

Y  
C I O  
U

*Nicki Sorger*  
August 27, 2019

I am honored and humbled that you chose to spend your last session of the day with me, so let's make it a good one!

**SYNOPSIS:**

Representing yourself. Asking for what you want. These things are hard, but they don't have to be. YOU are the corporate executive in charge of YOUR CAREER strategy and implementation. Be your own brand. Learn about tailoring your resume, tips for applying for jobs, and setting goals. Understand why to say yes, but not be a "yes man".



The book equivalent of me when I was a child = Harold and the Purple Crayon

The world was new fun and exciting...and I --- I was an ARTIST!

Stay the Course. Forge Ahead. Go the Distance.

Adult Nicki = Hustle, find what you're good at.

Personal Motto: Stay the Course. Forge Ahead. Go the Distance.

- Developed early on

# CIO

- A **chief information officer** (CIO) is the corporate executive in charge of information technology (IT) strategy and implementation.

Standard Definition

# CIO of You

- YOU are the corporate executive in charge of YOUR CAREER strategy and implementation.

My Definition

This is about you and building your brand

**“ALWAYS  
REMEMBER,  
YOUR FOCUS  
DETERMINES  
YOUR REALITY.”**

**- GEORGE LUCAS**

Speaking from the true nerd in me – a quote from George Lucas

Belief starts from within.

# THE BEGINNING (before I knew anything)

Before I knew anything



### **Humble Beginnings**

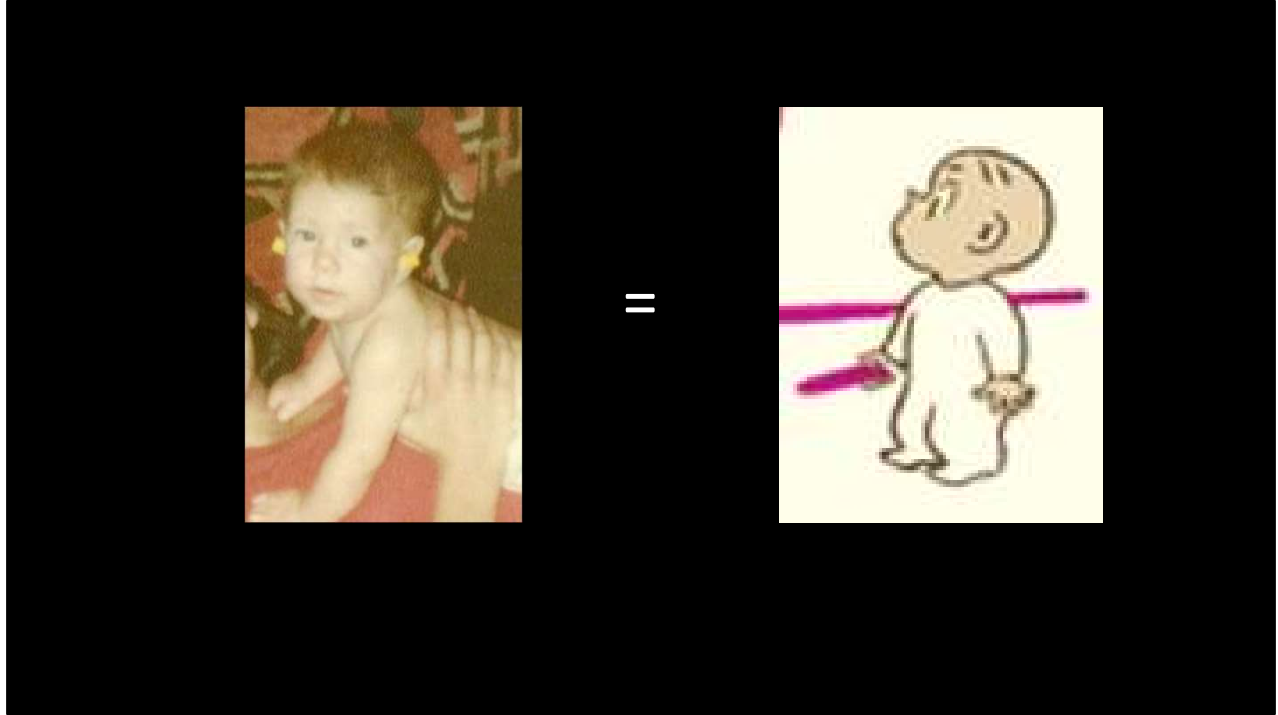
- I came from a poor to average family
- Working class, blue collar
- My parents were average students (K-12).
  - I always heard “Be better than I was.”
  - My thought “That won’t be too hard.”
- No one in my family had a college education
  - Dad and uncle did trade school

Based on my family and my upbringing, I could have foreseen my manifest destiny as lower-middle class, doing just enough to get by, with only a few luxuries in life.

