SELF EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Student Success Center

Office of Career Development
SELF KNOWLEDGE

How will you be able to identify potential career options if you don’t know who you are or what you want?

A critical part of career-decision making is assessing who you are: understanding your interests, values, skills, motivations, and preferences. With self-knowledge comes the ability to recognize career-related information that either fits you or does not. This information helps clarify your potential career paths and guides you through different life transitions.

The following self-assessment exercises are designed to aid with your self-reflection. You are strongly encouraged to complete one or more of the exercises and then make an appointment with a career coach to discuss. Contact the Office of Career Development (909) 621-8177 to schedule an appointment.
Over the years, you have developed many skills from your total life experiences including coursework, extracurricular activities, leisure pursuits, etc. If you have researched topics and written reports or edited and presented papers for classes, you have used skills that are not limited to just one discipline but are transferable to many different occupations or disciplines. A prospective employer expects you to be able to apply the skills you have learned in college and in everyday life to the work environment. Use the following checklist to identify some of your transferable skills. The following skills are arranged in “skill clusters.” Within each skill cluster, there are a number of related skills. Place a check in the box next to the skill that you enjoy using and in which you feel competent. This list is not exhaustive, so you can add additional skills for each section. Remember competency does not imply perfection.

**VERBAL COMMUNICATION**
- Perform and entertain before groups
- Speak well in public appearances
- Confront and express opinions without offending
- Interview people to obtain information
- Handle complaints _in person_ _over phone
- Present ideas effectively in speeches or lecture
- Persuade/influence others to a certain point of view
- Sell ideas, products or services
- Debate ideas with others
- Participate in group discussions and teams
- Establish environment to support learning
- Express feelings through body language
- Promote concepts through a variety of media
- Respond to non-verbal cues
- Model behavior or concepts for others

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**
- Write technical language, reports, manuals
- Write poetry, fiction plays
- Write grant proposals
- Prepare and write logically written reports
- Write copy for sales and advertising
- Edit and proofread written material
- Prepare revisions of written material
- Utilize all forms of technology for writing
- Write case studies and treatment plans
- Demonstrate expertise in grammar and style

**NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Convey a positive self image
- Use body language that makes others comfortable
- Develop rapport easily with groups of people

**TRAIN/CONSULT**
- Teach, advise, coach, empower
Conduct needs assessments

Use a variety of media for presentation

Develop educational curriculum and materials

Create and administer evaluation plan

Facilitate a group

Explain difficult ideas, complex topics

Assess learning styles and respond accordingly

Consult and recommend solutions

Write well organized and documented reports

Compile numerical and statistical data

Classify and sort information into categories

Gather information from a number of sources

Patiently search for hard-to-find information

Utilize electronic search methods

**PLAN AND ORGANIZE**

Identify and organize tasks or information

Coordinate people, activities and details

Develop a plan and set objectives

Set up and keep time schedules

Anticipate problems and respond with solutions

Develop realistic goals and action to attain them

Arrange correct sequence of information and actions

Create guidelines for implementing an action

Create efficient systems

Follow through, insure completion of a task

**COUNSEL AND SERVE**

Counsel, advise, consult, guide others

Care for and serve people; rehabilitate, heal

Demonstrate empathy, sensitivity and patience

Help people make their own decisions

Help others improve health and welfare
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen empathically and with objectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach, guide, encourage individuals to achieve goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediate peace between conflicting parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of self-help theories and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate self-awareness in others</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Envision the future and lead change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set goals and determine courses of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivate/inspire others to achieve common goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create innovative solutions to complex problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate well with all levels of the organization</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convey a sense of humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate and maintain relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipate people's needs and reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express feelings appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process human interactions, understand others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage, empower, advocate for people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create positive, hospitable environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust plans for the unexpected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen carefully to communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and mentor talent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiate terms and conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take risks, make hard decisions, be decisive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the use of technology at all levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convey a sense of humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative and maintain relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipate people's needs and reactions</td>
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<td>Adjust plans for the unexpected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize technology to facilitate management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calculate, perform mathematical computations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with precision with numerical data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep accurate and complete financial records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform accounting functions and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile data and apply statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create computer generated charts for presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use computer software for records and analysis
Forecast, estimate expenses and income
Appraise and analyze costs
Create and justify organization's budget to others

ADMINISTRATIVE

Communicate well with key people in organization
Identify and purchase necessary resource materials
Utilize computer software and equipment
Organize, improve, adapt office systems
Track progress of projects and troubleshoot
Achieve goals within budget and time schedule
Assign tasks and sets standards for support staff
Hire and supervise temporary personnel as needed
Demonstrate flexibility during crisis
Oversee communication, email and telephones
Attend to detail
Create images through, sketches, sculpture, etc.
Utilize computer software for artistic creations
Remember faces, accurate spatial memory

CREATE AND INNOVATE

Visualize concepts and results
Intuit strategies and solutions
Execute color, shape and form
Brainstorm and make use of group synergy
Communicate with metaphors
Invent products through experimentation
Express ideas through art form

CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE

Assemble and install technical equipment
Build a structure, follow proper sequence
Understand blueprints and architectural specs
Repair machines
Analyze and correct plumbing or electrical problems
Use tools and machines
Master athletic skills
Landscape and farm
Drive and operate vehicles
Use scientific or medical equipment

OTHER


When you have completed the whole exercise, choose your four favorite “clusters” (those clusters in which you have the most checks). Then arrange them in order of greatest enjoyment/satisfaction for you.

