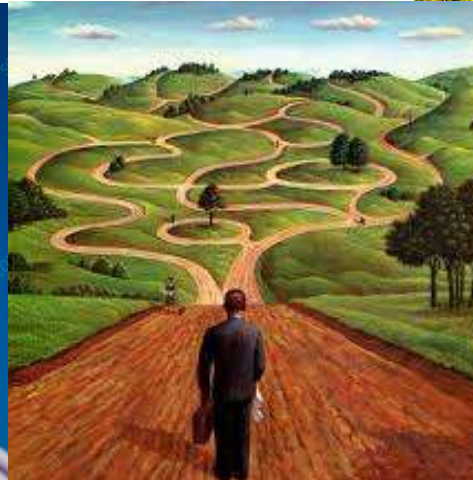




 **Richmond**  
American University  
London

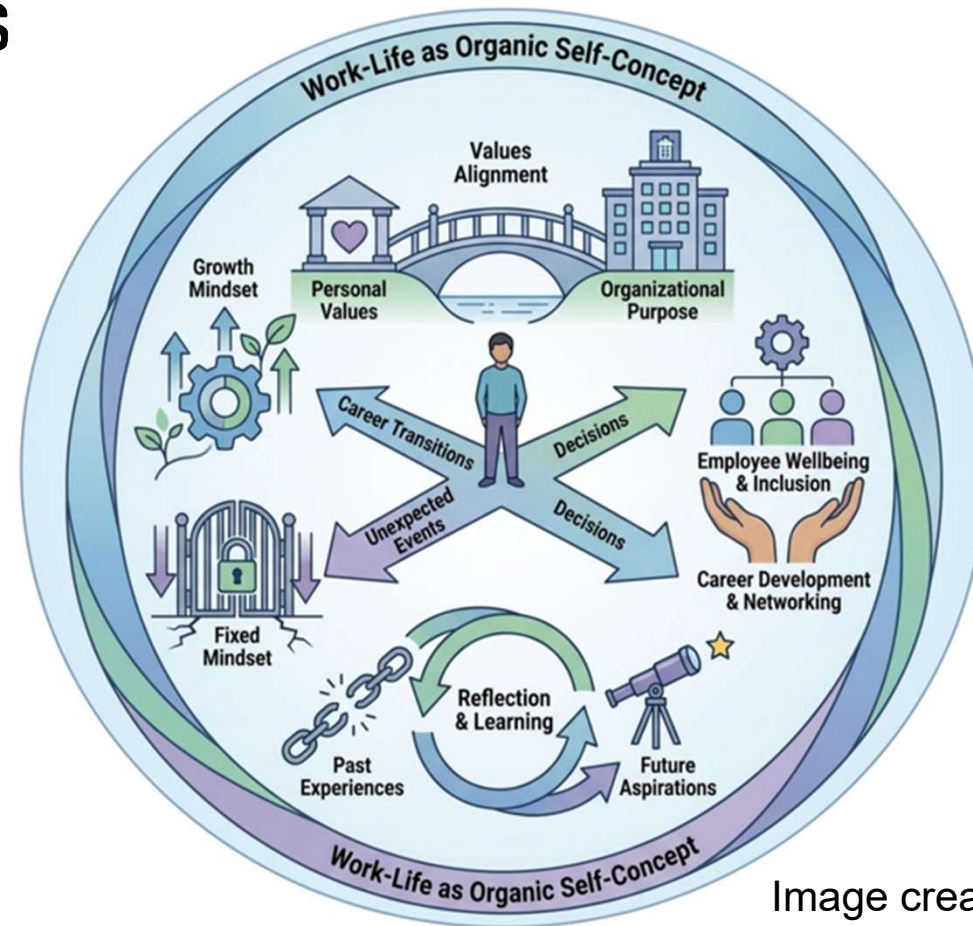
# Metaphors: Vocabulary of Success and Failure in Career Guidance

