

# PERSONALITY TRAITS FOR EFFECTIVE UX

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**20+ Years in UX and Design**

**Principal UX Consultant**

**Lead UX Architect, Lazada Group**

**Director of UX, Bourne Digital**

**VP Product, Bizzy Indonesia**

**VP of Product, Ardent Labs**

**Director of UX, Technocrat**

**President, Visca Consulting**

Newcomers to UX typically ask

**“WHAT DO I NEED TO  
KNOW TO SUCCEED?”**

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The demands and breadth of knowledge  
a UX practitioner must possess to truly  
be impactful is tremendous.

We tend to focus on mastering technical skills, if we know these, we know UX:



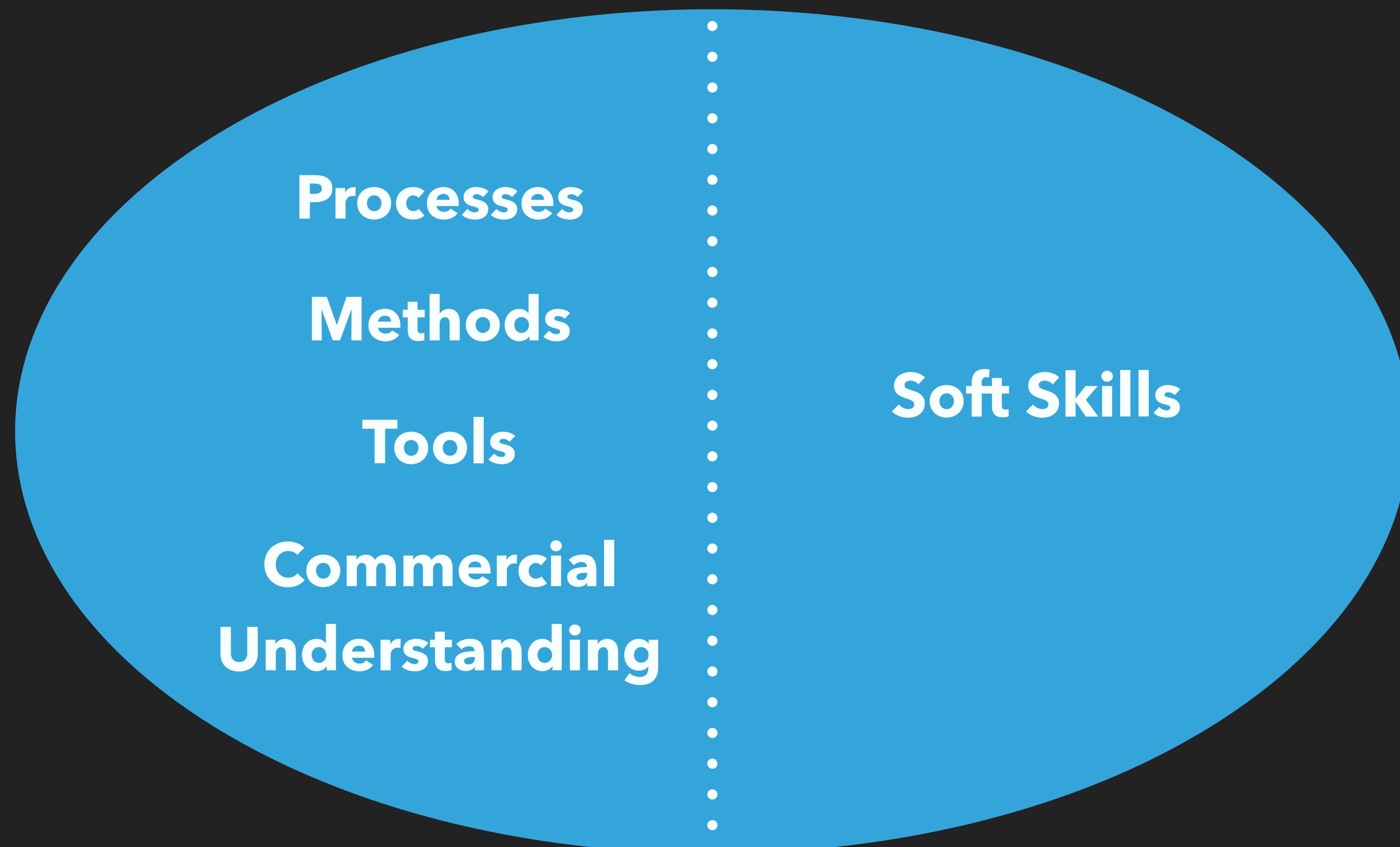
**Processes**

**Methods**

**Tools**

**Commercial  
Understanding**

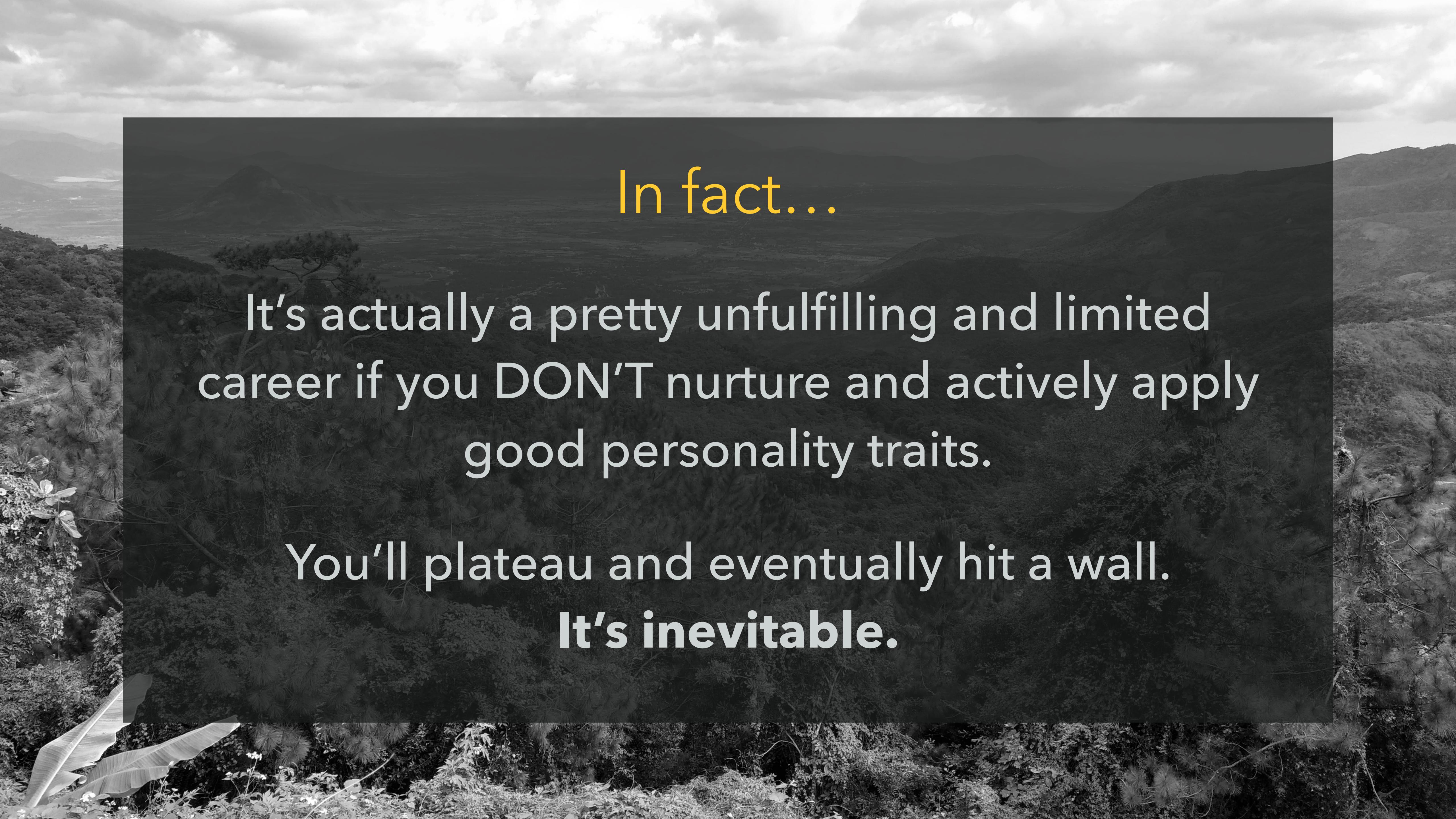
However... That's half the equation. Well developed "soft skills" play a powerful role.





