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Career Planning Workbook
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Career Planning Workbook

■ *Career Planning
Workbook?*

BBM Human Resource Consultants Inc.

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INTRODUCTION: Why You Should Plan Your Career

Career planning is simply the process of framing meaningful goals for what we want to achieve in our working lives, and then taking steps to attain them.

Without clear goals there is a risk that we will drift: our careers will be shaped by accident, fate, or the decisions made by other people. And when that happens we may well end up dissatisfied with our careers . . . and our lives. By setting your own goals, you have the opportunity to take control of your career development.

Knowing exactly where you stand now, and where you should be heading, is something that has always been a great advantage in managing your career. But in today's fast-changing world, it is more vital than ever before.

Mariaging Your Career In A Changing World

There was a time, not so long ago, when people thought of "career planning" as simply a question of mapping out an orderly progression through the ranks of an organization -- of finding the best route from Job A to Job B to Job C.

Today, we can no longer rely on such detailed career maps. The world is changing much too fast. The workplace is being transformed out of all recognition by new technology, new ways of working, and heightened global competition. Organizations are restructuring their operations to become more effective and competitive. Mergers, downsizing, and sweeping organizational change are affecting almost every industry and sector.

As a result we can no longer expect to follow an orderly career path from Job A to Job B to Job C. Because we know that at any moment, Job B may disappear, while Job C may change to the point where it demands quite different skills. And the further we look into the future, the more difficult it becomes to say what type of opportunities will exist, or what skills and experience we will need to take advantage of them.

In this situation of constant flux, individuals can no longer look to their organizations for detailed career guidance. Instead, they must take responsibility for managing their own careers.

Career planning can help us make our way successfully through this changing world. Instead of narrowly focussing on our current positions, and possibly preparing ourselves for jobs that may not even exist, career planning allows us to educate ourselves as to who we really are and what we really do at work. It shows us how to look beyond our job titles and identify the key underlying skills that we can successfully apply in other work settings.

The "5 W'S" of Career Planning

Through career planning, we can examine not only our current position and specific technical skills, but also the broader context -- the "5 'W's" of our strengths and preferences:

- who? That is, what kinds of people do you want to work with and for: and how much interaction do you want with your colleagues?

- What do you have to offer in terms of skills and competencies?
- Why do you work? What is the Purpose of your job and how does it fit into the "bigger picture"? And how well does it mesh with your personal values?
- Where should you work? What kind of work setting suits your work style and allows you to perform most effectively?
- When? Do you prefer a fast-paced work environment, in which you are required to handle many tasks simultaneously, or a slower, more deliberate pace?

By examining the total context of your work, you can gain a much better understanding of how to achieve career and life satisfaction.

Often, for example, when people say they are unhappy with a job, they are confusing the technical aspects (e.g., accounting, systems management etc) of the job with other aspects. Typically it's not what they actually do that is bothering them, but one or more other elements. For example, someone might enjoy the technical aspects of accounting, but dislike being required to handle many tasks at once.

By examining all the elements of your work, you can discover your most important skills, values and preferences. You can then identify the areas in which you are most likely to be able to make a contribution. You will then have a much clearer sense of where you are now, where you are going, and where you want to be. You will be able to make informed decisions about your career and about the opportunities available to you, while retaining the flexibility to modify those plans as required.

Know Yourself: Self-Assessment

The foundation of successful career planning, then, is knowing who you are. It is vital that you identify and articulate your unique strengths, skills and values, so that you can make the best possible decisions about your career, and about opportunities available to you within the organization.

That is why the first step in the career planning process is self-assessment. The exercises in this Workbook will help you identify:

- The skills you are strongest in and most enjoy applying.
- The skills you want to improve to achieve greater satisfaction and effectiveness in your current and future work assignments.
- The general skills you have that could be applied in a variety of work settings to a range of positions within the organization.
- The underlying themes and patterns in your career.
- Your values and preferences in terms of work assignments and what you are ultimately seeking from your career and life.
- The work settings in which you will be most satisfied and productive.
- How well you are balancing work and personal life, and how you can improve that balance.

Select Activities Most Relevant To You

Not all the sections in this Workbook will be equally relevant to you. The questions you are asking about your career, and the areas you need to explore in greatest

depth. will depend on your personal career and life situation: your age; your current position. and the length of time you have spent in it: and your personal values.

The Guide to the Exercises in this section describes each one in detail. and can help you identify the exercises that will be most helpful to you.

Obviously people change. Your interests and goals may well change over time. By completing this Workbook, you will be embarking on a process through which you will be able to establish realistic career goals. along with an action plan to accomplish them. You will know not only where you want to go, but also what you have to do to **get** there.

Moreover, you will have learned an approach to managing your career that will allow you to continue to make informed judgments about future job opportunities.

Which Way Is Up?

Traditionally, people have tended to think of career development in terms of promotion. Today, however. many organizations can offer employees only limited opportunities for advancement. due to:

- The surge of baby boomers into the workplace. greatly increasing the competition for management positions at the mid-career level.
- The trend towards leaner and flatter organizations, with fewer reporting levels.

The result is too many people competing for too few promotions. There are approximately twice as many people between the ages of 30 and 40 in the workplace

today as in the previous decade -- but significantly fewer middle management positions.

That makes it all the more important to manage your career effectively -- and. in some cases, to consider alternative forms of career development.

If you are currently feeling stalled in your career advancement, it's possible that you will need to develop new skills or knowledge to continue to move up the ladder. This Workbook can help you evaluate whether your advancement goal is realistic. and -- if it is realistic -- identify what you need to do to achieve it.

Adapting To Change...Lifelong Learning

Positioning yourself for promotion, however, is by no means the only reason to acquire new skills and knowledge. In a world of constant change, lifelong learning is becoming increasingly vital, due to:

- Skills obsolescence: Changes in both technology and in business operations. can render old technical skills redundant. while bringing new ones to the fore.

In the financial services industry, for example. it's no longer enough for branch managers to run an efficient operation and stay on top of their loan loss portfolio.

Instead, in an increasingly competitive market, these managers need quite different skills. such as the ability to stay close to customers; to develop new business; to train and develop staff in using new technology as a marketing tool; and to motivate employees to provide high quality customer service.

- New ways of working: In today's leaner and flatter organizations, people are taking over greater responsibility for their work, with less supervision. At the same time, they are more likely to work as part of a larger team.

These new ways of working demand new skills -- not so much new technical skills as general skills. For example, the ability to communicate effectively to work well as part of a team: to delegate effectively; to develop staff to take on new responsibilities; to make good decisions: and to solve problems as they arise.

"Lifelong learning" doesn't necessarily mean going back to school. For the most part, this learning can take place at work, both in your current position and through developmental assignments, as well as formal company training programs.

what it does require, though, is a positive attitude to change. You need to be flexible, creative and strategic, determining what skills and knowledge you will need to develop, and then making plans to acquire them.

Up Is Not The Only Direction

In planning your career, it's also important to recognize that up is not the only direction. Career development can take many forms. Promotion is one way of developing your career. But it is not the only route to a rewarding and satisfying career.

"Enriching," your current position, for example, is another important form of career development. So is acquiring a new set of skills or taking on a temporary developmental assignment. In some cases, you may want to move laterally

into another area, or perhaps even take a step downwards to acquire new skills and experience as a basis for future mobility. Completing the last section of this Workbook will help you identify a range of realistic career options.

The Grass Is Not Always Greener

Sometimes, when people think about career planning, they think of it as involving dramatic change: the executive who becomes a deep sea fisherman, for example, or the accountant who writes a best-selling espionage novel.

When people are under pressure at work, it's not unusual for them to entertain thoughts of a new career, a business of one's own, or simply a new position elsewhere. They think that they're unhappy in their job, and they wonder if the grass is greener elsewhere. But once they go through the career planning process, most people conclude that their current position, with perhaps some minor adjustments, is fundamentally a good match.

You may well find that you want to make more use of certain strengths, or to develop skills required to attain future career goals: but these requirements can typically be satisfied by enriching your current positions, or by lateral transfers within your department. Dramatic career shifts, however, are the exception rather than the rule.

Your Career Plans & the Organization

Career planning cannot, of course, be conducted in a vacuum. Achieving your career goals does not depend only on your personal interests, skills, and goals. It will also be shaped by the organization's assessment of your potential and by the business environment.

To manage your career effectively you will require information about:

- Opportunities which might realistically be available to you now and in the future.
- The skills and experiences necessary to handle specific jobs.
- Ways in which the organization is changing now -- and may change further in the future.
- Business areas that are growing, and areas that are shrinking

There are exercises and guidelines in this Workbook that will help you in gathering this information.

Your manager will also play an important role in helping you establish realistic career goals and plans by:

- Discussing with you your skills and interests.
- Giving you feedback on your strengths and general potential, and on the career opportunities likely to be available to you.

Taking Responsibility for Your Career and Your Life

The primary responsibility for managing your career, though, is yours. You must take the initiative in communicating with your manager about your interests and goals. At the same time, you need to understand that attaining your goals will depend on organizational needs and the degree to which you can fulfill those requirements.

Demands, Demands, Demands . . . Juggling Your Career And Personal Life

Finally, it is important to remember that your career is only one important strand in the fabric of your life.

The decisions you make about your career can have an impact on other areas of your life - just as the decisions you make in your personal life can affect your career.

The exercises in this Workbook will help you develop a greater awareness of what you need to do to keep your life in healthy **balance**.

For Your Eyes Only

This Workbook is for your private and personal use. There is no expectation that you will show the completed exercises to your manager, Human Resources, or anyone else in the organization.

Once you have completed the Workbook, and formulated new ideas and plans about your career, you may well wish to discuss your conclusions with your manager and with other people in the organization. But the Workbook itself remains personal and confidential - unless, of course, you choose to show it to other people.

CAREER PLANNING CHECKLIST & EXERCISE KEY

Use this checklist and the interpretation key that follow as a guide to select the activities in the workbook that will be most helpful to you.

	Yes	No
1. Do you know what is most important to you in a job and job setting?	_____	_____
2. Can you identify your key skills and abilities?	_____	_____
3. Can you easily describe your major strengths and weaknesses?	_____	_____
4. Do you know what your major accomplishments are?	_____	_____
5. Are you satisfied with how well you are fulfilling your most important values in your work and personal life, and if not, do you have a plan to achieve a better balance?	_____	_____
6. Are you aware of the key aspects of your work style that affect-how you perform and the kind of position and working environment in which you would be happiest and most productive?	_____	_____
7. Do you know how to change aspects of your work style that may be interfering with your work effectiveness?	_____	_____
8. Do you know if and how you can expand and enrich your present position so that it gives you more of what you want?	_____	_____
9. Do you know how your supervisor sees you in terms of your skills, abilities, and potential, and what positions you can realistically aspire to over the next couple of years?	_____	_____
10. Do you know what kind of career opportunities exist for you given your interests, skills and background on the one hand, and the organization's business plans and human resource requirements on the other?	_____	_____
11. Do you know what career opportunities exist for you outside of your department?	_____	_____
12. Do you know what your career options are?	_____	_____
13. Do you have meaningful and achievable career goals?	_____	_____
14. Do you know what you have to do to achieve your personal and career goals?	_____	_____
15. Do you know what kind of training and development you require to achieve your goals?	_____	_____

INTERPRETATION AND EXERCISE KEY

- **If** you want to be better able to answer yes to questions 1 to 7, go to pages 1 - 69. You are interested in Self-Assessment. If you are interested in only selected questions, go to the Guide to the Exercises and identify the activities that will be most relevant to you.

If you want to be better able to answer yes to question 8, go to pages 1 -9, 65 - 69, and 85 - 102. You are interested in exploring the possibility of Job Enrichment.
- **If** you want to be better able to answer yes to questions 9 and 10, go to pages 70 - 75. You are interested in Reality Testing and Receiving Feedback on how your plans fit in with the organization's assessment of your strengths, abilities, and potential.
- If you want to be better able to answer yes to question 11, go to pages 76-84. You are interested in Searching Out Opportunities and Exploring a Full Range of Career Options, possibly including a career change.
- If you want to be better able to answer yes to questions 12 - 15, go to pages 85 - 102. You are interested in Evaluating Your Career Options, Formulating Goals, and Developing Action Plans.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Brainstorm

Many people have problems in making career plans and developing goals because they **inhibit** expressing their ideas and goals. They tell themselves things like "I could never achieve this", "That opportunity is not available to me" and so on.

In working through these exercises, suspend judgement and let your imagination flow. Generate ideas first, without censoring your thoughts. Later, you can sit back and evaluate how realistic they are.

Pace Yourself

Don't be deterred by the length of this Workbook. Although it looks like considerable work it will not take many hours to complete (depending on your particular career planning interests and the number of exercises you complete).

The best way to approach this Workbook is by **completing** one or two exercises at a time. Set yourself a schedule over the next few weeks, and try to keep to it. You will probably get the best results if you can complete the entire Workbook within a two to three week period. That way, you will still have your earlier findings clearly in mind as you complete the later exercises, and the process will take on a momentum of its own.

Spend Time/Invest Effort

The benefit you will obtain from this Workbook will be in direct proportion to the effort you put into it.

It may be tempting to just read through the exercises and "complete them in your head". But you will get much greater benefit by sitting down, pencil in hand, and completing them.

Focus On Areas Most Relevant To Your Career Situation

As already mentioned, not all sections of this Workbook will be equally relevant to your particular career-related questions and concerns. Concentrate on those exercises that are most personally meaningful to you. The Guide to the Exercises that follows describes each of the exercises and what you will gain from completing it.

Before deciding that a section is not for you, review the Summary Questions located at the end of each chapter (coloured pages). If you cannot answer the questions with ease, then you should complete the exercises in that section.

Consult Others

Career planning requires integrating information about yourself - your interests, skills and potential - with information about the organization and its business plans. You will have better information about yourself if you check your personal perceptions against those of people who know you well and have had an opportunity to observe you: for example, your friends, spouse, colleagues and manager.

GUIDE TO THE EXERCISES

KNOW YOURSELF: SELF-ASSESSMENT

	Page
Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction At Work: How Does Your Job Measure Up?	1
<p>This exercise will help you evaluate and clarify your feelings about the individual components of your job, and provide you with important information about your job preferences. As a result, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop guidelines for evaluating future career moves ▪ Begin to develop guidelines for modifying your present position to build in more of what you want and reduce aspects you find less satisfying. 	
Taking Stock: Analyzing Your Career History	10
<p>This activity will provide you with important information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your underlying career orientations and preferences • How your past positions have contributed to your development ▪ The skills and abilities you have acquired over your career <p>Note: For people who have held at least two positions in their careers.</p>	
Taking Credit Where It's Due: Analyzing Accomplishments	15
<p>Completing this exercise will help you identify your accomplishments (both at work and outside of work); the skills you used in reaching those accomplishments; and the common linking themes running through all your achievements which best define who you are and what you like to do.</p> <p>Note: This exercise is primarily intended for people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are unsure about what they are good at or what they really like to do; ▪ Have difficulty identifying or communicating their accomplishments; ▪ Are considering a career shift. 	

