

# Planning for Career Satisfaction and Success

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## **WHAT ARE MY SKILLS?**

When have you felt the most energized, confident and capable? List specific situations. (Example: giving a presentation and getting rave reviews, running in a 10K, planning and preparing food for a dinner party, teaching someone a particular technique, helping someone in a neighboring research group analyze their data, working on a particular type of experiment or analyzing a particular type of data)

What compliments or other positive feedback have you received for particular activities? Positive feedback may be as simple as a smile or as significant as a pay increase. Write down the positive feedback, briefly explaining each situation.

For several important work activities (examples: teaching a class, supervising a summer intern, completing a proteomic screen, writing a paper) list specific tasks associated with the activity and consider the transferable skills necessary to complete the tasks.

ACTIVITY #1:	
TASKS	TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS

ACTIVITY #2:	
TASKS	TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS

4) What are some of my highly developed or developing skills?

5) What skills do I wish to develop further? How will I accomplish this?

## WHAT ARE MY JOB-RELATED NEEDS?

We all want and need different things from our jobs and we derive work satisfaction in different ways. To help you assess your needs rate each of the following statements as:

Not important to me (NI)

Important to me (I)

Very important to me (VI)

Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong ratings; it is a process of identifying what matters most to **you** rather than to someone else.

I am interested in a career that includes:

- \_\_\_\_\_ A lot of mental challenge and problem-solving
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autonomy, independence, freedom
- \_\_\_\_\_ Creating or building things
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friendships and warm working relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flexibility in work schedule and structure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Frequent dealings with the public
- \_\_\_\_\_ Global perspectives and international work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Having a positive impact on others and society
- \_\_\_\_\_ High degree of competition
- \_\_\_\_\_ Immediate or rapid feedback and gratification
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intellectual status; to be acknowledged as an "expert" in a given field
- \_\_\_\_\_ Job stability and security
- \_\_\_\_\_ Making decisions and having power to decide courses of action
- \_\_\_\_\_ Many deadlines and time demand/pressure challenges
- \_\_\_\_\_ Opportunities for supervision, power, leadership, influence
- \_\_\_\_\_ Opportunity for balance between work and family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Order and structure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Precision work with little tolerance for error
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prestige, respect, or a level of social status
- \_\_\_\_\_ Respect, recognition, being valued
- \_\_\_\_\_ Routine, predictable work and work projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ Substantial alone time and solitary work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Substantial financial compensation and financial rewards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Substantial teamwork and group interaction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tranquility, comfort, and avoidance of pressure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Using creativity, imagination; being innovative
- \_\_\_\_\_ Using cutting edge or pioneering technologies or techniques
- \_\_\_\_\_ Variety and a changing work pace

Focusing on needs you rated as VERY IMPORTANT to you, rank them from most important to least important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What types of jobs will satisfy these very important job-related needs?  
What jobs that you are considering might prove challenging when you consider these personal needs/work values?  
How might you work around those challenges?

## WHAT ARE MY INTERESTS?

List your scientific, intellectual, athletic and/or artistic interests.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List your hobbies and extracurricular activities.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List activities that you enjoy, such as public speaking, planning events, debating, teaching others, analyzing data, writing.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List activities that you do NOT enjoy, such as public speaking, planning events, debating, teaching others, analyzing data, writing.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Identify themes that emerge from the exercise:

Things that interest me: \_\_\_\_\_

Things that do NOT interest me: \_\_\_\_\_

## SELF-ASSESSMENT PROFILE

Review the previous three exercises and enter the data requested below:  
List the top 3 skills you enjoy using most:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List your top 3 interests:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List your top 3 most important work needs:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Do your **interests** and **skills** seem consistent with one another? If not, what are the potential implications for the inconsistency?

Do your **values** seem consistent with your interests and skills? If not, what are the potential implications for the inconsistency?

Potential careers to explore:

## **USING INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS TO LEARN ABOUT SCIENCE CAREERS**

There are many different career options for scientists. As you consider your options, it may be helpful for you to gather information from people currently working in careers of interest to you. Visiting work sites and talking with people about their jobs is often the most effective way to find out more about different fields.

Below are some questions you may want to ask as you start to talk with friends, family, or colleagues, visit work sites, and/or discuss job opportunities with potential employers:

- What do you do in a “typical day?” Is there such a thing as a typical day?
- Where is most of your work performed? (i.e., at a desk, with patients, on the road, in other people’s offices)
- What kinds of skills are important to have in your job?
- What kind of technical skills do you have? Do you work with specialized equipment?
- What are some of the things you like about your job?
- What are some of the frustrations in your job?
- Do you do your work mostly by yourself or with other people? Do you supervise other people?
- To whom do you usually report?
- Are there opportunities for advancement?
- What is the employment outlook in your field?
- Are there other people you would suggest I talk to about careers in your field?
- What kind of advice would you give people considering this field?

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY (NOT comprehensive)**

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### **Career Exploration**

- Newhouse, M. *Outside the Ivory Tower: A Guide for Academics Considering Alternative Careers*
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### **Networking**

- Ferrazzi, K. & Raz, T. (2005), *Never Eat Alone: And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time*, Crown Business Press
- Baber, A. & Waymond, L. (2007), *Make your Contacts Count: Networking Know-how for Business And Career Success*. NYC, NY, Amacon Press
- Fisher, D. & Vilas, S. (2000), *Power Networking*. Bard Press
- Zack, D. (2010) *Networking for People Who Hate Networking*, BK Publishers
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### **OITE On-line Resources**

- Information relevant to the job search process: [https://www.training.nih.gov/career\\_services/](https://www.training.nih.gov/career_services/)
- Videocasts of OITE career workshops: [https://www.training.nih.gov/nih\\_resources#Other%20Online](https://www.training.nih.gov/nih_resources#Other%20Online)
- To search prior OITE events: <https://www.training.nih.gov/events/prior> If you toggle on the "HAS MATERIALS" button you can access all handouts and links to career videocasts.
- For OITE Careers Blog : <http://oitecareersblog.wordpress.com/> . Look for Day in the Life transcripts to learn about various career paths for Ph.D. scientists
- For OITE Job Board: [https://www.training.nih.gov/career\\_services/jobs](https://www.training.nih.gov/career_services/jobs). An overlapping, but not identical, set of positions is posted on the LINKED-IN INTRAMURAL SCIENCE job board.

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