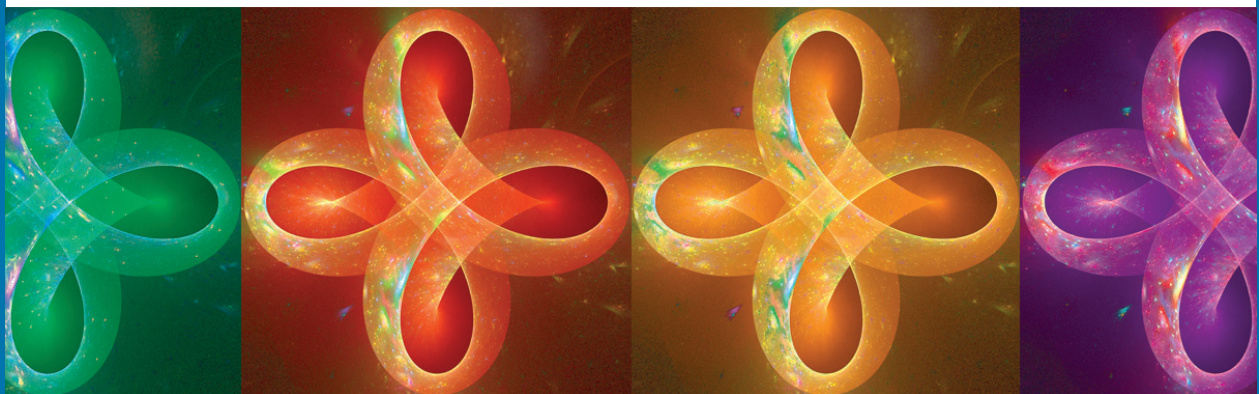


CAREER *by Design*

Tips and Tools for Re-Inventing, Re-Focusing
& Re-Balancing Your Work-Life



e-Book

2017 Birkman Method edition - abridged

ROBIN DENISE JOHNSON, Ph.D.

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Tips and Tools
for Re-Inventing, Re-Focusing, & Re-Balancing
Your Work-Life

e-BOOK

Revised & abridged 2017 - Birkman Edition

Robin Denise Johnson, Ph.D.

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CAREER BY DESIGN: TIPS AND TOOLS FOR RE-INVENTING, RE-FOCUSING, & RE-BALANCING YOUR WORK-LIFE

INTRODUCTION

In this program we explore two of life's fundamental questions . . .

Who are you?

and

What do you want?

. . . in order to help you

- boost your productivity,
- enjoy your work more,
- get promoted and recognized for your contributions,
- develop people who work with you, and
- eliminate energy draining work activities!

Who are you? is a question only you can answer. The activities in this workbook will help you identify and articulate who you are through a series of self-assessments. The value of your answers will depend on your honesty and insight as you do each assessment.

Many people do not get what they want because they *don't know* what they want. The question *What do you want?* has different levels of answers.

At the core and deepest level you want to do meaningful work consistent with your personality and purpose. At the next level you want work that enacts your values, or at least enables you to live in ways consistent with your values.

You will only thrive at work if the environment suits your basic needs. When your basic needs are not met, your work is a source of stress.

On another level work and long-term career satisfaction are highly correlated with doing daily activities that tap into your motivating interests—not just your superficial interests, but interests that motivate you, that move you physically, emotionally, and psychologically. I would even go so far as to say that you must have those activities that motivate you, if not in your daily work life, then in hobbies, volunteer activities, or community service. In *Career by Design* I will show you how to leverage those motivating interests that may seem impossible to use in your current job.

And then to have a great career you need skills. Skills are acquired and developed throughout our lifetimes. Some skills are grounded in our deepest core personality and flow up through our values, needs, and motivating interests. But what I've learned through years of working with people using the *Career by Design* system is that many of us, if not most of us, do what we think we *should* do. We acquire and use skills that we are rewarded for using - rewards such as salaries, status, and approval from bosses, parents, friends, and spouses. When we 'should' all over our selves in our career, we end up “successful” on the surface but discontent at the core.

At work, your managers will focus on the skills you have that drive the results they desire. And rightly so! That is their job to recognize, use, and reward you for the effective use of skills that contribute to organizational goals. **Your job** is to make sure you are using skills you **enjoy** using and getting credit for the contributions you make through the intentional use of your skills. Skills, in and of them selves, are not the key driver of career success or career satisfaction. But when skills are like a flower—the visible expression of energy rooted in your unique blend of personality, values, and interests—your work life is truly beautiful.

That is a Career by Design!

Let's cover a few housekeeping items about this workbook and then we will start you on your journey.

A Note About the Career By Design Workbook

The *Career by Design* workbook is a modular system that includes inventories to help you make a realistic assessment of your personality, values, needs, interests, and skills. Most of these assessments can be completed with the written instructions I provide in the modules. Some of them are also available on my website and you can take them for free.

This version of the Career by Design workbook is powered by the Birkman Method. You will use your Birkman Method report to gain insight into, and descriptive language for your personality, motivating interests, interpersonal-environmental needs, work strengths, and attracting career information.

Each module has work sheets you can use to apply the information in that module to you and your situation. I believe you will get the most out of the activities in each module by giving them your full attention. Find a quiet place, print the worksheet for the activity, and commit pencil to paper.

The following modules are included in this workbook (suggested order)

1. Career by Design: Personality (Needs)
2. Career by Design: Values
3. Career by Design: Personal Mission Statement / Decision Matrix
4. Career by Design: Motivating Interests
5. Career by Design: Skills
6. Career by Design: Matrix
7. Career by Design: Career Contribution Statement
8. Career by Design: S.E.E.D.
9. Career by Design: Work-Life Balance
10. Career by Design: Time Management

A Note to People Already Working

While you may have chosen your job, employer, or business based on your interests, training, education and skills, the ***Career by Design Matrix*** module in this workbook will help you refine and enrich your job so that you spend more time doing what you love and what you do well, and less time doing things that drain your energy. This matrix will help you be more strategic in your performance evaluations and negotiate for more resources to support your professional growth. You will know what projects to look for to help you

grow and enjoy your work. If you manage other people or work with teams, you will have guidance for managing those relationships more effectively.

By using the **Mission-Based Decision Matrix**, you can select your best career options.

The **Career Contribution Statement** is a fantastic tool for those informal interviews with senior managers, would-be mentors, and potential clients in need of your talents, skills, and services.

A Note to Women and Multicultural Workers

After years of doing research, executive education, and coaching in the diversity and inclusion field, I cannot overestimate the importance of the tools that support strategic career management for so-called demographic minorities. First of all, your long-term career success and enjoyment will be built on the foundation you establish at the beginning of your career. In your early work years you are establishing your credibility and competence. Even if your promotions don't come as quickly as you think they should, a reputation for competence and commitment to your work will circulate in your workplace and serve you in the long run.

Second, choosing work that is grounded in your personal and cultural values and that internally motivates you is very important. Your intrinsic interest in your work will sustain you when you find yourself encountering those inevitable challenges at work, sometimes due to unfair practices, individuals, or companies that have a negative impact on the careers of women, LGBTQ, and people of color. If you are doing work that is consistent with your values and meaningful for you, then you will also be able to look at yourself in the mirror every day. You will also be able to sit in your rocking chair when you retire and know that you've done your best to make a significant difference in the world. So spend some quality time on the values chapter. So many values and beliefs differ by race, ethnicity, gender and culture but are invisible. The behaviors grounded in those values and beliefs contribute to work conflict and dissatisfaction. The values information I provide in this workbook can increase your awareness and appreciation of both yours and others' values, thereby reducing much conflict and discontent simply by increasing understanding.

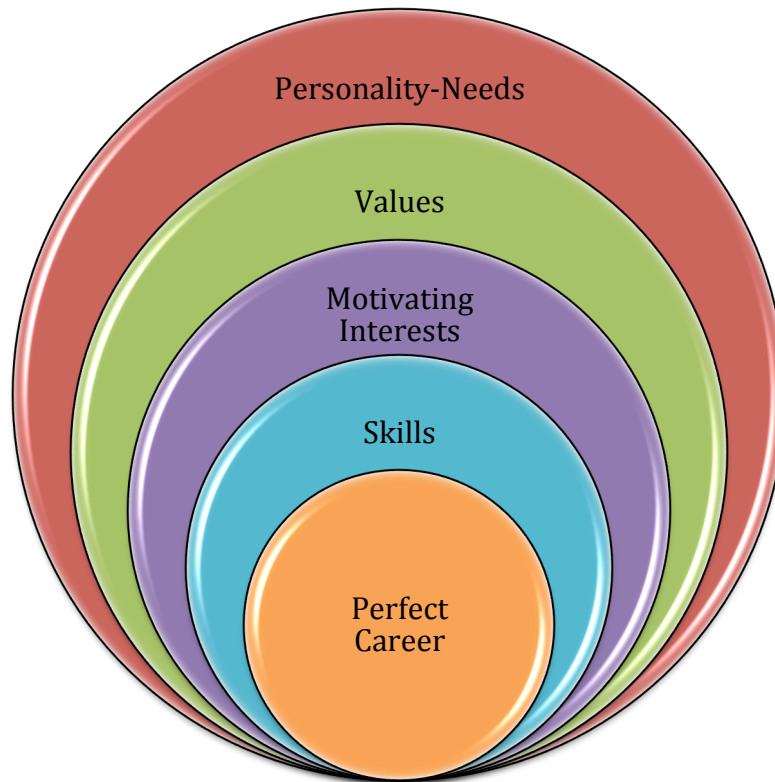
One of the most important decisions you can make
Is to CHOOSE to do what you love to do,
In an environment that allows and values
your contribution as you use your talents and skills.

The Journey Is Yours . . .

This workbook will help you map out your career path and the tools in this workbook are a compass that you can use on your journey to career effectiveness. A map and compass are useful, but in the end you have to make the journey—you must take steps to implement what you learn. You'll start taking steps directed toward your goal of an empowered and

effective career with this workbook. But you must continue taking those steps using feedback from your own successes and failures, your body, your colleagues, and your environment to help you stay on your path to career fulfillment.

Your Career by Design



You will be most successful and satisfied in a career that is:

- Grounded in your core personality
- In an environment with relationships that meet your basic needs
- Meaningful because it enacts your individual, social, and cultural values
- Engages your motivating interests, thereby providing you with energy
- Uses and develops your strengths and rewards you for the contributions you make by using your skills

A *Career by Design* is the result of continuously making high-quality decisions consistent with your personality, values, needs, interests, and skills throughout your life.

Your ideal career will bring all these elements together in a way that is unique for you.

Designing your own career will make you more productive, happier with your work and with your coworkers, and support your growth in a way that gives meaning to your life.

