

NorthQuest — Flashcards

A Spark & Anvil printable flashcard deck. Quiz yourself on the NorthQuest cast's curriculum — one card at a time.

How to use these cards

Fold each sheet down the middle line so the answers are hidden. Read the **question** on the left, say your answer out loud, then **unfold** to check the right side. Testing yourself — then checking — is one of the most powerful ways to remember. Get one wrong? That's the best kind of practice: try it again tomorrow.

Want real flashcards? Cut along the fold line and the rows into cards — question on one side, answer on the other.

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How to use these cards

1. Values & interests clarification (as a skill)
2. Strengths identification
3. Exploration mindset
4. Asking real people about real paths
5. Decision-making without full information
6. Future orientation
7. Purpose & meaning (self-authorship)
8. Integrating values, strengths, and a next step

Keep going

Keep exploring online

1. Values & interests clarification (as a skill)

⌘ Question (fold →)	Answer
Two of your values conflict (e.g. stability vs adventure). The mature response is to...	accept the trade-off and choose what fits you now, revisiting later — Values often compete; maturity is weighing the trade-off and choosing what fits you now, knowing you can revisit as you change.
Someone says “just follow your passion.” A more complete version is...	combine what you care about, what you’re good at, and what the world needs — “Follow your passion” is incomplete; a sturdier direction blends what you care about, what you're good at, and what's genuinely needed.
Values can change over your life. What does that mean for planning?	revisit your direction as you grow; it's not a one-time decision — Values evolve, so future planning is a process you revisit — not a single, permanent decision made once.
A good sign a value is really YOURS (not borrowed) is that...	you'd hold it even if no one was watching or rewarding you — An authentic value holds up even without an audience or reward — values chosen to impress others are borrowed, not yours (self-authorship).
Why start a future plan with your values instead of a list of jobs?	a path that fits your values is one you'll stick with and feel good about — Work that fits your values is more sustainable and satisfying — starting with jobs first can lead you into a path that looks good but doesn't fit.
“Values clarification” means figuring out...	what genuinely matters most to you — Values clarification is identifying what genuinely matters to you — it's the honest starting point for any direction, before jobs or salaries.
Clarifying your values is MOST useful for...	guiding your own choices, not judging anyone else's — Your values are a compass for your own choices — never a way to rank careers or judge other people's paths.
Journaling about “when do I lose track of time?” helps clarify values because...	flow activities reveal what you genuinely find meaningful — Activities where you lose track of time (flow) often reveal what you find genuinely meaningful — a useful clue to your values.
Which is a VALUE (not just an interest)?	making a positive difference for other people — “Making a difference for others” is a value (a principle about what matters); the rest are interests (enjoyable activities).
An “interest” differs from a “value” in that an interest is...	a topic or activity you enjoy; a value is a principle about what matters — An interest is something you enjoy doing; a value is a deeper principle about what matters. Both help point a direction.

2. Strengths identification

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Building a direction around your strengths tends to...	make growth faster and work more energizing — Leaning into strengths usually means faster growth and more energizing work — though it never removes the need for effort.
A fair way to assess a strength is to...	look at a range of real situations, not a single good or bad day — Assessing a strength fairly means looking across several real situations, not over-weighting one great result or one bad day.
“Transferable skills” are...	abilities (like communication) useful across many different paths — Transferable skills — communication, problem-solving, teamwork — carry across many paths, so building them keeps options open.
The best evidence for a strength is...	times you’ve actually done it well, not just how you feel — Real strengths show up in actual examples of doing something well — more reliable than a quiz result or a wish.
If you can’t name a strength yet, the best move is to...	try varied activities and notice what you do well — Strengths are discovered through doing — trying varied activities and noticing what goes well beats assuming you have none.
A “growth mindset” about strengths means believing...	abilities can improve with effort and good practice — A growth mindset holds that abilities develop with effort and good practice — so a current weakness can become a future strength.
Naming your strengths is useful because it lets you...	choose paths where you can contribute and grow, and explain your fit to others — Knowing your strengths helps you pick paths where you can contribute and grow, and articulate your fit — not to rank yourself above others.
A weakness matters for planning mainly when...	it’s central to a path you care about (then you build it or route around it) — A weakness matters when it’s central to a path you want — then you either build the skill or design around it; peripheral weaknesses matter little.
Asking others “what do you see me do well?” helps because...	people often notice strengths we take for granted — We often overlook strengths that come easily to us; trusted others can name them, adding an outside view to your self-assessment.
A personal “strength” is best described as...	something you do well AND can keep getting better at — A strength is an ability you do well and can develop further — broader than a single grade, and grounded in real evidence.