### **Definition of *manifest destiny***

: a future event accepted as inevitable





Nicki = Artist

- I really thought this could be.

Truly, Artist meant CREATIVITY

- High School: Translated to Yearbook Editor and Writing

HARNESS CREATIVITY IN A PRACTICAL WAY



Get a Job / Independence – YOUNG

- Just out of HS, trying to figure it out.

I was going to community college:

- Initial focus – communications; plan to transfer after AA
- Only 1 year - Quit – financial hardship
  - parents made too much money, no financial aid for me

I wanted to work

GOAL: get out of parents house

A few years of jobs – ups / downs

- Enough was enough
- I needed to quit screwing around – figure out career

# METAMORPHOSIS

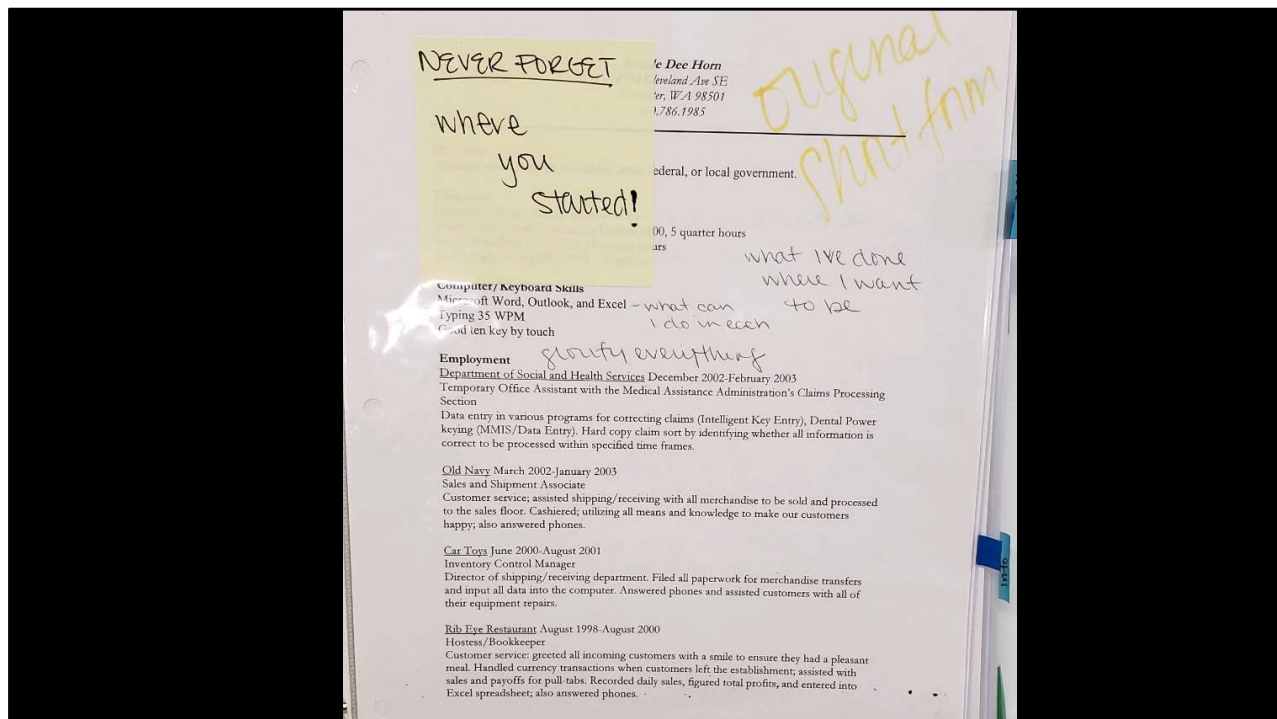
The change begins

- I'm 22
- 4 years out of High School
- My mom (you saw her earlier) worked for the state
- Well, let's give that a go.



