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**Assessing your Pattern of Skills and Motivations Exercise**

Everyone possesses a unique set of abilities that when developed become skills. When using preferred skills, the individual will enjoy the work and often lose track of time. Careers and jobs provide the opportunity to utilize your preferred skills and be rewarded in ways that are personally meaningful beyond a paycheck.

Employers hire and rely on individuals with the skills necessary to accomplish their organizational and business objectives. The ideal job role is one in which your transferable skills and motivations align with the needs of an employer and the requirements of the job.

Whether you are planning for your first career or exploring your next career move, understanding your transferable skills and motivations is central to identifying work roles that capitalize on your unique pattern of skills and motivations. In marketing yourself, you will use this self-knowledge to convey your unique strengths as you explore opportunities and highlight your strengths in resumes and employment interviews.

**Step 1 – Identify Your Favorite Activities**

Develop a list of **enjoyable experiences or accomplishments from any part of your life**. Come up with as many activities as you can. To be included in the list, each activity or situation must meet **all** of the following criteria:

* It is a specific situation in which you played an active role—for example, “developed a mentoring program for high school students” (correct), versus, “I like creating service programs” (too general).
* You enjoyed the process of performing the activity, as well as the end result. (Work is a process, not just a result.)
* The activity had value to you, not necessarily to anyone else. (You may not have been acknowledged for the work.)

**Consider paid work and non-work activities including hobbies, volunteer work, and social and community activities** from any period of your life. You can include a single component of a large project or parts of a job (if you didn’t like the job as a whole). *These accomplishments do not need to be big “resume accomplishments” but the ones that gave you the greatest satisfaction.*

**Brainstorm a variety of favorite activities and accomplishments, and list them below.**

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**Step 2 – Evaluate What Motivates You**

In this exercise you will focus in on a few of the most enjoyable activities to clarify the key rewards or meaning that will make work fulfilling for you.

1. From the list of activities in Step 1, select the 5 most rewarding and enjoyable experiences and list them below. Reflect upon the most rewarding aspects of each of these activities by asking yourself, “what was the most enjoyable and rewarding part,” and write down the response in the space provided. Go beyond the first answer that comes to mind, e.g. “it made me happy.” Instead consider, “in what ways it made you happy” and the deeper needs it filled and the feelings it gave you, e.g. “seeing my idea in action and the impact it achieved.”
2. Upon completion, review the entire table of responses and identify your top 3 motivational themes. List them below the table.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity Title and Key Actions** | **First Most**  **Rewarding Part** | **Second Most**  **Rewarding Part** | **Third Most**  **Rewarding Part** |
| 1. |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |

**Top Motivational Rewards**

|  |
| --- |
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3** |

**Step 3 – Rate Your Skills**

In thinking holistically about the many activities and experiences you listed in Step 1 and specifically the activities in Step 2, rate your skills using the rating tables on the next page. A sample is provided below.

1. Enter your level of Proficiency for each skill: 3 = High Proficiency, 2 = Moderate Proficiency, and 1 = Low Proficiency
2. Then in the Enjoyment column, enter your enjoyment level when using each skill:   
   4 = High Enjoyment, 3 = Moderate Enjoyment and 2 = Low Enjoyment
3. **Then multiply the Proficiency score times the Enjoyment score and enter the total in the Total column.**
4. Once you have completed the scoring for each individual skill, add the scores for the skills in each category and enter the totals in the Category Score boxes.
5. Check the box in the Want to Develop column for the skills you would like to develop.

***Sample Skill Rating Table***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Skill Category*** | ***Proficiency Level***  *(3=High, 2=Moderate, 1=Low)* | ***Enjoyment Level***  *(4=High, 3=Moderate, 2=Low)* | ***Total*** | ***Want to Develop*** |
| ***Relationship*** |  |  |  |  |
| *Collaborate* | *3* | *3* | *9* |  |
| *Respect Diversity* | *2* | *3* | *6* |  |
| *Resolve Conflict* | *2* | *2* | *4* |  |
| *Serve Customers &Clients* | *2* | *4* | *8* |  |
| *Counsel* | *2* | *4* | *8* | *X* |
| *Facilitate groups* | *3* | *4* | *12* |  |
| *Train/Instruct* | *2* | *4* | *8* | *X* |
| *Provide Care & Support* | *2* | *3* | *6* | *X* |
| *Serve as Liaison* | *2* | *2* | *4* |  |
| ***Category Score:*** | | | *65* |  |