What Do You Look For In A Job?

Page

Investigating Your Work Style and Preferences

26

People vary along dimensions such as preference for working alone versus working with others, or, high **visibility** versus low visibility. Your ideal job is one that provides the best match between your personal preferences and job characteristics. Completing this inventory will help you answer such questions as:

- What motivates you in your career?
- What features are really important to you in a work setting?
- What are the distinctive characteristics of your work style and what elements of your work style might you want to modify in order to realize your full potential?
- What are some of the underlying psychological elements affecting how you work that may be interfering with your work effectiveness? How can you change those aspects of your work style that are interfering with your effectiveness? .

Identifying Your General Skills

44

This inventory will enable you to conduct a thorough analysis of your skills, and identify the skills you are strongest in and most enjoy applying.

Note: For people who:

- Are uncertain about what their major strengths are;
- Have difficulty in succinctly labelling and describing their skills;
- Are considering a career change;
- Are less than 6 years into their career.

What Do You Really Care About? Clarifying Your Values

52

In completing this activity you will identify what is most important to you and what you want out of your life and career. You will develop criteria for determining, personal and career goals and selecting the kind of position and working environment which best matches your needs and preferences. You will also evaluate the degree to which your present position meets your underlying needs and preferences,

Keeping Your Life In Balance: Career/Life Choices

59

Your career is only one important strand in the fabric of your life. This activity will help you **evaluate** how well you are balancing the different areas of your life along important dimensions related to life and career planning. You can then develop life-style goals and plans to address identified areas of weakness.

Putting It Together: Your Ideal Job

65

This summary puts the results of your self-assessment together. In completing this exercise you will:

- Summarize key information about yourself that will help determine your ideal career direction
- Evaluate how well the features of your present position match with what you are ideally seeking and are suited for.

KNOW YOUR OPPORTUNITIES: Reality Testing and Opportunity Search

Reality Testing: Soliciting Feedback from Others

70

*"O wad some Pow)er the giftie gie us,
to see oursels as others see us!"*

Robert Burns

Career planning cannot be conducted in a vacuum. To set realistic career goals you need feedback on how others perceive your strengths, skills, and general potential within the context of the organization's business plans and human resource requirements. -This- activity -tells you how to test out the results of your self-assessment with your manager and others whose opinion you value.

Opportunity Search: Finding Out About Other Jobs

If you are considering a career change or move into another department, are early into your career, or simply want to explore a full range of career options, completing this activity will help you. Use the practical guidelines provided to find out about other positions in the organization, and the skill, experience, and educational requirements for moving into positions and areas that interest you. You will identify:

- The kind of information you need
- Where to go to collect that information
- How to collect that information through interviews with your contacts

PLAN YOUR FUTURE:
Evaluating Career Options and Formulating Plans

Goal Setting: Planning for their Achievement

- What are your career options?
- What are your short and longer-term goals?
- How can you plan to achieve your goals?

This segment provides helpful guidelines and suggestions for evaluating your career options, setting meaningful and achievable goals, and planning to achieve your goals.

SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION AT WORK

How Does Your Job Measure Up?

It is rare for someone to be completely satisfied or dissatisfied with a particular job. Typically we like some aspects of our work while disliking others, to a greater or less degree. This exercise will help you accurately evaluate and clarify your feelings about the individual components of your job and will provide you with important information about your career preferences.

If on the whole you like your job, it is important to pinpoint precisely what it is you like about it. You can then seek out those same underlying job features in the future (while minimizing the things you do not like as far as possible).

If you are dissatisfied with your current position, this analysis will be all the more important. It may be, on reflection, that your dissatisfaction is with only one or two aspects that have come to assume a disproportionate negative significance. For example, a person whose position involves chairing meetings and giving presentations, and who dislikes those activities, may become extremely dissatisfied or unhappy in the job -- even though there are many other aspects of it that are actually enjoyed. Gaining some perspective on your current position, by specifying the things you do and do not like, will give you a much more accurate picture of where your career should be heading.

In completing this exercise you **will**:

- Develop guidelines for evaluating future career moves
- Begin to develop guidelines and an action plan for possibly modifying your present position to build in more of what you want, and to reduce aspects you find less satisfying.

Instructions

On the next page you will find a number of potential sources of job dissatisfaction. We stress the word "potential": what you may find annoying may be a source of satisfaction to someone else, and vice versa. This is not intended as a complete list - its purpose is to stimulate your thinking.

Tick off the items that describe how you feel about your present position. Add any other items that occur to you in the space provided.

POSSIBLE JOB DISSATISFIES

- _____ Not learning anything new (lack of variety in the work)
- _____ Job description is unclear (not clear what is expected of me)
- _____ People I work with (my colleagues; my manager) are (too political, unfriendly, etc.)
- _____ Work assignments are too unstructured
- _____ No opportunity to gain management experience
- _____ Not enough recognition of my contributions
- _____ **Lack of opportunity** to gather new skills that are not related to my functional area (area of expertise)
- _____ Manager rarely gives feedback
- _____ Work is always under too much time pressure
- _____ Work too much "alone (too much teamwork)
- _____ Not possible to set for myself the pace of my work
- _____ Too much writing of reports (too many meetings) (too much red-tape) etc.
- _____ Too many presentations (no opportunity to present, lead meetings etc.)
- _____ Too much **backroom** work
- _____ Too many (not enough) management/administrative responsibilities
- _____ Not enough autonomy in determining how I do **my** work
- _____ Not enough responsibility to challenge me
- _____ Too much (not enough) travel
- _____ Poor compensation
- _____ Tasks I dislike, e.g. managing the budget
- _____ Other things (please list) _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Instructions

Copy your list of dissatisfies onto the first column on the next page.

In the second column write what you want in your job. Be as **specific** as **possible**. Do not censor your ideas. Write down what you would ideally want in light of things dissatisfying you.

EXAMPLE

<i>Things dissatisfying me at work</i>	<i>What I want in my job</i>
<i>lack of opportunity to gain management experience</i>	• <i>opportunity to supervise others</i>
<i>colleagues too political and competitive</i>	<i>colleagues who are friendly and supportive</i>
<i>job description too vague</i>	• <i>clearly defined tasks and responsibilities</i>
<i>too much time pressure/too many deadlines</i>	<i>opportunity to work at a more leisurely pace/to set my own deadlines</i>
<i>always working in groups and teams</i>	• <i>opportunity to work alone</i>
- <i>lack of opportunity to develop skills outside my field of specialization</i>	- <i>opportunity to work in or with another department (marketing?)</i>

Now you will repeat the preceding three steps for the things you find satisfying about your job.

Tick those items that describe how **you** feel about your position. Add any other items that occur to you in the space provided.

POSSIBLE JOB SATISFIERS

- Work arrangements are flexible
- Opportunity to supervise younger colleagues
- Writing reports
- Giving presentations
- Colleagues are supportive/friendly/can learn from them, etc.
- Manager gives frequent feedback
- Exercising my skills in my technical/functional area
- Good training and development opportunities
- Work usually done in teams/good teamwork environment
- Work has visible importance
- Opportunity to personally determine how I do my work
- Believe in the product
- Good compensation
- Opportunity to work with people I respect and can learn from
- A lot of variety in the work
- Managing others
- Learning new skills/knowledge in my work
- The work is challenging
- Planning and setting objectives
- Job has high visibility
- Other things (please list) _____
- _____
- _____

Copy your list of satisfiers onto the first column on the next page.

In the second column, note the things you want to maintain and/or have more of in your current and future positions. Again, do not worry for the moment how realistic these ideas are.

EXAMPLE

<i>What I like about my current job</i>	<i>Things I want to maintain and/or have more of in current & future assignments</i>
<i>systems work - I provide an important service</i>	<i>an equally important product or service</i>
- <i>opportunity to supervise several people</i>	· <i>increased management responsibilities</i>
- <i>working with John and Mary as part of a team</i>	<i>more opportunity to work with people in a teamwork environment</i>
<i>a lot of variety</i>	<i>variety in assignments</i>
- <i>working with Dave/learning a lot about management from him</i>	· <i>working with people I can learn from</i>
<i>working under pressure to meet deadlines</i>	<i>high pressure environment</i>

Instructions

1. Examine the lists you have made in the right-hand **column** of your two tables. Highlight in **yellow** the items on these lists that are most important to you.

Few jobs **are** absolutely perfect, and we almost always have to make certain **trade-offs**. When you set clear priorities for yourself, you will be much better **able** to determine what trade-offs you are prepared to make. You will be able to discuss the issues that are really important to you with your manager, and may be able to modify your current position to better suit your needs. You will also be **able** to make more informed choices in thinking about future job assignments, and about the types of work setting in which you will be most effective and productive.

2. **Summary** and Action Plan: Now begin to think about how you can get **what you want**. **First**, think of **some realistic ideas for improving your current position** to form a **basis** for eventual discussion with your manager. Then write some specifications for your next job, starting to think of some possible jobs or assignments that match with what you want.

(Note: If you can't think of anything right now, don't worry. You will be gathering more information in the rest of this Workbook that will help you in finding out about other positions in the organization through discussions with your manager and other contacts.)

SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN

Some ways in which I can improve my present job are:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

In my next job I want:

-
- m
-
-
-
-

In my next job I don't want:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Some possible jobs/assignments that match with what I want are: (Brainstorm)

-
-
-

TAKING STOCK: Analyzing Your Career History

In the preceding exercise you conducted a detailed analysis of the components of your present position and identified specific job “likes” and “dislikes”.

How you feel about your current position tells only part of the story. It is also important to analyze the positions you have held in the past and to draw the connections between where you have been and where you are now. That, in turn, will provide valuable information for deciding where you want to go in the future.

You may find, for example, that you have always enjoyed **supervising** or leading other people **in every** position you have had; or that you have always disliked using your professional skills. By examining your past work history, you can identify these recurrent themes and take note of them in planning where you want to go from here.

It is also possible that your current position, while satisfying in many ways, does not allow you to apply some of the skills you have enjoyed **using** in previous positions. Looking at those previous positions helps to refresh your memory about what you can do, and what you find satisfying.

In completing this exercise, you will be conducting a thorough analysis of **your** career **history** in order to increase your understanding and knowledge of:

- Your underlying career orientations and preferences
- How your past positions have contributed to your development
- The skills and abilities you have acquired over your career

Note: For people who have held two or more positions/jobs in their careers,

- Step One: List all the jobs and positions you have held, from most recent to least recent. If you have played a role in a voluntary, professional, or community organization, include this as well (as long as the role was one that was personally meaningful to you).
- Step Two: Complete the next two columns for each position or role. Use your results from the previous exercise to help.
- Step Three: Each of your past roles and jobs have in some way contributed to your development. **Identify** the skills, **knowledge** and abilities acquired in **each role** or job in terms of technical/professional skills and general skills.

Technical/professional skills are skills, knowledge, or abilities that are acquired through education or special training.

For example, how to:

- Increase **office** productivity; use a spreadsheet program on a computer; conduct a **business study**; apply accounting principles on a day-to-day basis; maximize interest yields **within** given risk scenarios; apply accounts payable procedures and standards; do project budgeting (costs and time); provide accurate reports and statements.

General skills are skills, knowledge, or abilities that are not typically acquired through specialized training, but instead through a combination of on-the-job experience and personal aptitudes. These competencies can be applied to a range of jobs in a range of settings.

For example, how to:

- Conduct a **meeting**; work effectively with senior management; **manage** a budget; set objectives; give a presentation; **manage** time; **delegate** assignments; conduct a performance review; relate effectively to very diverse kinds of people; write a business plan.

Note: A list of general **skills** to help you identify and describe your skills can be found on pages 45-49.

Position	Liked Most	Liked Least	Skills, Abilities, Knowledge Acquired
----------	------------	--------------------	--

Position	Liked Most	Liked Least	Skills, Abilities, Knowledge Acquired
----------	------------	-------------	--

SUMMARY OF CAREER THEMES

Review your worksheets for this and the preceding exercise and look for any repeating patterns or themes. Complete the following sentences:

In analyzing my career history it appears that I am most happy when:

-
-
-
-

I am least satisfied when:

-
-
-
-

The roles and positions I have had that have been most important to my development are:

-
-
-
-

In these roles/positions I acquired the following key skills, knowledge, abilities:

-
-
-
-
-
-

TAKING CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE: Analyzing Your Accomplishments

Effective career planning means having a firm knowledge of the skills you have and most enjoy using. You should know what those skills are and be able to state that **knowledge** fluently in discussions about your career and its development. One of the best ways to identify your skills and interests is to examine achievements that gave you lasting satisfaction - in your career, at school, and in your personal life. In identifying these experiences, you will be looking for:

- The **skills** you used in reaching those accomplishments
- What you found **satisfying** about those accomplishments
- The common linking threads **running** through all of your accomplishments that best define who you are and what you like to do.

Some people find this exercise difficult because they, find it, hard to acknowledge their accomplishments. They diminish or disown even quite significant accomplishments (e.g. "It wasn't anything special" "Anyone could have done it". etc.) **Don't** let modesty interfere with completing this exercise.

The **criteria** you should use in selecting these experiences is **personal satisfaction and pride** -- not how others might have viewed your accomplishments. So if improving your personal fitness was more satisfying to you than an achievement at work that earned you high praise, select that experience.

Note: For people who:

- Are uncertain about what they are good at or what they really like to do
- Have difficulty identifying or communicating their achievements
- Are considering a career shift.

PART I

This exercise asks you to **do** three things:

- Identify and describe your past accomplishments. They can be drawn from your work, educational or leisure activities.
- List the **skills** you used in achieving the accomplishment.
- Identify why the accomplishment was personally satisfying.

The **forms** you will be completing are on Pages 19 and 20.

To help you in identifying and writing about your accomplishments we have included:

- Two **sample accomplishments** to act as a **model**.
(**Note:** The accomplishments shown here are drawn from outside of work life to be meaningful to a broad range of people. Your accomplishments should also include work-related achievements.)
- **Phrases** commonly used in describing accomplishments (page 18)
- A list of common action verbs to use in describing your accomplishments and the skills used (page 21)

You can complete this exercise in a number of different ways. Some people find it easier to brainstorm as many accomplishments they can think of, then go back and **identify** the skills and satisfiers in each accomplishment. Others find it easier to take **each** accomplishment one at a time: they find that thinking about one accomplishment in detail helps stimulate their thinking about other accomplishments.