THE BELIEVER: Don Johnson

- Not the actor
- 1<sup>st</sup> Supervisor – hired me into the state (DSHS)
- Reminded me of Mr. Magoo
  
- My first job at DSHS – data entry - a short timeline
  - October 2002 – Interview
  - Hiring Freeze – the call “I want to hire you, but there’s a hiring freeze. When I can hire again, I’ll call you”
  - December 2002 – hired with the state (6 month temp)
  - Feb 2003 – RIF’d
    - 2 weeks to do my resume and apply
      - Don would work with me
    - Time for me to find something
  - Nick-of-Time: Kept me for the remainder of my 6 month temp



NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU STARTED!

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> Resume that I EVER wrote – Don Johnson helped me.

The notes I made on it, were from talking to him.

# Resume + Tips For Applying

Exercise / breakout: **Tailoring your Resume + Tips for Applying for Jobs**


Handout:

- Tailoring Your Resume

Exercise / breakout: **Tailoring your Resume + Tips for Applying for Jobs**

Handouts:

- Tailoring Your Resume (samples – next slide)



**Nicole Dee Horn**

5119 Camle Dr NE Olympia, WA 98516 360.459.5568

**Objective**  
To work as a Forms & Records Analyst, while pursuing my Bachelor of Arts degree.

**Education**  
I plan to pursue my Bachelor of Arts degree starting Fall 2007.  
Pierce College Fort Steilacoom 2004-2006 ~ Associate of Arts Degree  
Pe Ell High School 1995-1998 ~ Diploma


**Computer/Keyboard Skills**

- Adobe Acrobat: Create/revise standard and fill-in forms. Use JavaScript to manipulate fill-in fields.
- Informed Designer: Create/revise standard and OCR/ICR (Optical/Intelligent Character Recognition) forms.
- Microsoft Word: Create and maintain standard forms, composition of letters, and use of Mail Merge.
- Microsoft Excel: Create new spreadsheets/formulas. Work existing spreadsheets.
- Microsoft Outlook: Compose e-mails, set up appointments, and use an electronic calendar.
- Microsoft PowerPoint: Create/revise slideshow presentations. Create JPG headlines and graphics.
- Dreamweaver UltraDev 4: Create/revise pages to update Intranet website; includes making links to other pages/documents and inserting graphics/photos.
- Macromedia Fireworks 4: Crop and alter photos, headlines, and graphics.
- Aldus/Adobe PageMaker: Create layouts; insert text, graphics, and scanned/digital photographs.
- Typing 40 WPM - certified
- Ten key by touch

**Employment Experience**

- Create standard, fill-in, and OCR/ICR forms. Make requested revisions to existing forms. Use knowledge of JavaScript to manipulate fill-in forms to the specifications needed. Test each form to make sure it meets customer needs and is as user friendly as possible.
- Maintain Agency forms with Microsoft Word, Informed Designer, and Adobe Acrobat.
- Work with Department of Revenue staff and State Printer to see the creation/revision process of each job through completion. Work with customers to make each job as cost effective and timely as possible, suggest more efficient ways of production.
- Work with United States Postal Service, Consolidated Mail Services, and State Printer to make sure

then



**Nicole Dee Sorger**

< address > | < phone > business | < phone > cell | < email >

**Objective** I am seeking a position with the Washington State Department of Revenue as the ATLAS Control Officer. I am interested in opportunities enabling me to provide leadership and collaborate across the organization. I have excellent knowledge, skills, and abilities in the areas of information technology including project management, software testing, and business analysis.

**Job Related Experience** Serving as a Project Manager (PM) I am directly responsible for the successful delivery of complex projects. I am a successful PM because of the people I work with on my projects. Flexibility has allowed me to build rapport with my peers, team members, and customers throughout the Agency. I continually reach out to my teams to collaborate on work activities. I find it's easier to have influence when your team can utilize their strengths.

I've been involved in the Agency Mentoring Program for Leadership. Based on my career goals, I was paired with the Assistant Director of Human Resources. Involvement in the mentoring program has caused me to push myself and enable growth in ways that I thought were further out in my career. I strive to create strong, functional teams and I've had success bringing disparate teams together.

In November 2017, I became a Crucial Conversations Trainer; and I became a certified trainer June 2018. The Department has invested in me for the future of this organization. I've utilized the skills from this training and I've seen the benefits, specifically on my projects. The certification is another way for me to give back to the agency.

In March 2018, I earned my Competent Communicator through Toastmasters. The program has opened up a side of myself that is confident, engaging, and inspiring. I currently serve as an officer in the Department's Money Talks, I'm Vice President of Education.