Good personality traits are critical

If you can't build effective relationships, be a force that motivates and convinces others, yet surrender your ego - it's an uphill battle.



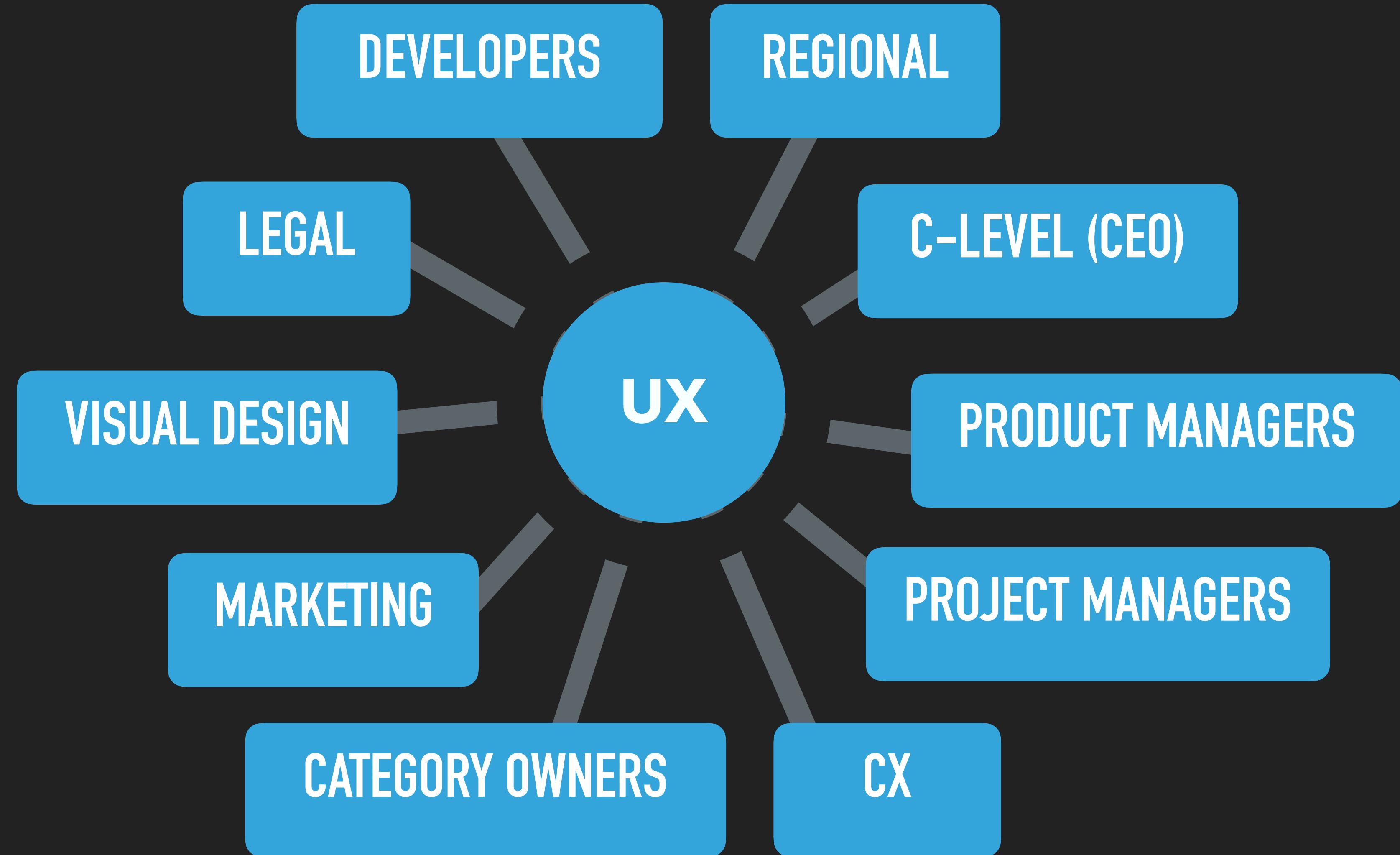
In fact...

It's actually a pretty unfulfilling and limited career if you DON'T nurture and actively apply good personality traits.

You'll plateau and eventually hit a wall.