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Today, we will talk about

- Common metaphors in Career Guidance
- Career Theories



# If your career were a doodle, what would it look like?

→ A straight line — smooth and steady

2.5

📈 A squiggly line — twists, turns & surprises

3.2

🪜 A ladder — climbing one step at a time

2.9

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree



## Climbing a ladder

- Everyone starts at the bottom
- Progress is always upwards
- It's a linear path, but there can be set-backs
- There is a planned destination at the top
- There may be others ahead of you or behind you progressing at different paces



## Cycles/Seasons

- Different life stages
- Vocational maturity not defined to a chronological time
- Skills grow organically and those developing them must be flexible, adaptable and resilient
- Sometimes you will make great strides in growth, sometimes you won't
- Change is inevitable and welcomes in a life cycle of continuous learning

# Journey to a destination



- Your pathway is unknown, but your destination is clear
- You are progressing toward a goal
- Others may join you in your journey, but they may take different routes
- Sometimes your journey isn't linear—you might get lost and have to find your way back
- If you choose a short cut, you might get to your destination faster...or you might not



# Pathways

- With so many choices, your path has an unclear destination
- Advancement is not only vertical
- Sometimes pathways converge and sometimes they don't
- Sometimes you meet other travelers along the way and travel with them, sometimes you travel alone
- Your journey may never end...



## Building/Construction

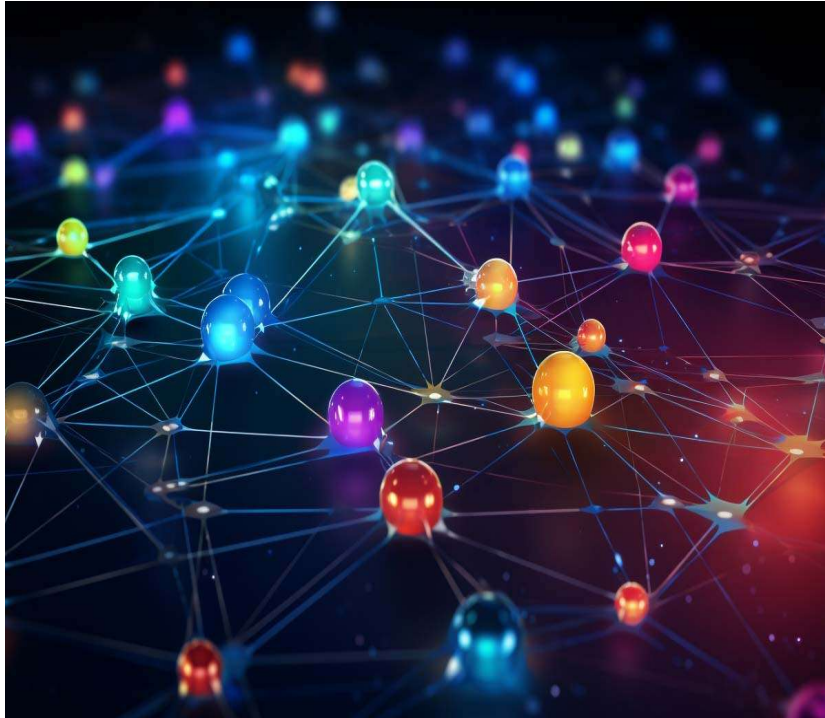
- Everyone starts at the bottom and build up from there
- Sometimes areas need to be reinforced and sometimes the design changes
- Renovations can go on endlessly
- The ‘solid’ nature of construction reflects a foundation of skills

# Story-telling



- Much like a life well lived, a career pathway is a story of your education, experience, connections and work
- Your story is unique and built on your own inspiration and interests
- You can choose the narrative of your story and indeed change directions if you don't like the way it is going

# Network/Web



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○

- Life situations make the result unpredictable
- In the same way people meet one another and learn new things, your career can form a network of people, experiences and outcomes
- Your network grows over time and so do your skills, contacts and expertise
- Making connections between roles and experiences drives your career journey and the possibilities of where you may end up are endless
- Connecting, learning from others, risk-taking, optimism



## Navigating your way

- You can use tools to support your journey
- Learning to use the tools is an important part of making decision about your future
- Occasionally the tools malfunction leading to a route that doesn't lead to a clear destination
- Constant reviewing and adapting plans

Which metaphor matches your  
career journey?