**Employment History**

May 2003 – Present	Washington State Department of Revenue Olympia, WA
<b>Project Manager (2014 – present)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and manage multiple in-flight projects, including: TLSR Rollout 3 Legacy Project and co-PM on the State Data Center (SDC) Migration Project.</li> <li>Manage and deliver multiple projects, including: TLSR Rollout 2 Legacy Project, Listserv Replacement Project, TLSR Rollout 1 Legacy Decommission, TIRTS Aerospace and Aluminum Smelter Project, co-PM on planning phase for 6400 Building Project-IT components, Facilities Remodel supporting the TLSR Project, GIS Platform Migration, HP NonStop Migration.</li> </ul>	

Ask yourself:

- What's your brand?
- Who's your target audience?

THEN:

- When I first started and thought I was going to be in graphic design, my resume had colors and was very artsy.*

NOW:

- When I transitioned into IT, I scaled it back to basics, removed color and excess art fluff.*



### Handouts:

- State Jobs: create your profile and apply
- Interview Prep
- Interview Prep: Worksheet

Exercise / breakout: **Tailoring your Resume + Tips for Applying for Jobs**

### Handouts:

- State Jobs: create your profile and apply
- Interview Prep
- Interview Prep: Worksheet

Interview – January 24<sup>th</sup> – 10 am – Dept. of Revenue

- Leader
- Organized
- Technically Inquisitive
- Focused
- Project Experience
- Mentor
- Driven
- Hard worker
- Innovative
- Dedicated
- Loyal
- know-how-show-how-doer
- Enthusiastic
- Work well with others
- Not afraid to ask questions
- Learn quickly / Enjoy learning
- Take the time to do it right the first time
- Manage my time well

Why am I interested in this position?

- My skills are an excellent fit
  - Project experience, allows me to know what to expect and how I'd like to manage a project
  - Organizational mastermind
  - Top notch documentation skills
  - I use my leadership skills regularly, within my group and others
- Personal growth
  - This will give me an opportunity to guide others
  - My past project experience will help shape and create a cohesive project experience for my team
  - Enhance delegation abilities, instead of individual work
  - Learn new tools and processes
- I run my current workload like a mini-project
  - I try to use time estimates, prioritization, and communication as I'm working through my personal daily/weekly/monthly workload
  - I like the challenge of setting goals and trying to achieve them within the timeframe I set

Strengths:

- Opportunistic
- Organized
- Allow others to provide feedback
- Know when to ask for help

Weaknesses:

- Haven't been good at delegation
- Have a hard time saying "NO" to people, even if my plate is full

**Premier Agency:**

The longer I'm here, the longer I believe this. The Department of Revenue is a premier agency.

People work here because they want to. Because they believe in the work we do. We grow people, opportunities, and innovative ideas. We move state government forward.

DOR has been great to me: 11 years and counting. Of course like any job, there are ups and downs, but there is no place I'd rather be.

**Strength(s):****Opportunistic**

I use my surroundings as opportunities. My life is my canvas and I make the most of it. I always look at it as being a part of something. I want to use my knowledge to make a difference. It's mainly about being observant and catching those small moments, the glimmers of hope, that others dismiss and making something out of them.

**Organized**

I am constantly trying to be more organized. As I think to myself "Is this even possible?" I have always had a way about my personal organization, something that people envy, something they want. It's very hard to describe. I don't think I've had to work at this...if anything I have to work on not being so OCD about the process. A place for everything and everything in its place!

**Allow others to provide feedback**

Not just feedback, but ideas. I want everyone to work together and have input. It's something I've learned a lot over the past year...getting people's buy-in. Make people feel like they're a part of something, they'll follow you anywhere. Earn their respect, not just talk over them. Listen to their valid points and justification, let people speak their mind and have ownership over the end result.

**Know when to ask for help**

I do not know everything, even though my 'Nikipedia' reputation seems to speak otherwise. I am knowledgeable about quite a bit, and I even push myself to find the answer, but at times enough is enough...ask someone more qualified. Even then, I don't always look to get the answers handed to me, but to guide me in the right direction. I try to choose wisely when looking for leadership, and so far it hasn't let me down.