1. Cluster:

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

2. Cluster:

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

3. Cluster:

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

4. Cluster:

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
SUMMARIZING YOUR SKILLS

Review your Functional/Transferable Skills Checklist with your four favorite skill clusters and write a summarizing paragraph.

Example of a skills summary paragraph:

“I seek a job in which communicating both verbally and in writing is central. Specifically, I’m good at compiling information from a variety of sources into a final report form. I am better at writing factual rather than persuasive material. I enjoy explaining information to individuals or small groups. My organizing skills evident in preparing reports are also demonstrated in my ability to coordinate people and resources to complete a project. In addition to these primary skill areas, I am good at budgeting my time, setting priorities and attending to details.”

Try writing your skills summary in the space below:

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Points to Consider:

1. Of the skills you have checked, what kinds of work activities, work environments or occupations can you name that would utilize those skills?

2. Which skills would you like to develop? How might you begin to acquire them?
VALUES CLARIFICATION EXERCISE

All of the following values are worthwhile. Put a check mark next to the TEN most important to you. You may write in other values if your top values are not on this list. After checking off your top TEN choices, circle FIVE that are most important to you.

- **ACHIEVEMENT** (sense of accomplishment by means of skills, practice, perseverance, or exertion)
- **ADVANCEMENT** (Moving forward in your career through promotions)
- **AESTHETICS** (caring about harmony and appreciating the beauty of ideas, things, etc.)
- **AUTONOMY** (working independently, determine the nature of your work without significant direction from others)
- **CHANGE & VARIETY** (varied, frequently changing work responsibilities and/or work settings)
- **COMPETITION** (Pit your abilities against others where there are clear win/lose outcomes)
- **CREATIVITY** (being imaginative, innovative)
- **FAMILY HAPPINESS** (being able to spend quality time and develop relationships with family)
- **FRIENDSHIP** (develop close personal and collegial relationships)
- **HEALTH** (Physical and psychological well-being)
- **HELP OTHERS** (be involved in helping people in a direct way, individually or in a group.)
- **HELP SOCIETY** (do something to contribute to the betterment of the world)
- **INTEGRITY** (sincerity and honesty)
- **KNOWLEDGE/WISDOM** (understanding gained through study and experience)
- **LEISURE** (have time for hobbies, sports, activities and interests)
- **LOCATION** (place conducive to your lifestyle and allows you to do the things you enjoy most)
- **LOYALTY** (steadfastness and allegiance)
- **PLEASURE** (seeking enjoyment and gratification)
- **POWER** (authority)
- **PRESTIGE** (status, a high level of standing among others)
- **RECOGNITION** (getting acknowledged for your contribution)
- **SPIRITUALITY** (seeking inner harmony, loyalty to one’s beliefs)
- **STABILITY/SECURITY** (being certain, sure of something, not likely to change over a long period of time)
- **TEAMWORK** (working together productively and cooperatively)
- **WEALTH** (Profit, gain, making a lot of money)

The five values that are most important to you:

1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________
4. ____________________
5. ____________________
**INTERESTS**

The following activities/topics are of interest to many people. Circle any that interest you. **Do not worry whether or not there seems to be any direct connection to a career.** The list is not exhaustive, so use your imagination and add any interest you have which is not listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawing</th>
<th>Innovations</th>
<th>Labor-Employee Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardening/Horticulture</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Stamp Collecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>Electronic Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird-watching</td>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>Back-packing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Aerospace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Outer-space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Landscaping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Selling</td>
<td>Scuba Diving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Abuse</td>
<td>World Hunger</td>
<td>Aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Home decorating</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Advocacy</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Military Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Planning</td>
<td>Environmental Issues</td>
<td>Others: ________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>Computer Technology</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobiles</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>International Affairs</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review those you have circled and develop a prioritized list of those interests, which if possible, you would like to directly connect to your work.

1.__________________________
2.__________________________
3.__________________________
4.__________________________
5.__________________________

WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

1. What are your favorite hobbies? What do you do in your free time?

2. What do you love to talk about?

3. What magazines or newspapers do you love to read? And what subjects do you like to read about?

4. What sections of the bookstore do you tend to gravitate toward?

5. What sites on the Internet do you tend to gravitate toward?
List Your Top Five Interests:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

My Skill Summary:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________
3.__________________________________________
4.__________________________________________
5.__________________________

My Top Five Interests:

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________
3.__________________________________________
4.__________________________________________
5._________________________________
After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

Self-assessment is an ongoing process. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Coach and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment.