3. Exploration mindset

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Volunteering or an internship helps exploration by...	giving you real, hands-on experience of the work — Volunteering or interning lets you experience the work directly — the strongest way to test whether a path fits before committing.
A realistic view of most careers is that people...	often change paths and combine interests over a lifetime — Most careers are nonlinear — people change direction and blend interests over time, so exploration is a lifelong skill, not a one-time task.
“Job shadowing” means...	spending time observing someone at their actual work — Job shadowing is observing a professional during their real workday — a low-commitment way to see what a path is actually like.
If a path looks glamorous online, you should...	look for the everyday reality behind the highlights — Online portrayals show peak moments; wise exploration looks for the everyday reality behind the glamorous highlights.
Exploring several paths before committing is wise because...	you make a more informed choice and discover options you hadn’t considered — Exploring widens your information and surfaces options you'd never have found — leading to a more informed, confident decision.
Exploring paths early (in high school) is helpful because...	you have low-stakes time to try things and learn what fits — High school is a low-stakes time to sample widely — exploring early builds information without locking you into anything.
The purpose of exploring paths is to...	gather real information so YOUR choice fits YOU — Exploration gathers information so your choice fits you — there's no single best career for everyone, only the one that fits.
Discovering you DON'T like a path during exploration is...	a valuable result — you saved yourself a wrong turn — Finding out a path isn't for you is a genuine win — you gained real information cheaply and avoided a costly wrong turn.
The best way to learn what a job is really like is to...	talk to people who actually do it — Firsthand accounts from people who do the work are the most accurate source — media and assumptions often mislead.
A good exploration question about a path is...	“What does a normal day actually look like?” — Asking what a normal day looks like reveals the reality of a path — the routine, not the highlight reel.

4. Asking real people about real paths

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Informational interviews build a “network,” which is...	a web of real relationships you can learn from over time — A network is genuine relationships you learn from over time — not a follower count or people to “use.”
After an informational interview, you should...	send a short thank-you and note what you learned — A brief thank-you (and jotting down what you learned) is courteous and cements the insight — pressuring for a job would sour the relationship.
A strong opening request is...	“Could I ask you 15 minutes of questions about your work?” — Asking politely for a short block of time to learn (not for a job) makes it easy for someone to say yes.
An “informational interview” is...	a short, friendly conversation to learn about someone’s work — An informational interview is a low-pressure conversation to learn about someone's work and path — you're gathering information, not applying for a job.
Informational interviewing is a skill because...	it can be learned and improves with practice — Like any skill, informational interviewing improves with practice — early awkwardness fades as you do a few.
If someone is too busy to talk, the respectful response is...	thank them and ask if a quick email question would be okay — Respecting a “no” — and offering a lighter option like one email question — keeps the relationship positive and often still gets you help.
Talking to people in DIFFERENT paths (not just one) helps because...	you can compare real trade-offs and find the best fit for you — Hearing from several paths lets you compare real trade-offs, so the fit for YOU becomes clearer than any single account could show.
The main value of an informational interview is...	honest, first-hand information you can’t get from a website — Its value is candid, first-hand information about a path — the reality behind the official descriptions, which no website fully captures.
A good informational-interview question is...	“What surprised you most about this work?” — Open questions about their real experience (“what surprised you?”) draw out useful, honest insight — better than leading with salary.
You should prepare for an informational interview by...	researching a bit and writing a few genuine questions first — A little research plus a few genuine questions shows respect for their time and gets you far more than showing up unprepared.