**Weakness(es):****Haven't been good at delegation**

As the years have gone on, this is something I've gotten better at, but it doesn't mean it cannot be improved. Most recently I've tried my hand at leading the ESS Training Committee. This required a lot of teamwork and asking (and sometimes telling) others to take on tasks. I found that by instilling trust in others, asking for their feedback, and working with them on the end result, I can be just as happy allowing others to help get us to the finish line. Now, it's just keeping in line with that mentality over time.

**Have a hard time saying "NO" to people, even if my plate is full**

I thought I had gotten better at this...and then the past year has proved otherwise. Not necessarily saying "no," but the time it takes to accomplish things, and allowing other tasks to be piled on. I've had to try my hand at resistance and "normal" work hours, but I push to get it done and make everyone happy. ...and everyone else is happy, and I'm the one who suffers. I need to set more personal boundaries for myself when it comes to a work/life balance.

**The time is now:**

Yes, the time is now. Believe. Believe in myself, my abilities, and in my willingness to make a difference. I have so many people telling me that this would be great for me. We need more people like "you." ...and I am trying to be that person. I feel like that person.

The more I work on myself and improving my 'brand,' the more I struggle with what I want. Last year it was the BA Supervisor position. My first real defeat in the interview/employment world...but it was worth it, and honestly at the time that was the goal. I struggled, I worked, I endured, and I succeeded. I have gained the respect of others. I have mentored and helped others promote. Everyone else is moving on and achieving their dreams and goals, and I want to be there too.

This position is just another form of leadership. I can be that leader. I am that leader. Will they let me? I hope they will. They know me; know my work ethic and what I can provide. Is that enough? What do I have to prove? What do I have to show them? Honestly, just me and that should be enough. So, where does that leave us?

I come in: prepared with war paint on, game face on. Let's do this. It's go time. Watch them watch you. Be the candidate they want, that they've dreamed of. Make a difference. Change their minds. As I've said before: You've gotta risk it to get the biscuit. Go – Be – Do. Eye of the Tiger!

## Interview Prep Samples – 3 of 3



#### DOR – the beginning

- May 2003 – Hired at DOR (6 month temp – Office Assistant Senior) -- TPS
- This happened 1 week before my 6 month mark @ DSHS (aka: you're booted)
- The bright side of this, my first 6 months wiz'd by!
  - You name it, I did it.
  - Lots of exposure.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> go-round with web design: I managed the TPS Intranet Page
- At the end, I applied for, and got my PERMANENT POSITION!!!

# GETTING GOALS (what do I want?)

# Say Yes

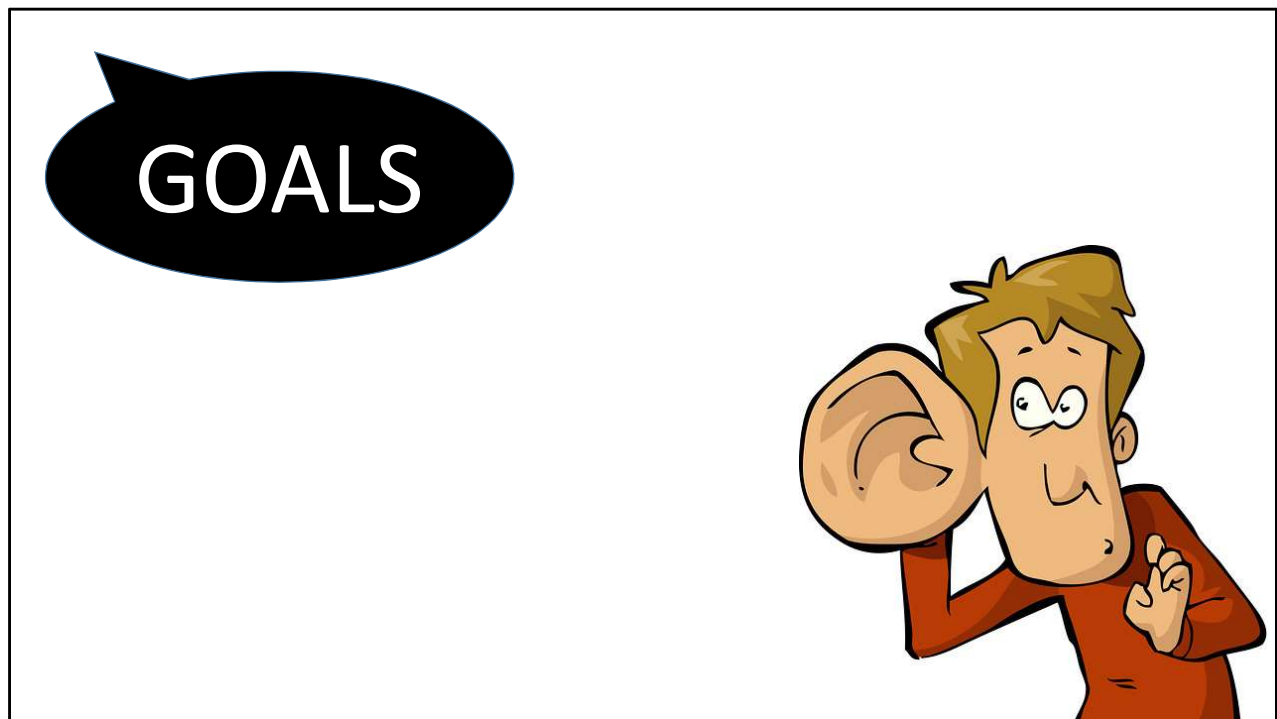
## Early Opportunities:

- Say YES, but don't be a 'Yes man' – there is a difference.
  - When you're given an **opportunity** to:
    - Learn
    - Grow
    - Stretch yourself
      - SAY YES
- Don't say yes to everything that comes your way
  - Weigh the options / value of the ask
  - Will this get me closer to what I want?
  - Am I even interested in this?

	12.79	12.82	12.93	13.24	13.53	13.87	14.18	14.52	14.86
	0.79	0.82	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.88	0.92	0.93	0.98
	26376	26988	27636	28248	28956	29616	30312	31032	31740
36	2198	2249	2303	2354	2413	2468	2526	2586	2645
	12.63	12.93	13.24	13.53	13.87	14.18	14.52	14.86	15.20
	0.82	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.88	0.92	0.93	0.98	1.02
08/02/02/05									
	26988	27636	28248	28956	29616	30312	31032	31740	32544
37	2249	2303	2354	2413	2468	2526	2586	2645	2712
	12.93	13.24	13.53	13.87	14.18	14.52	14.86	15.20	15.59
	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.88	0.92	0.93	0.98	1.02	1.01
08/02/01/05									
	27636	28248	28956	29616	30312	31032	31740	32544	33300
38	2303	2354	2413	2468	2526	2586	2645	2712	2775
	13.24	13.53	13.87	14.18	14.52	14.86	15.20	15.59	15.95
	0.86	0.89	0.88	0.92	0.93	0.98	1.02	1.01	1.06

- I had an opportunity to do an unofficial DJA (Developmental Job Assignment) in Forms & Records
  - I was back-filling someone else who'd taken an opportunity.
  - I learned new things, met new people, developed new skills
  - I was creating!
    - It was forms, but I was creating
  - I did the DJA for 15 months
  - Then applied and hired into it permanently – 1<sup>st</sup> in-training plan
- 1<sup>st</sup> Goal Achieved: Make at least as much as I was old (e.g.: “25 make 25K”)
- Back to school





Talk about what your goals are

- Apparently having 'goals' isn't common. Who knew?

When you talk to people, even casually, you're putting it out into the universe.

- Guess what?
- People are listening.

<2006 - Vikki retired (TPS AD), Julian (IS AD) took her place>

I was in school.

- I was talking about Transitioning out of F&R and figuring out what I wanted (aka: Next Steps)

Surprise visit from the IS CIO and Deputy CIO, Colin and Renee – out of the blue, their lead in “So, I hear you have goals.”

- Pssssh
- Yeah
- I want...

# THE OPPORTUNITY THAT CHANGED IT ALL

The Opportunity that changed it all

That conversation with Colin and Renee led to at least 3 more conversations and  
Informational Interviews

The Result = DJA in IS as a Software Tester

- What an opportunity it was

IT WAS A DREAM

# Living the Dream.

Young Nicki, even Adult Nicki, never even dreamed that she'd be here.