CAREER BY DESIGN: PERSONALITY MODULE (BIRKMAN VERSION)

Although most career counselors prioritize interests, skills, and values for helping you determine career direction, after years of research and practice I agree with Paul Tieger and Barbara Barron, authors of [Do What You Are](#), that the more aspects of your personality you incorporate into your career, the greater your career satisfaction and success. Your personality is your life blueprint. Interests, skills, and values may change with age and life experience. Behaviors change with situation. The blueprint doesn't. By basing your career on deeper aspects of self (personality and purpose), you need not change careers as your interests, skills, and values change. You are born with your personality blueprint and it provides a great map that can be used in building the structure of your life, including your career.

*Personality is a set of distinctive individual characteristics, including motives, emotions, values, interests, attitudes, and competencies. Personality is the result of **personal traits interacting with the environment**.*

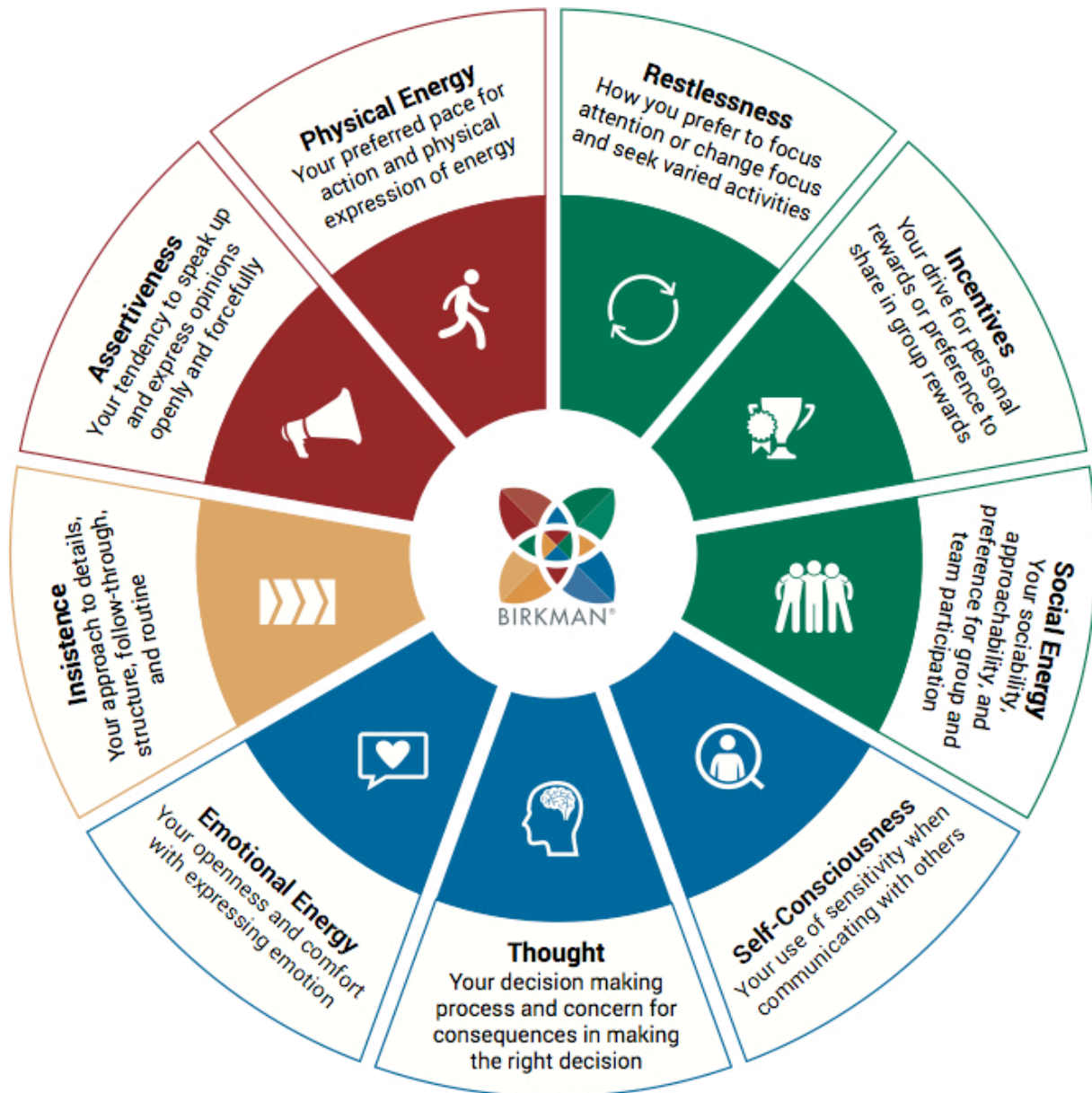
We map and measure personality through the use of self-report personality inventories, projective tests, and observation from simulations, role plays, and interviews. In using these systems our intention is to be able to identify and articulate individual traits and attributes.

Self-Report Inventories. Self-report inventories require you to answer a series of questions about your behavior. Your responses are then organized in a way that provides insight into some aspect of your personality. The inventories I recommend are intended for psychologically healthy people who seek to learn more about themselves and others. There are many personality inventories available. Widely used ones include the [Myers-Briggs Type Indicator \(MBTI\)](#), the [Birkman Method](#), and the [DiSC Personality Profiles](#). In my work I use the Birkman Method most often, and focus on that one in this version of Career by Design. In other versions I used the MBTI as the basic personality template. Contact me if you wish to have the MBTI version.

Self-report inventories have the advantage of being readily available, easily interpreted, standardized, and fun to use. Their very subjectivity is appealing to many. They have the disadvantages associated with any self-report instruments: questionable validity/objectivity, a positive self-report bias, and confusing results if the person has ambivalence in his or her personality. The Birkman Method has very strong psychometric properties to reduce some of the issues found in other personality assessment tools - and is actually validated by the U.S. National Science Foundation.

The Birkman Method

The Birkman Method assessment is a powerful tool that gives you a lot of information you can use to design your career. It identifies your personality, behaviors, motivating interests, strengths, and interpersonal-environmental needs. Specifically, Birkman measures nine components of personality:



For each of these nine personality-based behavior components, the Birkman Method provides information about your Usual Behavior and your Needs.

Usual Behavior: *How you behave in each of these personality areas when you are at your best, using your most productive behaviors, and when your needs have been met.* People see these externalized, usual behaviors.

Needs: *How you need or expect to be treated by other people and the environment that would support you, motivate you, to do and be your best self.* Needs are often invisible (sometimes even to us), and internal. When needs are not met, we have stress reactions. The Birkman Method also describes these stress reactions - how you might act when you're frustrated because for some reason your needs are not being met for an extended period of time.

You will only thrive at work if the environment suits your basic needs. When your basic needs are not met, your work is a source of stress.

One of the major insights of the Birkman Method is that there is no logical connection between what we do (our Usual Behaviors) and what we want from others - our environment (our Needs). So your scores for Usual and Need may be similar to each other or completely different.

There's also no such thing as NORMAL behavior - no perfect profile. We use the Birkman Method to help you gain insight into YOUR personality.

BIRKMAN METHOD WORKSHEET 1:

After you've taken the Birkman and received your report, fill in the worksheet on the next page to summarize your results. The first column lists the component name. Look at your scores for each component. If you have a score below 40 for that component, put the score on the line in the "Low Usual" box for that component. For example, I filled in 14 for Social Energy.

COMPONENT	Low Usual	High Usual	Low Need	High Need
SOCIAL ENERGY	<u>14</u> Independent	<u> </u> Sociable	<u> </u> Recharge time	<u>89</u> Acceptance

If your score is above 60 put that score under High Usual for that component.

Look at your Need score for that component. If your NEED score is below 40, fill it in under Low Need for that component; if your need score is over 60 put that score in the High need box - as I did in the example.

If your score is between 40 and 60, inclusive, then put your score in the first column under the name of the component. When a score is between 40-60 it means how you act, and what you need, will depend on the situation.

Circle the key words under your scores. These might be adjectives you use to describe you at your best (Usual); and what you look for in work environments-coworkers (Needs).

PERSONALITY: BIRKMAN WORK SHEET 1

COMPONENT	Low Usual	High Usual	Low Need	High Need
SOCIAL ENERGY	_____ Independent	_____ Sociable	_____ Recharge time	_____ Acceptance
PHYSICAL ENERGY	_____ Efficient	_____ Active	_____ Reflection time	_____ To be busy
EMOTIONAL ENERGY	_____ Logical	_____ Expressive	_____ Unemotional environment	_____ To discuss feelings
SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS	_____ Candid	_____ Tactful	_____ No-nonsense feedback	_____ Demonstrated respect
ASSERTIVENESS	_____ Suggesting	_____ Directing	_____ Minimal conflict	_____ Clear authority
INSISTENCE	_____ Flexible	_____ Consistent	_____ To improvise	_____ Defined systems & processes
INCENTIVES	_____ Trusting	_____ Competitive	_____ Collaboration	_____ Status symbols
RESTLESSNESS	_____ Focused	_____ Responsive	_____ Minimize interruptions	_____ Variety
THOUGHT	_____ Decisive	_____ Reflective	_____ Freedom to act	_____ Time to think

The Psychological Contract

There are many explicit expectations in the employer-employee relationship including salary, compensation and job duties. In addition to the explicit agreements between employer and employees, there are often implicit, unacknowledged and unspoken needs and expectations. These are part of the psychological contract. *The psychological contract is set of needs and expectations between you and another person, your team mates, or your organization. It influences what you expect from the key people in your life, as well as what employers expect from employees and what employees expect from employers.*

In practice most psychological contracts are between managers and their direct reports. But you have relational needs that must be met in all kinds of social interactions. It should be emphasized that you need not communicate, nor agree on the specifics of a psychological contract for the contract to exist, and, for the contract to have behavioral consequences. The psychological contract has an impact on the amount and quality of your relationships at work whether you can articulate it or not; whether your circumstance meets your needs or not.

However, most people do not communicate their needs and expectations clearly, to the appropriate person, or at the most effective times. Broken psychological contracts between people at work are at the root of many workplace conflicts, absenteeism, poor performance, career dissatisfaction, demotivation, stress, and costly employee turnover. This silence about the relational needs at work seems to be the rule, rather than the exception.

So why do we not communicate our work expectations with each other? First, we often do not know what our needs are until we have been disappointed because some important need is not met. Second, the opportunity to actually discuss relational needs at work is relatively new. Until recently workers mostly did what they were told to do and they expected to keep their jobs until they retired unless they failed to perform in some important ways. Those days are gone now. Expectations have changed. Today it is important to communicate needs and expectations.

Needs motivate behavior. Unmet needs cause stress and contribute to conflict. With greater empowerment of workers, especially in the service sectors, making sure people are engaged, competent, and committed is important. With globalization and high-speed service delivery, interruptions in work flow due to unproductive conflict is costly. And for our purposes, knowing and communicating your needs empowers you to design your career.

Birkman Method Needs

The Birkman Method is one of the best ways to gain insight into, and learn a non-judgmental language you can use to articulate, negotiate, and take responsibility for getting your needs met.