In thinking about your accomplishments, don't confine yourself only to the past few years. For example, you may want to select:

- 3-4 accomplishments from the past two year period
- 2-3 from the five year period before that
- 2-3 from the previous 10 year period

SAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishment	Skills Used	What made the achievement so personally satisfying
<p>Coordinated local United Way Campaign</p>		
<p>Recruited through my neighborhood contacts, 8 volunteers to assist in organizing the campaign. Informed the local newspaper about the event to generate publicity. Ran 4 meetings with volunteers. Coordinated the volunteers by assigning tasks.</p>	<p>conceptualizing the campaign</p> <p>managing others</p> <p>motivating others</p> <p>planning</p> <p>organizing</p>	<p>managing</p> <p>planning the campaign</p> <p>running the meetings</p> <p>contributing to something I believe in</p> <p>the results - \$5,000!</p>
<p>Developed plan to go to the schools and knock on the doors to inform people about the campaign and recruit volunteers. Got 200 people to participate.</p>	<p>delegating tasks</p> <p>running effective meetings</p> <p>public relations - selling the campaign to the community and persuading people to participate.</p>	<p>- getting recognition and being in the limelight</p>
<p>Bought a home as an investment property that doubled in value over 5 years</p>		
<p>Evaluated the market to determine neighborhoods with greatest growth potential, then interviewed a large number of agents. Selected an agent with the best understanding of my needs and a proven track record.</p>	<p>research/analytical</p> <p>interviewing and selecting the best person for the job</p> <p>thorough analysis of the market</p> <p>conducting cost-benefit analysis</p> <p>negotiating</p>	<p>- knowing what I wanted and insisting that I achieved it</p> <p>- negotiating the buying price</p> <p>- making an excellent profit</p>
<p>Reviewed and evaluated numerous houses & compared their relative merits. Negotiated an excellent price with the owners. Researched the mortgage market and got a very good rate.</p>		

EXAMPLES:

Phrases commonly used in describing accomplishments:

Work Achievements

- Improved productivity in by
- Successfully convinced (my manager, my staff etc.) to
- Increased staff morale by
- Detected a serious error in (a procedure, filing system, report etc.) and
- Improved **service** by
- Successfully arranged and ran a meeting on
- Changed
- Improved quality control in by
- Increased market share of by
- Initiated and implemented a (program, campaign, process, etc.) to
- Developed (introduced, designed, etc.) a new (program/method/system, etc.) for resulting in

Non- Work Achievements

- Successfully counselled/advised/helped a friend
- Lost 20 pounds/stopped smoking
- Organized (coordinated, etc.) a charitable drive (United Way, etc.)
- Successfully renovated (did the interior design, fixed, etc.) my home myself
- Acted as a member of a committee or chaired a committee
- Started and kept to an exercise program.
- Established (acted as Treasurer of, etc.) a (professional association, social, athletic club, etc.)
- Turned a local community charity from a low-profile, part-time agency to a high-profile, full-time agency
- Created (managed, ran, etc.) a fund-raising campaign for (name of charitable, athletic or artistic activity/group)

Accomplishment	Skills Used	What made the achievement so personally satisfying
----------------	-------------	--

Accomplishment	Skills Used	What made the achievement so personally satisfying
----------------	-------------	---

COMMON ACTION VERBS

achieved	drafted	judged	recommended
adapted	dramatized	lead	reconciled
addressed	drew	learned	recruited
administered	edited	lectured	reduced
advised	eliminated	listened	referred
analyzed	empathized	made	rehabilitated
anticipated	energized	maintained	related
arbitrated	enforced	managed	remembered
arranged	established	manipulated	repaired
assembled	estimated	mediated	reported
assessed/appraised	evaluated	mentored	represented
audited	examined	modeled	researched
budgeted	expanded	monitored	resolved
built	experimented	motivated	responded
calculated	explained	navigated	restored
charted	extracted	negotiated	retrieved
checked	filed	observed	reviewed
clarified	financed	obtained	risked
classified	fixed	offered	scheduled
coached	formulated	operated	screened
collected	founded	ordered	selected
communicated	gathered	organized	sensed
compiled	generated	oversaw	separated
completed	guided	painted	served
composed	had responsibility for	perceived	set-up
computed	handled	performed	shaped
conducted	headed	persuaded	shared
conserved	helped	piloted	showed
consolidated	hypothesized	planned	sketched
constructed	identified	played	sold
consulted	illustrated	politicked	solved
controlled	implemented	predicted	spoke
coordinated	improved	prepared	studied
counseled	improvised	prescribed	summarized
created	increased	presented	supervised
decided	influenced	problem-solved	supplied
defined	informed	processed	surveyed
delegated	initiated	produced	symbolized
designed	innovated	programmed	systematized
detected	inspired	projected	talked
determined	instituted	promoted	taught
developed	instructed	protected	team-built
diagnosed	integrated	provided	tended
directed	interpreted	publicized	tested
discovered	interviewed	purchased	trained
dispensed	invented	questioned	transcribed
displayed	inventoried	raised	translated
disproved	investigated	realized	traveled
dissected	involved	reasoned	trouble-shot
distributed		received	wrote

IDENTIFYING KEY COMPETENCIES

Instructions

Review the previous two pages. Where do your ticks lie?

Get some **coloured** pencils or markers.

Highlight the words where you have the most ticks in one **colour**.

Highlight the words where you have some ticks in a second **colour**.

Highlight the words with no ticks in a third **colour**

Interpretation

Frequently occurring ticks indicate a key underlying competency: a skill or competency you have used in a wide range of situations over time. These are relatively stable underlying **competencies**. If you took another ten accomplishments you would probably end up with a similar profile.

Your ticks can provide you with valuable insight into the kinds of situations that you most enjoy and in which you are most **likely** to excel. Most people receive the most **value** in terms of self-development by trying to become better at what they are already good at.

If you have a lot of ticks in a lot of places, you are probably a generalist: If you have some or a lot of ticks only in some places, your areas of strength are more specialized. This is important information, indicating that you are probably more of a specialist.

What about areas where you don't have any ticks? Although some people might describe these areas as "weaknesses", for the most part these represent areas to which you, personally, are not attracted. If possible, **try** to avoid work situations that demand these skills. However, if the lack of these skills is a serious impediment to your present performance, or to the achievement of some of your longer-term goals, then develop a plan for improvement in these areas.

In sum, your profile of ticks can show you where your greatest interests and strengths are. Now, complete the following summary form.

SUMMARY OF KEY COMPETENCIES

In reviewing my accomplishments, I find that:

The situations in which I excel, and that I most enjoy, involve:

-
-
- m
-

The situations I am not particularly interested in involve:

-
-
-
-

The **areas** in which I should **try** to develop further are:

(Note: Focus on either:
(a) skills and **competencies** in which you are already strong or
(b) areas of lesser strength important to your career goals)

-
-
-
-

My key competencies are:

-
-
-
-

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A JOB?

Investigating Your Work Style and Preferences

We all look for slightly different things in a job. The important thing is to know exactly what you are looking for.

The next activity will help you explore some important aspects of, your work style and preferences. Gaining increased awareness of these preferences will help you in charting your career direction, and in identifying the jobs in which you will be most satisfied and productive. Your results will help you answer such questions as:

- What motivates you in your career?
- What features are really important to you in a work setting?
- What are the distinctive characteristics of your work style?
- What elements of your work style might you want to modify in order to realize your full potential?

You will know what to look for in future job settings. You will also be more aware of some of the underlying psychological elements that affect how you work. This self-knowledge will help you make future job choices. It may also reveal some things that are currently interfering with your work effectiveness and career development that you may want to correct.

Work Style/Work Preferences Inventory

Instructions

For each of the statements in the inventory, select the number on the scale that most closely describes your personal feelings. Write the number in the space provided beside the statement. There are no right or wrong answers so be as honest as possible.

Use the full range of the scale. If you always answer a “3” or “4” you will not be able to derive maximum benefit from this inventory.

As you complete this inventory, you may feel that some of the items seem repetitive. In fact, each of the statements is different. Therefore, it is important that you treat each statement as a new item.

After you have completed the inventory, you will be able to interpret your answers using the attached self-interpretation guide.

How true is this statement of you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
not at all					extremely

1. ___ I would rather work as part of a team/group than work alone.
2. ___ I enjoy exercising the particular technical/professional skills that I have, and would be upset if I couldn't continue to do this.
3. ___ Most people who know me well would agree that I have strong leadership skills.
4. ___ I feel bored and under-utilized when I only have one or two assignments or tasks to work on, rather than a large number.
5. ___ I feel constrained by the rules and norms that characterize organizational life, e.g. specified *working* hours, dress code, etc.
6. ___ I would find it quite difficult to make decisions that would have a bad affect on others.
7. ___ I rarely walk up to and join a large group of people.
8. ___ Getting the job done is more important to me than maintaining good relationships with my colleagues.
9. ___ I always make sure that I get recognition for my accomplishments.
10. ___ In pacing my work, I'd rather be involved in a number of different projects at the same time, than work on them one at a time.
11. ___ I am not concerned about the opinions that important people have of me. •
12. ___ The opportunity to pursue a career in my area of technical/professional specialization is not important to me.
13. ___ I feel shy when I am with people I don't know very well.
14. ___ I would only be really happy in a position that allowed me to teach and develop others.
15. ___ Job security is not particularly important to me.
16. ___ When I give a presentation or have to talk in front of a group of people, I worry about the kind of impression I have made.
17. ___ Some people think of me as being stubborn and unyielding.
18. ___ I would prefer to work alone rather than in groups.

How true is this statement of you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
not at all					extremely

- 19 . _ I become angry when my manager doesn't give me full credit for my contributions.
- 20 . _ I would enjoy a management position only in an area related to my professional/technical specialization.
- 21 . _ I am affected by other people's opinions of my work.
22. ___ I enjoy work that brings me into a lot of contact with other people.
23. ___ My strengths lie in my ability to coordinate and direct the efforts of other people.
- 24 . _ I worry that people will think less of me when I don't do a good job, even on an assignment that I know is unimportant.
- 25 . _ I like to drop by other people's offices to chat.
- 26 . _ I would rather execute one or two tasks at a time than be involved in a **large** number of different tasks at the same time.
27. ___ I like being my own boss -- in charge of what I do, when, and for whom.
- 28 . _ I consistently seek out opportunities that allow me to influence **decision-making**.
- 29 . _ Sometimes I have conflicts with other team members when I am **working** in a group, and I don't agree with the way they are doing things.
- 30 . _ When I have successfully completed an assignment it is important to me that others hear and know about the quality of my work.
- 31 . _ I have never **really** given the benefit plans this company offers much thought -- they are not something I particularly care about.
- 32 . _ I often feel **nervous** and on edge at meetings and group get-togethers.
- 33 . _ I don't like having to be at work at a particular time or having to dress in a particular way.
- 34 . _ I am happiest when I have complete freedom to do my work as I want.
- 35 . _ I would probably turn down a transfer to a more challenging position, if the job being offered had no long-term security.

How true is this statement of you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
not at all					extremely

- 36 . _ It bothers me when I know that someone disapproves or is critical of me.
- 37 . _ I would rather rise to a general management position than advance in my **professional/technical** area of specialization.
- 38 . _ I would enjoy a position that involved leading, persuading, and **supervising** others, whether or not my own professional/technical area was related to the work of my staff.
- 39 . _ I worry that others will think of me as not being competent when I do work that is not very good.
- 40 . _ I work most effectively when I have a lot of assignments and projects going at once.
- 41 . _ I would rather get work done through others than do the work myself.
- 42 . _ I enjoy meeting new people and making new friends.
- 43 . _ I become very upset when I feel that I'm not getting full credit for my contributions.
44. ___ When I complete a project, or an assignment. I am always curious about what other people thought about it.
- 45 . _ I seek out opportunities that allow me to exercise **my** power and influence. .
- 46 . _ Some people think of me as being unyielding in **my** opinions and positions.
- 47 . _ When I have successfully completed a project or assignment, I always try to ensure that I get the recognition I deserve.
- 48 . _ The freedom to choose **my** work hours, training courses etc.. is **very** important to me.
- 49 , _ I usually seek out tasks and jobs that have high visibility.
- 50 . _ I am not really bothered when other people are critical of me.
- 51 . _ Once I believe I know the best way to do something, it's difficult to persuade me to change **my** mind.
52. ___ Having **my** contributions fully recognized is very important to me.

How true is this statement of you?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
not	at	all				extremely

- 5 3 . _ The fact that this company provides many financial benefits was an important consideration for me in accepting the job offer.
- 5 4 . _ I frequently end up as the leader in groups where I am not the official leader.
- 5 5 . _ It wouldn't bother me if I knew that a colleague did not respect my **abili-**ties.
- 5 6 . _ I **would** be reluctant to accept a transfer outside my area of professional/technical expertise.
- 5 7 . _ In evaluating a job, whether it offered **long-term security** would be a **particu-**larly important concern for me.
- 5 8 . _ In group decision-making situations, if I have a strong opinion on a matter, I am not easily persuaded to change my mind.
- 5 9 . _ I become bored when I don't have a number of different projects going on at the same time.
- 6 0 . _ I feel comfortable starting conversations with people" I don't know very **well**.

Scoring

The following nine dimensions relating to work preferences were measured in this inventory:

- Autonomy
- Control
- Leadership
- Work Pacing
- Specialist/Managerial Orientation
- Security
- Evaluation
- Recognition
- Affiliation

The meaning of these dimensions and your scores are discussed on pages 36 to 42. After you have scored your responses you will interpret your scores on each of the dimensions.

To determine your scores:

1. **Remove the next page. This is the Scoring Key.**
2. **Enter your answer** to the inventory item indicated on the Scoring Key in to the space provided.
3. **ANSWERS TO ITEMS MARKED WITH AN (*) MUST BE REVERSED** as shown before being entered. For example, if you answered "2" on an item marked with an (*), you would write "5" in the space provided.
4. **Add up your answers** to each dimension to obtain your total score for that dimension.
5. **Divide your total score** by the number of items on that dimension to obtain your average score for that dimension.

NOTE: To obtain your score on "**Affiliation**", subtract .7, since the average score on this dimension tends to be higher than on the other dimensions.

5. **Plot** your scores on the Work Style/Work Preferences Profile on Page 34. Place a mark above the dimension being measured at the correct point for each of your scores. For example, the **sample** on page 33 shows a score of "2" on Autonomy and "4.2" on Control.

Join all your marks together once you have completed this step to produce your profile.