5. Decision-making without full information

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
“Deciding under uncertainty” means...	making a reasonable choice even though you can’t know everything — Most real decisions are made without complete information — the skill is choosing reasonably despite uncertainty, not waiting for certainty that never comes.
Two options both look good and you can’t decide. A reasonable move is to...	notice that either is fine, pick one, and move forward — When two options are both genuinely good, the risk of choosing “wrong” is low — pick one and move, rather than staying stuck.
Waiting for “complete certainty” before deciding usually...	means you never decide, and time decides for you — Certainty rarely arrives; endless waiting is “analysis paralysis,” and not-deciding lets circumstances decide for you.
Getting a bit more information before a big, hard-to-reverse choice is...	usually worth it, up to a point — For big, hard-to-reverse choices, gathering a bit more information is usually worth it — but only up to the point of diminishing returns.
The core idea of deciding under uncertainty is that...	you can act wisely without knowing everything — Deciding under uncertainty is the learnable skill of acting wisely without complete information — essential because the future is never fully knowable.
Involving a trusted adult in a big decision is...	smart — a second perspective catches blind spots — Seeking a trusted adult’s perspective is a strength — it catches blind spots — while the decision still remains yours.
A decision that turns out imperfectly means...	you made a reasonable call with the info you had — and can learn from it — A good decision is judged by the process (reasonable given what you knew), not only the outcome — luck plays a role, and imperfect results are for learning.
A “reversible” decision should be treated...	more lightly — you can adjust if it’s wrong — Reversible decisions carry lower stakes — you can adjust later — so they deserve less agonizing than truly permanent ones.
After making a decision under uncertainty, a wise person...	commits, then adjusts as they learn more — The mature pattern is to commit to your best reasonable choice, then adjust as new information arrives — not to second-guess endlessly.
A useful tool for a hard choice is to...	list the trade-offs of each option against your values — Listing each option’s trade-offs against your values turns a vague worry into a comparison you can actually reason about.

6. Future orientation

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Future orientation does NOT mean...	sacrificing all present happiness for a distant goal — Healthy future orientation balances present and future — it's not grimly sacrificing all present wellbeing for a distant goal.
Your image of your future self will...	change as you learn and grow — and that's expected — Your future self is a working sketch that updates as you learn and grow — revising it is a sign of growth, not failure.
Thinking about your future self helps decision-making because...	you can ask “which choice does that person thank me for?” — Asking which option your future self would thank you for is a practical lens for weighing present choices against long-term wellbeing.
Setting a long-term goal works best when you also...	break it into a concrete next step you can take soon — A long-term goal becomes actionable when paired with a concrete near-term step — that bridges the distant vision to what you do this week.
The point of picturing your future self is to...	guide today's choices toward who YOU want to become — Picturing your future self guides today's choices toward who you want to become — it's personal, not a template copied from someone else.
A realistic view of your future is that...	you can influence it with choices, though you can't control everything — You can meaningfully influence your future through choices, even though you can't control everything — agency without illusion of total control.
Imagining your future self in detail tends to...	make long-term goals feel real and worth acting on now — A vivid picture of your future self makes long-term goals feel real, which motivates present action — research links it to better follow-through.
Future orientation is linked to better outcomes such as...	follow-through on goals and thoughtful decisions — Future orientation is associated with stronger goal follow-through and more thoughtful decisions — not with guaranteed success or an easy road.
“Future orientation” means...	connecting choices now to the person you want to become — Future orientation is linking today's choices to your longer-term self — not predicting the future exactly, but steering toward who you want to become.
A choice now that helps your future self might feel...	harder now but worth it later (delayed reward) — Choices that serve your future self often trade some ease now for a bigger payoff later — recognizing that trade-off is future orientation in action.