Your needs are typically developed when you are between 7 and 9 years old, and they don't change much without major life events. These needs are often hidden (even to self), so we

use projective assessments, like the Birkman, to identify what those needs are. When your needs are met, life is good. And you demonstrate the effective, positive aspect of the Usual behavior described by the Birkman. If your needs are not met, you are likely to demonstrate the stress-induced, reactive, and dysfunctional behavior also described by the Birkman. We even expect other people to know what we need without being conscious of our needs ourselves. Maybe someone you know has said something like "if you loved me you would know what I want, and give it to me"? Unfortunately, most people don't have a clue what you want. Sometimes, or for some areas of your life, don't have a clue either. And sometimes the people you work with or for, are not willing to invest the extra energy trying to figure you out. They've got plenty of work to do, plus they need their energy to figure themselves out. It's YOUR responsibility to know what you need, be able to verbalize it, negotiate/ask for what you need-want, and choose environments that meet your needs.

The Birkman Reports also describes how your needs combine and provide even deeper insight into your needs when relating to others.

1. For example, if you need *autonomy, pleasant work relationships, input before decisions, suggestions vs. orders AND independence, free action and thought, control over your schedule and your work, autonomy*, THEN when it comes to conflict, you need opportunities to take independent action without debate, freedom from interference, low-key team interactions, and to work with team members who take initiative and take care of their own responsibilities.
2. If you need *enforced, firm, clear direction, ability to direct and debate with others AND predictability, routine, familiar-established rules and procedures, order, consistency*, THEN you need cooperation from others as well as input from them, opportunities to discuss options fully with team members, and a team that works together without suppressing differences or pushing one opinion.

These are different relational styles based on different needs.

PERSONALITY - BIRKMAN WORK SHEET 2: UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEEDS

The items in the chart below describe the type of work environment would meet your needs. Using your Birkman report information, circle the info on the left if your NEED score is below 40; circle on the right if your NEED score for that component is >60). If you find you do not have a strong preference for one side or the other, do not circle either side on that row.

Frank, direct, candid relationships and no-nonsense feedback, clear instructions	self-consciousness	Respect for your title, status symbols, and personalized approval from people you respect above you, individualized discussions, explanations
Individualized goals, time to work alone, few meetings, contact with a few close friends, individual assignments	social energy	Interactions with lots of people, appreciation for your social status, reassurance, to feel like part of the team
Minimal routine, informal work relationships, task-work variety, OK to improvise, flexibility, generalized plans	insistence	Clear rules, systems, procedures, instructions and roles, predictable steady income, value advanced warning of change
Autonomy, pleasant work relationships, input before decisions, suggestions vs. orders, minimal verbal clashes and conflict	assertiveness	Enforced, firm, clear direction, ability to direct and debate with others, OK to air opinions openly, clear authority lines
Service, harmony, teamwork, work more for service & the team than for money, keep competitive rivalry to a minimum	incentives	Immediate, clear, personal benefits to you for success, compensation for performance, status associated with achievement, personal performance metrics
Intellectual and emotional engagement, recharge time, set own pace, low stress	physical energy	Practical results, competitive outlets in work or active hobbies, physical activities, a busy schedule with lots of activity
Logical solutions, matter of fact interactions, concrete, clear instructions, practical tasks, an unemotional environment	emotional energy	Quality work relationships, opportunities to express your feelings, sustained relationships
Time and a chance to give your input before change is started, uninterrupted time, space, consistency	restlessness	Task variety, changing-non-routine work, shift priorities as new interests arise
A short time from when you make a decision to action, freedom to act, clarity, short meetings	thought	Time, space, and data to think about options before acting, time to talk and hear others' perspectives, ambiguity OK

PERSONALITY - BIRKMAN WORK SHEET 3: GETTING KEY NEEDS MET

1. Prioritize your needs. Some needs are non-negotiable. Which are your top 3 needs? (write out the words describing the need, not just the name of the component).

a)
b)
c)

2. Are your needs being met in your current work situation? Are your needs likely to be met if you are evaluating a future situation? Note whether your needs are being met in the boxes below.

a)
b)
c)

3. Decide who is the person (or people) most likely to be able to help you meet your top three needs.

a)
b)
c)

4. If the need is being met, thank that person, as a way to reinforce the situation, and let them know that you appreciate the way they're being supportive. If the need is not being met, how might you communicate your expectations to that person / those people and together consider ways your needs and expectations could be met?

a)
b)
c)

5. Brainstorm some behaviors you think would help you meet each of your needs. What could others do? What might you do? Where else in your life might you get that need met?

a)
b)
c)

If you do not believe your needs can ever be met in your situation:

- ✓ Discuss the need anyway (give people a chance before giving up on them).
- ✓ Determine if you can live with that situation.
- ✓ Gather more information about how meeting your needs could make the team or organization more effective, reduce conflict, or improve your relationship. *Or*
- ✓ Modify your expectations.

CAREER BY DESIGN: VALUES MODULE

Values are principles and standards that are important to you.

You may have individual values, and you may share values with others in your family, organization, or culture. Values are deeply held and strongly felt—you have an emotional and psychological investment in them.

In the values assessment you will do here, you'll be determining your values—not what you should or should not think–feel–do based on what your parents, the media, your teachers, or your religion taught you, or what other people around you assume you value. You will be identifying and prioritizing what is important to you. You may have had some values when you were younger that have changed as you matured, after you have had different life experiences and different responsibilities. Values, and value priorities, will change during your lifetime.

Values Inventory

Select your top five values from the Values List starting on the next page. It includes cultural, individual, work, and personal values. All of the values are positive. As you select your values, you will simultaneously learn about others' values. You need not agree with others' values, but it is helpful to know what the values options are so that you can choose your own values (and respect others' when you need to do so). If you believe one of your top 5 values is missing from the Values List, there is space to write that value in at the end of the list. If you need to tweak the definition of a value, feel free to do so. These are your values. The definitions provided are there to help you think about what the value may mean.

The challenge is in choosing only five values. Please differentiate espoused (talked about) values from enacted (lived) values.

TOP 5 VALUES	WHAT THIS VALUE MEANS TO ME
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

The Values List

	Acceptance – be accepted as you are for who you are
	Access – live and work where the playing field is even and provides access to what is needed for a quality life
	Accuracy – use data in ways that get consistent, verifiable results
	Achievement - succeeding in doing something based on effort expended; an internal standard of excellence in all that you do
	Advancement – have challenges and opportunities where you can take risks, demonstrate ability, and win/compete to gain higher status or better position
	Adventure - undertaking activities that provide excitement and extraordinary events; seeking and being willing to participate in things that involve risk and uncertainty
	Aging well - changing with time, maturing when growing older in life
	Altruism – selfless concern for the well-being of others
	Artistic expression – sharing processes and products of human skill, imagination, and invention with the world
	Authority – the legitimate right to make decisions based on position power
	Autonomy - have personal control over your tasks and time
	Beauty/aesthetics – make life more beautiful or have time to appreciate beautiful things
	Being - thinking, contemplating are valuable; self-definition based on “who I am” regardless of external accomplishment
	Birthright - family background and heritage are essential self-defining qualities.
	Challenge – invent or revitalize thoughts, ideas, processes, or approaches that prove your abilities and help you grow
	Change - seen as positive, healthy, natural; it represents growth; “new and improved” concept
	Charity - voluntary sharing; giving money, materials, support, kindness, and resources to people in need
	Cleanliness – the state of being free from dirt, and the process of achieving and maintaining that state

	Comfort - being, feeling relaxed; free from pain and anxiety
	Commitment – keeping your word and agreements to self and others
	Communication – being effective in letting others know what you think and feel
	Community – commitment to the shared responsibilities and connections in the area you live, of the groups to which you belong
	Compassion – a caring motivational state associated with the propensity to actively relieve the suffering of others
	Competence – possessing and using skills, knowledge, qualities, and capacity to do something well
	Competition – competition is healthy and brings out the best in people
	Conservation – to protect all life forms—animals, fungi, plants, people—and their habitats
	Conservatism – disposed to preserve existing conditions, institutions, or to restore traditional ones and limit change so that it is moderate and purposeful
	Context/place - physical, geographic, historical, cultural, and temporal contexts are meaningful and important to life
	Contribution – have your work, life, presence on the planet make a difference
	Cosmopolitan – global citizenship; awareness of and connection to how events affect the entire world population
	Courage – ability and willingness to take action even when it is risky or even life-threatening
	Creativity – allow your imagination to find new, unique ways to express ideas, thoughts
	Curiosity – explore new areas of knowledge and awareness; seek new understanding
	Democracy – the right of every one to contribute to the governance of nations, organizations, and communities
	Detail – thorough and attentive to particular and specific parts or processes
	Dignity – maintaining poise and a sense of self, no matter what
	Direct communication - honest, open, get to the point

	Discipline – calm, controlled, conscious behavior; systematic approach to behavior, activity, subject, or lifestyle
	Discovery - finding out about things for the first time; finding something new or unexpected after searching
	Diversity – seeking and valuing contact with those who are different from you; believe variety enhances your life experience
	Doing/activity orientation — hard work pays off; prefer action over contemplation of ideas; self-worth based on what you do or accomplish with your life
	Duty – carry out your responsibilities and commitments
	Empathy – an emotional sensitivity to the needs and wants of others
	Empiricism – belief in knowledge acquired through sensory, objective, verified, quantified, scientific methods and experimentation
	Equality/egalitarianism – belief that all people are equal and should have equal access to things they need in life; treat everyone the same; believe people are (should be) free to change their roles
	Excellence – an internal high standard for doing/achieving things in life
	Expertise – to value and be valued for your knowledge, wisdom, experience, scholarly or intellectual abilities
	Expressiveness – share your unique ideas, feelings, and talents with others
	Extraversion – deriving energy from the outer world of people, objects, and events that involves initiating, expression, gregariousness, activity, and enthusiasm
	Extrinsic religiosity - religion helps us obtain desired goals, personal comfort, and social status consistent with God's wish for us
	Fairness - demonstrating impartial, unbiased, and equitable treatment to others; giving to each according to what they need, earned, or deserve
	Faith – a strong belief in a higher intelligence that guides, sustains your life
	Family – having a strong commitment to people with whom you share bonds of blood and marriage
	Fate - external forces (e.g., God, fate, genetics) control humankind, and many things are beyond our control because they are hereditary or in God's hands, etc.
	Financial freedom - having enough financial resources to support your lifestyle; no debt; working because you want to, not because you have to

