

Do What You Are

...too often our decisions are not really made for practical reasons but out of a sense of obligation to others. Our decisions become based on "I should" not "I would like to try".

Penning Your Life List

When you allow your mind to wander, what do you picture for your life? A high powered corporate job? A position in an art gallery? Maybe you are a writer, a teacher, a politician. Why do you imagine the life you are daydreaming about? You are imagining your life based upon the interests you have. Identifying your interests is the foundation of any successful job search whether it is an internship, a part-time job while you are in school, or a full-time job after graduation.

Use the following Life Lists Guide Exercise, answer these questions:

1. If you had to pick five songs/books from the past two years, which would you choose? What interests do they reflect?
2. What do you dream about?
3. Looking at old or current pictures, what interests do you see?
4. If you were asked to create a TV special, what would it focus on?
5. What magazines and book subjects do you pick up regularly at the bookstore?
6. With three hours of spare time, what would you do?
7. What classes have you taken that you have enjoyed?
8. List hobbies/activities you pursue more than two hours every two weeks.
9. What organization would you volunteer to help?
10. What do you feel so strongly about that you would devote time and effort to it?
11. Is there anything you believe in so strongly that you would work full time for no salary?

When you take time to answer these questions honestly, you might be surprised by your responses.

- Are your answers different from what you are studying in school?
- Perhaps your answers differ from what you always thought you wanted to do or what you have been encouraged to do with your life.
- Do your answers “fit” with aspects of your personality that you enjoy most?

If you spend some time thinking about what motivates you, excites you, enlivens you, you will actually find the path to finding a job much easier and fulfilling!

Skills

Skills can be acquired or can be natural talents or abilities. As you move through your college career, you are developing many valuable skills. Sometimes it is hard to identify what these skills are and how they are important to your career path. Some skills are a part of your personality. Others are skills that may or may not be directly related to your job. Take a look at these examples:

Fitting in Skills - Fitting-in skills are often referred to as personality traits and are often important when making a first impression like in a job interview. Examples of fitting-in skills are:

- Confidence
- Dependability
- Enthusiasm
- Thoughtfulness
- Open-mindedness

Transferable Skills - Transferable skills are those you bring to a job from other jobs, education or any of your life experiences and provide a potential employer a reason to hire you. Examples are:

- Attention to detail
- The ability to conceptualize ideas
- Communication of data or information
- Thorough research and the ability to analyze information

Job Skills - These are the skills that are specific to a particular job or industry. Job skills are often part of the training that comes with a new job so you may not need to have all the job skills before you start. However, you must convince a potential employer that you are able and willing to learn any required job skills. Career One Stop, www.careeronestop.org is one website that can help you identify job skills for various occupations. Examples of job skills are:

- Proficiency with computer software and hardware
- Ability to speak a second language
- Specific types of writing, such as a press release

Begin to identify your skills early in your college career. You will find that you have many more skills than you think! As you identify your skills in the three areas outlined above, it is important to be able to give 3-4 examples of how you have used each skill. Examples of how you have used your skills will demonstrate your worth to employers.

The **Skills Chart** activity should help you get started.

1. On the Skills Chart below, make a list of at least 10 skills you believe you possess.
2. Next, correlate those skills with jobs, internships, leadership experiences, etc. (list them under Activities).
3. Place an 'X' across from each skill and under each activity in which you utilized that particular skill. (For example: if you put an internship as one of your "Activities" and used communication skills in that internship, place an 'X' where communication skills and the internship intersect).
4. On a separate sheet of paper, write which of those skills are your strongest skills and which ones you like the most.
5. Write specific ways in which you have used those skills. For example:
 Developed communication skills as a camp counselor by...
 Used interpersonal skills as a member of HUSC to...

Your Skills Chart

	Activities				
Skills					
Communication					
Leadership					
Working on a team					
Interpersonal					
Problem Solving					

Sample Skills Chart

Skills	Activities				
	Student organization	Internship	Job	Volunteer	Community Service
Communication	X	X	X		X
Leadership	X	X	X	X	X
Working on a team	X	X	X		
Interpersonal	X	X	X	X	X
Problem Solving	X	X			X
Organizational	X	X			
Writing	X		X	X	
Analytical					
Supervisory	X		X		
Research	X		X		
Creative	X	X		X	X
Planning	X		X		

Still Searching?

- Meet with a career counselor to discover your unique values, skills, interests, strengths, and challenges to help you choose your major and plan your career.
- We offer the Strong Interest Inventory and Myers Briggs Type Indicator at no charge to students. These instruments will help identify your interests, personality preferences, strengths, and challenges and help you generate major and career options.