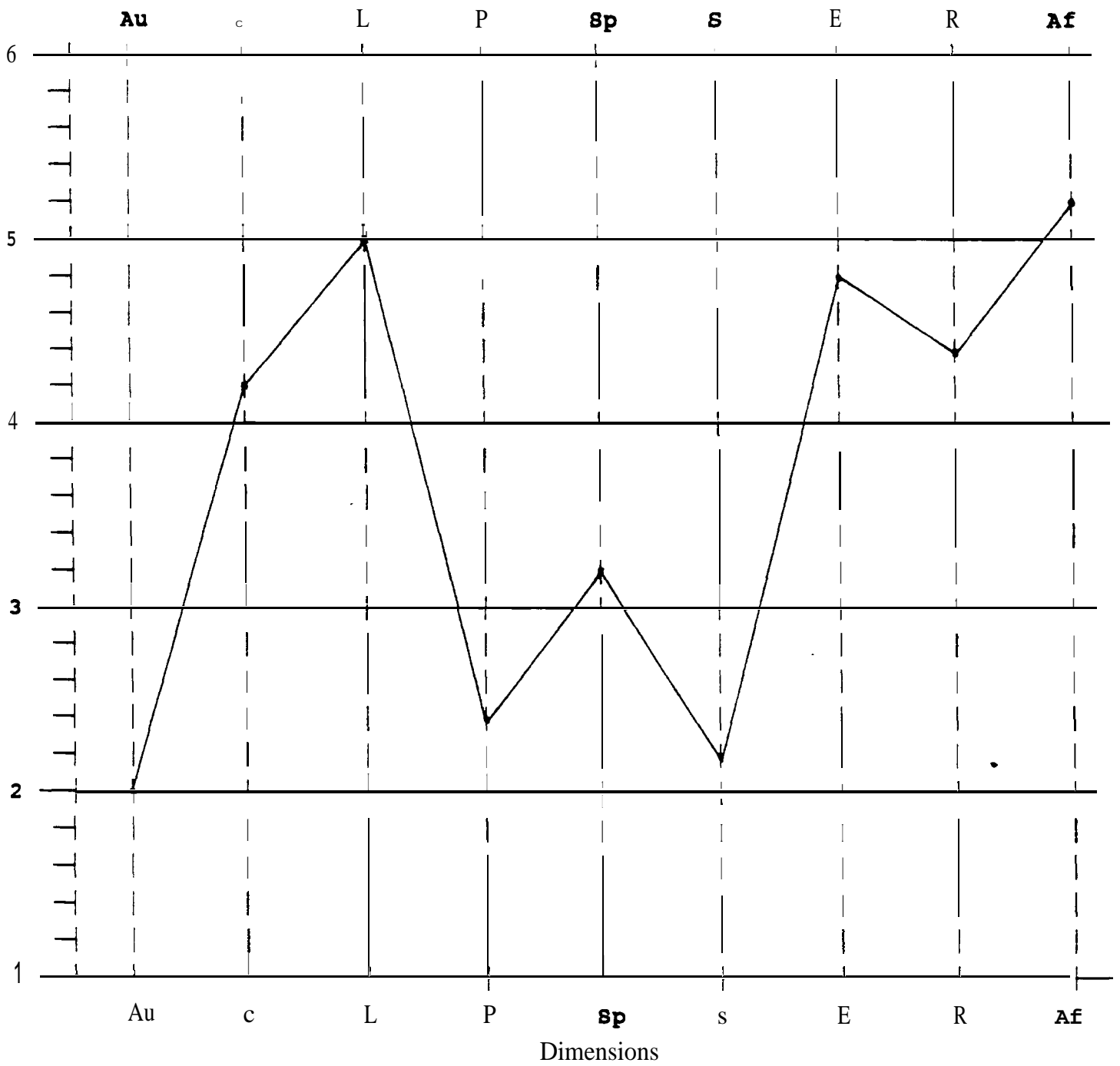
SCORING KEY

	Autonomy	Control	Leadership	Work Pacing	Specialist/ Managerial
	5 _____	17 _____	3 _____	4 _____	2 _____
	27 _____	29 _____	*6 _____	10 _____	*12 _____
	33 _____	46 _____	14 _____	*76 _____	20 _____
	34 _____	51 _____	23 _____	4 _____0	*37 _____
	4 _____8	58 _____	28 _____	59 _____	56 _____
			3 _____8		
			4 _____1		
			4 _____5		
			4 _____9		
	_____	_____	54 _____	_____	_____
TOTAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	÷	÷	÷	÷	÷
	5	5	10	5	5
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
AVERAGE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	security	Evaluation	Recognition	Affiliation	
	*15 _____	*11 _____	9 _____	1 _____	
	* 3 _____1	21 _____	16 _____	*7 _____	
	3 _____5	36 _____	19 _____	*8 _____	
	53 _____	* 5 _____0	24 _____	*13 _____	
	57 _____	*55 _____	30 _____	*18 _____	
			39 _____	22 _____	
			4 _____3	25 _____	
			44 _____	*37 _____	
			47 _____	4 _____2	
	_____	_____	5 _____2	60 _____	
TOTAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	
	÷	÷	÷	÷	
	5	5	10	10 (then minus .7)	
	_____	_____	_____	_____	
AVERAGE	_____	_____	_____	_____	

Note: ANSWERS TO ITEMS WITH AN * SHOULD BE REVERSED as follows:

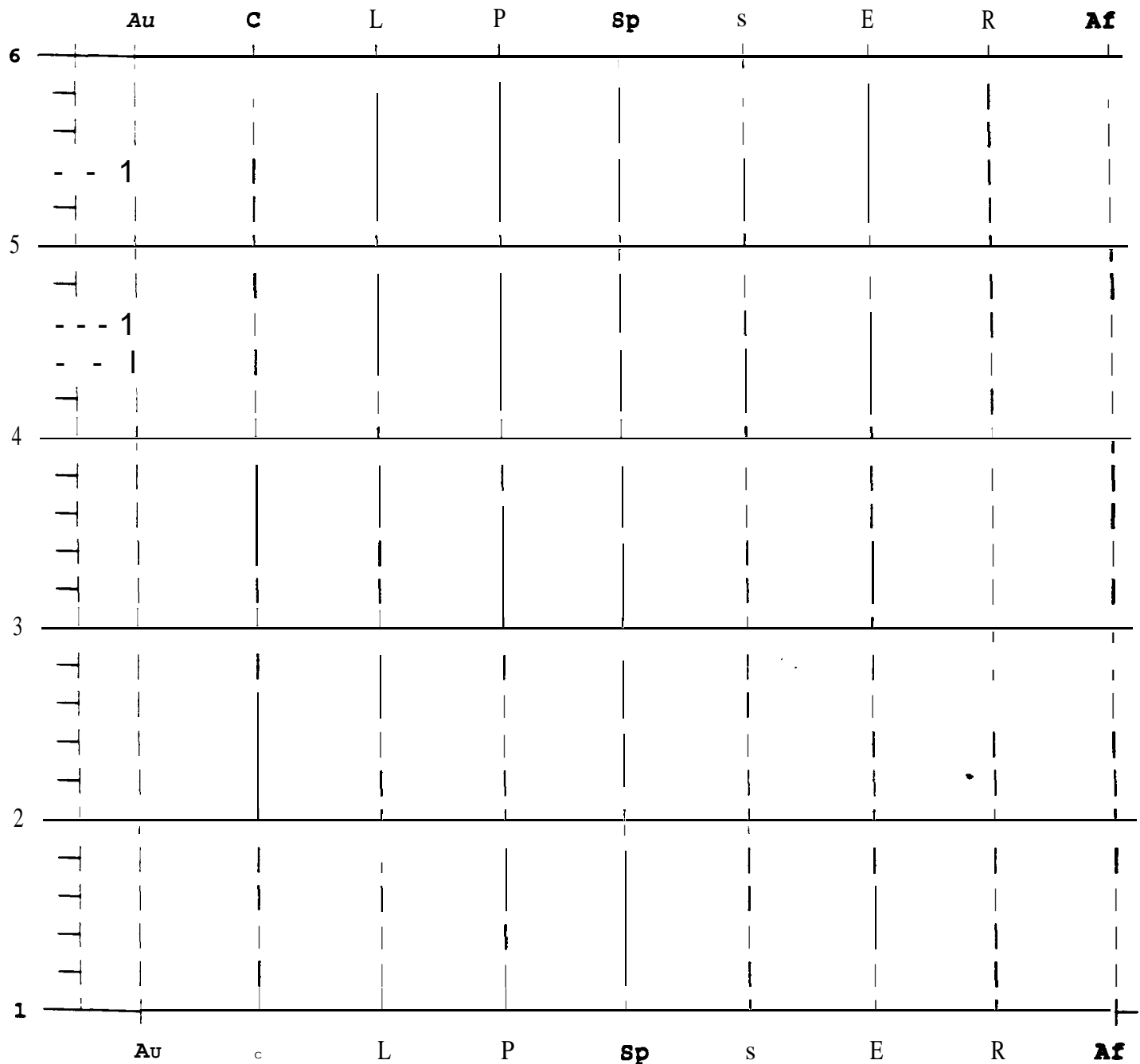
1 = 6; 2 = 5; 3 = 4; 4 = 3; 5 = 2; 6 = 1

YOUR WORK STYLE & PREFERENCE PROFILE (sample)



Au = Autonomy **S** = Security
c = Control **E** = Evaluation
L = Leadership **R** = Recognition
P = Pacing **Af** = Affiliation
Sp = Specialist

YOUR WORK STYLE & PREFERENCE PROFILE



Dimensions

- Au** = Autonomy **S** = Security
- c** = Control **E** = Evaluation
- L** = Leadership **R** = Recognition
- P** = Pacing **Af** = Affiliation
- Sp** = Specialist

INTERPRETATION

On the pages that follow you will see two descriptions for each of the dimensions assessed in this inventory: a description of a high score, and a description of a low score.

These descriptions are idealized: everyone is unique. Therefore, the description may not fit you exactly. As you read the description, underline the characteristics that you feel are particularly descriptive of you, and meaningful to you.

A score of 3 or less can be considered a lower score, while a score of 4 or above can be considered a higher score. But the closer to '1' that you score, the more the low score describes you; while the closer to "6" that you score, the more the high score describes you. If you scored in the moderate range (2.5 to 4.5), you will probably find that some statements in both descriptions apply to you. Underline those statements.

If you find that all your scores are in the "3" to "4" range, this either means that you don't have any strong preferences, or that your answers reflect what is known as response bias: that is, a tendency "to select answers from the middle of a scale. Go back and examine your answers in order to determine which of these explanations best characterize you.

In interpreting your results, remember that:

- A high score is not better than a low score, or vice versa. Everyone is different and has their own unique values, preferences, and work styles.
- The **results** of any inventory are only a guideline; they are not the definitive picture of your personality. If the descriptions below are not consistent with how you see yourself, ask someone who knows you well for their observations of your **behaviour**. Where are the points of similarity and difference?
- If you don't like some aspects of your **behaviour** that are described here and you believe that they are true of you, you can develop a plan to change these behaviors. There are many courses available in these areas. There are also many helpful books, which you can find in the business and self-help sections of any good bookstore.

AUTONOMY

Everyone requires some autonomy in their work. But people differ in the degree to which being their own boss, and being personally in charge of selecting what they do, when, and how, is important to them.

Low score: You enjoy organizational life, and identify with the standards, and values associated with **organizations**. You are responsive to directions from others, and usually are happy to follow their instructions. At times it is possible that you are overly compliant with others' instructions. You don't have any particularly strong desires to be your own boss. In **fact**, you are happiest in a work **environment** in which assignments are clearly defined, and are established by your manager.

High Score: You enjoy **independence**, flexible work arrangements (e.g. work hours, dress code), and the freedom to pursue your own life **style**. Being your own boss, with the freedom to **select** what you do and how you do it, is important. At times you may feel stifled and constrained by organizational life, and in particular by the politics involved in getting things accomplished. This may be misconstrued by others as impatience. Take care in how you express your impatience.

You would probably be happiest in a part of the organization where there is greater tolerance and encouragement of diversity, and greater flexibility in work arrangements. Positions in small, relatively entrepreneurial parts of the organization, or autonomous work units such as task forces, project teams, research groups, and some of the marketing areas, may provide greater autonomy.

CONTROL

This dimension measures your preference for being in control over situations, and your willingness to be influenced by others' views.

Low Score: You are a cooperative "team-player". You don't have strong needs to be in charge. You are willing to be influenced by others: you are open to **alternative** views and will readily compromise and **modify** your position on a matter. If you scored very low on this **scale**, some people may feel that you are too yielding to the opinions and demands of others.

For example, in a group decision-making situation, you may not be willing to defend your point of view. Some people who score very low on this scale, have difficulties asserting themselves and their views. If this is true of you, and if you feel that it interferes with your effectiveness, you would probably benefit from reading some books on how to become more assertive, or from some training in this area.

As a manager, you will be willing to listen to and to take into account the views of your staff. This openness and flexibility will be appreciated by your staff; they will feel that they are important contributors to your team. You may, however, experience some difficulty exercising power and authority. For example, you may feel uncomfortable taking a strong position on a matter and defending it.

High Score: You like to “take charge” of situations. Because you like to be in charge, you may become angry and resentful when your manager tells you how to do your **work**, or even makes some suggestions. You have strong opinions and are not easily persuaded to change your mind. This may lead to conflicts between you and others, particularly when you feel that your position is the correct one. For example, you may conflict with other people in group decision-making situations. If you have a very high score on this dimension, it is possible that at times other people perceive you as being “unyielding” and unwilling to compromise. Some people who score high on this dimension have difficulties delegating work, preferring to do everything themselves.

Also, in the role of a manager, they may sometimes have a tendency to be too “controlling” and “**heavy-handed**” with subordinates. If this is true of you, try to guard against this tendency by ensuring that you provide your staff sufficient autonomy, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making.

LEADERSHIP

This dimension describes your interest in a position that involves leading, influencing, and supervising others.

Low score: You do not enjoy, or seek out, opportunities for leadership. Skills in leading, influencing, and persuading others are not your major strengths. You would rather be responsible for primarily your own **efforts** than for coordinating the efforts of others. You don't have strong desires for a job in the **limelight**, and **would** probably be just as happy in a more “low-profile” position. Sometimes you may avoid or shy away from situations that call for decision-making, or for the exercise of authority. You would find it very **difficult** to make decisions that might adversely affect others.

Sometimes people who score low on this scale have difficulties asserting themselves: that is, they would actually enjoy and be good at supervision, but are inhibited from exercising their **skills** in this area because they feel uncomfortable in situations that call for assertive **behaviour**. If this is true of you, you would probably benefit from reading some books on how to become more assertive, or from management training or Toastmasters courses in public speaking.

