

Taking Control of
Your Career

KNOWING YOURSELF AND
WHAT YOU WANT

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**ACTIVITY 1: Knowing Yourself and What You Want**

This activity will help you identify your values, occupational interests, strengths and achievements, skills, and preferences. It will also help managers discuss professional development and career aspirations with their staff.

Looking back on your career is the first step in moving forward. It is useful to think about what actions have positively influenced your career so far and whether the same or similar actions might help your career progress even further.

**Reflections on Your Career**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions. You can enter as much text as you want. At the end of this activity, you may want to send this document to a counsellor on the Career Resource Centre Team[[1]](#footnote-1) and arrange meet to discuss your reflections.

1. **What experiences or actions that you have initiated previously have positively affected your career? How did you initiate them?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What experience or action positively affected your career?** | **How did you initiate it?** |
| Your response | Your response |
| Your response | Your response |
| Your response | Your response |
| Your response | Your response |
| Your response | Your response |

1. **What types of organizational support has helped your career growth?**

Your response

1. **Who helped you make cross-functional, interagency, or other job transitions?**

Your response

1. **If you have changed duty station and function what helped you in the past?**

Your response

1. **Did anyone make the transition easier for your spouse and children?**

Your response

**Thinking Ahead**

An important part of your career planning process is visualizing where you want to be in the short- and long-term future. What would you like to be doing and where? What skills and knowledge do you need to get there? Your answers to these questions will help you clarify your career goals and develop an action plan to achieve them.

**Instructions:** Type your answers in the tables below. You can enter as much text as you want.

1. **What job assignment(s) would you like to have or career move(s) would you like to make in the coming years? Why?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeframe** | **Job Assignment/Career Move** | **Why?** |
| **1 – 2 years** | Your response | Your response |
| **3 – 5 years** | Your response | Your response |

1. **What skills and knowledge do you need to develop to be eligible for these assignments and career moves?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeframe** | **Job Assignment/Career Move** | **Skills and Knowledge Needed** |
| **1 – 2 years** | Your response | Your response |
| **3 – 5 years** | Your response | Your response |

1. **Who might help you gain the experience you need to get your desired job(s)?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeframe** | **Job Assignment/Career Move** | **Who can help?** |
| **1 – 2 years** | Your response | Your response |
| **3 – 5 years** | Your response | Your response |

1. **How are you going to prepare for your desired new job assignment(s)?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeframe** | **Job Assignment/Career Move** | **Preparations** |
| **1 – 2 years** | Your response | Your response |
| **3 – 5 years** | Your response | Your response |

**Personal Assessment**

Knowing what you do well in the workplace can serve as a springboard for professional development. Your work preferences and personal motivators also influence where you want to go in your career and how you want to get there.

**Instructions:** Type your answers below. You can enter as much text as you want.

* 1. **What do you do well? What are your strengths? What specific skills do you have that you could use in other positions?**

Your response

* 1. **What is unique about your work experience?**

Your response

* 1. **What are your work preferences?**
* Do you like to work alone or with others?
* Do you like having a job with a lot or little structure?
* Do you prefer assignments that are very specific or that give you a lot of room for imagination?
* Would you prefer to work in HQ or a field location?

Your response

* 1. **In what areas would you like to continue your professional growth and learning?**

Your response

* 1. **What values drive or motivate you (for example, achievement, creativity, making a difference, money, or service)?**

Your response

**Career “Card Sort” Activities**

You can use web-based “card sorts” to identify and assess your career values and skills. These activities can help you focus your career plan on areas which excite or motivate you and which are consistent with your values.

**Values Card Sort[[2]](#footnote-2)**

If you are unhappy in and unfulfilled by your current job, it may be because your values and the work you do are “out of sync.” Aligning what is important to you with your work is essential to finding meaning and satisfaction.

Use this card sort activity to identify what is most important to you in a work setting. This activity helps you explore what is important to you about what you do, how you do it, where you do it, with whom you do it, and for whom you do it.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below and then enter the results in the table provided.

1. Enter the following address in your browser window:

<http://cce.umn.edu/cardsort/values/>

Rate the 48 values presented on the cards according to how important each is to you by “dragging”[[3]](#footnote-3) each card into one of the following categories:

Most Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

Note that only five values can be rated “Most Important” in order to help you set priorities for your key values.

1. Create a new card if a value which is important to you is not in the card deck. To do so:
	1. Click ***Create a new card****.*
	2. Type the name of the value in the top box.
	3. Explain what that value means for you in the bottom box.
	4. Click **Add New Card**.
2. Type your five most important values in the first column of the table below.
3. For each of your most important values:

Explain why it is important to you.

Describe how you will know when it is being met, in other words, what behavioural or observable indicators there will be.

