Self Knowledge

How will you be able to identify potential career options if you don’t know who you are or what you want?

A critical part of career decision making is assessing who you are: understanding your interests, values, skills, motivations, and preferences. With self-knowledge comes the ability to recognize career-related information that either fits you or does not. This information helps clarify your potential career paths and guides you through different life transitions.

The following self-assessment exercises are designed to aid with your self-reflection. You are strongly encouraged to complete one or more of the exercises and make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss. Contact the UCI Division of Career Pathways at (949) 824-6881 to schedule an appointment. If you would like to explore further with standardized assessments, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.
Functional/Transferable Skills Checklist

Over the years, you have developed many skills from your total life experiences including coursework, extracurricular activities, leisure pursuits, etc. If you have researched topics and written reports or edited and presented papers for classes, you have used skills that are not limited to just one discipline but are transferable to many different occupations or disciplines. A prospective employer expects you to be able to apply the skills you have learned in college and in everyday life to the work environment. Use the following checklist to identify some of your transferable skills. The following skills are arranged in “skill clusters.” Within each skill cluster, there are a number of related skills. Place a check in the box next to the skill that you enjoy using and in which you feel competent. Remember competency does not imply perfection.

Verbal Communication
- Perform and entertain before groups
- Speak well in public appearances
- Confront and express opinions without offending
- Interview people to obtain information
- Handle complaints in person/over phone
- Present ideas effectively in speeches or lecture
- Persuade/influence others to a certain point of view
- Sell ideas, products or services
- Debate ideas with others
- Participate in group discussions and teams

Nonverbal Communication
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Convey a positive self-image
- Use body language that makes others comfortable
- Develop rapport easily with groups of people
- Establish environment to support learning
- Express feelings through body language
- Promote concepts through a variety of media
- Respond to non-verbal cues
- Model behavior or concepts for others

Written Communication
- Write technical language, reports, manuals
- Write poetry, fiction plays
- Write grant proposals
- Prepare and write logically written reports
- Write copy for sales and advertising
- Edit and proofread written material
- Prepare revisions of written material
- Utilize all forms of technology for writing
- Write case studies and treatment plans
- Demonstrate expertise in grammar and style

Train/Consult
- Teach, advise, coach, empower
- Conduct needs assessments
- Use a variety of media for presentation
- Develop educational curriculum and materials
- Create and administer evaluation plan
- Facilitate a group
- Explain difficult ideas, complex topics
- Assess learning styles and respond accordingly
- Consult and recommend solutions
- Write well organized and documented reports

Analyze
- Study data or behavior for meaning and solutions
- Analyze quantitative, physical and/or scientific data
- Write analysis of study and research
- Compare and evaluate information
- Systematize information and results
- Apply curiosity
- Investigate clues
- Formulate insightful and relevant questions
- Use technology for statistical analysis
Research

- Identify appropriate information sources
- Search written, oral and technological information
- Interview primary sources
- Hypothesize and test for results
- Compile numerical and statistical data
- Classify and sort information into categories
- Gather information from a number of sources
- Patiently search for hard-to-find information
- Utilize electronic search methods

Plan and Organize

- Identify and organize tasks or information
- Coordinate people, activities and details
- Develop a plan and set objectives
- Set up and keep time schedules
- Anticipate problems and respond with solutions
- Develop realistic goals and action to attain them
- Arrange correct sequence of information and actions
- Create guidelines for implementing an action
- Create efficient systems
- Follow through, insure completion of a task

Counsel and Serve

- Counsel, advise, consult, guide others
- Care for and serve people; rehabilitate, heal
- Demonstrate empathy, sensitivity and patience
- Help people make their own decisions
- Help others improve health and welfare
- Listen empathically and with objectivity
- Coach, guide, encourage individuals to achieve goals
- Mediate peace between conflicting parties
- Knowledge of self-help theories and programs
- Facilitate self-awareness in others

Interpersonal Relations

- Convey a sense of humor
- Initiate and maintain relationships
- Anticipate people’s needs and reactions
- Express feelings appropriately
- Process human interactions, understand others
- Encourage, empower, advocate for people
- Create positive, hospitable environment
- Adjust plans for the unexpected
- Facilitate conflict management
- Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency
- Listen carefully to communication