High Score: You enjoy and seek out opportunities that allow you to exercise authority and to influence decision-making. You readily assume a leadership position in most situations, even when you are not the “official” leader. You have strong skills in leading, influencing, and persuading others. You would rather be **responsible** for coordinating the efforts of others than do the work yourself.

You would enjoy a position that allowed you to develop other people. If you scored moderate to high on this dimension you would probably be happy in a high-visibility position that provides opportunities for teaching or supervising others, and for influencing decision-making.

If you also enjoy coordinating the efforts of others and attending to administrative tasks, you would probably be happy in a position in general management. If administration, e.g. planning, organizing, coordinating, is not something you particularly enjoy or are good at, some examples of other jobs that would allow you to exercise your leadership skills and interests are positions that involve consulting, negotiating, trouble-shooting, coordinating a project or task-force, and/or supervising a small group of professionals.

WORK PACING

This dimension describes how you like to pace your work, in terms of the number of tasks you prefer to handle simultaneously.

Low Score: You like to be able to control the pace of your work. You would rather execute one or two tasks or projects at a time than be involved in a large number of different tasks at the same time. When this is not possible, you feel pressured and under stress. Under such pressure, the quality of your work may suffer. Some people who score low on this dimension have problems prioritizing their work and managing their time most efficiently. If this is true of you, you would probably benefit from reading some books or taking a course in the area of time management.

You would probably not be at your most effective in a position where you were constantly responding to other people's needs and deadlines. Many field management positions and "trouble-shooting" assignments are like this. As most management positions involve dealing with a variety of projects that are in varying stages of completion, a very low score on this dimension, in combination with a moderate to high score on the Specialist/Managerial Orientation dimension, suggests that you would probably be more satisfied and effective in a professional than in a general management position.

High Score: You are happiest when you have a variety of projects on-going at the same time, and your work flourishes under such conditions. When deprived of this opportunity, you feel bored and under-utilized. You would probably enjoy a field management position, a trouble-shooting position, or being a member of a work unit that is more entrepreneurial in spirit. In other words, an environment where "everything has to be done yesterday", and where you are constantly challenged to perform.

SPECIALIST/MANAGERIAL ORIENTATION

This dimension measures your interest in being a professional/technical specialist versus leaving your area of specialization in favour of a general management position.

Low score: You feel no particular allegiance to your professional/technical area of specialization, and would welcome the challenges associated with moving into new areas. It is possible that you are soured on your area of specialization because you don't like or are bored with what you are doing in your current job. If this is true of you, you would probably benefit from restructuring your job and changing and/or expanding the nature of your responsibilities.

Alternatively, if you actually dislike your area of specialization, a transfer out of your technical area would be a good career choice. A low to moderate score on this dimension in combination with a moderate to high score on leadership suggests that you would probably enjoy a position in general management.

If you scored low on this dimension in combination with a low score on leadership, consider a generalist position, either within your current department, or in other departments.

High Score: You enjoy exercising the particular professional/technical skills that you have and meeting the challenges associated with your area of expertise. You would not be happy if you were transferred out of your area of specialization. If you also scored moderate to high on leadership, you would probably enjoy such positions as being a project leader, a coordinator, supervising other professionals, or consulting.

SECURITY

This dimension describes how important long-term job and financial security (e.g. company benefits) are to you.

Low Score: You are willing to take risks, and would prefer a more challenging job to one that is less challenging but provides better long-term security. Job security is not an important consideration for you in making job/career decisions at this stage in your career. As you get older, however, try to ensure that you realistically evaluate the risks associated with different career moves and decisions.

High Score: Job security is an important consideration for you in planning your career. Sometimes this desire for security may come into conflict with your other needs and values, and you may end up being overly cautious in your career and job decisions. Try to guard against exaggerating the riskiness of particular moves by evaluating them realistically.

A high score on this dimension can sometimes be a function of one's current life situation. For example, a sole support parent will have a greater requirement for security than someone with a fully paid-off mortgage and grown-up children. In different circumstances that same person might be more prepared to take risks.

EVALUATION

To some extent everyone cares about what others think of them. People differ, however, in the extent to which they are affected by others' opinions of them and their work.

Low score: You don't care very much about how other people see you: what they think about you or your work does not affect you. When criticized you tend to shrug it off. Because you are not particularly responsive to others' feedback, some people may perceive you as being arrogant or thick-skinned.

A low concern about others' opinions may indicate self-assurance. On the other hand, it can also be a liability -- if you are too indifferent to others' opinions you may be shrugging off valuable information that could improve your effectiveness. Your low regard for others' views may leave you reluctant to change your behaviour and learn new (and sometimes better) ways of doing things.

If you also scored very high on Control, at times you may appear to be insensitive to others' needs and feelings. As a manager, you may have the tendency to be overly authoritarian and "heavy-handed" with subordinates. You can guard against this by insuring that you listen carefully to what others say, and where appropriate, changing your behaviour to meet their concerns.

High Score: You care about how others see you and what they think of you. Indeed, for people who score very high on this scale, how you feel about yourself is intimately related to what others think of you.

While being sensitive to others' opinions can be valuable from the point of view of learning and changing, at times you may be overly sensitive to criticism. For example, you may interpret a lack of feedback on your work, or a lack of praise, as indicating that your competence is not respected. Avoid the tendency to be overly dependent on others' approval; it is unrealistic to expect everyone to like you or to respect your competence. As a manager, because you care about what others think of you, you will probably be sensitive to the needs and feelings of your staff. On the other hand, you may find it very difficult to make "tough" decisions that could adversely affect others. This is not a serious liability as long as you are aware of it, and keep it in mind when faced with such a situation.

RECOGNITION

Everyone needs some recognition, but people differ in how important it is to them.

Low Score Being in an environment where you receive a lot of recognition for your work is not very important to you. You are a cooperative "team-player" and are happy to share the limelight with other people. You do not care about receiving recognition for your work, and you do not go out of your way to get such recognition.

A low need for recognition may indicate high self-confidence. But, it could also indicate shyness and/or a tendency to devalue your work. Examine **your behaviour** to determine which of these explanations best describe you. This is **important** since if you are actively "shunning" the limelight you may not be getting the recognition that you **deserve**, and this may interfere with your getting ahead. For example., you may not be communicating sufficiently (either verbally or by memo) about your **important** accomplishments to your manager and as a result, they may be unaware of your contributions.

High Score: Receiving full recognition for your work is important to you. When you don't receive such recognition -- for example, when your manager doesn't give you the credit for work well done that you feel you deserve -- you may become bitter, resentful, angry or upset. Indeed, if you scored very high on this dimension you may never feel that you are receiving sufficient credit for your work.

Because you worry about receiving adequate recognition, you may have difficulties sharing the limelight with others, and behave competitively with your colleagues. **This** could make them resentful of you, and ultimately interfere with your work effectiveness.

Because of your strong desires for recognition, you may also set unrealistically high standards for judging yourself and your work. For **example**, you may worry that people will think less of you when **you** do work that is only mediocre, even on **assignments** that you know are not very **important**. Guard against the tendency to be overly concerned about receiving recognition for everything you do. Otherwise, you may be setting yourself up for disappointment in your achievement-strivings. Often, people who score very high on this dimension set such high standards and expectations for themselves, that they feel that they have failed unless they receive constant promotions.

Realistically, achieving recognition for your work is important in successfully **managing** your career and it is an asset to behave in ways that ensure receiving such **recognition**. (Just remember to avoid pushing too hard or too obviously.)

You would probably be happiest in an environment that can provide you with strong and **steady** recognition of your efforts. You could probably receive more recognition by keeping your manager and other people you work with "informed as to what you have done; giving frequent presentations; being involved in the planning cycle of your work unit; becoming involved in projects important to senior management; heading up a task force; and understanding and structuring your job so that it relates intimately to the business plans and objectives of your work unit or division.

AFFILIATION

This dimension describes the desire to be with other people, both socially and in the workplace. As the average score for this scale is slightly higher than for the others, subtract .7 from your score to determine whether it is high or low.

Low score: You enjoy being by yourself, and would rather work alone than in groups. When you work with others in a team you tend to feel uncomfortable and shy about expressing your ideas. You don't enjoy meetings that are informal and unstructured. You don't mind working with others so long as the focus of the interaction is primarily task-related. You feel shy with people you don't know very **well**, and are uncomfortable in situations in **which** you are expected to socialize. Because you often avoid social situations and feel uncomfortable in those situations, some people may perceive you as aloof and arrogant, or shy.

You **would** probably be happiest in a job in which you can exercise some control over how much **time** you must spend with other people. There are many jobs that involve spending considerable amounts of time working **by yourself**, or in the company of **only** one or two others. Since most jobs in an organization require some contact with other people, social discomfort can create career problems **by** interfering with your work effectiveness. For example, you may be reluctant to contribute your ideas at meetings or to give presentations. You may avoid social situations that **could** enhance your visibility. If you scored very low on this **scale**, you might benefit from reading some self-help books on shyness and assertiveness, or from assertiveness training.

As a manager, you may tend to be more oriented towards tasks than people. As a **result**, some of your subordinates may misconstrue your shyness: **they** may feel that you are too "abrupt" and don't care about them. You can counter **this** by making sure that you **occasionally** engage them in non-task-related conversation. For example, enquire about how **things** are going in general for them, whether they are happy with their assignments, etc.

High Score: You enjoy being with people and are happiest in a work setting that permits considerable interpersonal interaction. You would rather work as part of a team/group than alone; you would be unhappy in a job that required spending much of your work time working alone behind closed doors. Being with people is an important component to your job satisfaction, and you seek out opportunities that permit this.

People who score high on this dimension are often friendly and outgoing, and possess good interpersonal skills. This can make your career progress easier. Try to avoid positions in which you must spend considerable time working alone.

For Further Reference

You can find more information about educational and training opportunities available in the company through Human Resources.

There are also many books that can help you further develop yourself. Look through the Business and Psychology sections of your library, or of any large book store, for titles on such subjects as: Assertiveness; Public Speaking; Self-Esteem; Time Management.

SUMMARY OF WORK STYLE AND PREFERENCES

Go back to the Interpretations section and re-read the interpretations for your highest and lowest scores. Concentrate in particular on those characteristics that you underlined as being particularly meaningful to you. In the light of this, complete the following sentences.

It is important that my job allows me to (gives me opportunity to) _____

I sometimes have difficulties when _____

The kind of work environment in which I am happiest is _____

The way(s) in which I, with the support of my manager, may be able to modify my current work environment to make it more compatible with my work style and preferences are: (Brainstorm)

-
-
-
-
-

IDENTIFYING YOUR GENERAL SKILLS

General skills (sometimes called “transferable” skills) are skills that can be applied in a range of positions in a wide variety of settings. Unlike specific knowledge or work-content skills, such as computer programming, general skills are not acquired through education or special training. They are determined by experience, personality, aptitudes and personal interests.

Examples of general skills include communication skills, **skills** in delegation, **time-management**, interpersonal skills, etc. Many of the skills you identified in the “Analyzing Accomplishments” exercise would probably fall into the category of general skills.

Everyone possesses a wide variety of general skills and **everyone** has their unique combination of skills. Developing an awareness of your general skills will help you make informed choices about future work assignments and will enable you to map out the career direction in which you will be most satisfied and productive.

Another important benefit is that you **will** be able to articulate your skills **fluently** in **career and performance discussions** with your manager and others. **Many** people know what they are good at in an intuitive fashion but have difficulty in communicating, labelling, or putting words around this self-knowledge.

The next exercise will help you **explore all of your general skills in a systematic way** in order to **identify:**

- The skills you are strongest in
- The skills you most enjoy applying.

In completing this exercise, it's important to **try** to imagine each skill vividly. For example, when you consider “conceptualizing ideas” or “working under pressure”, think about your experiences in applying the skill, whether at work, at school or in any other area of your life.

Note: For individuals who:

- **Are** uncertain about what their skills are, or how to label and describe their skills:
- Are considering a career shift:
- Are less than 6 years into their career.

GENERAL SKILLS INVENTORY

A large number of general skills are listed in this inventory. Some are listed more than once because they fall under more than one category. Space is available at the end of the inventory to add any other skills you can think of.

In rating each skill, recall as vividly as possible when and where you used the **skill in question**. This will increase the accuracy of your assessments.

For example, when you consider "motivating others" or "working under pressure", think about your experiences in applying the skill, whether at work, at school or in any other area of your life. If you cannot relate to the skill, leave the item **blank**.

Instructions

Column I: Read each skill listed and rate your enjoyment and feelings of satisfaction in using the skill as either:

VH	H	M	L
Very High	High	Medium	Low

Column II: Go back to the beginning and repeat the process, rating your degree of **skill** in each area as:

VH	H	M	L
Very High	High	Medium	Low

IGNORE COLUMNS III and IV FOR THE MOMENT. You will be returning to this exercise later.

General Skill	I Liking	II skill	III Importance	IV Gap
Interpersonal Skills				
▪ giving helpful and constructive feedback				
▪ mediating/resolving conflicts				
• counselling/advising others, e.g. on a work or personal problem, a career decision etc.				
• listening effectively				

General Skill	I Liking	II Skill	III Importance	IV Gap
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing contributions of others: sharing the limelight 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ being a cooperative team player; actively contributing to accomplishing the group's objectives 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ being sensitive to and responding adequately to people's needs and feelings 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ gaining the trust & respect of others 				
Communication				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ talking clearly and understandably in a manner that does not lead to misunderstandings 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ writing clearly and concisely 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ listening effectively 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ keeping others clearly informed (of ideas/activities/findings) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ giving clear directions/instructions 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ persuading/influencing others to accept a point of view 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explaining complex material and ideas in everyday language 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ giving constructive feedback 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ making good presentations 				
Leading and Directing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ motivating others 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ involving others in decisions that affect them 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ gaining respect of others 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ giving direction to others 				

General Skill	I Liking	II skill	III Importance	IV Gap
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • influencing/persuading others to accept a point of view 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mentoring; helping others develop 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ gaining cooperation of others over whom you have no direct control 				
Developing People				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counseling, advising 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coaching, training and developing new skills and competencies in others 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ motivating others 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ giving helpful, constructive feedback 				
Organizing/Coordinating				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prioritizing tasks and assignments 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ delegating effectively to make best use of employees' skills and abilities 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ integrating the efforts of others 				
Planning				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ thinking things through: anticipating potential problems and developing effective solutions; establishing priorities by taking into account all relevant information 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ anticipating future needs and requirements (e.g. for budgeting, human resource planning, etc.), taking into account all relevant information 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ establishing achievable objectives 				
Time Management				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ working effectively on several tasks or assignments at the same time 				

General Skill	I Liking	II skill	III Importance	IV Gap
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prioritizing tasks and assignments: establishing achievable goals and objectives 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ working under pressure; meeting demanding deadlines 				
Problem-Solving/Conceptualizing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ accurately identifying and diagnosing a problem; identifying and rejecting extraneous information to get at the root of a problem 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ anticipating long-range implications of current activities 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conceptualizing ideas (models, relationships) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrating information from different sources 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ developing innovative, effective solutions to complex problems 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ seeing and understanding “the big picture” when solving problems 				
Decision-Making				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ making firm decisions and following through, taking into account all relevant information 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ consulting with others when appropriate 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ taking responsibility for initiatives. decisions. etc. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ initiating projects, interventions, programs 				

General Skill	I Liking	II Skill	III Importance	IV Gap
Researching/Analyzing				
▪ gathering information; doing research				
▪ attending to small details				
▪ integrating information from different sources				
▪ analyzing and interpreting underlying themes from complex information; identifying and rejecting extraneous information				
▪ seeing the inter-relationships between parts of a system				
Creativity				
• developing innovative/creative solutions				
▪ adapting ideas of others and interpreting/applying them in new ways				
Profit & Cost Sensitivity				
• preparing budgets. computing costs etc.				
▪ establishing and/or exercising cost controls				
▪ managing activities to stay within budget				
▪ increasing profitability (of work unit. department. procedures, etc.)				
Other (please list)				
▪				
▪				
▪				

SKILLS SUMMARY

Part I

In looking at my skills, I find:

I'm very good at:

-
-
-
-
-

Development areas: The skills I am not quite so good at, but that I really enjoy applying are:

-
-
-
-
-

My major areas of weakness are:

-
-
-
-
-

and I maybe able to improve these skills by: (Brainstorm)

-
-
-
-

m

Part II

Review the skills you have rated in Column II as **VH** (Very High) or **H** (High).