Rate how well the value is being met in your current job on a scale of 1 to 5 where:

1 = Not being met at all

2 = Being met somewhat

3 = Being met adequately

4 = Mostly being met

5 = Being met well

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Why is it important to you?** | **How will you know when it’s being met?** | **How well is it being met in your current job?** |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |

**Skills Card Sort[[4]](#footnote-4)**

Many people find it difficult to identify their skills. We often:

Discount or minimize what we are good at

Don’t think of what we do well as being valuable

Assume everyone else can do it

Are overly critical of ourselves

Identifying your skills, as well as being able to articulate how you have used them, is helpful both for clarifying what sort of work might be a good fit and for marketing yourself when networking and interviewing.

Note that this card sort activity is not specifically related to UN jobs. Even so, it is a valuable tool for recognizing and categorizing your broad occupational interests. For example, are you someone who prefers to deal with people, ideas, data, or things?

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below and then enter the results in the table provided.

1. Enter the following address in your browser window:

 <http://cce.umn.edu/cardsort/skills/>

1. Rate the 42 skills presented on the cards according to how much the skill interests and excites you by “dragging”[[5]](#footnote-5) each card into one of the following categories:

Energizes Me

Has Little or No Effect

Depletes Me

Note that only five values can receive the top rating of “Energizes Me” in order to help you identify your preferred skills.

1. Create a new card if a skill which energizes you is not in the card deck. To do so:
	1. Click ***Create a new card****.*
	2. Type the name of the skill in the top box.
	3. Describe the skill in the bottom box.
	4. Click **Add New Card**.
2. Type your five most energizing skills in the first column of the table below.

Identify several examples of when you have used it on the job

Rate how often you get to use it in your current job on a scale of 1 to 5 where:

1 = Never

2 = Rarely

3 = Sometimes

4 = Frequently

5 = Most of the time

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Examples of when I’ve used this skill on the job** | **How often are you using it in your current job?** |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |
| Your response | Your response | Your response | Select a number. |

**Personality Type Inventory**

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is the most widely used personality inventory in the career development field. By asking you to identify your preferences, the MBTI can help you determine and learn about your personality type. The MBTI can also help you find your strengths, recognize possible blind spots, and get your ideas across more effectively to co-workers and your boss.

In this activity, you take a modified version of the MBTI.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below. In step 4, be sure to make a selection in each drop-down list. Make sure you have at least 10 – 15 minutes to complete the questions. Do your best to answer the questions honestly, even if you do not like the answer.

1. Enter the following address in your browser: <http://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>.
2. Answer each of the questions by “dragging”[[6]](#footnote-6) the circle in the middle of the bar in one direction or another. There are six positions on the bar, three to the left and three to the right, as shown here:



**Note:** Be sure to move each circle in one direction or the other; at the end of the activity, none of the circles should be exactly in the middle of the bar.

1. When you have answered all the questions, click **Results** at the bottom of the page.
2. At the top of the Results page, a 4-letter code appears after “Your personality type:” Enter the code which appears by selecting a letter from each of these lists:

Select a letter. Select a letter. Select a letter. Select a letter.

1. Click **Learn More About Your Type** and review the detailed description of your personality type.
2. If you see a diagram at the bottom of the description page which looks like this one:



* 1. Click **Careers** to read about the types of jobs for which you are most suited.
	2. Click **Workplace** to learn more about how you’re likely to function in the work environment depending on whether you are another staff person’s colleague, manager, or subordinate.

If, instead, you see a chart at the bottom of the description page like the one shown here:



* 1. Click **Career paths** to read about the types of jobs for which you are most suited.
	2. Click **Workplace habits** to learn more about how you’re likely to function in the work environment depending on whether you are another staff person’s colleague, manager, or subordinate.

**What Do You Think?**

**Instructions:** Enter your thoughts about the personality type you were assigned and the descriptions provided in the assessment tool. You can enter as much text as you want.

1. **Does the personality type match how you think about yourself? What resonates with you? What doesn’t?**

Your response

1. **Did any of the information surprise you? If so, what?**

Your response

1. **Now that you know your type, how do you think it affects your job performance?**

Your response

1. **Does the information provided give you any new ideas about the types of positions or work environments you might prefer? If so, what are they?**

Your response

1. To contact the Career Resource Centre Team, call +1 212 963 9500 or send an email to centrec@un.org. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This card sort is made available by the College of Continuing Education, University of Minnesota, MN, USA. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To drag a card, point to it with your mouse, click and hold down your mouse button, move the card to the appropriate column, and then let go of the mouse button. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This card sort is made available by the College of Continuing Education, University of Minnesota, MN, USA. The list of skills is from CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org>), which is sponsored by the U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. To drag a card, point to it with your mouse, click and hold down your mouse button, move the card to the appropriate column, and then let go of the mouse button. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. To drag the circle, point to it with your mouse, click and hold down your mouse button, move the circle to the appropriate position, and then let go of the mouse button. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)