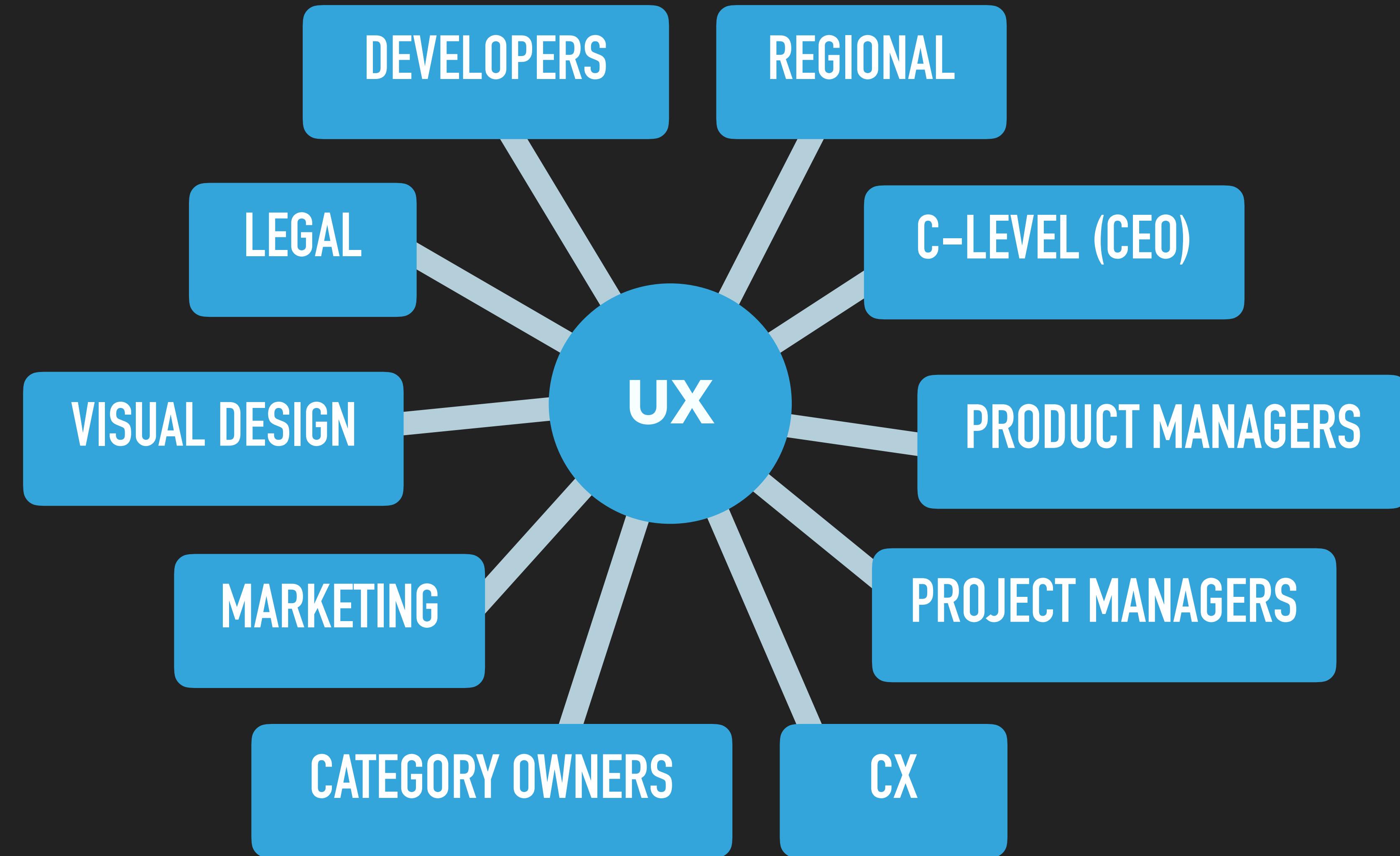
**It's inevitable.**

# The Hub of UX



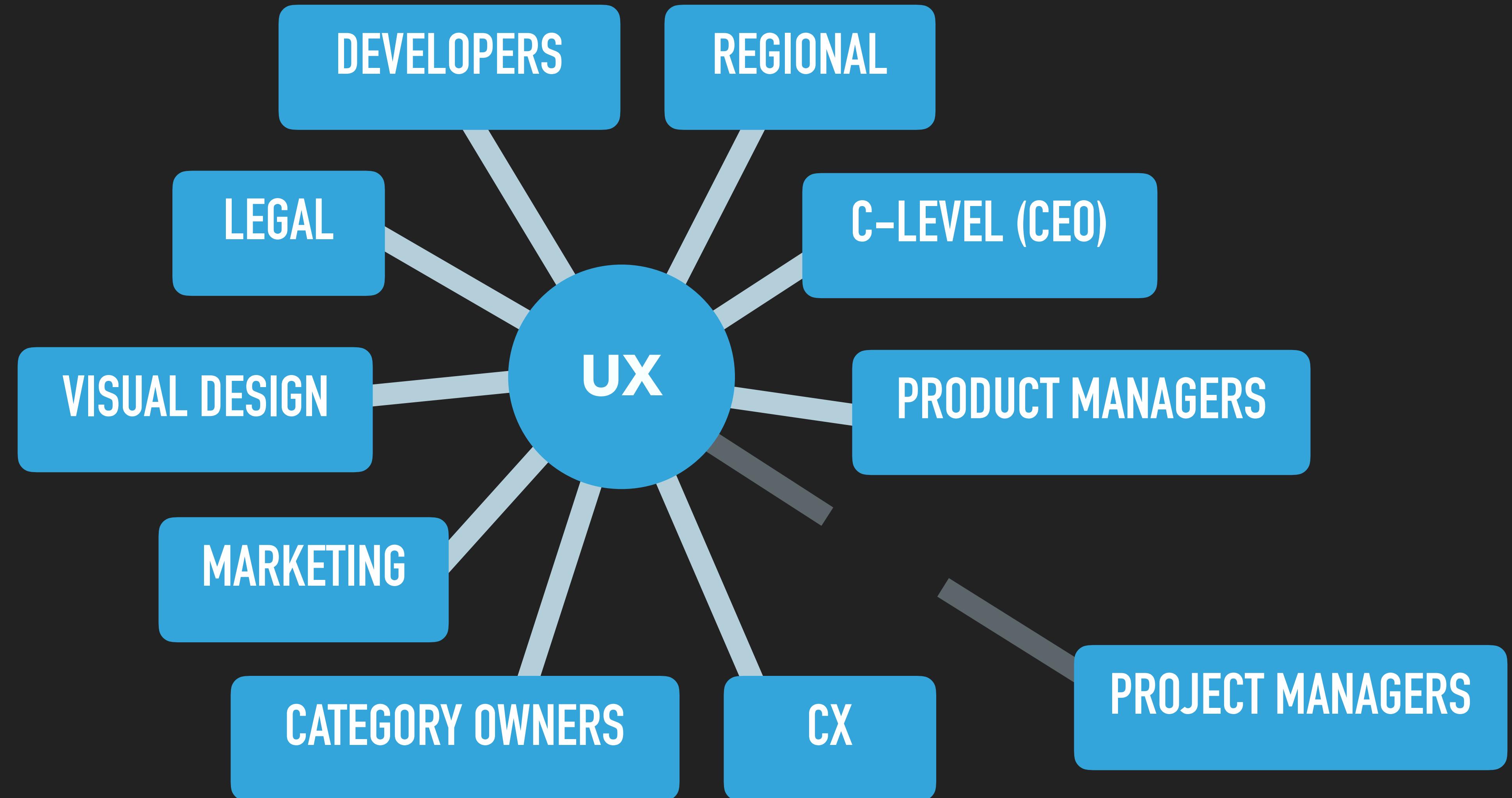
Be conscious invisible walls exist...

# The Hub of UX



...and break them down

# The Hub of UX



...left longer, the gap gets wider.

# At Individual Level

New

Build

Longevity



- ▶ First impressions
- ▶ Gain rapport
- ▶ Best interests at heart
- ▶ Competence
- ▶ Capable
- ▶ Know your stuff
- ▶ Impact
- ▶ Value to business
- ▶ Trust
- ▶ Follow through
- ▶ Discipline
- ▶ Reliability



Condescending

Aloof

Patronising

Egotistical

Impulsive

Tactless

Arrogant

Dishonest

Unreliable

Impatient

Lazy

Intolerant

Indecisive

Impatient

Preachy

Selfish

Entitled

Judgemental



Affable

Articulate

Collaborative

Humble

Patient

Persistent

Inquisitive

Sincere

Selfless

Adaptive

Genuine

Empathetic

Resourceful

Dependable

Understanding

Confident

Energetic

Driven

# ACTIVITY

# ACTIVITY



3 MINUTES

FORM 4 GROUPS  
PICK A CORNER OF THE ROOM

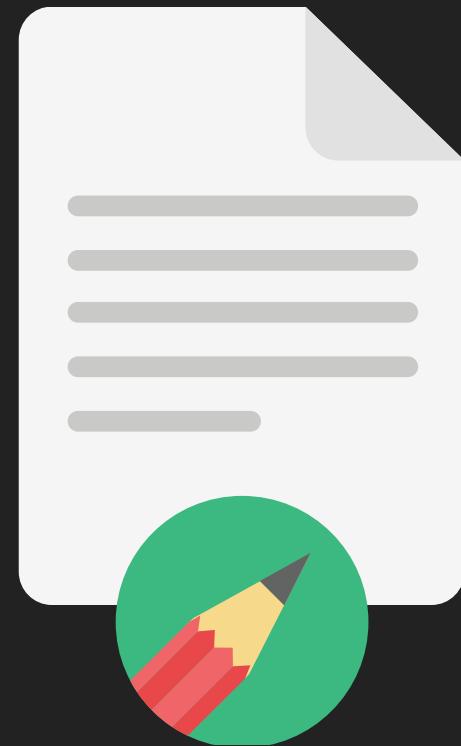
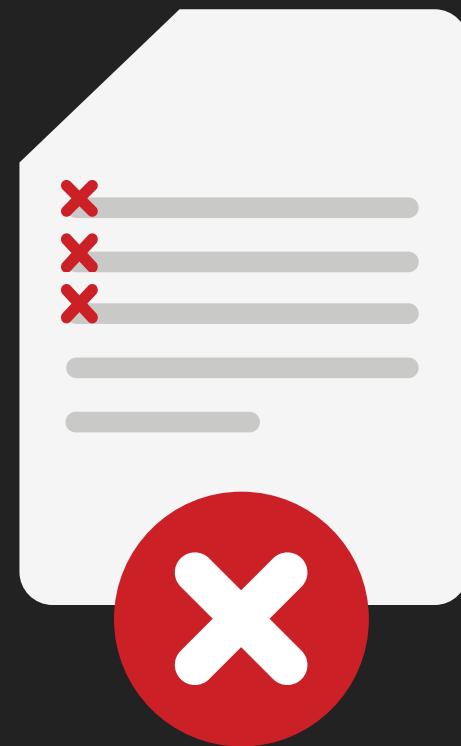