Underline the **headings** under which most of these skills fall e.g. Solving Problems, Leading and **Supervising** etc.

If you have endorsed approximately half the skills under any given heading, the chances are you have strong skills in that general area.

The skill areas in which I am strongest are:

-
-
-
-
-

WHAT DO YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT? Clarifying Your Values

Our **values** - what we care about - guide our actions and determine how we feel about different aspects of the world.

Values are not static. They change and evolve over time, to reflect new experiences and new stages in our lives and careers. As children, for example, our most important value may be winning the love and approval of our parents. As we grow and mature, new values, such as autonomy, achievement friendship, and the need for self-approval, may come to the fore. Parenthood may shift the emphasis once again to family and financial security.

It is all too easy, however, to lose touch with what is important to us in the process of managing our clay-to-day activities and tasks. Because we rarely stop to reflect on our values, we may fail to “catch-up” with changes in how we see the world.

Understanding your values can help you in:

- determining personal and career goals
- making decisions about your career and personal life
- selecting the kind of position and working environment which best matches your needs and preferences
- understanding the kind of people you most like to associate with
- allocating your money and time to achieve the greatest personal satisfaction.

The following activity will help you develop greater awareness of what is most important to you, and what you want out of your life and your career.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the values **listed** on the next page. Change or **re-write** the values in any way that makes them more meaningful to you. Add any important values you feel are missing.

Evaluate each value in terms of how important it is to you as **high, medium** or **low** (regardless of how well you are currently satisfying that value in your life). Try to assign roughly one-third of the values to each category.

PERSONAL VALUES

How important is this to you?		Importance		
		High	Med.	Low
Achievement	To accomplish important things; to reach the top of my field/organization			
Affection	To obtain and share warmth, caring, companionship with family, friends, or co-workers			
Affiliation	To be accepted and liked by others: to work closely with others; to belong			
Art/Aesthetics	To gain inspiration and enjoyment from art, music, design etc.			
Autonomy	To be able to establish and act in terms of my own priorities and time schedule; to be free of organizational rules and norms			
Challenge	To be involved in interesting, challenging work			
Competence	To be respected for my competence: to have my worth recognized by others			
Expertness	To become a known and respected authority in what I do: to achieve excellence in my work			
Family	To spend time with my family; to have meaningful relationships with members: to contribute to the development of children			
Growth	To develop to my full potential: to become a better and more rounded person: to be constantly learning, changing and developing			
Health	Physical health, fitness			

How important is this to you?		Importance		
		High	Med.	Low
Integrity	To act in terms of my convictions: to be honest: to stand up for my beliefs			
Leadership	To exert influence: to direct the efforts of others			
Location	To live where I want to live			
Money	To be financially successful			
Pleasure	To have fun; to enjoy my life and my work			
Recognition	To have status; to earn the respect and recognition of others			
Security	To achieve a secure and stable work and financial situation			
Service	To help other people; to feel that I am making a contribution to the well-being of others: to help improve society			
Spiritual well-being	Inner harmony; to be at peace with myself; to live by my religious beliefs			
Other values (List & describe)				

Step One: Copy the values listed as high importance into the first column of the Value Assessor (next page).

Step Two: Study each of these values in turn. For each value, ask yourself

- How important is this value compared to other values I have rated as **being of high importance to me?**

In the second column, evaluate the importance of each value to you by assigning it a rank from 1 to 10. Give a ranking of 10 to the value that is most important to you of all; rank the **second most important** value as 9; and so on.

Step Three: Now you have an approximate standard for evaluating your experiences. For each value you have listed, ask **yourself:**

- **Considering all aspects of my work, how well am I satisfying this particular value?**
- **Considering all aspects of my personal life, how well am I satisfying this particular value?**

Record your judgments in the final two columns. Let 10 represent “absolute and complete satisfaction - no need for improvement”. Let 5 represent “moderate satisfaction” and 0 “no satisfaction at all”. Use other numbers between 0 and 10 as appropriate.

Note: Sometimes, in completing Step Three, people will wonder. “How do I evaluate how well I am satisfying my desire for ‘challenge’ at home? How can I satisfy the value I place on ‘family’ at work?” etc. If this doesn’t make sense to you, leave it blank. However, it could make sense. For example, for some people who can’t spend time with family as a result of extensive work-related travel, the amount of family value satisfaction they get at work is low.

VALUE ASSESSOR

	I Important Values	II Importance Rating	III Value Satisfaction In Work	IV Value Satisfaction In Personal Life
8				

SUMMARY OF VALUES

In descending order of importance my most important values are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My values that are being satisfied in my:

	Work	Personal Life
▪		
▪		
▪		
▪		
▪		

My values that are not currently being satisfied in my:

	Work	Personal Life
▪		
▪		
▪		
▪		
▪		

Some ways in which I may be able to achieve greater satisfaction of my values in my work life include: (Brainstorm)

m

▪

m

▪

▪

Some ways in which I may be able to achieve greater satisfaction of my values in my personal life include: (Brainstorm)

▪

▪

▪

m

▪

KEEPING YOUR LIFE IN BALANCE: Career/Life Choices

Career planning should never take place in isolation. The decisions you make about your career can have a major impact on your life outside work - just as your activities outside work can have considerable impact on your career.

For example, if you are considering a career change, it may be necessary for you to go back to **school** and give up a significant **portion** of your leisure time. Similarly, while business travel is a normal part of organizational life, some job assignments require more travel than others. In considering a new assignment you may want to determine how much **travel** is involved, and what effect that will have on your personal and family life.

At the same time, particularly in the early stages of your career, it may be necessary to make certain **trade-offs between** your career and personal life in order to pursue your goals. Only you can decide exactly what **trade-offs** you are prepared to make.

In any event, no matter how challenging and **satisfying your work life**, it can never meet all of your needs for personal growth and development. You ought to have a rewarding life outside work as well -- and a narrow concentration on your job is by no means a guarantee of ultimate career success. Indeed, successful people are usually well-balanced people, with a number of outside interests. Rather than detracting from their career success, a full leisure and family life refreshes them to **perform** more effectively at **work**, and allows them to bring a broader scope of vision to their jobs.

The next activity asks you to review how **well you are currently balancing the different areas of your life**, and to develop goals and action **plans** to address areas of weakness that you have identified.

INSTRUCTIONS

Step One: Imagine that the circle on the next page is a “pie” representing your life. Divide up that **pie into segments representing** how you currently, allocate your waking time - into the “slices” of your life. Use any division that seems meaningful to you. Some possible labels for your segments include:

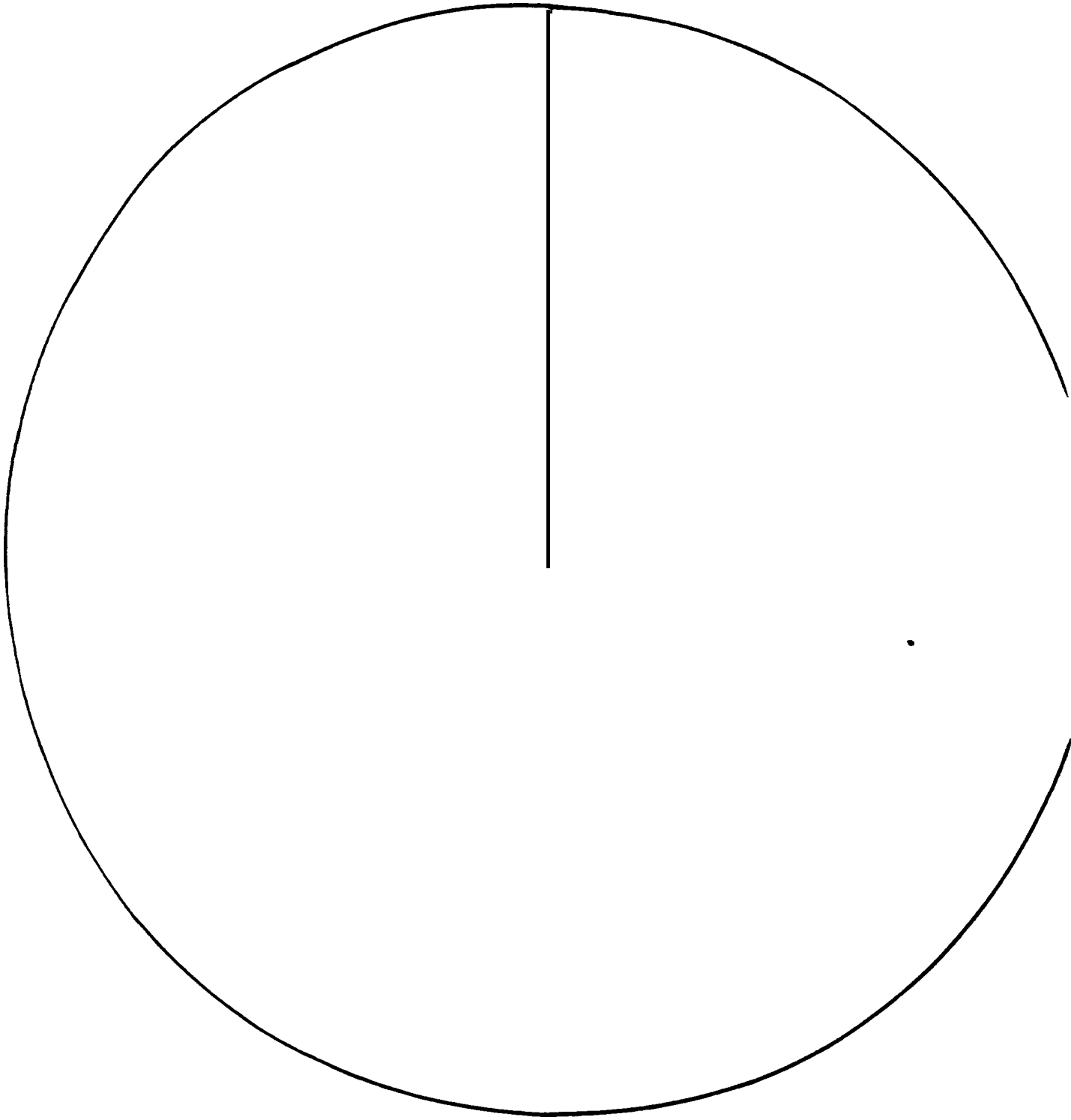
- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • work | • physical fitness |
| • hobbies | • personal development |
| • sports | • professional development |
| • entertainment | • spending time with friends |
| • education | • relationships |
| • reading | • community and professional activities |
| • attending church | • errands |
| • financial management | • household maintenance |
| • fun | • continuing education |
| • children | |

The size of each segment should represent the amount of time you spend on each activity. For example, if you spend half your waking hours on work, that should account for one-half of the circle.

Step Two: Now consider how much energy you are investing in each of the segments. Sometimes we spend a lot of time on an activity without actually putting in much energy. For example, you might spend a lot of time with your children but find that you spend it primarily watching TV with them rather than talking or playing with them.

Take some coloured pencils and colour in the segments of your pie **according to the amount of energy you invest in each**. Use red (or another dark colour) to show those activities in which you invest a **great deal of energy**. Use orange (or another moderate colour) for activities in which you invest a moderate amount of energy. Use yellow (or another light colour) for activities in which you invest **very little energy**.