**EXAMPLE: SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

**My Skill Summary:**

*I seek a position where written and verbal communicating is central; specifically, I am good at researching and compiling primary and disparate information into a cohesive report form. I can write in both explanatory and persuasive form/materials. I am comfortable in a multi-cultural setting and have the ability to co-ordinate people from many different backgrounds. I enjoy traveling and researching “on-site” in archives and museums.*

**The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:**

1. Family happiness
2. Friendship
3. Help society
4. Knowledge/Wisdom
5. Autonomy/Creativity

**My Top Five Interests:**

1. Travel/research/history
2. Studying culture/belief systems/mythology
3. Movies
4. Gardening/museums
5. Reading

After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

- Teaching
- Diplomacy/governmental
- Travel & Research
- Foreign liaison for an international corporation
- Museum fellow (teaching-researcher)
- Mediator

Self-assessment is an ongoing process. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Coach and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment.
Below is a list of factors characterizing working conditions. These factors should always be taken into consideration when evaluating career goals because our preferences for or against certain job settings and job traits can affect our enjoyment of and success in a given position. What working conditions do you prefer and in which do you perform best? Circle the factors important to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High pressure</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Compete with others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed atmosphere</td>
<td>Focus on single task</td>
<td>Your own office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work alone</td>
<td>Perform multiple tasks</td>
<td>Common, shared work space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with a team</td>
<td>Oversee a project</td>
<td>Incentive opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to home</td>
<td>Carry out specific task only</td>
<td>Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban setting</td>
<td>Flexible hours</td>
<td>Non-union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban setting</td>
<td>Regular hours</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural setting</td>
<td>8-5 day</td>
<td>Reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large company</td>
<td>Work at home</td>
<td>Co-workers at same educational level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small company</td>
<td>Creative/progressive/innovative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in a variety of office locations</td>
<td>Conservative/well-structured hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work outside in nature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in one office</td>
<td>Supervise others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review those preferences you have circled and develop a prioritized list below:

1. ______________________________  2. ______________________________  3. ______________________________  4. ______________________________

What settings would you want to be sure to avoid?

1. ______________________________  2. ______________________________  3. ______________________________  4. ______________________________

Do you have a geographical preference or requirement? If so, indicate it here.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
FUNCTIONAL AREAS

In order to begin the necessary exploration, it is helpful to identify functional areas where jobs are grouped in terms of activities and responsibilities. Listed below are categories of employment. Mark those functions for which you want to gather more information.

**Administration**
- Educational Administration
- Legal
- Government Relations
- Office Management

**Finance**
- Accounting
- Commercial Banking
- Corporate Finance
- Credit Management
- Investment Banking
- Security Analysis

**Human Resources**
- Compensation & Benefits
- Conflict Resolution
- Employee & Labor Relations
- Recruiting
- Training & Development
- Diversity Management

**Marketing & Sales**
- Advertising
- Corporate Brand Management
- Marketing Operations
- Market Research
- Merchandising / Buying
- Product Management

**Consulting**
- Corporate Training & Development
- Function Specific Consulting:
  - Marketing, Finance,
  - Human Resources,
  - Operations, Career, etc.
- Leadership Development
- Management Consulting
- Organizational Development
- Personal Consulting
- Strategy Consulting

**Computers / Information Systems**
- Database Management
- Network Administration

**Operations**
- Engineering
- Research & Development
- Production
- Purchasing

**Other Business**
- Business Development
- Customer Service
- Distribution
- Facilities Management
- Logistics
- Manufacturing / Production
- Product Training & Support
- Project Management
- Purchasing / Receiving
- Quality Assurance
- Real Estate / Property Management
- Regulatory Affairs / Compliance
- Supply Chain Management
- Travel & Tourism
Review the categories you have marked and list by priority those functional areas you would be interested in exploring:

1. ______________________  
2. ______________________  
3. ______________________  
4. ______________________

INTEGRATION OF SELF ASSESSMENT WITH OCCUPATIONS

**Directions:** Write your top 5 interests, skills, and values in rank order in the space provided. Write the top five occupations in which you are most interested. Determine how compatible the occupation is with each interest, skill, and value, and fill in the numerical value for each attribute in column A under each occupation. Multiply each rating by the number listed and fill in the numerical value in column B under each occupation. Total column B in each group. Combine the 3 totals. The highest totals show the strongest compatibility.

**Ratings:**
- 2 = strong compatibility
- 1 = compatible
- 0 = no significant relationship
- -1 = incompatible
- -2 = strong incompatibility
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Communicating</td>
<td>X5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top 5 Interests**

1<sup>st</sup>  
2<sup>nd</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup>  
5<sup>th</sup>  
Total

**Top 5 Skills**

1<sup>st</sup>  
2<sup>nd</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup>  
5<sup>th</sup>  
Total

**Top 5 Values**

1<sup>st</sup>  
2<sup>nd</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup>  
5<sup>th</sup>  
Total

**Combined 3 Totals**