	Formality - ritual and tradition are valued; formality is a sign of respect and importance
	Freedom/autonomy – have open-ended responsibilities with ability to choose and define your life, love, and work
	Friendship – personal relationships grounded in mutual concern for each other
	Fundamentalism – only one set of religious teachings (the Bible, the Torah, the Koran, etc.) clearly contains the fundamental, basic, intrinsic, essential, inerrant truth about humanity and God; this essential truth is fundamentally opposed by forces of evil that must be vigorously fought; this truth must be followed today using basic, unchangeable practices from the past; and following these fundamental teachings creates a special relationship with God/Jesus/Allah/Yahweh
	Future - planning ahead, goal setting, working today for a better future
	Generosity – willingness to share time, treasures, talents with others without viewing it as a transactional exchange for something in return
	Group/collectivism - strong identification with others; think interdependency with others is normal and desirable
	Growth – in personal terms, to have opportunities to improve yourself and self-actualize; professionally, to seek to enhance your skills and experience
	Harmony – seeking, contributing to, and maintaining conflict-free relations between people; “all for one, and one for all”
	Healing – helping others become healthy or maintain their health
	Help others – Give support, advice, information, or assistance to people, animals, groups, or organizations
	Hierarchy – View rank, status, and title as important; we should treat people differently according to their place in society; specific rights, obligations, and personality characteristics are expected based on age, sex, and position within society
	Honesty – telling the truth about your life and experience
	Human interaction - personal relationships with people are important
	Humility - being modest and respectful
	Idealism – cherishing or pursuit of high and noble principles and goals
	Immanence spirituality – belief that everything is God/part of the universe; transcendence of interpersonal and intrapersonal boundaries is good

	Independence – making decisions and carrying them out without regard or need for others’ assistance or approval
	Indirect communication - subtle, delicate, inferred communication that respects people’s intelligence and ability to decipher meaning while saving face
	Individuality – free to be yourself and express yourself in your own unique manner; see privacy as necessary and desirable; see each person as unique/special
	Influence – have an impact on the opinions, decisions, lives of others
	Informality - casual and spontaneous behavior is appreciated
	Initiative – taking action on your own without waiting for approval or permission
	Innovation – creating new and different objects, ideas, and experiences
	Integrity – consistency in word, thought, and deed in your interactions
	Intellectual challenge – explore ideas, problems, puzzles, or decisions that test your mental abilities, creativity, knowledge, assumptions, or world views; competitive tests of mental prowess against other intellectuals
	Introversion – deriving energy from your inner world of thoughts, feelings, and ideas; being receptive, contained, intimate, reflective, or quiet
	Intrinsic religiosity – believe people should <i>live</i> their religion; orthodoxy is valued
	Joy – happiness, contentment, pleasure (especially of an elevated or spiritual kind)
	Justice - fairness or reasonableness in the way people are treated, the decisions made, and the result/impact
	Kindness – good and charitable behavior, pleasant disposition, concern for others
	Knowledge/expertise - contribute to new findings in technology, research, or science; strong desire to learn new things; be valued for intellectual prowess
	Leadership – make a significant difference for achieving shared goals; have impact
	Learning – acquiring new, modifying, or synthesizing existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences; detecting and correcting errors
	Legacy - directing resources (time, talent, money) to causes you care about in order to make a significant difference in the world that continues even after you are gone
	Leisure - time without obligations or work responsibilities, and therefore being free to engage in enjoyable activities

	Liberalism – belief in the importance of liberty and equal rights, generally pro progress or reform in political or religious affairs
	Love – intense feelings of tender affection and compassion for others
	Loyalty – supporting a person or cause due to your feelings/attitude of devoted attachment and affection through challenging as well as good times
	Making a difference - leaving the world a better place for having lived; having a significant impact in your sphere of influence
	Mastery – possession of consummate skill, control, command, or grasp or a skill, ability, or organization, or people; having the upper hand in a contest/competition
	Materialism - acquiring and protecting wealth or objects are desirable; material possessions are a sign of success
	Membership – a sense of belonging and therefore contributing your time, talents, skills, and energy to organizations, clubs, and institutions
	Multiculturalism – appreciation, acceptance, and promotion of multiple cultures
	Natural abilities (use) – use innate gifts as way to acknowledge life purpose
	Naturalness – be able to dress and be casual, your natural self
	Nature – being concerned with animals, environment and people’s impact on nature; being outdoors
	New ideas – appreciation of new concepts, approaches, theories, inventions, etc.
	Objectivity – approach people, tasks, or decisions with detachment, appreciation for cause and effect, neutrality, and accuracy
	Opportunity – a condition of openness such that every one has access to resources necessary for a fulfilling life
	Order – a condition of logical, methodical, and comprehensible arrangement among separate elements, processes, or people in a group
	Organizing – the act of rearranging or coordinating people, processes, objects, events, or elements
	Parenting - to have, acquire, and use experiences, skills, and responsibilities involved in teaching and caring for children
	Past - tradition and history are important and provide guidelines for living life
	Patriotism - pride in or devotion to your country

	Peace – mental calm and serenity, without anxiety, making sure you and others get along without war, conflict, fights
	People – interest in, value of, concern for well-being of other human beings
	People (contact) – have frequent, quality interaction with others
	Perfection – complete flawlessness, free from fault or defect, the highest degree of proficiency, skill or excellence
	Personal control – expecting to control your life and environment to sustain or improve your quality of life
	Physical activity – be able to have energetic movement or exercise
	Physical challenge – perform activities, sports, stunts, etc., that require hard labor, pit you against others physically, or test your own physical limits
	Place/space – be in surroundings that reflect your lifestyle, preferences, values, and interests
	Power - the capacity to influence the behavior of others to achieve a result and to have impact; the right, authority, or desire to have power-over, power-with others, or power to get things done
	Practicality – action orientation with sensible, hands-on approach to work
	Pragmatism – linking of practice with theory; practical approach to problems and affairs that balances ideals with what works
	Precision – work/live in ways where there is little room for error
	Progress – positive movement toward a goal or something valued; growth, development, advancement
	Preservation – guarding children, nature, people, animals, or things from danger, harm, or injury
	Quality – excellent standard or level of service, product, action, event, etc.
	Quest (spirituality) – honestly facing existential questions in their complexity (e.g., Why are we here? Why is there death? What is the purpose of life? why earth-humans-animals? etc.), while at the same time resisting clear-cut, pat answers
	Reality – the state of things as they actually exist, rather than as they might appear or be imagined; authenticity
	Reciprocity – relationships involve mutual exchange of obligations, favors, and privileges

	Recognition – receive validation and acknowledgment from others for your effort-based accomplishments
	Relationships – have time to develop and maintain quality contact with people you care about
	Respect – admiration and acknowledgment from others; wanting others to admire and defer to you
	Responsibility – willingness to be accountable for your charges in life
	Results – see bottom-line, measurable, tangible impact of your actions and work
	Retirement - leaving a job or career; the end of the time when you work for money
	Ritual – a set of actions performed regularly, often with an unchanging pattern
	Self-discipline - practicing methods that ensure controlled and orderly behavior; mental self-control used to direct or change behavior or learn something
	Self expression – sharing your personality, feelings, or ideas through work, speech, art, life
	Self-help - initiative, hard work, and individual accomplishment are essential qualities
	Service – give support, information, and advice to others
	Shared values – be with others who agree with you about what is most important in life and how to reach mutual goals
	Simplicity – a straightforward quality of life without complications, difficulties, or embellishments
	Spirituality - growth and introspection are seen as the purpose of life and the measure of one's worth
	Solitude – a state of being alone, remote or secluded
	Stability/Security – regular, predictable work-life through the use of routines and structure with predictable income
	Status – have or earn prestige with a reputation based on achievements, talents, skills, or family; have a positive public image
	Supervising – oversee people and activities, usually in a work arena
	Surrender - to release; to let go; to relinquish possession or control to somebody (something, e.g., God/fate) greater than yourself (your ego)

	Talents (use) – use innate aptitudes, flair, gifts, abilities, or capacities
	Task accomplishment – carry out projects in a systematic way to meet goals, output, or performance objectives
	Time: alone - spending time in solitude, separated from other people; usually in quiet, remote, or secluded places where human activity is limited or absent
	Time: cyclical - importance attached to doing things in season
	Time: linear - importance attached to schedules, calendars, deadlines, watches, and being “on time”
	Time: procedural - doing things when everything comes together naturally
	Tradition - heritage, continuity, and stability are desired and worth continuing
	Transformation – change involving an end to some aspect of self you valued and becoming something new
	Travel - to journey to and visit different people, cultures, and places in the world
	Trust – the ability to have confidence in, and reliance on, others’ goodwill in situations involving risk or interdependence
	Utilitarianism – the proper course of action is one that is useful and maximizes the greatest good; the value of something is determined by its usefulness
	Wealth – have, gain, or maintain a high economic standard of living; high net worth
	Well-defined responsibilities – use training, skills, abilities, and experience to do clearly defined tasks with delineated roles and expectations
	Winning – achieving victory or success by defeating an opponent; gaining something of value through skill and or luck
	Wisdom - the knowledge and experience needed to make sensible, caring decisions and judgments
	YOUR VALUES AND YOUR DEFINITIONS Use the spaces below to add values not included in the list.

Values Clarification Grid

In this activity you will differentiate espoused (talked about) values from enacted (lived) values. You will also share your top five values with at least one other person. List your top five values again in the first column from the left (just the name of the value, not the definition you wrote out before). Then follow the Values Clarification instructions.

YOUR TOP 5 VALUES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

- Values Clarification Step 1: In the second column next to each of your values, put a check mark if you are proud of that value.
- Values Clarification Step 2: In the third column next to each of your values, put a check mark if you have told at least one person, out loud, that this is one of your values. If you have publicly affirmed that value, put a check mark next to each of the five values.
- Values Clarification Step 3: In the fourth column next to each of your values, put a check mark next to that value if you have chosen that value. Have you considered the alternative to that value? Have you considered the pros? The cons? The consequences of living according to that value? Have you freely chosen that value? Many people have absorbed their values from their families, community, the media - and not truly chosen their values. We often don't even know what our values are until we've encountered someone with different values. So only put check marks next to values where you're certain you have chosen your value freely. Remember, the list of values you used to

select your top five values includes a lot of values that might be positive alternatives to yours. In that way it is a good resource for you.

- Values Clarification Step 4: In the fifth column next to each of your values, put a check mark next to each of your five values if you can remember a time and can tell another person of a time that you have acted, at least once, on that value.
- Values Clarification Step 5: In this final column, put a check mark next to the value if you act consistently on this value. People know you walk your talk when it comes to this value. People know that your behavior is predictable, consistent and trustworthy when it comes to this value.

Now if you have any empty boxes in your grid, you have an opportunity for action. When you are looking at projects, entrepreneurial opportunities, or jobs - be sure to check that opportunity with your top values.

If you reflect for a while and then revisit the values inventory, you may discover that when it comes to your actions (what you do) vs. your thoughts about what you *should* do, you enact some different core values. You then have a choice. You can change your core values to more accurately reflect your enacted values, or you might decide to act more consistently in alignment with your values.

***Once you decide to
LIVE according to your values,
your luck and your life will change.***

Voicing Values Activity (research of [Mary Gentile: Giving Voice to Values](#))

One way to start living according to your values is to voice your values out loud with another person. Values researcher Mary C. Gentile found that by voicing your values and stating your intent to live according to those values, you are less likely to get confused when you are in situations that call for you to act according to those values. Use the values and definitions you prepared on the first Values Worksheet. Be prepared to share what you have written with another person out loud.