Leadership

- Envision the future and lead change
- Establish policy
- Set goals and determine courses of action
- Motivate/inspire others to achieve common goals
- Create innovative solutions to complex problems
- Communicate well with all levels of the organization
- Develop and mentor talent
- Negotiate terms and conditions
- Take risks, make hard decisions, be decisive
- Encourage the use of technology at all levels

Management

- Manage personnel, projects and time
- Foster a sense of ownership in employees
- Delegate responsibility and review performance
- Increase productivity and efficiency to achieve goals
- Develop and facilitate Work Teams
- Provide training for development of staff
- Adjust plans/procedures for the unexpected
- Facilitate conflict management
- Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency
- Utilize technology to facilitate management
Financial
- Calculate, perform mathematical computations
- Work with precision with numerical data
- Keep accurate and complete financial records
- Perform accounting functions and procedures
- Compile data and apply statistical analysis
- Create computer generated charts for presentation
- Use computer software for records and analysis
- Forecast, estimate expenses and income
- Appraise and analyze costs
- Create and justify organization's budget to others

Administrative
- Communicate well with key people in organization
- Identify and purchase necessary resource materials
- Utilize computer software and equipment
- Organize, improve, adapt office systems
- Track progress of projects and troubleshoot
- Achieve goals within budget and time schedule
- Assign tasks and sets standards for support staff
- Hire and supervise temporary personnel as needed
- Demonstrate flexibility during crisis
- Oversee communication, email and telephones
- Attend to detail

Create and Innovate
- Visualize concepts and results
- Intuit strategies and solutions
- Execute color, shape and form
- Brainstorm and make use of group synergy
- Communicate with metaphors
- Invent products through experimentation
- Express ideas through art form
- Create images through, sketches, sculpture, etc.
- Utilize computer software for artistic creations
- Remember faces, accurate spatial memory

Construct and Operate
- Assemble and install technical equipment
- Build a structure, follow proper sequence
- Understand blueprints and architectural specs
- Repair machines
- Analyze and correct plumbing or electrical problems
- Use tools and machines
- Master athletic skills
- Landscape and farm: Drive and operate vehicles
- Use scientific or medical equipment

Other
When you have completed the whole exercise, choose your four favorite “clusters” (those clusters in which you have the most checks), then arrange them in order of greatest enjoyment/satisfaction.

1. Cluster:
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

2. Cluster:
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

3. Cluster:
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

4. Cluster:
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
Summarizing Your Skills

Review your Functional/Transferable Skills Checklist with your four favorite skill clusters and write a summarizing paragraph.

Example of a skills summary paragraph:

“I seek a job in which communicating both verbally and in writing is central. Specifically, I’m good at compiling information from a variety of sources into a final report form. I am better at writing factual rather than persuasive material. I enjoy explaining information to individuals or small groups. My organizing skills evident in preparing reports are also demonstrated in my ability to coordinate people and resources to complete a project. In addition to these primary skill areas, I am good at budgeting my time, setting priorities and attending to details.”

Try writing your skills summary in the space below:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Points to Consider:

1. Of the skills you have checked, what kinds of work activities, work environments or occupations can you name that would utilize those skills?

2. Which skills would you like to develop? How might you begin to acquire them?
Values Clarification Exercise

All of the following values are worthwhile. Put a check mark next to the TEN most important to you. You may write in other values if your top values are not on this list. After checking off your top TEN choices, circle FIVE that are most important to you.

___ ACHIEVEMENT (sense of accomplishment by means of skills, practice, perseverance, etc.)
___ ADVANCEMENT (Moving forward in your career through promotions)
___ AESTHETICS (caring about harmony and appreciating the beauty of ideas, things, etc.)
___ AUTONOMY (working independently, determine the nature of your work without significant direction from others)
___ CHANGE & VARIETY (varied, frequently changing work responsibilities and/or setting)
___ COMPETITION (Pit your abilities against others where there is clear win/lose outcomes)
___ CREATIVITY (being imaginative, innovative)
___ FAMILY HAPPINESS (being able to spend quality time / develop family relationships)
___ FRIENDSHIP (develop close personal and collegial relationships)
___ HEALTH (Physical and psychological well-being)
___ HELP OTHERS (be involved in helping people in a direct way, individually or in a group.)
___ HELP SOCIETY (do something to contribute to the betterment of the world)
___ INTEGRITY (sincerity and honesty)
___ KNOWLEDGE/WISDOM (understanding gained through study and experience)
___ LEISURE (have time for hobbies, sports, activities and interests)
___ LOCATION (place conducive to your lifestyle and allows you to do the things you enjoy)
___ LOYALTY (steadfastness and allegiance)
___ PLEASURE (seeking enjoyment and gratification)
___ POWER (authority)
___ PRESTIGE (status, a high level of standing among others)
___ RECOGNITION (getting acknowledged for your contribution)
___ SPIRITUALITY (seeking inner harmony, loyalty to one’s beliefs)
___ STABILITY/SECURITY (being certain, sure of something, not likely to change soon)
___ TEAMWORK (working together productively and cooperatively)
___ WEALTH (Profit, gain, making a lot of money)