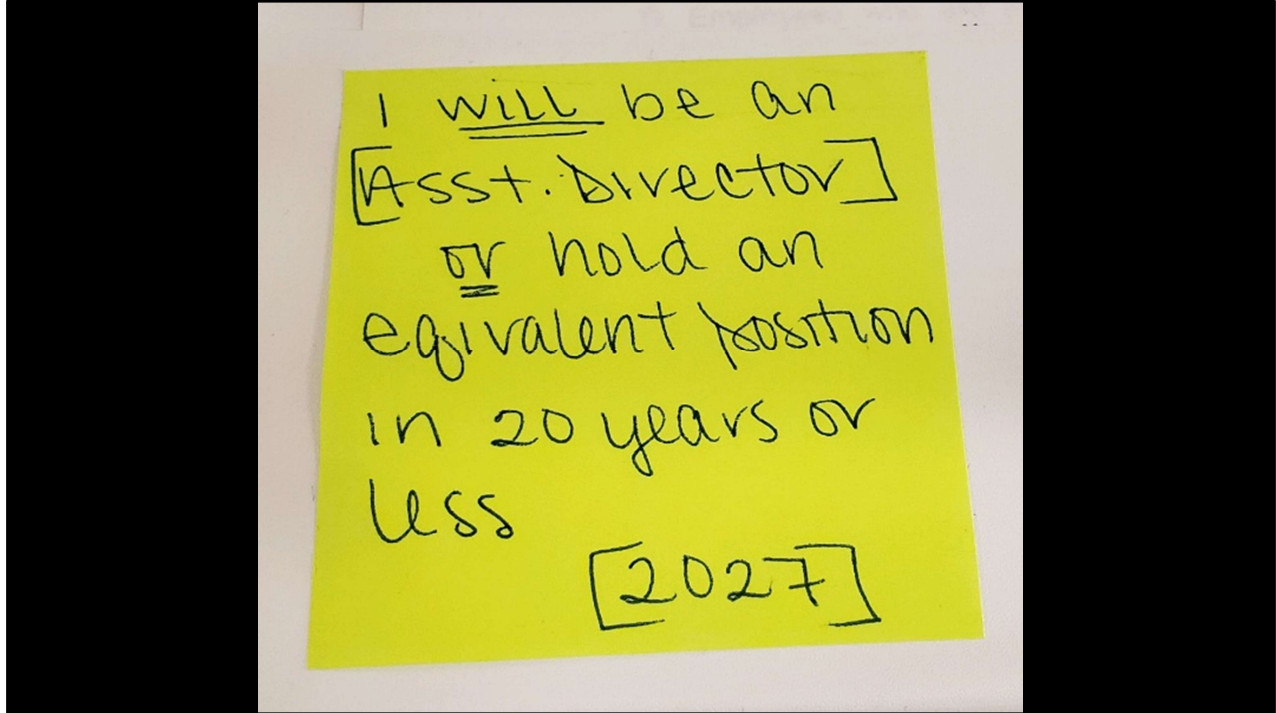
"Living The Dream." – something I joked about in TPS with some friends

Here I was: Living it. Loving it. \*Pinch Me\*

Then, the question: "So what do you want to do?"

- "Oh, I'll be Vikki in 20 years."
- <2007 Vikki came out of retirement, back to DOR, to be the IS CIO>

The "Unicorn" is born (aka: Post-it)



The “Unicorn” is born (aka: Post-it)

This was in 2007.

I call it the UNICORN because it’s a 20 year goal – in my mind, I’m unsure if it’s even obtainable.

- ...but damn, I said it.
- Let’s give it a whirl.
- Something I learned in my TPS days: “If it’s not committed to paper, it remains strictly a wish.” – so POST-IT

Another reason I call it a UNICORN: It can change.

- I wrote it in a way that would allow me to achieve in multiple ways. “AD or Equivalent Position”

It’s 12 years later – I still have this Post-it.

- I just took this picture yesterday.
- For those of you who are counting, I have 8 years remaining to achieve my goal.
  - It does say “...or less.” but I want to give myself the full gamut and not rush it.

# Getting a Mentor

At year 10, I got a mentor

I've mentored plenty

- NOW

Getting a Mentor

- GAME CHANGER

When I applied, I included my "Unicorn Goal"

- I was paired with the AD of HR

Initially terrified

- He's a pastor
- I've got the mouth of a trucker
  - "Oh dear lord, help me now"

The time was now, so I got serious and mapped it...