1 I value _____ and this means

I am proud of my _____ value.

I intend to act in ways consistent with my _____ value.

2 I value _____ and this means

I am proud of my _____ value.

I intend to act in ways consistent with my _____ value.

3 I value _____ and this means

I am proud of my _____ value.

I intend to act in ways consistent with my _____ value.

4 I value _____ and this means

I am proud of my _____ value.

I intend to act in ways consistent with my _____ value.

5 I value _____ and this means

I am proud of my _____ value.

I intend to act in ways consistent with my _____ value.

CAREER BY DESIGN: MISSION STATEMENT MODULE

Crafting and memorizing your personal mission statement helps you remember your top five values and make decisions consistent with those values. For example, my personal mission statement is ...

I am happy, healthy, and peaceful being with people I love, in a place I love, doing creative and expressive work I love, all with financial freedom.

There are several elements to this mission statement.

- This mission statement includes my core values using words that resonate with me. I know that *happy*, *healthy*, and *peaceful* are states of being I value no matter what I am doing.
- I also find I have much more energy when I love something or someone. Energetically, I run more on love than on fear, challenge, or competition.
- I value working with people who are my friends, whom I trust, whom I care about and who care about me. I spend a lot of hours working, and those relationships matter as much to me as my big R relationships with family. And I value being near and with family members.
- I did not realize that *place* was an important value until I lived and worked in rainy, gray, cold, dreary, isolated places. I now admit to being solar-powered (I live in the desert) and seek physical spaces that are aesthetically pleasing to me. I also value living, working, and being in communities that are multicultural and inclusive. The value *place* captures all of that for me.
- For many years my work was quantitative (I am a recovering finance professional), and data-research driven, in part because I put away my more creative–expressive side to find work that would bring me money, status, and approval. I also had an internal fear that “artists starve.” So I did not choose to be creative and expressive although both of those attributes are part of my personality, nature, and talent base. After I started the *Career by Design* process, I reclaimed those aspects of self and reaffirm them as core personal and professional values.
- I knew that I cared about money, but like many people in the United States, I was also ambivalent about holding money as a value. Only you can sort out what your feelings, thoughts, and beliefs truly are about money. With work and time, I came to know that what I truly valued was enough money to feel free to make decisions and live my life according to my values. Some people truly want wealth—and they know what that is. Others do not care too much about money at all. But for most of us, money represents, or allows us to have, something of even greater value. For me, that was freedom. If you notice that you make life and work decisions that seem to compromise your values because you need money, dig a little deeper into your values to uncover what is really important about money for you.

- The phrasing of the mission statement is in the powerful, positive, present tense. Use words such as “I am” or “I allow” or “I accept.” Avoid “I want”, “I will try”, “I hope”, “I wish”, “If I’m lucky”, “I have to”, “I must”, “I should”, “I need”, etc. Avoid negative, doubtful, questioning terms. Affirm your mission in the now.
- My values are in priority order.

Enough about my mission statement! Start drafting your personal mission statement below.

Mission Statement Worksheet

List your top five values.

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

Mission Statement Draft

Mission Statement Refined

TIP: Use Your Values-Based Mission Statement for Decision Making

One excellent way to use your values-based mission statement is as a criteria matrix for making important job decisions. For example, working with my mission statement from the values chapter, *“Being with people I love, in a place I love, doing creative and expressive work I love, all with financial freedom,”* four of my values are clear:

1. people (relationships)
2. place
3. creativity
4. financial freedom

When I am deciding between jobs, assignments, new contracts with clients, etc., I use those values in a decision matrix. For example, when I was considering two job offers recently, my decision matrix, based on my mission values, looked like this . . .

VALUES	JOB 1	JOB 2	STAY
People			
Place			
Creative Work			
Financial Freedom			

I ranked each of the options by each of the values. So for people, **Job 1** had a lot of people I knew from previous interactions and I enjoyed working with them. For **Job 2** I did not really know anyone. Both **Jobs 1** and **2** would require me to move away from my relational support system, so staying was actually my top choice for the people criterion: In the people row, **Stay** got 3 points, **Job 1** got 2 points, and **Job 2** got 1 point. I gave the highest number of points to the option with the greatest value to me, based on my people value.

I used a similar method for place. **Jobs 1** and **2** required moving, but **Job 2** was an international assignment that was exciting but in a big, noisy city. **Job 1** was in the United States, but in a colder climate. I love where I live and work now. So **Stay** got 3 points in the **Place** row, **Job 2** got 2 points, and **Job 1** only 1 point.

For creative/expressive work, **Job 1** involved research and consulting, using skills I have, but not very creative. **Job 2** was teaching—something I love doing, but not always as creative as what I do now. And again, I love the mix of creative/expressive work I have

currently. So **Stay** got 3 points, and I gave only 1 point to both **Jobs 1** and **2**. (You can decide how to weight all of your criteria. It is *your* matrix).

Finally, financial freedom. Both **Jobs 1** and **2** were offering me a lot more money and financial security than I have in my current situation. But my core value is not financial security; it is financial *freedom*. For me that means the freedom to do what I love without taking a job that distances me from key relationships, my intrinsic creative interests, or in a place I do not love. So I ended up giving all three choices 1 point because they balanced each other out—more money and security versus less money with freedom.

VALUES	JOB 1	JOB 2	STAY
People	2	1	3
Place	1	2	3
Creative Work	1	1	3
Financial Freedom	1	1	1
TOTAL	5	5	10

Using this matrix, I soon realized that staying in my current situation was most consistent with my core values. I am also more content with staying in my current job because I know I am consciously choosing to stay. *Choosing* is empowering psychologically.

In my own life, in the past, I often changed jobs or locations because someone offered me more money, status, or approval. I would seriously consider taking jobs or assignments just because I was happy they wanted me and I had invested energy in convincing them during the interview process that I was the right person for that job. But whenever I used my personal mission statement with my values as the decision criteria, I made what I know was truly the best decision for me. I espoused values about relationships, but moved frequently based on promotion opportunities even when those moves damaged relationships. I suffered doing work I could do, but not work I loved, because somebody paid me to do it. But as I discovered, and as we move into the other parts of *Career by Design* process it will become increasingly clear to you, compromising on core values in career decisions is neither the path to satisfaction nor success.

Here is a blank **Values-Based Decision Matrix** for you to use with your top five values and personal mission statement. Consider using this the next time you need to make a values-based choice. Remember! Staying (no change) is always one of the choices to consider.

Mission-Based Decision Matrix

VALUES	JOB 1	JOB 2	STAY
TOTAL			

CAREER BY DESIGN: MOTIVATING INTERESTS MODULE

Motivating interests are . . .

- Those areas of work that attract you naturally
- The endeavors to which you bring the most passion
- Activities where work will seem like play for pay
- The best guide to the work content you enjoy
- The primary driver of career satisfaction over your lifetime

The underlying patterns of our motivating interests, even our work interests, start when we are young and stay with us throughout our lifetimes.

Birkman Interests

The *Interests* section of your Birkman report compares your interest in broad areas of activity with the level of interest most other people have. There are ten circles, and each circle has a percentile number inside it from 1% to 99%. The number tells you how many people out of 100 have *less* interest than you do in that area. For example, if the number beside “**Technical**” is 88%, 88% of the population is less interested in doing technical things than you are. Conversely, you are more interested in doing technical things than 88 out of 100 people. You can say that you’re strongly interested in that area.

Below is an explanation of the numerical system. I'd like you to focus on the intense scores.

1%-20%

Shows a lack of interest in that area compared to most of the population. You don't like to be involved in these types of activities, and in fact you may be uncomfortable when this kind of activity continues for very long.

21%-79%

Indicates more, less, or average interest in that area compared to most people. 50% is the “average” interest, meaning that half the people have more interest and half have less interest than you do in that area. You are neither strongly interested nor uninterested.

80%-99%

Shows an intense interest, even a *need* to be involved in this activity. This means you may be unhappy and feel unfulfilled without at least some of this activity in your life.

Keep in mind that *there are no perfect numbers . . . just different numbers*. A 20% is no worse, or better, than an 80% – it just indicates a level of *interest* in an area.

Also keep in mind that a single area and number don't tell the whole story. You need to look at all the Birkman Interests to see how they balance and reinforce each other. For example, a Technical percentile of 90% plus an Artistic percentile of 80% might indicate you would

enjoy architecture. An Artistic 90% and an Outdoor 80% might mean you would rather be outside doing landscape design. In any case, it helps to look at the areas and numbers together to see if a theme emerges.

As you might infer from what you have just read, you should interpret these Interests broadly. A high Artistic percentile does not mean that you are necessarily interested in art museums, or being an artist. A high Artistic score does indicate a need in your life to honor your aesthetic sense.

It is also important to remember that *Interests* do not necessarily relate to talent, skill, or aptitude. Birkman does not measure skill or aptitude in any way. Because of this, your occupation will not necessarily match your highest Interest scores. This is okay, as long as you realize that **a score over 80 points to an energy producing area to pay attention to in your life**. You can generate and harvest that energy vocationally, through your job, or through your hobbies/activities you do at home. Whether job vs. home, one is not better than the other.

Below are descriptions of the Birkman Interests with examples of how they may be expressed by various individuals.

Artistic

Concern with visual impact, usually combined with a *strong aesthetic sense*. A keyword is 'design'. Methods for expression may include sculpture, painting, interior design, art appreciation, how you-and others dress, and crafts. Occupations may include graphic arts, landscape design, photography, architecture, fashionista, and florist. Carries with it a liking for strategic or creative thinking.

Administrative

An *affinity for an orderly, structured approach* with a preference for (establishing) routines or processes that provide consistency. Methods for expression may include scheduling activities and resources, filing, systematizing materials, keeping close control over resources, and producing order in the surrounding environment. Occupations include financial manager, office worker, security and control systems manager, project management and court reporter.

Literary

An affinity for language and its use in the printed word, along with appreciation for the *abstract feelings and ideas conveyed through words*. Methods for expression may include reading in all forms (pamphlets, novels, professional publications, and magazines), concern with different literary styles, interest in writers and their histories, writing or a desire to write, and interest in foreign languages. Occupations may include writers, editors and literary agents.

Technical

An affinity for applying principles of technology into the design, building or maintenance of devices requiring the operation of several interrelated parts with separate functions.

Usually *learn by doing* - and have an interest in building things with your hands that you can see and touch. Methods for expression may include programming, engineering, computer/machine design, home repair, machine maintenance, carpentry, woodwork, mechanical operations, gadgetry, and construction activities. Occupations may also include construction, energy development, transportation-material moving, plumbing, and crafts.

Musical

Sensitivity to sound with an affinity for the art of arranging sound in time through the elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony. May often tune into *harmony-discord* in interpersonal interactions, as well as tone of voice for conveying information. Methods for expression may include playing a musical instrument, listening to varied forms of music; writing music, singing, dancing, and watching musical performances. Occupations include singers, musicians, counselors and song writers.

