

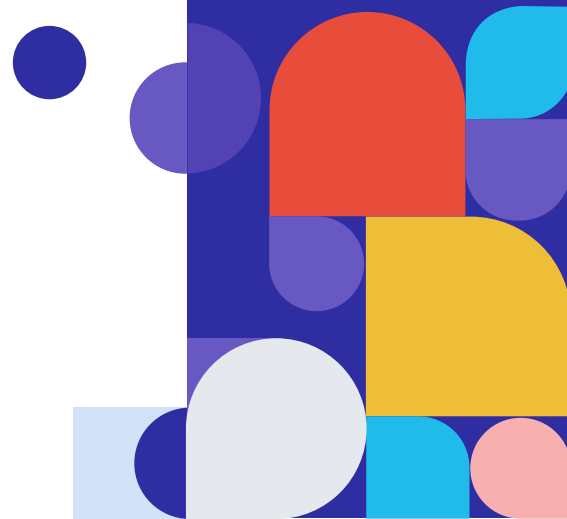


# Meeting your people where they are

@amandasopkin

# General agenda

Today I will walk through three examples from my career of lessons in different kinds of preferences and share what I learned in each scenario





# Mia's story

- ❑ Initial conversations were awkward



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- ❑ My response was to ask a lot of questions -- it felt like pulling teeth

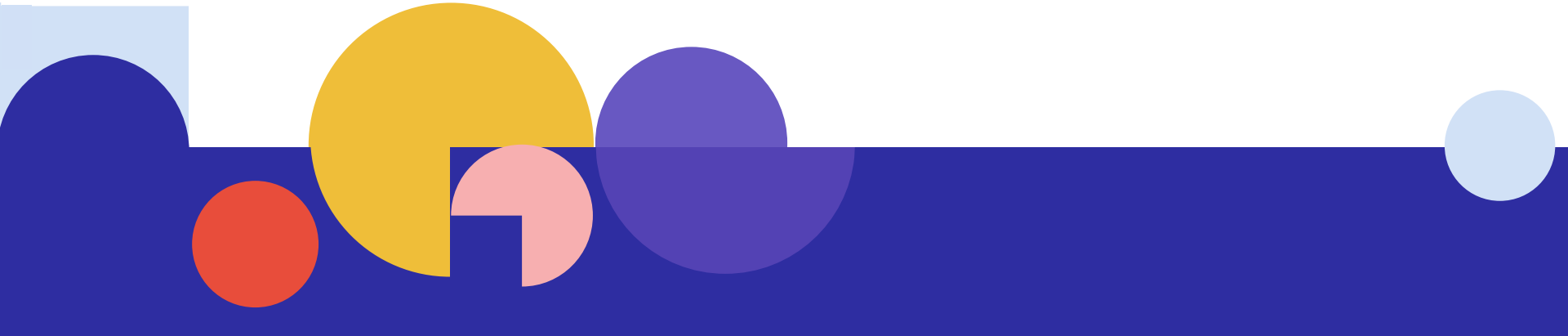


# Mia's story

- ❑ Initial conversations were awkward
- ❑ My response was to ask a lot of questions -- it felt like pulling teeth
- ❑ In my 90 day review they said that they didn't feel like they knew me



**Strategy: Customize your  
1:1s with each individual**





**Mia needed space  
to think. Looser  
more open-ended  
1:1s with pauses  
were more  
productive.**



# People want different levels of structure in their 1:1s

- ❑ Consider starting with personal conversation instead of jumping in directly
- ❑ Pauses (as long as 30 seconds) can lead to surprising insights
- ❑ Many people take time and established trust to open up





# Nico's story

- ❑ Nico's previous manager spoke to their ambitious career goals



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# Nico's story

- ❑ Nico's previous manager spoke to their ambitious career goals
- ❑ I brought a lot of focus/attention to reaching the next level
- ❑ They didn't seem motivated by these conversations and I grew concerned