<b>DSHS</b>	<b>105 days</b>	<b>Mon 12/09/02</b>	<b>Fri 05/02/03</b>
Office Assistant (Temp)	105 days	Mon 12/09/02	Fri 05/02/03
<b>DOR</b>	<b>3973 days</b>	<b>Mon 05/05/03</b>	<b>Wed 07/25/18</b>
<b>TPS</b>	<b>1216 days</b>	<b>Mon 05/05/03</b>	<b>Mon 12/31/07</b>
Office Assistant (Temp)	132 days	Mon 05/05/03	Tue 11/04/03
Office Assistant (Perm)	325 days	Wed 11/05/03	Tue 02/01/05
<b>In-Training Plan: Forms &amp; Records Analyst</b>	<b>628 days</b>	<b>Wed 02/02/05</b>	<b>Fri 06/29/07</b>
F&R Analyst 1	261 days	Wed 02/02/05	Wed 02/01/06
F&R Analyst 2	367 days	Thu 02/02/06	Fri 06/29/07
F&R Analyst 3	131 days	Mon 07/02/07	Mon 12/31/07
<b>IS</b>	<b>2908 days</b>	<b>Mon 06/04/07</b>	<b>Wed 07/25/18</b>
Developmental Job Assignment (DJA): Tester	151 days	Mon 06/04/07	Mon 12/31/07
Tester - ITS 2	174 days	Tue 01/01/08	Fri 08/29/08
<b>In-Training Plan: Tester - ITS 4</b>	<b>522 days</b>	<b>Mon 09/01/08</b>	<b>Tue 08/31/10</b>
Tester - ITS 2	261 days	Mon 09/01/08	Mon 08/31/09
Tester - ITS 3	261 days	Tue 09/01/09	Tue 08/31/10
Tester - ITS 4	470 days	Wed 09/01/10	Tue 06/19/12
Business Analyst - ITS 4	454 days	Wed 06/20/12	Sat 03/15/14
Project Manager - ITS 5	1139 days	Sun 03/16/14	Wed 07/25/18

1<sup>st</sup> mapping – where I'd been

« NOW > Future	205 days	Tue 03/21/17	Sun 12/31/17		Building into the future -- this is the earliest I see it happening.
« Training	1 day?	Tue 03/21/17	Tue 03/21/17		
Supervisory					
Leadership					
How do I know if I want to be a supervisor?					
» Future (how I see it in my head)	2610 days	Mon 01/01/18	Fri 12/31/27		These are minimum years in positions.
Supervisor	522 days	Mon 01/01/18	Tue 12/31/19	22	Q: How do I know if I want to be a supervisor? Can I get to a senior mgr level w/o it?
Manager	522 days	Wed 01/01/20	Thu 12/30/21	29	
Sr Mgr	522 days	Fri 12/31/21	Mon 01/01/24	30	
Deputy / Prog Mgr	522 days	Tue 01/02/24	Wed 12/31/25	31	
AD	522 days	Thu 01/01/26	Fri 12/31/27	32	

2<sup>nd</sup> mapping – what I thought it'd take to achieve it.

Feb 2018 – I was asked “where’s that list from when we first met?”

\*Proudly: “Right here...”

Ugh \*gulp\* “I’m behind...”

# 2 Years Later

It's been 2 years later and I'm still working with my mentor – they've been a whirlwind.

I've:    pushed myself.    challenged myself.    seen results.

Things I've achieved:

- Became a Crucial Conversations Certified Training
- I've been in Toastmasters for 2.5 years
- I finished 2 major project rollouts
- I applied for at least 8 jobs last year
  - The last one culminating in the job I'm in now: ATLAS Control Officer – within our new sustainment office -- PS: my new leader is AMAZING!

Two major lows: Deaths

- I had to put my beloved puppa, Abbey, down
- My dad died

Two major highs: I had TWO pretty stellar vacations

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Vancouver, CA after a major project rollout
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: LA for HHN Hollywood and Disney, then Las Vegas and San Fran to boot!



# Setting Goals

Exercise / breakout: **Setting Goals**

Handout:

- My Success Goals

Exercise / breakout: **Setting Goals**

Short Term | 1 year

Intermediate Term | 2-5 years

Long Term | 5+ years

The beginning

Metamorphosis

Getting goals

The opportunity

The beginning: Who you want to be, before you know anything.

Metamorphosis: There's a point that will change you <could be a pivotal moment>

Getting goals: think about it -- By defining the things you want (aka: Goals) it will help you achieve.

The opportunity: look for these moments in your life – they happen so fast – these may help you define your Unicorn



Stay the Course. Forge Ahead. Go the Distance.

Remember... Belief starts from within.

Stay the Course. Forge Ahead. Go the Distance.

## Contact Info | Nicki Sorger

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phone: 360.704.5884

Contact Info:

- Personal email created specifically for this
- Since this is an event for State Employed persons, I've included my work info too.

Any questions?