Numerical

A preference for the *clarity and precision of numbers* (and prefer precise-clear communications), and an affinity for activities requiring quantitative or mathematical abilities, i.e., the use of numbers. Methods for expression may include statistical theory, bookkeeping, systems approaches, any measurement technique, logic and forms of logic expression, and novel approaches to measurement. Occupations might include cashiers, accountants, mathematicians, numerical modeling, budget analysts, administrative office workers, and any jobs working with computers.

Outdoor

An affinity for activities that are conducted in the outdoors or *natural environment*. Usually their *mood and energy levels are influenced by being outdoors*. Methods for expression may include sailing, forestry, skiing, camping, driving or touring, swimming, hunting, building things outdoors, and observing and interacting with nature. Occupations might include carpenter, farmer, veterinarian, sports, forest ranger, and field engineer.

Persuasive

Communicating verbally to *influence or sway someone* to a point of view, or to buy-try a product, service, or idea. Methods of expression may include selling, teaching, debate, and psychological counseling. Occupations include sales, public relations, politics, mediation and psychology.

Scientific

An interest in *why* things are the way they are, usually combined with curiosity and an interest in discovering what's going on behind the scenes. Methods of expression may include chemistry, physics, medicine, biology, anthropology, astronomy, botany, zoology, and geographic enterprises. Occupations might include diagnostician, all types of scientists, lab worker, weather forecaster, dentist, and occupations in medical and technical areas.

Social Service

Concern for the welfare of other people and an interest in helping them succeed. High interest usually wants to directly assist others in obtaining their goals of growth,

development or physical capability. Methods of expression may include social work, religious activities, civic groups, youth services, non-profit management and volunteer work. Occupations include teacher, coach, community service, social work, therapist, and minister.

MOTIVATING INTEREST THEMES

When you think about your interests, you may gain insight not only into the content of the work you would like to do, but also into your personal work style and preferred work settings. In each of the theme descriptions below, I describe some common characteristics that people who are motivated by these key themes share. The seven themes are people, things, creativity, research, numbers/data, nature, and sports/activity. These themes put motivating interests into context. I describe some of the attractive qualities of each theme and some common challenges people with that theme may have to overcome.

Theme: People

Working with other people often means you are attracted to work where you can have frequent interactions (preferably face-to-face), and where you share similar values to your colleagues. You probably want time to develop yourself, and you appreciate organizations that support professional development of employees. You will grow by learning to manage conflict effectively and understanding that sometimes businesses make tough decisions to keep the business profitable, not to just keep the people happy. And you should learn to balance professional requirements with your personal needs.

A note on working with people. Most of us work with other people, even when working with people is not a core theme. It is therefore helpful to think about and decide what kind of relationship you want when working with others. Here are some different ways you may want to work with people.

Leadership: Perhaps you want to influence others to take actions you believe will be best for achieving a shared goal. Perhaps you enjoy telling people what to do. You are willing to push and direct people in directions that you believe are right and efficient. This kind of relationship is one of *power-over* others.

Autonomy: You may prefer to use your own initiative in your work, without significant guidance or direction from any other person. You may be a self-starter who dislikes (even occasionally resents) any interference when you are doing your work. You may be somewhat anti-authoritarian and resist any one trying to control you, your actions, or your output. You might think of this as being *individually empowered*.

Collaboration: You may prefer to work with others on an equal playing field. You really enjoy the interaction and camaraderie that comes with teamwork. This is a *power-with* relationship.

Service: You may want to help others achieve their goals and objectives, make them feel better, or take care of them in some way. This can be thought of as *empowering others*.

It is possible to combine these too. For instance you might have a combination of Service–Leadership, such as a minister; Collaboration–Leadership, such as a team leader; or Autonomy–Collaboration, such as being a key member of a product design team.

Theme: Things

If you really enjoy working with things, you may also appreciate manual dexterity and well-crafted products and tools. Perhaps you value precision—in thought and action. Do you like tangible, visible output? Working well with things often requires concentration, patience, pragmatism, and physical coordination—and as a person who enjoys working with things, you are likely to value similar qualities in your coworkers, leaders, and organizations. You like to be able to speak directly, to get to the point, to limit the small talk and unnecessary chit-chat at work, to focus on the task (not on relationships), to learn from past experience so you don't repeat mistakes in the present, to work alone, and to follow precise and predictable procedures to achieve high-quality output consistently. You may avoid presentations and social situations, brainstorming, and social niceties—these skills thus being opportunities for your personal and professional development.

Theme: Creativity

If you noticed a strong inclination to communicate through the arts—visual, verbal, craft, musical, performing—you may also find that you value individual expression, autonomy, and contributing to your work-world in your own unique way. Often people with a strong interest in the creative and expressive arts do not aim to be artists per se, but rather create their own unique lives without undue regard for the opinions of life's ever-present critics. You probably have a strong anti-authoritarian streak—not necessarily wanting to control other people but not wanting to be controlled by others either. Personal control over your life is very important to you. And you are willing to delegate routine, administrative, and repetitive tasks to others who seem to enjoy them more. Sometimes that's the budget—and not paying attention to those details can cost you—literally and politically. You are willing to come up with ingenious, original solutions to problems and may sometimes get bored doing the same old thing, over and over. Getting used to those aspects of work-life that are routine or require adherence to specific standards can help you become more effective at work in the long run. Learning to prioritize, manage your time, plan, and pay attention to the value of your contributions can move you forward in your career.

Theme: Research

Perhaps you are very interested in research, investigation, and analysis of information in order to discover the secrets of the universe, or life, or a product. You value knowledge—learning, sharing, using information that helps you develop ideas, drawing logical conclusions, using resources more wisely, being seen as an expert, or coming up with new theories. You enjoy the respect of your intellectual peers, explaining complex ideas, and making an intellectual contribution. Freedom means having time to explore your intellectual pursuits without being bothered by matters you consider trivial (matters

unrelated to the ideas you are investigating at that time). The social niceties may not appeal much to you, nor political activities at work, nor talking to people who don't seem quite as intelligent as you are. Organizations are made up of all kinds of people; being able to simplify complex ideas to make them accessible and useful in your company, to understand the dynamics of politics and power at work, and to involve others in projects of value to you and your organization will be skills that serve you well as you grow in your career.

Theme: Numbers/Data

You may really have a knack for, and enjoyment of, working with numbers and data; loving the elegance, clarity, precision, order, reliability, and beauty of numbers (especially when compared to the messier interactions and ambiguity you encounter when dealing with people). The qualities you enjoy about numbers are probably metaphorically descriptive of the qualities you appreciate in your organization and its leaders. You may speak in a clear, quiet, precise, sequential manner in order to be accurate, efficient, and precise. Numbers and data coordinate, and you enjoy coordinating your efforts with other team members, using a structured approach in the service of clear goals. You probably prefer a more predictable, planned approach to change—if change is necessary at all. If you had your druthers, you'd work in an information-oriented, task-focused organization. Your attention to detail is legendary, yet sometimes you could pay more attention to the big picture, be open to exploration of new and different ways of doing things, get more comfortable with ambiguity and relational messiness, and recognize that other styles can also make an important contribution to overall organizational effectiveness. As you learn to develop those skills and appreciate stylistic diversity, you may find that your career success is greater.

Theme: Nature

If you love nature, you probably also believe that nature teaches many lessons, and not just about survival. You probably have a bias toward action—quick actions when necessary, slow action when it's better to slow down and smell the roses. Nature teaches us about its cycles—nurture, growth, harvest, death, regrowth—whether plants or animals. You are likely to be willing and able to understand the cycles and seasons of change, both metaphorically and literally. If your outdoors interests run toward growing things, then you are likely willing to plant and watch—an ability to give things time to come to fruition. You also know that the roots create the fruits and have a sense of how we reap what we sow. If you love being with and nurturing animals, you have a sense of the instinctive, pragmatic, and impersonal ways of the world. You know that sometimes it's not about you—and thoughts and feelings are nice, but things still have to be done, in season, on time. Your style is likely to be down-to-earth, with a preference for communicating more through your actions than your ideas.

Theme: Sports/Activity

If you have a strong interest in doing or watching sports, you may find that you also enjoy physicality and action in general, a clear beginning and end to tasks, goal-directed behavior, and focused, energetic activity. It's also likely that you like teamwork, a good challenge, negotiating, and the strong sense of accomplishment that comes from a job well done. With

a preference for the now, the present, you might find it helpful in your career to do more long-term planning and strategic thinking accompanied by developing an appreciation for subtler forms of communication.

Additional Interest Resources

The Birkman Interests and interest themes mentioned here may only scratch the surface of your interests and *why* you enjoy those activities. Here are a few additional resources I recommend for deepening your exploration into motivating interests.

The Birkman Method Career Exploration Report combines your motivating interests with your usual behaviors and needs. You then receive an e-report with job families and job titles organized from what's most likely to appeal to you given your personality and interests, to what's least likely to appeal. To the right of each Job Family you have a number of bulleted specific jobs that are active links to an online page with information about the Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Personality, Technology, Education, and Job Outlook for that specific job. This is obviously useful if you're searching for the right career fit for you. It is also helpful if you're in a large organization and looking to grow-develop into other areas of that company. As an entrepreneur you could use it to give you some insight into who might be your target market or ideal client.

The Strong Interest Inventory will provide you with suggested careers, courses, and activities you might do associated with your interests.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)-based book *Do What You Are* correlates your personality-based interests with hundreds of possible careers, and gives you strategies consistent with your personality for finding a satisfactory career. It is based on the observation that interests are often correlated with our personality profiles.

Both the Strong Interest Inventory and the MBTI are Consulting Psychologies Press (CPP) products and require a qualified administrator to provide you with access to them. You can find out even more about these tools by visiting the CPP site.

Although these resources can be helpful guides, many people need a special career niche, not found in these resources, to tap their unique combination of values, needs, personality, interests, talents, and skills. There are so many new career options, with the list changing rapidly, that you may not find your perfect career listed in any book or computer report. Don't give up. This may mean you need a career designed just for you.

Interests Matter for Career Satisfaction

Do not underestimate the importance of identifying your career-related interests for having a successful career. Interests really matter. They signal the content of the work that will be most intrinsically energizing for you. By choosing work consistent with your interests, you are more likely to build a foundation of competence, credibility, and confidence early in your career. Doing work that is grounded in your core interests will sustain your efforts during those times when you are challenged or disappointed by other aspects of your work. I strongly urge everyone to choose work that they love—to play for

pay. Your love of your work will make it so much easier to handle slow(er) promotions, biased performance reviews, or other work-related obstacles at various points in your career. Doing work you love and do well also means that you start on the right foot and build credibility and capital with your organization. And when it's all said and done, if you've loved the work all along, you will be able to say, I've had a life-affirming career. This choice is yours.