___
___
___
___
___

The five values that are most important to you:
1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________
Interests

The following activities/topics are of interest to many people. Circle any that interest you. **Do not worry whether or not there seems to be any direct connection to a career.** The list is not exhaustive, so use your imagination and add any interest you have which is not listed.

- Drawing
- Gardening/Horticulture
- Tennis
- Bird-watching
- Construction
- Research
- Education
- Travel
- Camping
- Photography
- Religion
- Counseling
- Health Care
- Chemical Abuse
- Rehabilitation
- Foreign Languages
- Consumer Advocacy
- Climbing
- Urban Planning
- Animals
- Automobiles
- Mathematics
- Finance
- Innovations

- Television
- Human Rights
- Investments
- Criminal Justice
- Cooking
- Writing
- Design
- Politics
- Carpentry
- Music
- Dance
- Selling
- World Hunger
- Home decorating
- Architecture
- Transportation
- Yoga
- Environmental Issues
- Computer Technology
- Sewing
- Law
- International Affairs
- Labor-Employee Relations
- Stamp Collecting
- Electronic Equipment
- Back-packing
- Driving
- Theater
- Aerospace
- Outer-space
- Energy
- Sports
- Video games
- Landscaping
- Scuba Diving
- Aviation
- Real Estate
- History
- Science
- Others:____________________
- ______________________
- ______________________
- ______________________
- Environmental Issues
- Military Affairs
- Science
- Others:____________________
- ______________________
- ______________________
- ______________________
- ______________________

Review those you have circled and develop a prioritized list of those interests, which if possible, you would like to directly connect to your work.

1.__________________________
2.__________________________
3.__________________________
4.__________________________
5.__________________________
What are Your Interests?

1. What are your favorite hobbies? What do you do in your free time?

2. What do you love to talk about?

3. What magazines or newspapers do you love to read? And what subjects do you like to read about?

4. What sections of the bookstore do you tend to gravitate toward?

5. What sites on the Internet do you tend to gravitate toward?

6. If you watch TV, and it's a game show, which categories would you pick? If it's an educational program, what kinds of subjects do you stop and watch?

Summary

List Your Top Five Interests:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
Self-Assessment Summary

My Skill Summary:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________

My Top Five Interests:

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________

After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Self-assessment is a process that is ongoing. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Counselor and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment. If you would like to explore further, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.
Example

Self-Assessment Summary

My Skill Summary:
I seek a position which communicating both written and verbal is central; specifically, I am good at researching and compiling primary and disparate information into a cohesive report form. I can write in both explanatory and persuasive form/materials. I am comfortable in a multi-cultural setting and have ability to co-ordinate people from many different backgrounds. I enjoy traveling and researching “on-site” in archives and museums.

The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:

1. ____ Family happiness
2. ____ Friendship
3. ____ Help society
4. ____ Knowledge/Wisdom
5. ____ Autonomy/Creativity

My Top Five Interests:

1. ____ Travel/research/history
2. ____ Studying culture/belief systems/mythology
3. ____ Movies
4. ____ Gardening/museums
5. ____ Reading

After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

📈 Teaching
📈 Diplomacy/governmental
📈 Travel & Research
📈 Foreign liaison for an international corporation
📈 Museum fellow (teaching-researcher)
📈 Mediator

Self-assessment is a process that is ongoing. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Counselor and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment. If you would like to explore further, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.
Working Conditions/Work Setting Preferences

Below is a list of factors characterizing working conditions. These factors should always be taken into consideration when considering career goals because our preferences for or against certain job settings and job traits can affect our enjoyment of and success in a given position. What working conditions do you prefer and in which you perform best? Circle those factors that are important to you.

