAKES MANY FORMS



Universities & Business Schools



Think Tanks & Research Institutes



Policy Schools & International Affairs



Executive & Professional Education



Applied Research Centers



Global Faculty & Visiting Roles

Your experience is not just your past — it is a contribution to the future.

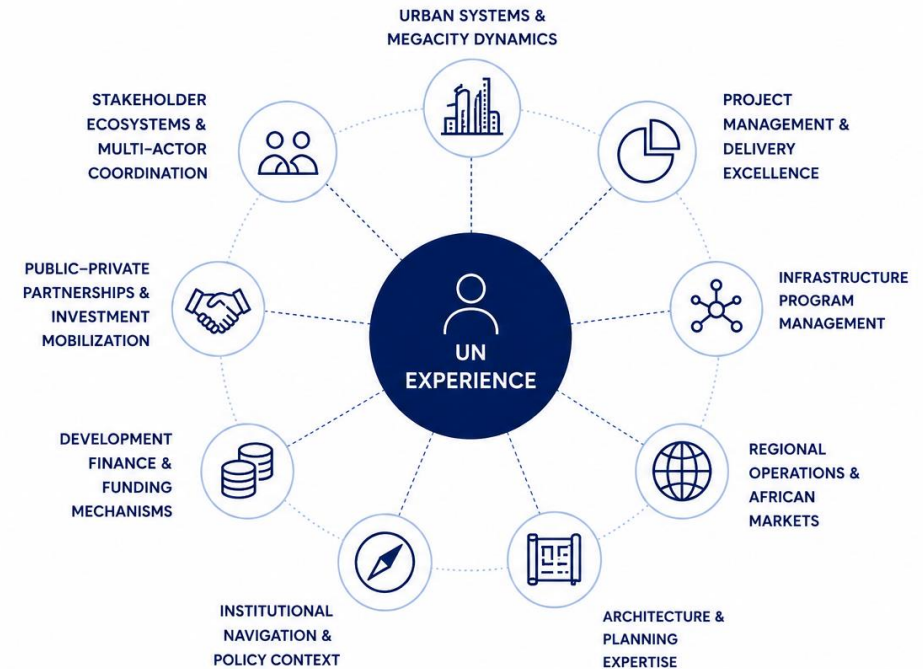
Academia is not a fallback. It is a force multiplier.

3. Entrepreneurship

- **Generate wealth aligned with values**
- **Create equitable opportunities**
- **Contribute to local economies**

EXPERTISE TO ENTERPRISE

Your experience. Your advantage. Your venture.



Example Case_Antonia

Engineering Project Manager, Architect by training

Strategy:

Launching a consulting firm focused on African megacities

Competitive Advantage:

- **Deep UN operational experience**
- **Strong understanding of local markets and stakeholder ecosystems**



Possibility Recognition

What feels newly possible for you?

Drop a few words into the chat.



Final Strategic Reframing

Beyond public vs private

Expertise may be more portable than we can imagine.



Final Strategic Reframing

S



Strip the title

Move beyond institutional labels and formal functions.

H



Highlight the capability

Identify the deeper operational capability beneath your experience.

I



Interpret the market value

Understand where these capabilities already exist outside the UN.

F



Find your positioning

Connect your experience to sectors, ecosystems, and opportunities aligned with your strengths.

T



Take movement

Create momentum through exploration, experimentation, and strategic action before certainty arrives.



You are not starting from zero.
You are learning how to **SHIFT**
your experience into new possibilities.

Final Strategic Reframing



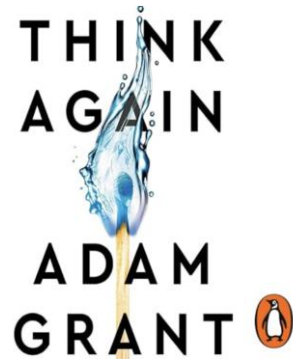
Evaluation Form

Let us know your thoughts
about the session!

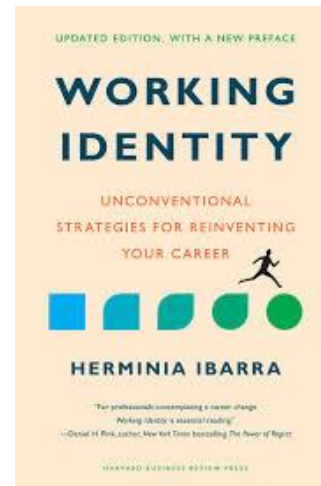
👉 Click [here](#) or scan the QR code.



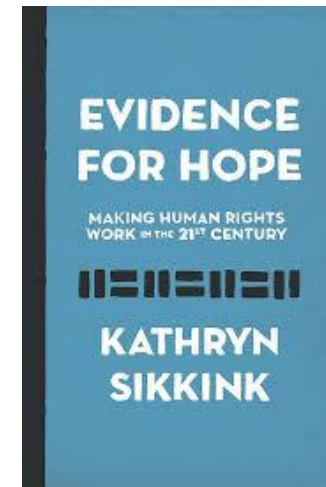
Further Exploration



Adam Grant —
Think Again (2021)



Herminia Ibarra —
Working Identities (2003)



Kathryn Sikkink —
Evidence for Hope (2017)

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Thanks for your participation!



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