# ACTIVITY



20 MINUTES

## DISCUSS AND DECIDE



Pick the 5 most  
desirable personality  
traits for UX

Pick the 3 least  
desirable bad traits  
for UX

An experience that  
illustrates how a top 5  
trait benefited

ACTIVITY



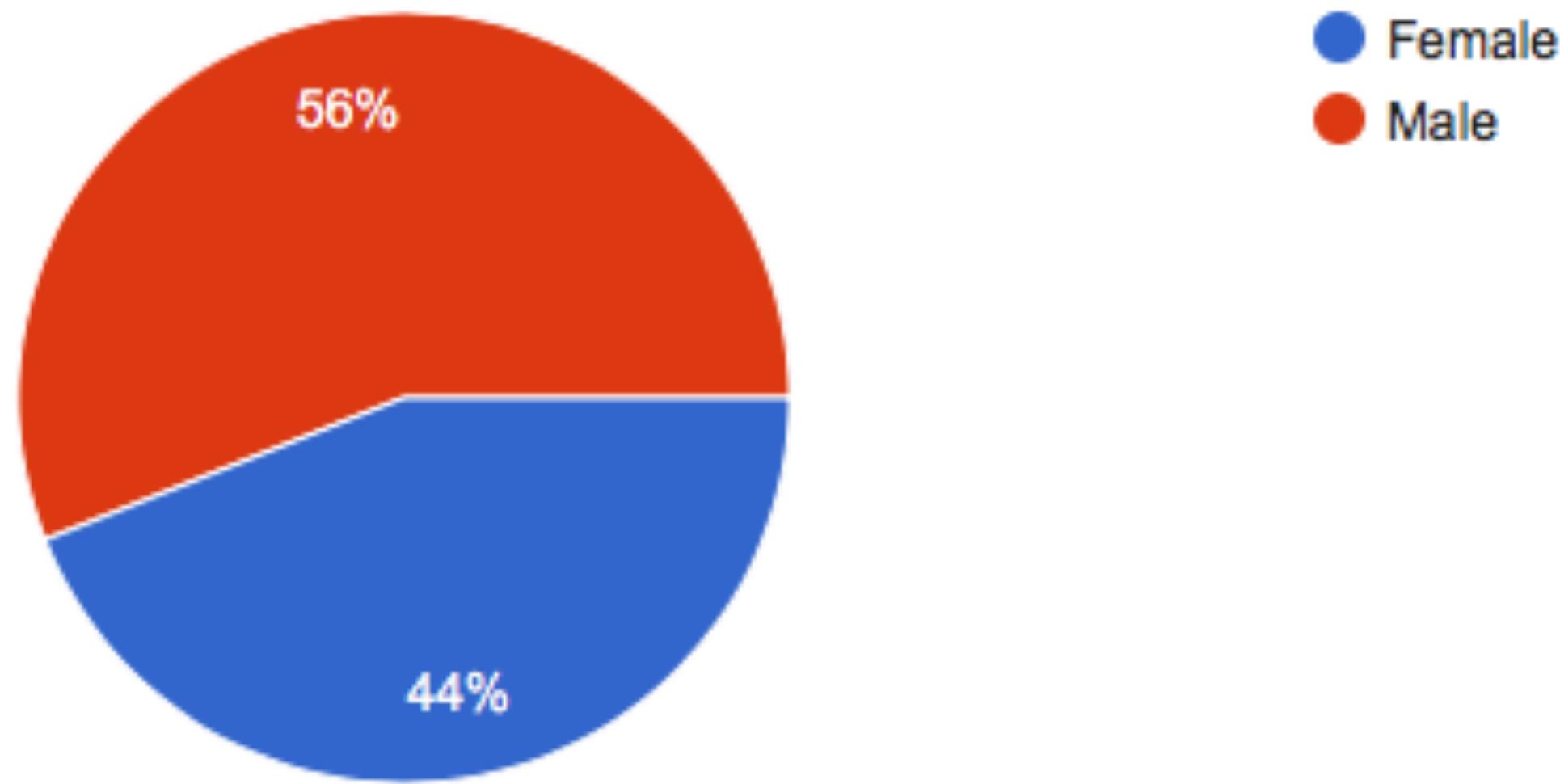
20 MINUTES

# GROUP PRESENTATIONS



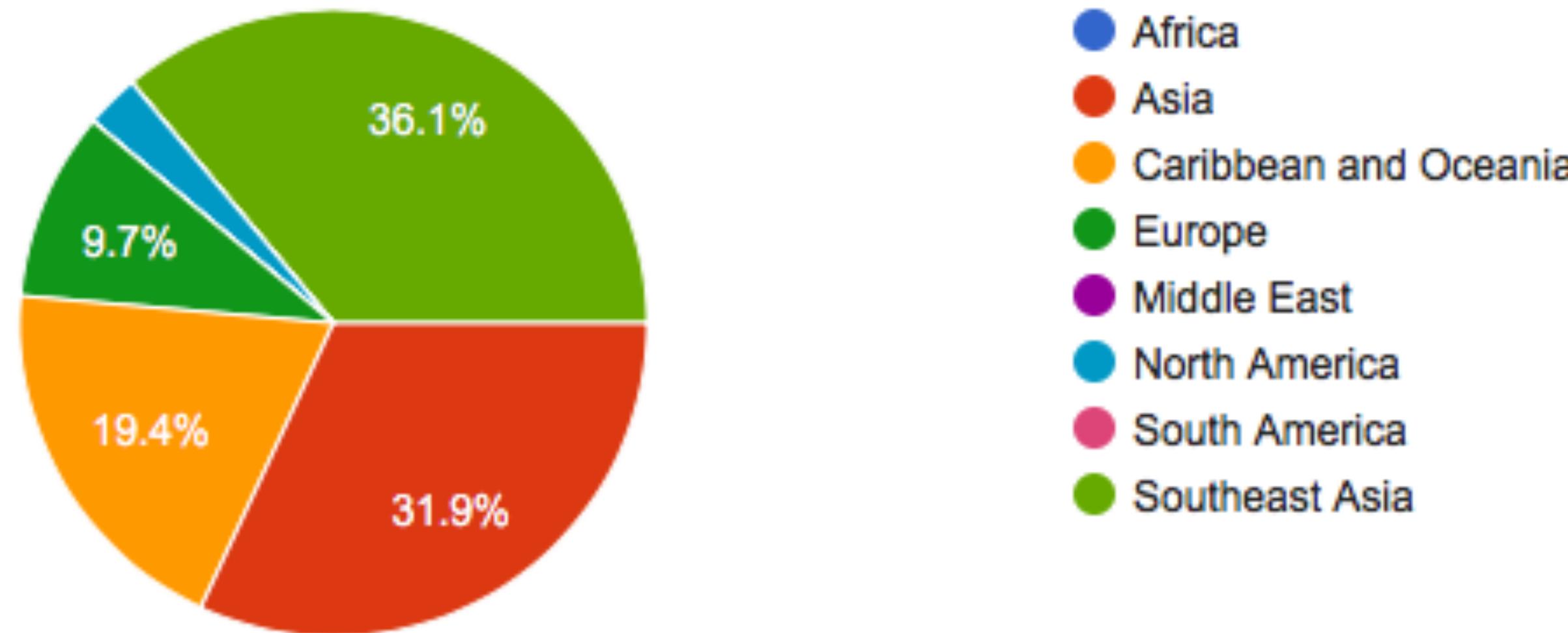