INTERESTS ACTIVITY (BIRKMAN VERSION)

- Look at your Birkman Interest scores over 80. List that Interest in the left column on the worksheet. Put the associated score in the next column.
- In the third column add specifics and any skills you think *you need to have* to go with that interest. You don't have to be super-skilled to enjoy that interest, but many interests do require some skills. I've filled in an example for you with Outdoors. One specific might be farming, and then you would add skills that go with farming such as planning crop rotations and crop pricing.
- Next to the skill, in the far right column list your current skill level for that activity - with a range where 10 is expert and 1 is novice. So your planning crop rotation skills skill level might be 9, but your pricing skills might be a 3.
- Sometimes you might use the same word for an interest and a skill—and that is OK. You might also repeat an interest because you have several variations that interest you.
- If you do not have 3 top interests from the Birkman, consider the interests in the themes section of the motivating interests module. Add those interest themes, specifics, associated skills, and skill level to this chart to come up to 3 top interests.

TOP INTERESTS	Score	Specifics and Associated Skills	Skill level
<i>Outdoor</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>Specific: Farming</i> <i>Skill: Crop rotation</i> <i>Skill: Crop pricing</i>	<i>9</i> <i>3</i>
1		Specific: Skill: Skill:	
2		Specific: Skill: Skill:	
3		Specific: Skill: Skill:	

CAREER BY DESIGN: SKILLS MODULE

Skills are . . .

- Activities you do well.
- Competencies you have acquired.¹
- Talents you have developed.

Usually you will develop a skill when you have been rewarded in some way for doing that activity. You might be rewarded in lots of different ways—by money, awards, promotions, approval, your own internal sense of accomplishment, positive feedback, and status. As a result you will keep doing what you are getting kudos for doing well, and become even better at doing those activities.

However, skills are not the primary indicator of career satisfaction, although you may feel really good about doing things well. According to research, skills are not as good a predictor of career effectiveness as are motivating interests.

But when you put motivating interests and skills together, your work-life is really good.

Career satisfaction and success come from doing what you love and doing what you do well. In order to have a career by design, you will therefore need to know what you do well—your skills.

This module includes a number of tools to help you identify your skills. First is a SKILLS WORKSHEET. Use the Skills List and Relational Skills List to complete that.

I provided a list of Relational Skills for those of you who work with people to get things done. All too often people adept at using these skills cannot name the skills, undervalue the skills, or find these relational skills are undervalued because their importance and impact in organizations are invisible.

Accurate assessment of skill-ability requires feedback. The [Korn Ferry VOICES 360-Leadership Architect Feedback](#) program is my tool of choice for getting that feedback. Contact me if you're interested in doing that.

If you are exploring career options, you may find the Career Exploration Report from Birkman, and [SkillScan](#) help with that. See the Motivating Interest module for more information about the Career Exploration Report. I provide some information about [SkillScan](#) with its thematic organization that correlates skills to possible occupations at the end of this module.

Skill assessment can be somewhat tricky because you want to do three things:

1. Get an accurate assessment of what skills you have
2. Know how skilled you are with the skills you have, and
3. Know what skills are most useful for the career you have, or wish to have.

The Skills Worksheet on the next page will allow you to self-identify skills you believe you have. In the Best Work Skills Worksheet I guide you through some questions that will help you gain a more objective assessment of whether you have used those skills productively. This is a good start for your skills assessment purpose #1.

For a more accurate assessment of your actual skill level (purpose #2), you will need additional information. To get that information I suggest you:

- ✓ Review your performance reviews.
- ✓ Ask for feedback from your colleagues.
- ✓ Do a 360 feedback assessment, such as the Korn Ferry Leadership 360 Feedback report.

A coach can help you examine your reviews. You can always ask colleagues for feedback. That will help you with the second part of your skills assessment.

For the third part, determining what skills you have or need for a particular job or career—I suggest the Birkman Career Exploration Report, informational interviews with people doing the job you are interested in doing, and/or SkillScan. In this workbook, I do not go into much detail for linking skills to specific jobs or careers, but I do describe SkillScan more near the end of this module.

Note: The skills lists are deliberately broad and inclusive. Some terms may be competencies (a combination of attitude-skill-talent), some talents, some strengths. My intent is to have you choose the terms that resonate most to you for describing you. Whatever words you use, be sure to *FOCUS! Use no more than five skills for each section.*

SKILLS WORKSHEET 1

A. List 3-5 skills where you have very high interest in this activity (you love doing it) AND you are highly skilled AND it is important to you for your career aspirations.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

B. List 3-5 skills where you have very high interest in this activity BUT you skills need some improvement (and it may not be important to your career at this time).

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

C. List 3-5 skills where you have very high skill in this activity BUT you do not love doing it. You do it for various reasons and have become good at doing it or even have a natural talent, but you don't LOVE doing it.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

D. List 3-5 skills that need improvement; you don't really love doing these but they are important for your work and somebody's got to do it.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Skills List

Accounting	Conceptualizing	Fairness
Achiever	Conflict resolution	Farming
Action orientation	Confronting direct reports	Filing
Activator	Connectedness	Finding opportunities
Adaptability	Consistency	Focus
Advising	Constructing	Following through, up
Advocacy	Consulting	Forecasting
Analytical	Convincing	Foreign language
Analyzing	Cooking	Functional-technical skills
Approachability	Coordinating	Fund-raising
Arranger	Counseling	Futuristic
Artistic	Creating images	Gardening
Assembly	Creativity	Gifting time and attention
Attention to detail	Crediting others	Goal setting
Being active outdoors	Critiquing	Growing plants
Belief	Cultural competence	Hand dexterity
Body coordination	Customer focus	Harmony
Bookkeeping	Customer service	Hiring & Staffing
Boss relationships	Dealing with ambiguity	Hiring good people
Brainstorming	Dealing with paradox	Humor
Bringing people together	Debating	Idea generation
Budgeting	Decision quality	Ideation
Building	Decorating	Identifying problems
Building effective teams	Delegating	Imagining, visioning
Building things	Deliberative	Implementing
Business acumen	Demonstrating foresight	Improving
Campaign management	Designing	Including
Career ambition	Determining importance	Individualization
Caring about direct reports	Developer	Influencing others
Caring for others	Developing direct reports	Information management
Categorizing	Developing people	Informing
Change management	Diagnosing	Innovating
Clarifying issues	Directing	Innovation management
Classifying data, information	Directing others	Input
Clear, engaging direction	Discipline	Inspecting
Coaching	Doing skilled work with hands	Installing equipment
Coalition building	Drafting	Instructing
Collaborating	Drawing	Integrating different ideas
Comfort-higher management	Drive for results	Integrity & trust
Command skills	Editing	Intellection
Communicating graphically	Educating	Intellectual horsepower
Communicating in writing	Empathy	Interpersonal savvy
Communicating verbally	Encouraging	Interviewing
Communicating visually	Entertaining people	Inventing
Communication	Envisioning	Investigating
Compassion	Estimating	Involving
Competition	Ethics and values	Keeping your word
Composing	Evaluating	Leading
Composure	Examining things, ideas	Learner
Computer graphics, animation	Expressing confidence	Learning on the fly
Computing	Expressing ideas	Listening
Conceiving	Facilitating groups	Making a profit

Making decisions
 Making judgment calls
 Managerial courage
 Managing
 Managing & measuring work
 Managing conflict
 Managing diversity
 Managing negative emotions
 Managing operations
 Managing people
 Managing projects
 Managing records
 Managing resources
 Managing stress
 Managing through systems
 Managing vision & purpose
 Mathematics
 Maximizer
 Meaning making
 Mentoring
 Monitoring
 Motivating others
 Music
 Negotiating
 Observing
 Officiating, serving as referee
 Operating equipment
 Organizational agility
 Organizing
 Organizing people, ideas, info
 Outdoor-nature skills
 Overseeing
 Painting, drawing, cartooning
 Participating in sports
 Patience
 Peer relationships
 Performance evaluations
 Performing
 Perseverance
 Personal disclosure
 Personal learning

Perspective
 Persuasion
 Planning
 Planning events-parties
 Playing a musical instrument
 Policy-making
 Political savvy
 Positivity
 Presentation skills
 Prioritizing shared interests
 Priority setting
 Problem solving
 Problem-solving-people
 Process management
 Producing
 Promoting
 Protecting
 Public speaking
 Raising-tending animals
 Reading
 Receiving feedback
 Expressing optimism
 Reconciling
 Recording
 Relator
 Repairing
 Researching
 Resolving conflict
 Respecting others
 Restoring
 Renovating
 Risk taking
 Scheduling
 Self-assurance
 Self-development
 Self-knowledge
 Selling
 Service
 Serving people
 Setting goals
 Setting priorities

Significance
 Sizing up people
 Sketching
 Standing alone
 Statistical interpretation
 Statistical modeling
 Storytelling, joke telling
 Strategic
 Strategic agility
 Strategic planning
 Studying things, people, animals, ideas, objects
 Synthesizing
 Taking a stand
 Talking
 Teaching
 Team building
 Technical learning
 Testing
 Time management
 Timely decision-making
 TQM/ISO
 Training
 Transcribing
 Treating people as individuals
 Trusting
 Understanding
 Understanding others
 Updating
 Using intuition
 Using numbers
 Using words
 Using your expertise
 Visual-motor
 Visualizing
 WOO-Win others over
 Work-life balance
 Working with animals
 Working with environment
 Writing
 Written communications

Relational Skills

If you are like many of the people I work with, you have and need relational skills but may not know how to articulate them. There is a tendency in business for relational skills to be overlooked, discounted, or lumped into a single category generically referred to as "good with people." So I developed a list of relational skills just for people in that situation. The relational skills listed here are behaviors that will help you describe more specifically what you do when you work with others to accomplish your tasks. Relational skills are skills used to obtain results through working productively with people.

Adapting—Adjusting to changing tasks, responsibilities, and environments

Advising—Suggesting or providing professional, technical recommendations

Caring—Concern for the well-being of direct reports, coworkers, clients, colleagues

Celebrating successes and achievements—Making plans to bring people together to acknowledge achievement milestones

Championing people, ideas—Taking actions that move exciting new possibilities (people, products, ideas, services) forward

Coaching—Setting mutual expectations and providing feedback and assistance to enhance individual or group performance

Collaborative conflict management—Communicating information in a manner that gains acceptance; maximizing concerns for both self and others; working cooperatively with other team members

Communicating expectations—Letting people know what is important to you in achieving the task, what they must do, and what will be the consequences or results of their behavior

Considering people's needs—Paying attention to the needs, abilities, and aspirations of others

Counseling—Understanding feelings, listening impartially, and identifying issues so that people can do what they need to do to cope and be effective

Crediting others—Giving people credit for ideas (and using their names)

Cultural competency—Demonstrating cultural awareness and sensitivity; being aware of how personal and cultural values/beliefs impact

interactions with others, and recognizing when others are interpreting behavior differently, based on differing cultural backgrounds

Customer/client care—Providing hospitality and service to internal and external customers that meets or exceeds their expectations

Developing others—Helping others to enhance their skills, knowledge, and abilities

Empowering others—Giving people appropriate decision-making authority, enhancing their skills and competencies, and trusting them

Encouraging—Helping others think and do for themselves

Energizing—Sustaining a high level of activity, energy, concentration about an idea, project, or task over time

Envisioning—Formulating and communicating a compelling vision and direction for a group or organization

Expressing confidence—Displaying and sharing beliefs that you (all) can do what needs to be done to succeed

Expressing optimism—Assisting people to see setbacks as challenges they can learn from, encouraging them to persist, try out new approaches rather than give up, blame self/others, or get demoralized

Feedback (giving)—Providing specific, timely, behavior-based information to a person about their work

Feedback (receiving)—Asking for, listening to (without defensiveness), and using information to modify/correct actions that would cause you to go off track; graciously using that information as a guide for changing behaviors and creating respectful relationships.