THE PIE OF LIFE



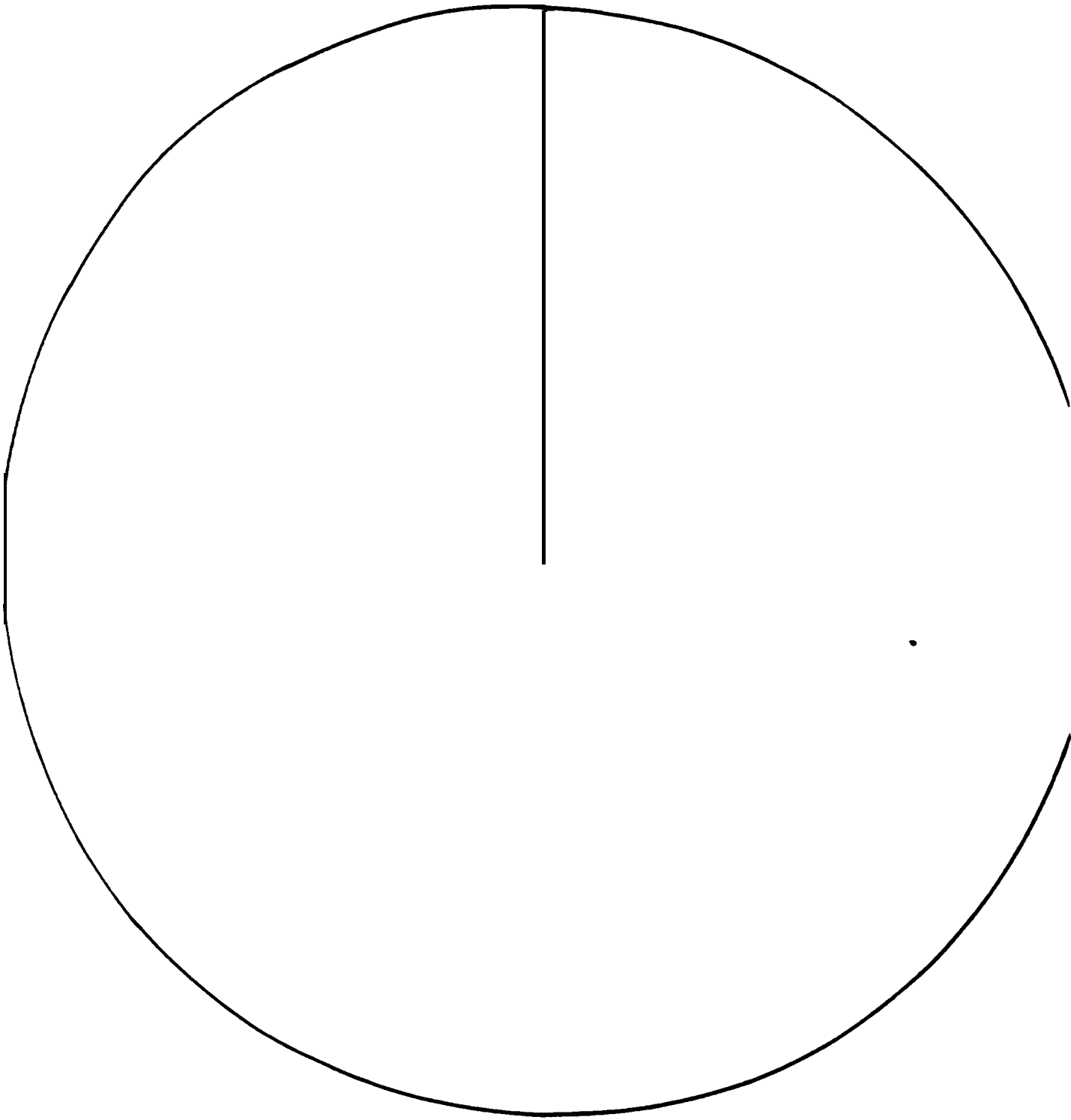
Step Three: Look at your pie. Ask **yourself:**

- Am I satisfied with how I am currently balancing my life?
- What parts of my life seem out of balance?
- What am I neglecting?
- What is the **impact** of this neglect on me, and on other important people in my life?
- What activities am I spending too much time and/or energy on, and what can I do about it?

Divide the second pie to show how you would like to spend your time. This is your ideal pie. **Colour** in the segments to show how you would like to allocate your energy.

Step Four: **Complete the Summary and Action Plan Table** (p. 64). In the left hand column write your goals, e.g. "I want to spend more time on physical fitness". In the right hand column state what you intend to do about **this goal**, e.g. "Join an athletic club. Play squash three times a week."

YOUR IDEAL PIE



PUTTING IT TOGETHER: YOUR IDEAL JOB

You have conducted a thorough assessment of your interests, skills, values, work style and preferences. Now it is time to put this information together. In the **next** chapters you will be looking at how to establish realistic career goals, and how to develop action plans to achieve them. The purpose of this exercise is to summarize key information about yourself that will help determine your ideal career direction **and to identify some possible career goals.**

Based on what you have learned about yourself, consider your ideal job. Don't worry about being overly realistic. (This is private and a fantasy.) If you can think of more than one ideal job, list these as well. (If you can't think of anything, then try **answering** the following question: "If you could be anything you wanted, what would you be?") If you can't think of any possible job titles, then try to identify possible roles or functions.

My ideal job would be...

Now complete the following questions in terms of your ideal job. If you couldn't identify any ideal jobs, then answer the questions in terms of your ideal' job characteristics, roles or functions.

1. What **skills** would you be using?

- 2. What kinds of people would you be interacting with? (e.g. very bright; fun to be with; powerful: senior management; professional; organized; supportive; etc.)

- 3. What would be the special features of your working environment? (e.g. task-oriented; people-oriented; a lot of autonomy a lot of variety etc.)

- 4. What would be the scope of your responsibility?

- 5. What kind of roles or functions would you be playing? (e.g. managing, giving technical advice, helping others, etc.)

6. Which of your **important** values would you be satisfying?

7. Do you know of any positions or kinds of positions within the company that might match with your responses to Questions 1 to 6? List them.

8. What kind of **special training or development** do you think you would need to fulfill this job successfully?

HOW DOES YOUR CURRENT JOB COMPARE?

How do the features of your present job match with the features of your ideal job?

Review your answers to questions 1 to 6. Circle the number on the scale which best describes the degree to which your present job matches with your ideal job, in terms of:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Unacceptable	Poor	Adequate	Quite Good	Excellent
	Match				
Skills being used	1	2	3	4	5
Nature of people interaction	1	2	3	4	5
Features of work environment	1	2	3	4	5
Scope of responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
Roles or functions	1	2	3	4	5
Values being fulfilled	1	2	3	4	5

In what ways can you expand and enrich your present position? (Brainstorm)

Consider, for example, participating in or chairing a task force; working with someone who you can learn from; delegating some of your responsibilities to free yourself for other work that challenges you (as long as you can still meet your performance objectives); etc.

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OCCUPATION CHOICE

If you are considering a major career change and are not certain about what occupation you would enjoy, you may want to consider consulting a professional career counselor. This person would probably give you a battery of tests to complete and then discuss your results with you and recommend some possible career alternatives that match with your interests and skills.

You can find good career counseling services through private referrals to a career counselor or psychologist. A number of community organizations such as the YMCA Counseling Centre and the Jewish Vocational Service offer such services on a fee for service basis.

REALITY TESTING: Soliciting Feedback from Others

*"O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us,
to see oursels as others see us!"*
Robert Burns

You have now completed a detailed analysis of your interests, skills, values, and work preferences. You may also have begun to formulate some tentative career goals and/or some ways of enriching your present position.

The next step is to move beyond self-analysis to gather information about how other people see you. No matter how honest and thoughtful we are in assessing ourselves, we all have certain blind spots. Others may point to weaknesses we are unaware of, or more commonly, strengths and abilities we have underestimated. Moreover, even when others' views generally confirm our own, that input will still help clarify and round out your picture of yourself.

Obviously no two people will see you **in exactly the same** way. Neither is it **true** that other people will always see you more accurately than you see yourself. But by talking to a range of people whose opinion you value, you **will** develop an enhanced picture of how the world sees you. This section tells you how to go about the process of testing out the results of your self-analysis.

Whose feedback do you value?

Write down the names of three or four people whose opinion you value who have had the opportunity to observe you. Consider, for example, your:

- Current manager
- Past managers
- Colleagues
- Subordinates
- Friends
- Family members

Use **the following guidelines to help you. The person:**

- Has observed your performance in different situations
- Knows you well and how you tend to react to different situations
- Is after your best interests
- Is perceptive - you value their opinion

People whose opinion I value:

What is the nature of the feedback you want from each of them ?

The nature and kind of feedback you solicit from each of the people you have identified will, of course, depend on the nature of your relationship with that person.

Friends and family can provide you with important feedback in such areas as your interpersonal skills; decision-making style; communication skills; ease of social interaction; some of your personality characteristics; how well you plan; how well-organized you are; etc.

Don't discount this input. If you can do something well under one set of circumstances, for example at a party or at home, then the chances are that you could also do it well at work. By the same token, weaknesses perceived at home are probably applicable to work as well. For example, if your spouse tells you that you don't listen very well, or that you have **difficulties** managing your temper, then you probably have similar difficulties in the work environment.

Your manager and other work contacts are obviously an important source of information about your performance-related behaviour and potential.

Remember: Your manager and others will provide you with better feedback if you have done your homework. Be prepared for your discussion by completing your self-assessment.

Some questions you may want to ask of your manager, or other significant work contacts:

- What do you see as my major skills? Strengths?
- What do you see as my major weaknesses?
- How can I improve how I am seen by others?
- What are the main areas I should be working on improving over the next year?
- Given what you know of me and the company's requirements at the present time:
 - What kind of jobs (levels, etc.) do you think I could realistically aspire to over the next few years?
 - Are you aware of any jobs that I would perform well in (inside this department? outside of this department? division? etc.)
 - How realistic do you think my career goals are based on what I've told you?
 - What kind of training and/or development do you feel I need to attain these goals?
 - In terms of attaining these goals, is there anything you think I (should pay particular attention to?) (watch out for?) (work on improving?) etc.
 - Do you see any obstacles to my accomplishing my goals?
 - Are my interests (plans, goals, etc.) consistent with what you know about the company's requirements?
- What kind of developmental experiences could you provide me with which would help me accomplish my goals?

Note: Before speaking to your supervisor you may want to read and complete the activities on Finding Out about other Jobs "in the Company, and Setting Goals in the next two chapters.

GUIDELINES FOR FEEDBACK DISCUSSIONS

- **Plan for the meeting. Plan your questions ahead of time. Know what you want to share of your self-assessment data. Know what you want to achieve in each meeting. (The worksheet on page 75 can help you do this.)**
- **Create a climate in which the other person will feel comfortable sharing their perceptions of you.**
- **Listen. Don't be defensive. After all, you asked for the feedback. Don't punish the other person for being honest with you.**
- **Ask for examples of specific behaviors - both positive and negative. Discuss and probe until you clearly understand the feedback. For example:**

Your boss says, *'You don't meet your deadline-s.'*

You respond, *"Could you be more specific? Could you give me an example?"*

Your boss replies, *"Last month you agreed to complete three reports. At the end of the month you had only completed one."*
- **Ask for guidelines and examples on what you can do to improve your weaknesses and change your behaviour. e.g. "What do you think I should be doing differently?"**
- **Make notes during the discussion.**
- **Don't immediately reject out-of-hand any feedback you receive. Even "if it doesn't seem accurate to you, go away and consider it. If you don't hear the same feedback from anyone else, then you may want to consider rejecting it as not very significant.**
- **Express appreciation for the other person's time and honesty. You may want to send a thank-you note to someone who has been particularly helpful.**
- **Remember that no one is perfect. So you have some weaknesses - welcome to the club.**

PREPARING FOR FEEDBACK DISCUSSIONS

1. Review the names of people you have identified who can provide you with helpful feedback (page 71).
2. Review the feedback questions on page 72. Add others, as appropriate.
3. Review your summaries at the end of each self-assessment section (**coloured** pages) as well as the Summary from **Putting It Together: Your Ideal Job** (pages 65 - 68). Decide what information from this self-assessment you want to share with each person you have identified.
4. Complete the following worksheet for each person you have identified.
5. Schedule your meetings with each person.

Don't forget to bring to the meeting whatever self-assessment materials you want to share as well as the worksheet to take notes during the meeting.

FEEDBACK WORKSHEET

Name:

What I want to ask/learn/share:

Notes during meeting

Date:

USE THIS WORKSHEET AS A MODEL --
DRAW UP YOUR OWN FOR RECORDING FEEDBACK DISCUSSIONS

OPPORTUNITY SEARCH: FINDING OUT ABOUT OTHER JOBS

So far much of the focus of your career **planning** efforts have been upon yourself -- both in terms of how you see yourself, and how others see you. Now it's time to broaden that focus to examine the potential match between your interests, skills, and preferences, and the career opportunities available to you.

This chapter helps you answer the question: "Given organizational realities on the one hand, and my skills and abilities on the other, what are my career options?" Guidelines are provided for finding out about other jobs in the company, and the skill, experience, and educational requirements for moving into jobs and areas that interest you. You will **identify**:

- . The kind of information you need to seek
- . Where to go to collect that information
- . How to collect that information through interviews with your contacts

Note:

For individuals who:

- . Are considering a career change or move into another department or division
- . Are early into their career
- . Want to explore a full range of career possibilities before setting career goals

Sources of Information

Gathering information about other jobs **in** the company, the necessary skills and **experiences** to **fill** these jobs, and the **flavour** or climate of other departments and functions **will** require research and leg-work on your part. Your information will come from two sources - formally through printed materials about the company and informally through your contacts and other people.

Printed materials include such items as the Annual **Report**, business plans, descriptions of some typical career paths within the company, job **profiles**, and organizational charts. You can find these materials in the Human Resources Department.

These materials will give you a good **overview** of the company, the functions and **organization** of other departments, requisite skills and experiences for some other jobs, and business trends likely to impact on job availability.

Current and former managers know the **organization** and may have progressed along career lines similar to **yours**. **In** some **cases** **their** knowledge may be limited to certain departments or divisions; in others they may have a broad knowledge of the **company**. **In** any **event**, they may be able to provide **you** **with** names of other **people** in the **company** who you can contact for information. Your current and past managers can be particularly helpful because they have the advantage of knowing your strengths and weaknesses and how you perform under different sets of circumstances.

Colleagues and other contacts: Co-workers and people in your fields of interest can both give you information about their jobs, departments, and divisions as well as the names of other people (their co-workers) who you can contact.

Information Needed

The list below represents some of the kinds of information you may need to seek in finding out about career opportunities that might be available.

- Educational, experience, and skill requirements for jobs/careers that interest you.
- Other units **in** the organization in which your kind of work is performed.
- Other jobs compatible with your skills, abilities, and experiences.
- **Possibilities** for advancement in other parts of the organization compared to possibilities in your work unit.
- Typical career paths of people occupying positions that interest you.
- Business plans and developments that might lead to expansion or retrenchment in different areas (which in turn would impact the number and nature of job opportunities in different fields).
- Human resources trends and projections for different jobs and parts of the organization.
- How positions are classified and what different levels are called.
- What different work units, departments, and divisions are like in terms of their working environment.
- What makes someone seen as having high potential for promotion.
- How you might improve your chances of becoming (a manager, a director, etc.).

Information Interviewing

As already noted, your contacts will **provide** you with invaluable information for your opportunity search. If you collect the reformation you need **in** a professional and courteous manner you will find that most of your contacts (and the contacts of your contacts) will be pleased to help you. Most people like to talk about themselves and their work, and if they feel that they are helping someone in the process - so much the better.

You will also be well positioned for any future job openings. Many people get jobs as a result of "who they know". If you present yourself well in your information **interviews**, and communicate your interest in the job area under discussion, you will probably be remembered if an opening arises. Moreover, because your contacts will have contacts your name will be passed along to others who may be **able** to help you or hire you. Of course getting the job will depend on the match **between** your skills and experience, and the **job requirements**.

You will find some guidelines for information interviewing below: some sample **interview** questions follow on the next page.

Interview guidelines

- Be specific about your purpose. Make it clear that you are looking for **information**, not a job,
- Schedule a meeting in the other person's office.
- Be prepared with a clear set of interview questions. (Complete the interview worksheets on pages 81-82 before the interview.)
- present yourself as professionally as you can in the **interview**. This contact may be invaluable later on.
- Take notes during the meeting. (Again, using the **interview** worksheets.)
- **Close** the interview by thanking the person for their time and help. Ask for the names of others in their field (if you are still interested) and whether you can use their name as a reference.
- Send a brief thank-you note. **Let** your interviewee know that you appreciate the time and help that has been given you.