High pressure  Carry out specific task only
Relaxed atmosphere  Flexible hours
Work alone  Regular hours
Work with a team  8–5 day
Close to home  Work at home
Urban setting  Creative/progressive/innovative co.
Suburban setting  Conservative/well-structured hierarchy
Rural setting  Supervise others
Large company Small company  Compete with others
Work in a variety of office locations  Your own office
Work outside in nature  Common, shared work space
Work in one office  Incentive opportunities
Travel  Union
Focus on single task  Non-union
Perform multiple tasks  Professional
Oversee a project  Reputation

Review those preferences you have circled and develop a prioritized list below:

1._____________________________  2._____________________________
3._____________________________  4._____________________________
5._____________________________

What settings would you want to be sure to avoid?

1._____________________________  2._____________________________
3._____________________________  4._____________________________
5._____________________________
Do you have a geographical preference or requirement?  
___________________________________________________________________  
___________________________________________________________________

**Functional Areas**

In order to begin the necessary exploration, it is helpful to identify functional areas whereby jobs are grouped in terms of activities and responsibilities. Listed below are categories of employment. Mark those functions for which you want to gather more information.

**Administration**
- Educational Administration
- Legal
- Government Relations
- Office Management

**Finance**
- Accounting
- Commercial Banking
- Corporate Finance
- Credit Management
- Investment Banking
- Security Analysis

**Human Resources**
- Compensation & Benefits
- Conflict Resolution
- Employee & Labor Relations
- Recruiting
- Training & Development
- Diversity Management

**Marketing & Sales**
- Advertising
- Corporate Brand Management
- Marketing Operations
- Market Research
- Merchandising / Buying
- Product Management
- Promotions
- Direct Sales
- Telemarketing
- Graphic Design

**Communications**
- Broadcasting
- Corporate Communications
- Investor Relations
- Journalism
- Media & Event Planning
- Public Relations

**Consulting**
- Corporate Training & Development Function
- Specific Consulting: Marketing, Finance, Human Resources, Operations, Career, etc.
- Leadership Development
- Management Consulting
- Organizational Development
- Personal Consulting
- Strategy Consulting

**Computers / Information Systems**
- Database Management
- Network Administration
- Programming
- Quality Assurance
- Software / Hardware / Systems Administration & Development
- Technical Support

**Operations**
- Engineering

**Research & Development**
- Production
- Purchasing

**Other Business**
- Business Development
- Customer Service
- Distribution
- Facilities Management
- Logistics
- Manufacturing / Production
- Product Training & Support
- Project Management
- Purchasing / Receiving
- Quality Assurance
- Real Estate / Property Management
- Regulatory Affairs / Compliance
- Supply Chain Management
- Travel & Tourism

**Human Services**
- Community Development
- Counseling
- Mediation
- Ministerial Services
- Psychology
- Public Interest Work
- Social Work
- Teaching
- Volunteer Coordination

**Health / Medical Services**
- Dentistry
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician

**Protective Services**
- Corrections
- Federal, Local, State Law Enforcement
- Military
- Private Security

**Education / Teaching**
- Academic Advising
- Administration
- Counseling
- Personal Development: Recovery, Dieting, Stop-Smoking Programs
- School Psychology
- Student Services
- Teaching

**Other Professional Specialties**
- Sciences
- Computer Life
- Physical Social

**Other:**
Review those categories that you have marked and list by priority those functional areas you would be interested in exploring:

1. _______________________  
2. _______________________  
3. _______________________  
4. _______________________  

**My Action Plan**

What do I need to do to bring me closer to making a career decision?  

**Goal(s):**  

__________________________________________  

__________________________________________  

__________________________________________  

| Activity | Target Date | Completed |
Example

My Action Plan

What do I need to do to bring me closer to making a career decision?

**Goal(s):** Identify alternative career goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete self-assessment exercises and summary</td>
<td>11/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult with friends and family to help brainstorm a list of viable occupations based on self-assessment summary</td>
<td>11/19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make appointment with career counselor to discuss career decision-making concerns</td>
<td>11/21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research potential occupations: Mediator, museum fellow and diplomat</td>
<td>Winter 200x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct two or more informational interviews for each occupation. Utilize Career Connection database</td>
<td>Winter 200x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend resume writing workshop and develop resume</td>
<td>3/26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice interviewing skills. Attend interview technique and practice interviewing workshops</td>
<td>4/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>