# Career Services Assignment: Building your Narrative

## Intro:

For this assignment you’ll be articulating your personal narrative or “story”. It’s a common misconception among boot camp students that since most of them didn’t work in tech prior to attending the boot camp, their personal histories are irrelevant in the post-boot camp job search. Nothing could be further than the truth. Not only will your story create inroads into the industry, but prospective employers want to know who you are, and how your story pertains to their company or product.

This assignment will walk you through a series of steps, the results of which will be your elevator pitch, or your response to the interview question, “Tell me about yourself.” We encourage you to spend some time with the below questions, and to dig deep when formulating your responses. Believe it or not 2/3 of your interview experience are behavioral/situational based questions. This exercise is key to successfully preparing for this part of the interview process. The more completely you’re able to connect the dots and articulate your story, the better off you’ll be in the job search. This assignment will take approximately one 1.5 hours.

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## Instructions:

1. **Make a copy of this doc** - it will automatically add it to your drive (you’ll need to use a Gmail address)
2. Add your name to the title of the doc
3. Complete each of the steps below
4. ***Once you’ve completed the assignment*, share it with your \*\*CSM and make a 1:1 appointment** (email addresses and calendar links below). *Please note that it’s critical that you complete the assignment and submit it prior to your 1:1. If you haven’t put the appropriate time and energy into the assignment, your CSM will ask you to reschedule your meeting.*

\*\* **CSM email addresses / calendar links: Some CSMs share the same “location” (i.e Python Part-time & Bellevue) your dedicated CSM will email you directly to clarify their support**

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## Assignment:

### Step 1/4 - Values Assessment

Your values drive your decisions and personal and professional pursuits. Until you’ve situated them in the context of your values, it’s often difficult to find the connections or “throughlines” between your past professional, educational, and personal pursuits and your new career.

Take this [values assessment](https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e35whN7tkXtvlHv) and list the results below

Your four final values:

1. Enjoyment of the activity itself
2. Hard work and Commitment
3. Personal growth and learning
4. Rewarding and Supportive Relationships

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### Step 2/4 - Personality Assessment

While you may or may not subscribe to the accuracy of the Myers Briggs personality assessment, it is a useful tool in helping you identify strengths that pertain directly to your personal narrative.

Take this [Myers Briggs test](http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp), and then head to this site to read about your personality type: [check out this personality resource](https://www.16personalities.com/personality-types).

**Please share your personality type results below:**

1. **MY MBTI PERSONALITY TYPE** (example: INTJ, Architect): \_\_\_INTJ\_\_\_\_

Pick out three or four of the strengths AND weaknesses that resonate with you and list them below. If you need more ideas for strengths/weaknesses to share please check out these [24 Character Descriptions](https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths) to choose from.

1. Perseverance
2. Perspective
3. Teamwork
4. Love of Learning
5. Creativity
6. Prudence
7. Zest
8. Social Intelligence

### Step 3/4 - Type out responses to the following questions:

*Why did you decide to attend a coding boot camp? How does this decision reflect your values and strengths?*

*Enjoy writing scripts, wanted to get better at them. Reflects personal growth and learning.*

*Briefly describe your past professional pursuits, educational history and personal passions and interests. How do your professional pursuits, education, interests and passions reflect your values and strengths?*

*I earned my Associate’s degree in 2015, then bounced around different jobs using the knowledge and experience gained to advance my career. I then determined that earning my Bachelor’s degree would further help advance my career so I enrolled in school again, this time finishing in 2020. This I believe is an example of hard work and commitment, as well as personal growth and learning.*

*Given your two above responses, what are the connections between your past professional pursuits, education, interests and passions, and your new career as a software engineer (or the associated career path of your choice)?*

*Achieving this will take hard work and commitment, but will provide personal growth and learning.*

*What was the first moment you considered software engineering (or the career track of your choice)? What obstacles did you overcome to pursue this career?*

*The first moment I seriously considered software engineering was when I saw the flyer for the bootcamp. I already had some experience writing code and enjoyed those opportunities so I figured worst case I would get better at my current job. If it turns into a different career all the better. The main obstacle I had to overcome was convincing my wife that I was going back to school yet again.*

*What do you love about the actual work of coding? How does this reflect your values and strengths?*

*Everyone’s heard the saying “Work smarter, not harder”, I think writing code is a perfect example of that. Most of the code that I have written for work has been to either automate a task or to save time by quickly gathering the information needed with a script rather than manually looking up. I love the fact that a few lines of code can save myself and others hours of repetitive, boring work. This helps build rewarding and supportive relationships as well as helping me enjoy an activity rather than dreading it.*

*Given your values, strengths, and personal and professional history, what kind of work do you want to do upon completing the program? What sort of impact do you want to have?*

*I am very open to becoming a Software Development Engineer, but am also open to continuing down the Systems Engineer path that I am currently on. I would hope that my work makes others jobs easier, more efficient and enjoyable.*

### Step 4/4 - Crafting Your Elevator Pitch

Now that you’ve reflected on your story, and how your values and strengths create throughlines that link your past to present, it’s time to craft your elevator pitch. This is just a first pass, and it certainly doesn’t have to be perfect. Your CSM will support you in both articulating your story and dialing in your elevator pitch during your 1:1.

**What’s in an elevator pitch?**

* An elevator pitch is a 30-60 second pitch about *who you are, what you do and where you’re going.* It highlights your uniqueness and is the “launchpad” for any conversation, be it in an interview or networking setting.
* A specific and personalized elevator pitch can go a long way in helping you network, will inform your online summaries, and will constitute your response to the dreaded question, “Tell me about yourself.”
* Note: we provide examples below, but don’t rely on them too much. Create your pitch in your own image.

**Who are you in the present and what are you passionate about? (Type out your response)**

Example: *“I’m a full stack developer, knowledgeable about Python and C#, and I’m super passionate about creative problem solving.”*

I am a Support Engineer with primarily a Windows background, however I am currently gaining Linux experience as well. I am passionate about finding solutions to complex problems.

**What makes you unique and how does your past reflect that?**

Example: *“I’m a really creative person and I love to build things with my hands. I have 5 years experience in sales but decided to make a career transition in order to pursue opportunities in tech where I can exercise my creativity. I recently completed an intensive 14 week coding boot camp, which helped me to enhance my knowledge of full stack software development. I’m really looking forward to joining a dynamic, collaborative team where I can share my skills and knowledge of 3 different software languages.”*

I spent most of my life working in a blue collar environment and didn’t go back to school until I was 36 years old. This prior experience helps me see the benefit of working smarter, not harder, yet also has shown me the values of teamwork and perseverance.

**What do you want to do in the future?**

Example: *“Though I’m comfortable in all phases of development, I love using my experience in sales and customer service to interact with people, so I really enjoy the customer-facing aspect of front-end development. I’m looking for a mission-driven company that is working on innovative new products and services, and that shares my value for creating a positive social impact.”*

*I want to work in an environment where I can create tools that will help others be more efficient at their job, while saving the company both time and money.*

As you look over your elevator pitch, does it effectively represent your strengths and values? Does it establish the throughlines that connect your past to present? Does it effectively portray your passions and how those passions relate to being a software engineer?