7. Purpose & meaning (self-authorship)

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
If you don't have a clear purpose yet, that's...	completely normal — purpose is discovered over time — Not having a clear purpose in your teens is normal — it's discovered gradually through experience and reflection, not assigned overnight.
Purpose tends to combine...	your strengths, your values, and a need in the world — A sense of purpose often lives where your strengths, your values, and a real-world need overlap.
"Self-authorship" means...	forming your own beliefs and direction rather than just following others — Self-authorship (Kegan/Baxter Magolda) is developing your own beliefs and direction from an internal compass — the hallmark of late-adolescent growth.
A healthy purpose statement focuses on...	contribution and growth, not comparison to others — A healthy purpose centers on contribution and personal growth — comparison-driven purpose ("beat everyone") tends to erode wellbeing.
Writing about your purpose helps because...	putting it into words makes it clearer and easier to act on — Writing a purpose statement clarifies fuzzy feelings into something you can act on — and it's a living draft you revise, not a binding contract.
The point of writing your purpose is...	to author your own direction — for you, not to impress anyone — Writing your purpose is an act of self-authorship — for your own clarity and direction, not a graded exercise or a bid for approval.
Purpose supports resilience because...	a strong "why" helps you keep going through setbacks — A clear "why" helps you persist through difficulty — purpose fuels resilience, though it doesn't remove setbacks.
Purpose can be found in ordinary work because...	meaning comes from how and why you do it, not only the title — Meaning comes from how and why you work, so purpose is available in ordinary roles — not reserved for prestigious titles.
A sense of "purpose" is best described as...	a reason your efforts matter to you and, often, to others — Purpose is a durable sense that your efforts matter — to you and often to others — beyond money or status.
Your purpose can...	evolve as you grow and learn more about yourself and the world — Purpose evolves with you — it's discovered and revised over time, and yours is distinct from anyone else's.

8. Integrating values, strengths, and a next step

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
The ultimate goal of NorthQuest is to help you...	get better at authoring your own direction over your life — NorthQuest builds the lifelong skill of authoring your own direction — not handing you a single “correct” career or ranking you against peers.
A good “direction plan” integrates...	your values, your strengths, and a concrete next step — A direction plan brings together what matters to you (values), what you're good at (strengths), and a concrete next step — not just a job title.
Sharing your plan with a counselor or trusted adult helps because...	they can offer perspective, resources, and honest feedback — A counselor or trusted adult can add perspective, connections, and honest feedback — while the plan remains yours to own.
A direction plan should be treated as...	a living draft you revisit and revise — A direction plan is a living draft — you revisit and revise it as you learn, grow, and encounter new options.
A direction plan works best when it...	fits YOUR values and strengths, not someone else's expectations — The best plan fits your own values and strengths — plans built to meet others' expectations tend not to hold up.
The most useful part of a direction plan is often...	the specific next step you can take this month — The near, concrete next step is what actually creates momentum — long predictions are less useful than something you can do this month.
A realistic first step toward almost any path is to...	talk to someone who does it and try a small taste of it — For nearly any direction, a realistic first step is talking to someone in it and sampling the work — small, low-risk, high-information.
The healthiest mindset about your direction is...	curiosity and openness — it's a journey, not a single verdict — Approaching your direction with curiosity and openness fits reality — it's an evolving journey, not a one-time verdict you must get perfect.
A direction plan is “done” when...	it names your values, a strength, and a real next step — for now — A direction plan is “done for now” once it captures your values, a strength, and a concrete next step — you'll revisit it as you go.
If your plan changes completely next year, that...	is normal and healthy — you learned something — A plan changing means you gained information and grew — that's the point of planning as a process, not a failure of the plan.

Keep going

You practiced **80 cards** from NorthQuest. Come back to the ones you missed — spaced-out practice makes them stick.

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