**Skill Rating Table**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill Category** | **Proficiency Level**  (3=High, 2=Moderate, 1=Low) | **Enjoyment Level**  (4=High, 3=Moderate, 2=Low) | **Total** | **Want to Develop** |
| **Relationship** |  |  |  |  |
| Collaborate |  |  |  |  |
| Respect Diversity |  |  |  |  |
| Resolve Conflict |  |  |  |  |
| Serve Customers &Clients |  |  |  |  |
| Counsel |  |  |  |  |
| Facilitate groups |  |  |  |  |
| Train/Instruct |  |  |  |  |
| Provide Care & Support |  |  |  |  |
| Serve as Liaison |  |  |  |  |
| **Category Score:** | | |  |  |
| **Communication** |  |  |  |  |
| Speak/Interact |  |  |  |  |
| Interview/Question |  |  |  |  |
| Persuade/Promote |  |  |  |  |
| Listen |  |  |  |  |
| Negotiate |  |  |  |  |
| Promote/Sell |  |  |  |  |
| Speak to Groups |  |  |  |  |
| Write |  |  |  |  |
| Consult |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Category Score:** | |  |  |
| **Management/Leadership** | | | | |
| Build a Team |  |  |  |  |
| Envision/Articulate a Direction |  |  |  |  |
| Make Decisions |  |  |  |  |
| Initiate |  |  |  |  |
| Plan/Organize |  |  |  |  |
| Implement |  |  |  |  |
| Coach |  |  |  |  |
| Set Goals |  |  |  |  |
| Manage Projects |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Category Score:** | |  |  |

| **Skill Category** | **Proficiency Level**  (3=High, 2=Moderate, 1=Low) | **Enjoyment Level**  (4=High, 3=Moderate, 2=Low) | **Total** | **Want to Develop** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Creative** |  |  |  |  |
| Design |  |  |  |  |
| Brainstorm |  |  |  |  |
| Conceptualize |  |  |  |  |
| Perform |  |  |  |  |
| Synthesize |  |  |  |  |
| Improvise |  |  |  |  |
| Use Intuition |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrate Foresight |  |  |  |  |
| Author/Compose |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Category Score:** | |  |  |
| **Analytical** |  |  |  |  |
| Forecast |  |  |  |  |
| Analyze |  |  |  |  |
| Research |  |  |  |  |
| Solve Problems |  |  |  |  |
| Categorize/Classify |  |  |  |  |
| Compute |  |  |  |  |
| Budget |  |  |  |  |
| Manage Data |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluate |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Category Score:** | |  |  |
| **Physical/Technical** |  |  |  |  |
| Use Hands |  |  |  |  |
| Sketch/Draw |  |  |  |  |
| Restore/Renovate |  |  |  |  |
| Build/Construct |  |  |  |  |
| Install/Operate |  |  |  |  |
| Operate |  |  |  |  |
| Repair |  |  |  |  |
| Inspect/Test |  |  |  |  |
| Use Body |  |  |  |  |
| Observe |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Category Score:** | |  |  |

**Step 4 – Your Skill Summary: Top Skill Categories and Hierarchy of your Greatest Strengths**

1. From Step 3, identify the Skill Category with the highest numerical score and list the name of the category in the Highest Category quadrant. Then list the Category name for the Second Highest, Third Highest and Fourth Highest quadrants. If you have any tie scores, list the categories in order of your preference for using them in work.
2. Then under each of the four Categories, list your highest rated individual skills for the category (scores of 12, 9, 8 and 6). This will give you a summary of your four highest-scoring Skill Categories and your strongest individual scores.
3. Refer to the scoring key below for how to interpret your scores.
   1. Use the knowledge of your greatest strengths to evaluate careers for optimal alignment.
   2. Highlight your greatest strengths in resumes and interviews.

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| --- | --- |
| **Highest Category** | **Second Highest Category** |
|  |  |
| **Third Highest Category** | **Fourth Highest Category** |
|  |  |

**Scoring Key:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Individual Skill Scores** | **Meaning** |
| **12** - High Proficiency X High Enjoyment | Dominant Skills - Leverage your dominant skills in your career to increase your personal satisfaction |
| **9** - High Proficiency X Moderate Enjoyment | Support Skills - Combine your support skills with your dominant skills to increase your contribution to work. |
| **8** - Moderate Proficiency X High Enjoyment | High Potential Skills - Seek out opportunities to develop your high potential skills to progress in your current career or gain entry into a new career. |

**Step 5 – Your Skills to Develop**

In the spaces below, list 3 - 4 of the skills you identified as "Want to Develop" in Step 3. For each skill, record actions you will take to develop it.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Skills to Develop** | **Actions to Take** |
|  |  |
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**Step 6 – Your Career Insights**

1. **Reflecting Upon the Results** – What insights did you gain from this exercise?

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1. **Skill Themes** – List themes that emerged from your most rewarding experiences, such as:
   * **Motivating circumstances** - situations that stimulated action, e.g. limited budget, deadlines, solving problems.
   * **Common roles you adopted**, e.g. leading a team, teaching, collaborating, executor.
   * **Impact you delivered**, e.g., producing a tangible product, enhancing efficiency, increasing knowledge of co-workers, identifying cost savings.
   * **The subject matter of the work**, e.g., services, relationships, working with money, dealing with data and numbers, theories, programs.

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1. **Application** – How will you apply these insights to your career development?

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1. **Alignment** – What jobs/careers are you considering that seem to fit your skills and motivations?

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