## Gender

75 responses



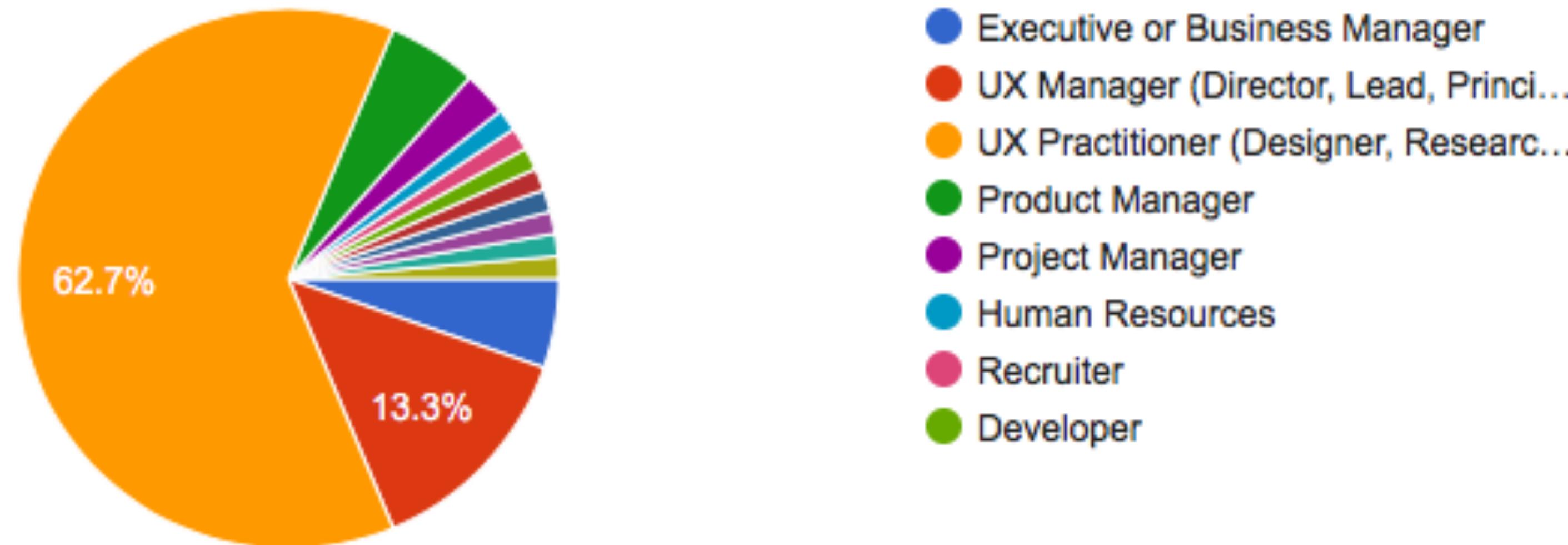
## Location

72 responses



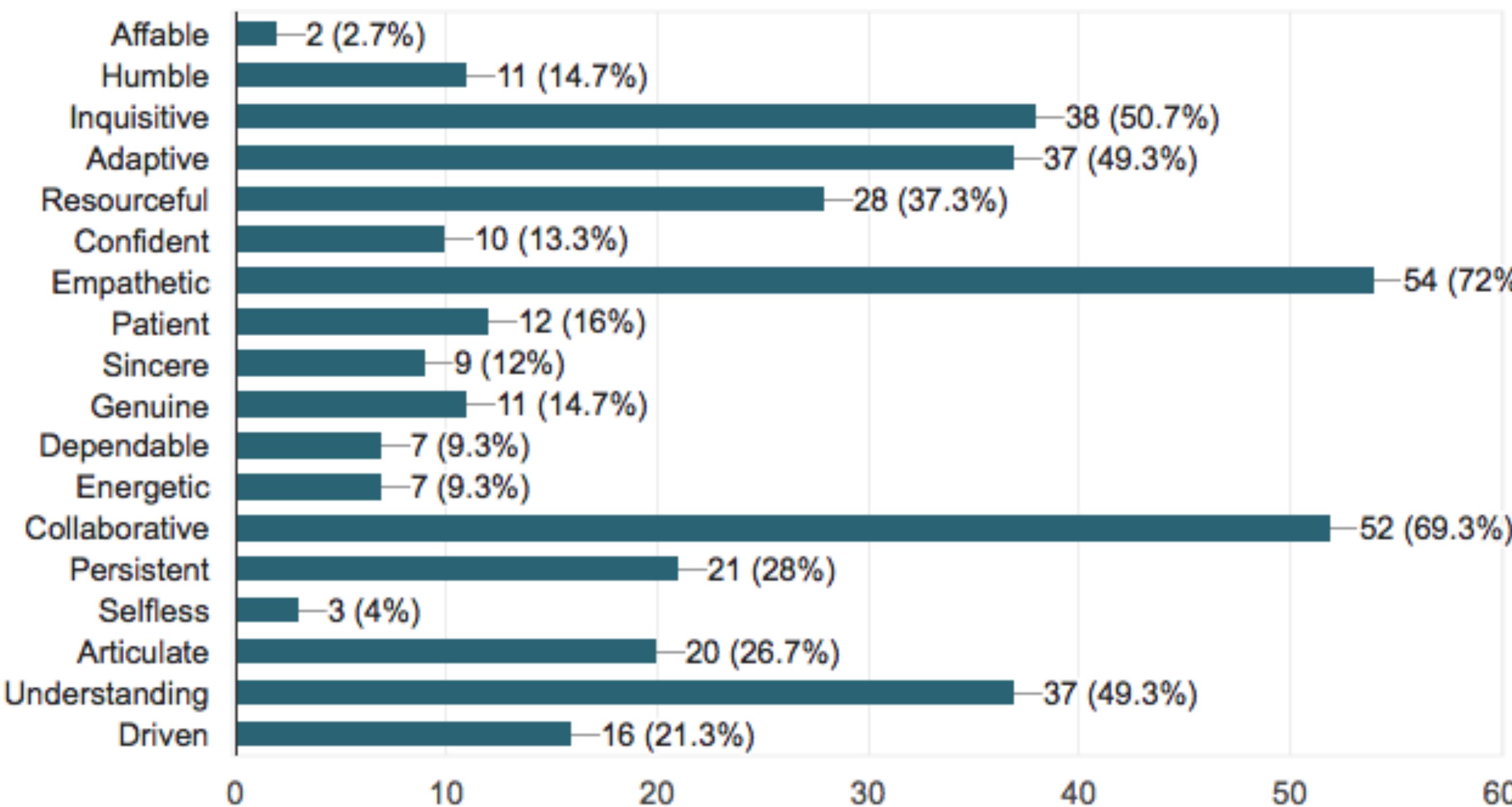
## Profession

75 responses



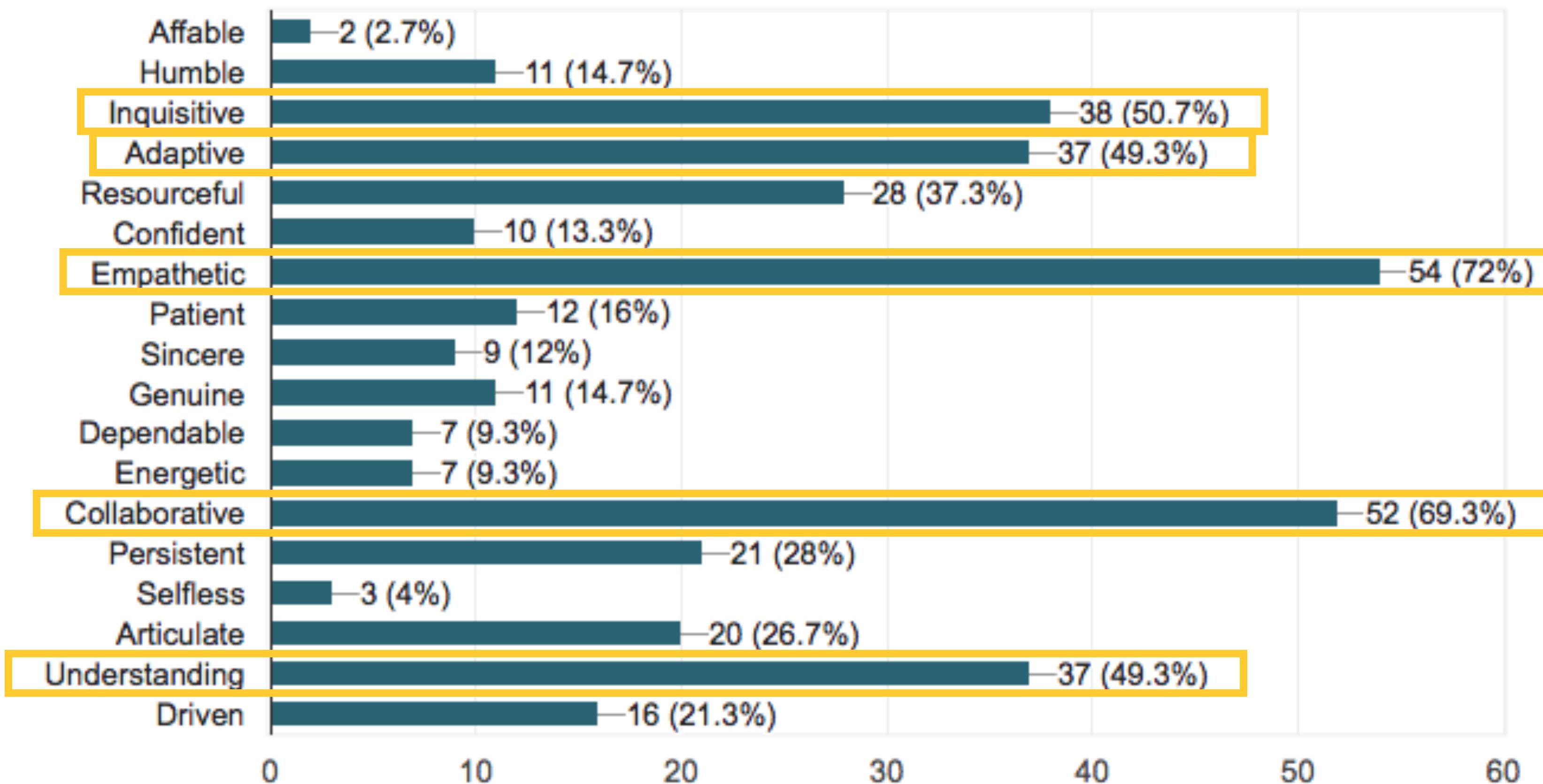
## What would be the 5 most important personality traits a UX professional could have?