Suggested Interview Questions

- How did you get into your position?
- Would **you make the same** career choice again? Why? **Why not?**
- What knowledge, skills, or experience are necessary to **qualify** for your position?
- What type of formal training (if any) have you had?
- What other experiences or training have you had that were helpful to you?
- Looking down the road a few years, do you know if your function is expanding or contracting?
- **Could** you describe briefly an average day's activities?
- What do you like best about your present position? What do you like least?
- What are the main problems or frustrations you encounter in your work?
- What advice would you give someone considering your field or a similar position?
- What kinds of training or experience would be helpful to a person entering your field now?
- Are there related fields I should explore? Other people I should talk with?
- What kind of career paths are therein your area?
- Given what I've told you about my skills and background, is it realistic to consider moving into your area?
- Ask questions about the unit, such as management philosophy, working conditions, advancement opportunities and performance norms.

**PREPARING FOR OPPORTUNITY SEARCH:
WORKSHEETS**

1. List the areas and jobs you might have some interest in at this point.
2. List the people you know in those areas or jobs. If you don't know anyone in an area you have **identified**, you can ask your **supervisor** or other contacts for names. or check the unit organization chart to **determine** the individual **responsible** for managing the function you are interested in.

<i>Areas or Jobs</i>	<i>People I Can Contact</i>
1.	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
2.	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
3.	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
4.	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
5.	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

Complete before meeting

Name of Interviewee:

Date and time of meeting

Information Needed:

Notes During Meeting

Names of Other Contacts/Areas to Explore:

**USE THIS WORKSHEET AS A MODEL --
DRAW UP YOUR OWN FOR RECORDING INFORMATION INTERVIEWS**

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITY SEARCH

Complete the following sentences to **summarize** what you have learned from your opportunity search.

1. **The following area(s) appears to be a good match with my interests, skills, and background.**

-
-
-
-
-

2. **In terms of the first area you identified:**

- **What, if any, additional education do you require?**
- What skills would you need to acquire or improve?
- What kind of training or developmental experience might you require?
- How realistic would this be as a goal, given your skills and **background**, and organizational realities?

3. *In terms of the **second** area you **identified**:*

- **What**, if any, additional education do you require?
- What skills would you need to acquire or improve?
- What kind of training or developmental experience might you require?
- How realistic would this be as a **goal**, given your skills and background, and organizational realities?

4. **In terms of the third area you identified**

- **What**, if any, additional education do you require?
- What skills would you need to acquire or improve?
- What kind of training or developmental experience might you require?
- How realistic would this be as a goal, given your skills and background, and organizational realities?

CAREER GOALS CAN TAKE MANY FORMS

- UP
 - To a more senior level in the organization

- ACROSS
 - Laterally or cross-functionally to acquire new skills; to increase your exposure to other parts of the organization; to refresh your perspective on your career.

- DOWN
 - To start a new **career**; to move onto a new career path; to acquire new skills and experience that can lead to future career mobility.

- ENRICHING
 - Making your job more challenging and stimulating by increasing your involvement in some areas, delegating tasks in others; changing **how** you execute your job; chairing or participating in a task force; taking on new assignments or responsibilities.

- OUT
 - To another organization; to set up your own business.

- SKILL ACQUISITION
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
 - Developing new skills or abilities; acquiring new knowledge by participating in developmental assignments, a training course, or further education.
 - Changing yourself in some way. For example, learning a language, developing a hobby, changing how you relate to people.

SETTING YOUR GOALS & DEVELOPING PLANS TO ACHIEVE THEM

You have now developed a fairly accurate picture of yourself who you are, what you are good at, and a general idea about where you want to go from here. You have also learned about some of the opportunities that are available to you by testing out your **preliminary** goals in the context of organizational realities.

Now it's time to define your career goals and to develop an action plan to achieve them.

Career Goals Can Take Many Forms

The purpose of this section is to help you explore your career options. If you already know what your goals are, then turn to page 93.

UP: Although traditionally upward movement has been viewed as the only acceptable means to career advancement and enhanced career satisfaction, increasingly people recognize that up is not the only direction.

There are many reasons for this:

- **Demographics:** As a result of the baby-boom in the late '40's and early '50's, there are quite simply too many people competing for too few jobs.
- **Pyramidal structure of organizations:** The higher up you go, the fewer the job opportunities. Obviously, there are more director level positions than V.P. level, more manager level positions than director level, and so on.
- **Leaner and flatter organizations:** To compete more effectively, organizations are cutting out entire levels of middle management, further reducing the scope for promotion.
- **Personal values and family pressures:** People are increasingly evaluating their career decisions in the light of their impact on their family life, life-style, and their spouse's career.

If you were to move up:

- What would be your next logical move?

-
- Are you ready? _____

- If not, what do you need to learn, be able to do, or have experienced in order to be ready?

- What would be the benefits of such a move?

- What would be the risks and/or costs?

- When do you think you would be ready? (e.g. how many months or years'?)

ACROSS: A lateral or cross-functional move represents an opportunity to increase your exposure to different parts of the organization, and to acquire new skills and abilities. It is also an excellent means of refreshing your perspective on your career.

At some time in our career we all reach a point at which future promotion is unlikely. A lateral or cross-functional move can be a rewarding alternative to advancement.

If you were to move across:

- **What are two possible lateral moves you could make?**

1. To (position/area) _____

2. To: (position/area) _____

Are you ready? _____

- **If not**, what do you need to learn, be able to do, or have experienced in order to be ready?

- What would be the benefits of such a move?

- What would be the risks and/or costs?

When do you think you would be ready? (e.g. how many months or years?)

DOWN: A downward move can provide the opportunity to move onto a new career path and to acquire new skills and abilities. Sometimes it represents the only route to future career mobility.

If you were to move down:

- **What position/area would you consider moving down to?**

- What opportunities would moving to that position provide you with?

- What would be the risks and/or costs?

ENRICHING: You can increase your sense of satisfaction and the meaning you get from your job by enriching your **present** position (so long as you can meet performance objectives mutually agreed upon with your manager).

If you were to enrich your job:

- What job duties could you add by taking some responsibilities from your manager, or creating new responsibilities altogether?

- What job duties could you delegate to your subordinates or pass onto peers?

- Is there a task force you could setup or become involved in? If so, what?

- Are there any aspects of your work you could change? How?

- What opportunity would enrichment provide you with?

SKILL ACQUISITION AND PERSONAL CHANGE: You can acquire new skills and abilities by

- Working with someone who you can learn from
- Taking a training course
- Continuing your education
- Taking on a developmental assignment
- Enlarging your position by taking on responsibilities that will stretch you

If you were to acquire new skills and abilities:

- **What skills, knowledge, or abilities would they be?**

- **How would you do this?**

PERSONAL CHANGE:

- **In what ways might you want to change or develop yourself?**

- **How would you do that?**

MOVING OUT: To another organization, inside or outside your industry to set up your own business.

If you were to move to another organization, where would you go? What industrial sector(s)? Kinds and size of organizations?

If you were to set up your own business, what special knowledge or skills do you have for which there may be a market niche? How can you gather more information about the feasibility of your idea?

• What would be the benefits of such a move?

• What would be the risks and/or costs?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CAREER GOAL

Your career goal should be:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Specific: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If it involves a move it should have details about the desired position, job, etc. If it is an enrichment goal, it should clearly specify the type of responsibilities you will add or delete from your job. If it is a personal development goal, it should specify what you will be able to do or what you will learn as a result of reaching this goal. |
| Measurable: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framed in terms that will permit you to evaluate whether you have achieved the goal. |
| Time-framed: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> m Includes target dates -- number of weeks, months, or years. |
| Realistic & Achievable: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In tune with both your skills, background, and abilities and with organizational plans and future requirements. |
| Personally Meaningful & Supportive of Other Goals: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> m You will feel good when you have achieved this goal. Your goal does not conflict with other personal goals, for example, life-style or financial goals. |

SETTING YOUR GOALS

You are now going to select two goals: one longer-term and one short-term. (If you have **difficulties** stating your goals, the exercise on page 97 may help clarify your thoughts.)

1. **State**, as precisely as you **can**, your longer-term career goal -- where **would** you like to be 2 to 4 years from now? (You may, of course, change your mind in the **future**. But it is better to work towards a goal you may revise later than to have **no** goal at all.)

Goal: To _____

By when? _____

I **will** know I have reached this goal **if/when** I (can/have/etc.)

2. State your short-term goal - where you want to be or what you want to achieve in the next 6-24 months. This short-term goal should be a sub-goal of your long-term goal - it should move you closer towards attaining that long-term goal. For example, if your long-term goal is to become a director, your short-term goal **might** be to acquire more managerial experience and training within the next six months.

Goal: To (move to) (enrich my job by) (develop myself by): _____

By when? _____

I will know I have reached this goal **if/when** I (can/have/etc.)

GOAL CHECKLIST

Check your goals against the following guidelines:	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Are your goals specific? Details desired position, job title, division; if enrichment, details the type of responsibilities you will add or delete; if skill acquisition or personal development, details what you will learn or how you will change.	—	—
Are your goals measurable? Framed in terms that will permit you to evaluate whether you have achieved them.	—	—
Are your goals time-framed?	—	—
<i>Are your goals realistic?</i>		
. In tune with your skills, background and abilities	—	—
. In tune with organizational plans and future requirements	—	—
. Your qualifications compare favorably with the competition	—	—
. The position is likely to open up	—	—
Are your goals personally meaningful? e.g. Will you feel happy, satisfied , or proud when you achieve your goal?	—	—
Are your goals supportive of other goals? e.g. Will attaining this goal conflict with other personal goals?	—	—

1. Review the summary results of all the exercises you have completed so far. Do your goals conflict with your self-assessment? For example, you may have indicated in the Career/Life Choices exercise that you want to spend more time with your family - yet your career goal may require **working 10 hours a day**. Similarly, you may have identified a high need for Autonomy as part of the Work Style And Preferences Inventory - yet reaching your goal may involve you working under closer supervision. Be aware of any such conflicts, and of the **trade-offs** that may be involved in reaching your goal.

Some **trade-offs** I may have to make in order to achieve my goal are _____

2. Do you currently have all the skills necessary to achieve **your goals**? Go **back** to the **General Skills Inventory** (page 4) and **review** your **earlier assessment of your skills**, refining it where appropriate. **Then complete the final two columns of the inventory**

- **In Column III**, rate the **importance** of each skill to your future career goals (both short and long term)

In Column IV, state to what extent you **need to improve** each skill to attain your goals.

Skills Summary for Goal Achievement

The skills that are important to achieving my short-term goal are _____

The skills I need to acquire or improve to achieve my short-term career goal are

The skills that are important to achieving my longer-term career goal are _____

The skills I need to acquire or improve to achieve my longer-term career goal are

Goal Setting Stimulator

If you're having problems setting a goal, the following exercise may help you clarify your thoughts. Complete the following sentences:

I want to learn _____

I want to start _____

I want to stop _____

I want to have _____

I want to become _____

I will now _____

IDENTIFYING OBSTACLES TO REACHING YOUR GOAL

Does anything stand in the way of reaching your long-term career goals? It is important to identify potential obstacles now, so that you can also plan ways of responding to those obstacles.

1. **Identifying personal obstacles**

In what ways might you stop yourself from getting what you want? (e.g. an overly perfectionist attitude; a failure to manage your time effectively failure to communicate your goals to your **manager**; etc.)

2. **Identifying external restraints**

What restraints might the organization, or society, place on your progress towards your goals? For example:

- **The** economy, and its effect on the organization's business plans
- Lack of information about opportunities
- People - **e.g.** Your **manager has** no **experience** of the area in which you are interested.
- Demographics - e.g. too many people your age competing for the same job
- The organization's structure

Using the chart on the next page, **list all the potential obstacles to your progress**, both personal and external. Then write what you can do to overcome, or reduce the effect of these obstacles. **State also when you are going to do it. There is little point in making plans if you don't also make a commitment to when and how you are going to follow it through. (If you feel you can't do anything about an obstacle, explain why.)**

Obstacle	What I can do about it	When
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

Now, ask **yourself**: What can I do to move towards my goals? (See the next page for some suggestions.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Underline in yellow the most important steps you can take towards achieving your goals.

Suggestions to Help You Attain Your Goals

- Speak to the person in charge of training and development. Ask about training in the area(s) relevant to your goals.
- Find out about the organization's policies regarding financial support for further education.
- Find out about the organization's business plans.
- **Enrol** in an outside educational program,
- Read books in the area of interest to you.
- Get a reading list from someone with special expertise in the area.
- Become involved in projects in which your manager is engaged which will enhance your skills.
- Propose a project to your manager that will help you in **developing/refining** your skills or acquiring necessary experience for desired career moves.
- Identify people who have already achieved your goal and consult with them on how they achieved it.
- Arrange to work with someone who can help you in reaching your goal or in acquiring the necessary skills through **observing** and learning from them.
- Ask your manager for information on how to reach your goal. If your manager doesn't know, ask him or her for the names of other people who might.
- If your manager is chronically preoccupied with other matters, set up an appointment well in advance to talk about your goals.
- Speak to the Human Resources advisor in your area.
- Speak to colleagues in other departments to learn more about other jobs in the organization.
- Join a professional association in your area of interest. Develop contacts with people in fields that interest you.
- Network with other people who can be helpful.

Resources

What resources do you have available to you to help you reach your goals? e.g. training courses both inside and outside the organization: sources of advice. etc.

Resources	How I will use this resource
2.	
3.	
4.	

People Supports

Identify the people who can help you in attaining your goal and in what ways they can help you.

People who can help me achieve my goal	What I will ask of them
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

CONCLUSION

*"Those whose work is truly play
Are Fortune's favoured few."*

Sir Winston Churchill

You have now learned a process for setting meaningful and realistic career goals. You have also learned how to formulate an action plan to achieve your goals. Now it's time to put your plan to work, and start reaping the benefits of your thinking and planning. You
time

No plan, of course, should be carved in stone. It's important to remain flexible, modifying and adjusting your plans and goals in the light of events, as necessary.

You should also recognize that your interests and values may well change and evolve over time. It's therefore important to take the time to periodically **re-evaluate** your career plans and goals to ensure that they remain meaningful, relevant and personally satisfying.

In summary, then, career planning is a journey, not a destination. **As** your career progresses, continue to be thoughtful and strategic in managing your career as effectively as **possible**. You have now embarked on a life-long process for making informed decisions about your career and your personal life. Enjoy the rewards.