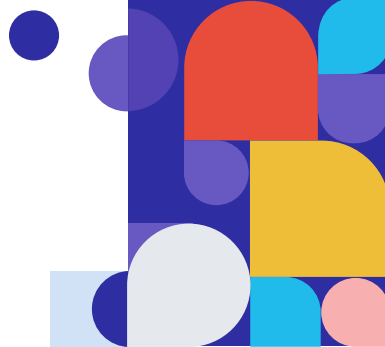
# Different paces of career progression

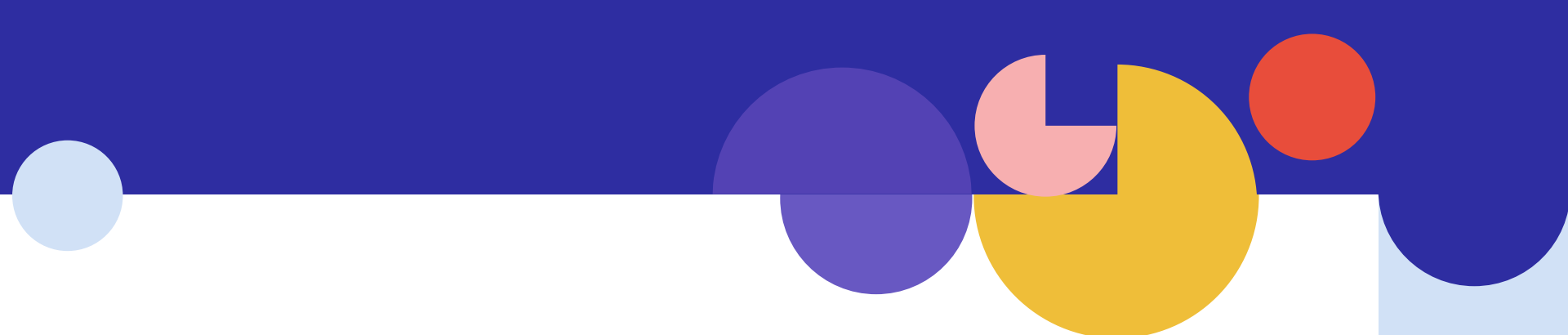
## Rockstars

- Development is steady
- Often the natural state after a promotion
- Content to progress opportunistically

## Popstars

- Development is fast, jumpy
- Often the state of seeking a particular role or recognition
- Often hungry for results and opportunities





**Strategy: Remain  
open-minded about changes  
in motivation**



**Nico's focus had shifted because of life changes. Balance and stability were now bigger priorities.**



# Ambition fluctuates throughout the course of a career

- ❑ Check in regularly to see if things have changed
- ❑ Identify other sources of motivation
- ❑ Keep an eye on big life changes, but try not to assume





# Vanya's story

- ❑ Hated being called out publicly



# Vanya's story

- ❑ Hated being called out publicly
- ❑ Did not seem to respond to individual shout-outs from peers



# Vanya's story

- ❑ Hated being called out publicly
- ❑ Did not seem to respond to individual shout-outs from peers
- ❑ They shared that they felt under-appreciated





# **Strategy: Experiment with different methods of appreciation**

# Different ways to recognize your team

## Material

- Compensation, awards, bonuses

## Social

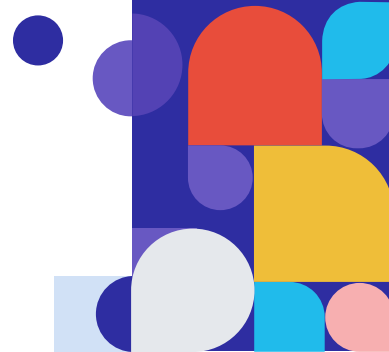
- Public praise (meetings, slack, kudoboard)
- Private praise (1:1 messages)

## Mission

- Direct connections with customers
- Metrics based results

## Opportunity-based

- Special say or authority
- Recognized expertise





**Vanya shied away from public recognition, but appreciated 1:1 emphasis on their impact.**



# Most people have a deep-seated desire for appreciation

- ❑ When possible, give options
- ❑ Ask for preferences, but make your own observations about results
- ❑ Experiment with different methods



# Management is not one size fits all

- ❑ Everyone is different (and notably, most people are not you)
- ❑ Things change, so check in regularly and try not to assume
- ❑ People don't always know their own preferences



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A decorative graphic on the right side of the image, featuring a white background with several overlapping, rounded shapes in bright colors: red, cyan, and purple.

@amandasopkin



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