75 responses



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75 responses



# Top 5

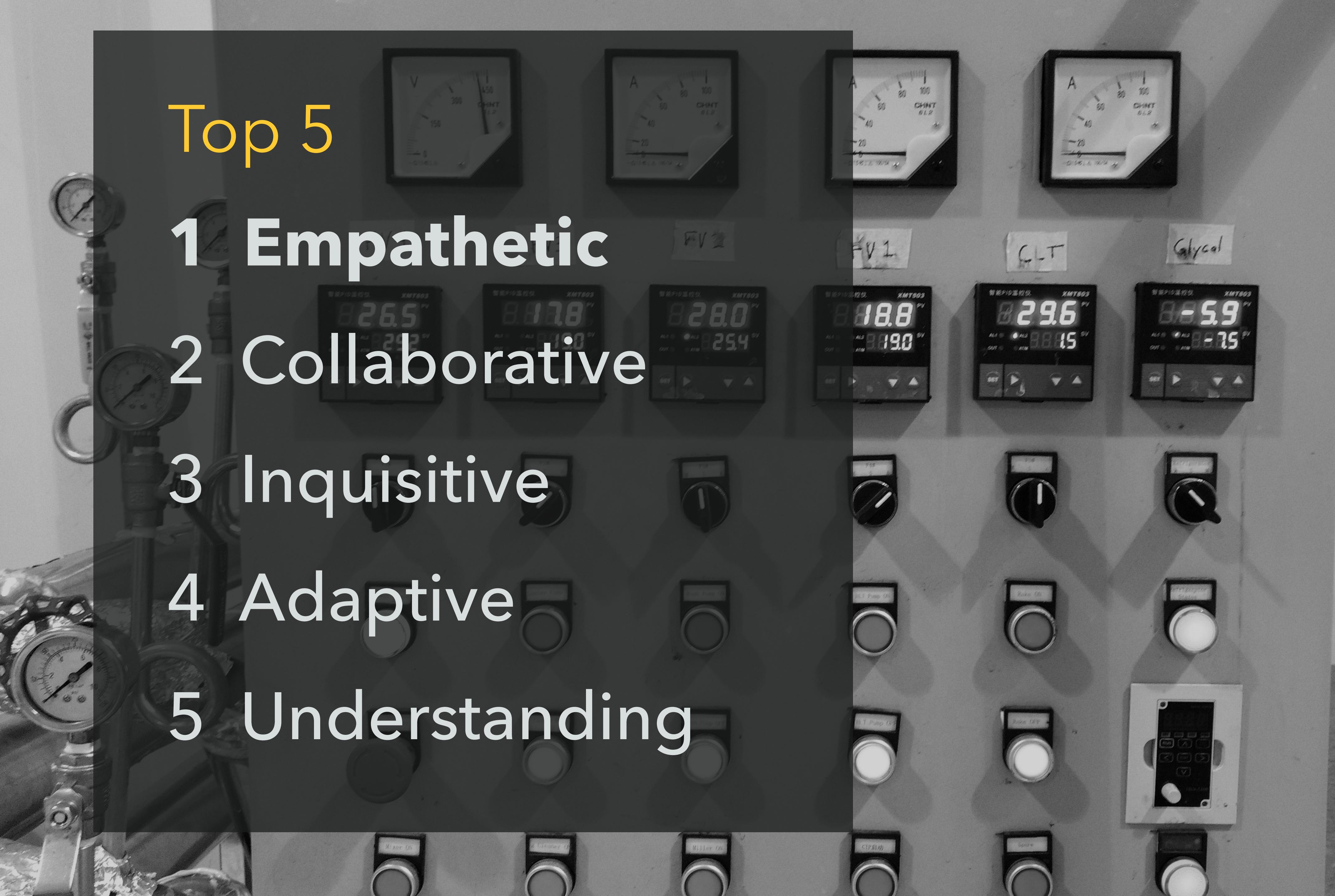
1 Empathetic

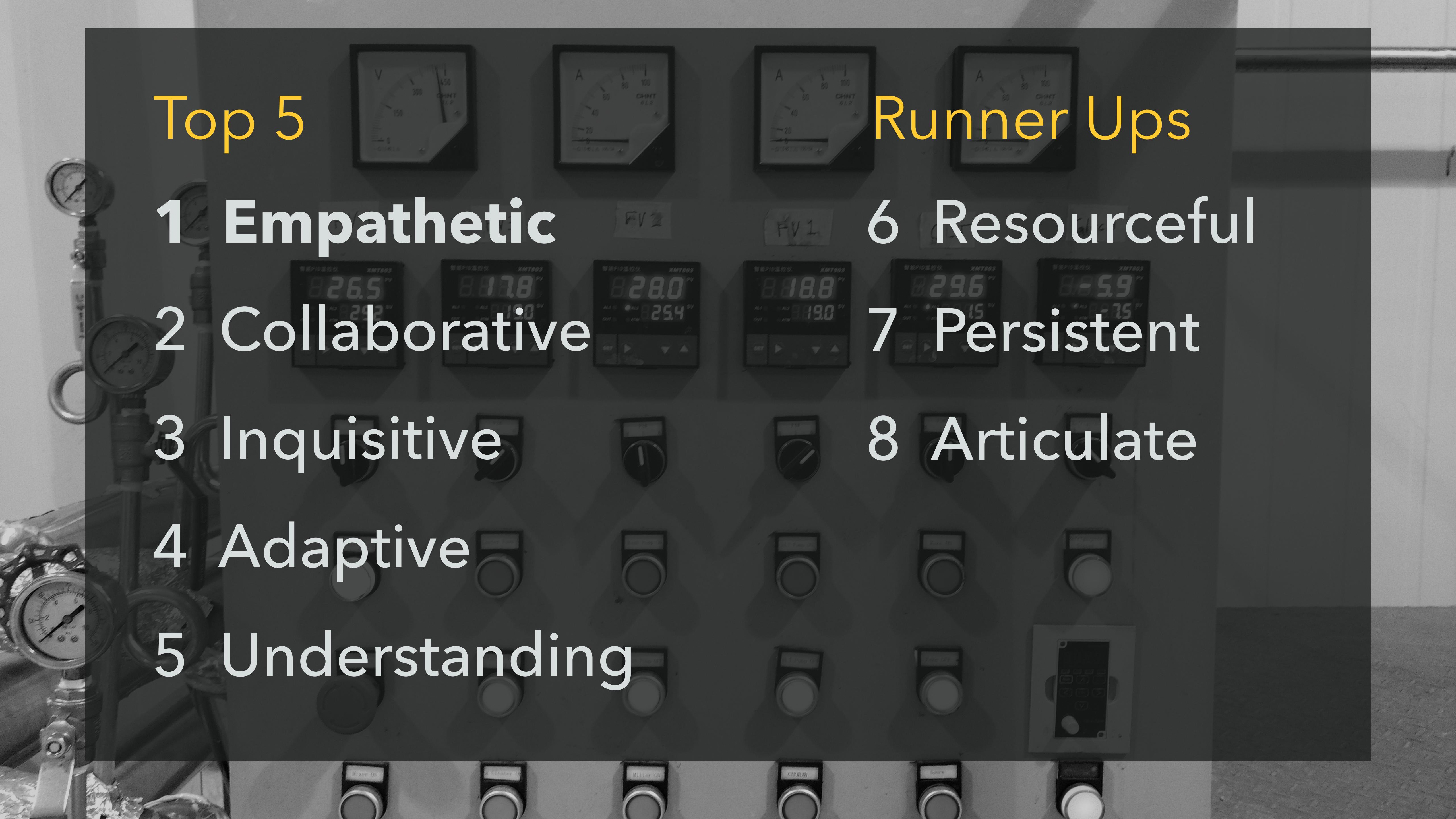
2 Collaborative

3 Inquisitive

4 Adaptive

5 Understanding





Top 5

1 Empathetic

2 Collaborative

3 Inquisitive

4 Adaptive

5 Understanding

Runner Ups

6 Resourceful

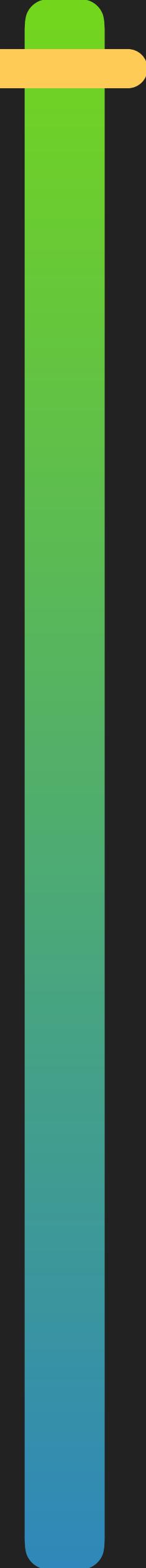
7 Persistent

8 Articulate

# RESOURCEFUL

6TH PLACE

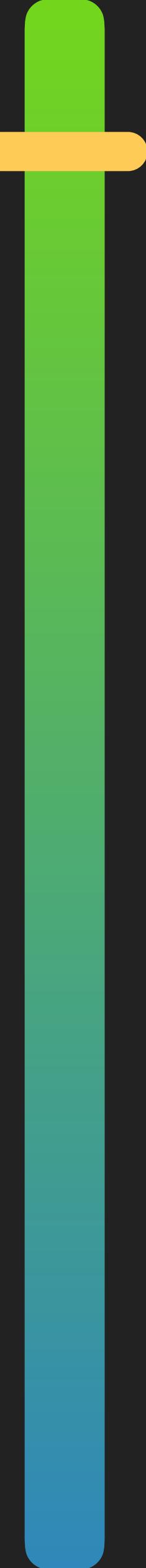
*"having the ability to find quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties"*



# PERSISTENT

7TH PLACE

*“continuing firmly or obstinately in a course  
of action in spite of difficulty or opposition”*



# ARTICULATE

8TH PLACE

*"having or showing the ability to speak fluently and coherently"*



# ENERGETIC

**16TH PLACE (3RD LAST)**

*“showing or involving great activity or vitality”*



# SELFLESS

## 17TH PLACE (2ND LAST)

*“concerned more with the needs and wishes  
of others than with one's own; unselfish”*



# AFFABLE

**18TH PLACE (VERY LAST!!)**

*“friendly, good-natured, or easy to talk to”*



**WHO AM I**

Personality

**HOW I DO IT**

Capacity

**GETTING IT DONE**

Determination

**MY IMPACT**

Motives

# WHO AM I

Affable

Sincere

Humble

Genuine

Patient

Dependable

# HOW I DO IT

Inquisitive

Collaborative

Adaptive

Articulate

Resourceful

# GETTING IT DONE

Confident

Driven

Persistent

Energetic

# MY IMPACT

Selfless

Understanding

Empathetic

**“WHAT INTERFERES MOST?”**

# “WHAT INTERFERES MOST?”

It's Ego

# “WHAT INTERFERES MOST?”

It's Ego

**Inquisitive**

Why delve deep if you think you know the answers?

**Adaptive**

Why change if you're already perfect?

**Collaborative**

How to properly share ideas when you “own” the right one?

**Selfless**

When it's all about you, it's not about the user or business.

**Understanding**

You're only interested in people understanding you.

**Genuine**

How can you be genuine if it's your interests at heart.

# “WHAT INTERFERES MOST?”

## Being Insular

Such a narrow vision of the world

It's incredibly self-limiting

Not taking in any ideas, perspectives or concepts from others

Holds you back from so many discoveries

Avoids the realities of a situation

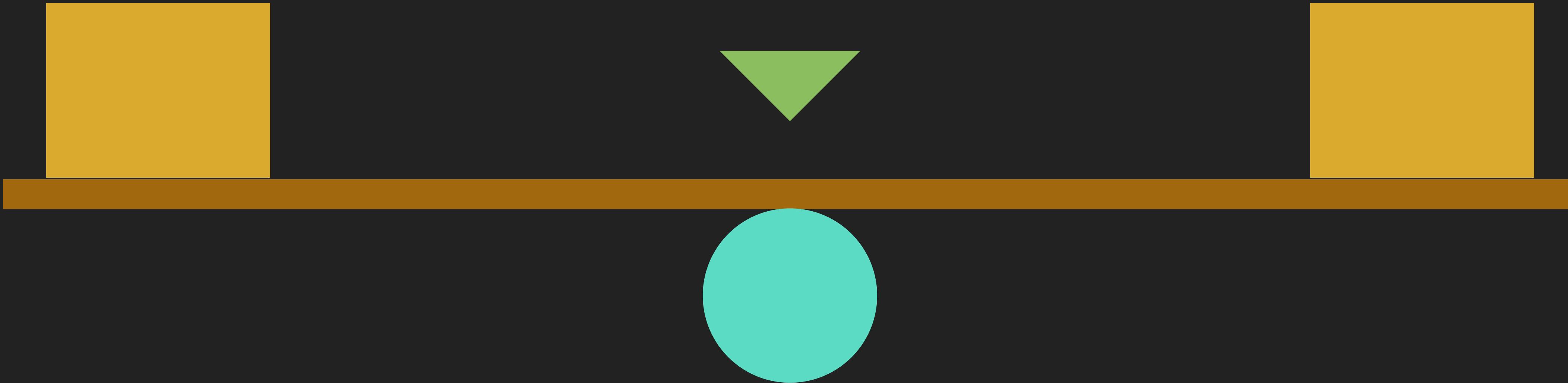
# Life's a Balancing Act

## Attachment

Detached like an ER doctor,  
but passionate like a music composer.

**DETACHED**

**ATTACHED**



# Life's a Balancing Act

## **Assertiveness**

You must carefully pick your battles  
and have a calculated approach.

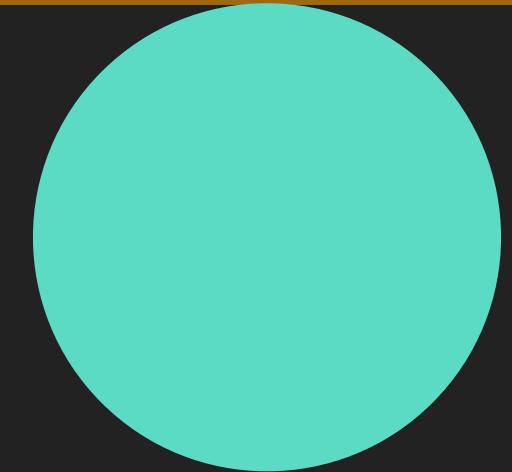
**DOORMAT**



**AUTOCRATIC**



Your designs will never  
see the light of day.



Your designs will never  
see the light of day.

# Luckily, We're in a Good Position

We're armed with...

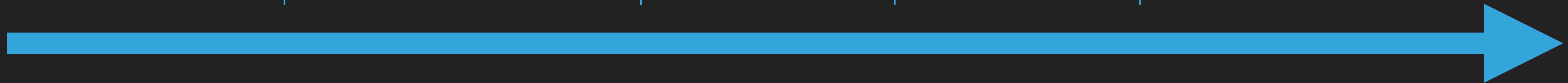
- ▶ Facts and data
- ▶ Results from research
- ▶ First hand observation

Which combats...

- ▶ Personal opinion
- ▶ Self interests
- ▶ Competitor pointing

Being conscious of personal traits  
throughout your career journey...

Learning | Hiring Interviews | Junior | Senior | Management



Consume knowledge and build consciousness of soft skills

Being conscious of personal traits  
throughout your career journey...

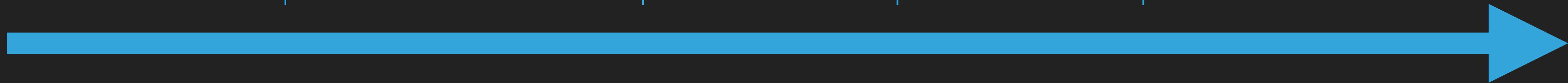
Learning

Hiring  
Interviews

Junior

Senior

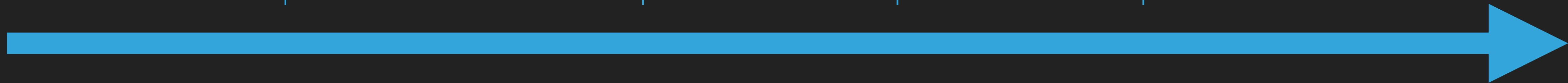
Management



Demonstrating and giving evidence of soft skills

Being conscious of personal traits  
throughout your career journey...

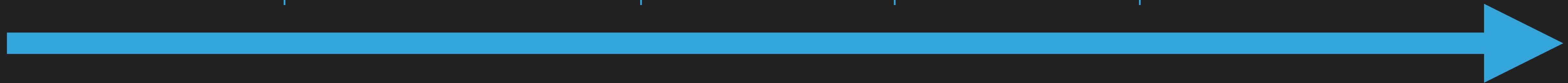
Learning | Hiring Interviews | Junior | Senior | Management



Experimenting, pushing yourself to apply skills

Being conscious of personal traits  
throughout your career journey...

Learning | Hiring Interviews | Junior | Senior | Management



Actively employing the soft skills to achieve effectiveness

Being conscious of personal traits  
throughout your career journey...

Learning

Hiring  
Interviews

Junior

Senior

Management



Managing, mentoring and inspiring use of soft skills

# Scenario 1

## Scoping and Defining Project

Business identifies new feature that  
needs to be clearly defined and scoped.



**TRAITS**

Inquisitive

Resourceful

Collaborative

Understanding

# Scenario 2

## Gaining Access to Necessities

As part of initial research you need analytics,  
sales data and access to customers.



**TRAITS**

Affable  
Resourceful

Patient  
Sincere

Collaborative  
Driven

# Scenario 3

## Workshop Facilitation

You're running a design workshop with senior business sponsors, designers and developers.



**TRAITS**

Affable  
Confident

Articulate  
Resourceful  
Energetic

Humble  
Selfless

# Scenario 4

## Usability Testing

Conducting a moderated usability test  
of your new mobile shopping app checkout design.

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**TRAITS**

Affable  
Inquisitive

Adaptive  
Articulate

Empathetic

# Scenario 5

## Presenting to Stakeholders

Just finished new desktop design, you're presenting it to decision-makers over video call for sign-off.



**TRAITS**

Affable

Confident

Articulate

Energetic

Humble

Selfless

**“HOW TO TACKLE THIS?”**

# Awareness

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- ▶ How mindful are you of your personality?
- ▶ Consciousness fuels action
- ▶ The culture of '**good enough**' isn't good enough
- ▶ After scoring a driver's license, how many continued their driving education? Most have not.
- ▶ You don't know what you don't know

# Words

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Words start wars... and they end wars.

Pretty powerful stuff.

What else do we have, really?

# Words

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- ▶ I think...
- ▶ I want...
- ▶ My opinion...
- ▶ My design...
- ▶ It's always...

# Words

---

- ▶ I think...
- ▶ I want...
- ▶ My opinion...
- ▶ My design...
- ▶ It's always...
- ▶ The consensus is...
- ▶ The usability testing results show...
- ▶ Our research indicates...
- ▶ The design we suggest...
- ▶ Analytics show a trend of...

# Words

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Highlight collaboration not ownership.

Prove that your position is the result of investigation  
and thoroughness, not assumption or preference,  
through your choice of words.

# Learning

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- ▶ The amazing wealth of resources - an infinite number of books, audiobooks, online courses, articles, publications.
- ▶ General books to very topic specific
- ▶ Read / listen / watch, practice, observe, repeat

# Your Score

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- ▶ What's your personal NPS (net promoter score)?
- ▶ Honestly rate yourself after interactions.
- ▶ Were you open and accepting of other's ideas and feedback, watched body language, aware of the group's tone, the value you brought to the table

# Projections

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**Awareness and interpreting of projections**

What you like, dislike and see in others is often a reflection of yourself

Projections change through the course of any relationship

# Projections

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- ▶ “They don't understand what I do”
- ▶ “They don't know anything about UX”
- ▶ “They won't listen to my ideas”

# Projections

---

- ▶ “They don't understand what I do”
- ▶ “They don't know anything about UX”
- ▶ “They won't listen to my ideas”
- ▶ Are you really listening to **their** ideas?
- ▶ Do you understand and **appreciate** the demands placed on them, their constraints, their challenges?

# Perseverance

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- ▶ We're creatures of habits formed over long periods
- ▶ Pushing yourself out of comfort zone
- ▶ Quote: "The biggest risk is not taking any risk."
- ▶ Quote: "Things easy to do, are easy not to do."
- ▶ It's rewarding and everything feels to have less friction when you're not working against the tide

# THANKS!

I'd love to hear from you...

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