Gifting time and attention—Spending time teaching, coaching, listening, developing, helping others

Giving clear, engaging direction—Letting team members know what they have to do, discussing why it connects to the mission, and sharing the boundaries/limits

Goal setting—Setting SANE goals: Specific, Actionable, Noticeable results, and Enjoyable; giving people moderate challenges that allow them to accumulate successes, become more confident, enjoy the process and each other, and do their best

Including—Asking for, and using, others' ideas, talents, skills, information on projects; asking inclusive questions

Involving—Asking questions and sharing information in a way that influences the opinions and actions of others; including all stakeholders in decisions, plans, and problem solving

Keeping your word—Doing what you say you will do; delivering what you promised as a reward

Learning—Re-examining key assumptions, questioning when/whether they are appropriate or working, and fixing errors when discovered

Leveraging different perspectives —Openly asking for, listening to, and using different viewpoints; looking at issues, problems, and ideas through various view points

Listening—Giving others your undivided, caring attention (without judgment or agenda) when they are talking to you

Managing negative emotions—Using emotionally difficult situations as a chance to understand what you are feeling, why you are upset, and how you can handle it

Meaning making—Sharing insights and ideas that enhance understanding through written, verbal, visual, musical, storytelling, digital, or other media

Motivating—Letting people know when they have met or exceeded expectations; reinforcing desired behavior through positive feedback

Prioritizing shared interests—Being willing and able to go beyond self-interest for the good of the team

Respecting others—Demonstrating respect for others, and encouraging people's respect for each other

Selling—Giving information in a way that influences the external customer's buying decision or the internal customer's choice to use a product or service

Taking a stand—Sharing your views on controversial issues with conviction, grounded in both personal and organizational values, mission, and purpose

Teaching—Explaining/describing concepts or issues through presentations or discussion

Team building—Bringing together groups of people who are interdependent for a task and then providing clear, engaging direction, inclusive leadership, appropriate influence at the right time, modeling collaboration and team recognition—rewards—celebration so that team members achieve results, learn, and enjoy working together

Treating people as individuals—Paying attention to others as people, rather than as numbers, groups, or "headcount" (as if they are only heads and not whole people)

Trusting—Understanding the importance of being able to rely on each other, telling the truth, allowing people to do delegated tasks without micromanaging, keeping confidences, and being consistent in word, thought, and deed

Using names—Learning, pronouncing correctly, and using people's names (especially effective in conjunction with credit for ideas, positive feedback, and contributions)

Visioning—Exploring exciting possibilities and articulating a compelling view of the future

Win-win negotiating and integrative problem solving, jointly solving problems by blending divergent views so that all parties get what is most important to them

Invisible Work

In my research with a team of people looking at gender equity issues in organizations, we noticed a tendency for some female leaders to do a great deal of mostly invisible, behind-the-scenes work in order to short-circuit problems, while maintaining a veneer of serenity and graciousness. Ironically, since these women manage to avoid catastrophes, they rarely received recognition or reward for having solved problems . . . since those problems never occurred in the first place! The invisible work was also often invisible to *them*, their coworkers, their peers, as well as their bosses. Their challenge was to get everyone to acknowledge and appreciate the work that goes into making their effective management and leadership look effortless.

As [Joyce Fletcher](#), who was part of that research team writes in her books and articlesⁱⁱ on [invisible work and relational practice](#), the skills that it takes to make teams work, people collaborate, and have shared learning–problem solving in organizations are often devalued or made invisible for several reasons.

First, the skill set is usually not seen as a SKILL set, but rather as individual traits or characteristics. If we think a person is born with the ability to work well with others, we (and they) often take that ability for granted. As a result, that person’s efforts in developing his or her competence may not be evident, nor will other people think that they too can develop those competencies.

Second, relationship skills are often undervalued in many cases because it is hard to quantify their contribution to results. In many organizations we don’t value what we cannot count. So relationship skills literally don’t count.

Third, despite our rhetoric that we value collaboration, teamwork, and systemic thinking, we actually reward individual achievement, heroic efforts, autonomy, and specialization. And it is folly to hope for *A* (collaboration, teamwork, and systemic thinking), while rewarding *B* (individual achievement, autonomy, and specialization).

Fourth, we often misunderstand people involved in relational practice—thinking they are just being “nice” rather than competent and committed to outcomes. Or we think that they are hiding behind others when they talk about “we” because they’re afraid to take credit for personal achievements, and that they are weaker than the big, bold, strong leaders who stand out front.

I talk about invisible work and women because there is significant and robust research that attests to women being in this situation far too frequently. This does not mean that it never happens that men doing relational work find themselves in situations where their contribution to making shared goals happen is undervalued. Whether you are female or male doing devalued invisible work that influences people to work respectfully toward a shared goal, Fletcher’s research can provide a way to understand the dynamics of that devaluation.

In my book [Dance of Leadership](#), I call this the Lyrical leadership style. When relational skills are developed and used intentionally to achieve results toward a shared goal, it is an

empowering leadership style. Lyrical leadership, through the intentional use of relational skills to achieve shared goals, is particularly effective in situations that require collaboration, creativity, and commitment. It is an *involving* style. We find that people who have to get work done with others, or who exercise influence without control, must use their relational skills. Moreover, research supports the idea that committed performance is better than coerced performance. And relational skills involve people, so that you get committed performance. Some researchers are starting to find that leaders don't have enough power to lead effectively if they have to resort to using position power or coercion. In the long run, when working with people (as opposed to managing time, processes, or things) influencing through the use of relational skills is more effective.

I admit to wanting to give special attention to relational skills and invisible work in order to help more people see how important their contribution is and to encourage us all to acknowledge these contributions. If you recognize yourself as someone in this situation and you would like to be acknowledged for your work, I suggest that you . . .

- Refer to your relational skills as *skills*, not as traits.
- Claim your accomplishments using these skills (by putting them on your performance appraisals, for instance).
- Measure your contributions as a result of using these skills; when you make them count, others are more likely to value these skills.

Intentional use of relational skills is very important in our organizations. Yet, relational work is often invisible, unless you identify these skills and keep track of your accomplishments by using these skills. If you don't, nobody else will. Name and Claim! Name your skills and claim your contributions from using them. The more you lead and manage people, the more important these skills become.

SKILLS WORKSHEET 2: BEST WORK SKILLS WORKSHEET DETAILS

I call the skills you listed in section A (Do well and Love) your best work skills. For those skills, please provide some additional information in the worksheet below.

SKILLS	SITUATION (specifics)	DATA-EVIDENCE	
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

SkillScan

[SkillScan](#) is an online assessment that will organize your skills into themes, link those skills to valued workplace competencies, suggest career options, and provide some practical application ideas as well as personal development and training activities. As is the case with all of the assessments I mention in *Career by Design*, you can choose to invest in the more detailed report, or you can see if you have enough guidance using the information I am providing here. I will tell you that SkillScan is widely used by a number of University Career Services for people who are trying to discover which occupations best use the skills they have, whether they are entering the workforce for the first time, after some formal education program, or whether they are re-entering the workforce having taken some time off, or considering a significant change in their career to align more with their personality, values, interests, and skills. This can be a particularly helpful assessment for reinventing yourself by using your existing skills in a new career. It is a tool I recommend highly.

[SkillScan](#) organizes skills into six categories, skill sets, and sample career options: Analytical, Communication, Creative, Management–Leadership, Physical–Technical, and Relationship. I added a seventh skill theme, Nature–Outdoors, to the list.

These skills words often end with "-ing" as a way to denote their action orientation. As you read the skills below, highlight skills you use, want to use, or need to use. You may not have, or need, every skill listed in a skills theme. However, using more precise skill words on your resume, in your performance reviews, and in your conversations about what you do demonstrates that you have given thought to your career aspirations.

At the end of each paragraph I mention which Motivating Interest theme from the previous module correlates with that set of skills. Remember! In the Motivating Interests module I describe not only the theme, but some common personality characteristics, strengths, and challenges (weaknesses, blind spots) associated with that motivating interest. Review those if you need to too.

Finally at the end of this Module I provide some examples of occupations that combine skill sets.

Analytical: *Logical processing of information and data to produce usable results.* Skills include analysis, investigating, observing, searching, comparing, calculating, programming, inventorying, bookkeeping, analyzing costs, itemizing, copying, transcribing, updating, systematizing, examining, scheduling, expediting, coordinating, following through, prioritizing, reflecting, testing, assessing, diagnosing, reasoning, conceptualizing, adapting, hypothesizing, discovering, improving, devising, problem solving, mathematics, statistics, categorizing, classifying, evaluating, managing data and records, budgeting, computing, estimating, and forecasting. These skills are used in business, finance, information systems, government, medicine, computer systems, law, marketing, research, technology, mathematics, statistical analysis, and the sciences, for example. *These skills line up with the Research, Numbers, and Data themes described in the Motivating Interests module.*

Communication: *Fundamental verbal and written communication skills for interaction with individuals and groups.* Skills include listening, speaking, interacting, writing, persuading,

promoting, selling, consulting, editing, translating, interpreting, storytelling, critiquing, meaning-making, interviewing and negotiating. These skills are used in advertising, coaching, fundraising, journalism, HR, marketing, sales, public relations, politics, and publishing, for example. *Many of these skills line up with the Creativity theme in the Motivating Interests module.*

Creative: *Process, generate, and connect ideas and information into something new.* Skills include brainstorming, demonstrating foresight, using intuition, conceptualizing, designing, synthesizing, integrating, visualizing, composing, authoring, creating images, photographing, video-graphing, decorating, displaying, exhibiting, painting, cooking, crafts, acting, dancing, directing, staging shows, singing, playing music, poetry, and performing. These skills are used in all the creative arts as well as advertising, marketing, education, publishing, entertainment, information systems, science and technology. *These skills line up directly with the Creativity theme in the Motivating Interests module.*

Management-Leadership: *The use of organizational, managerial, and leadership skills to accomplish organizational goals.* Skills include coordinating, implementing, managing projects, organizing, planning, team building, coaching, goal-setting, envisioning, leading, and making decisions. These skills are used in business and general management, education, event planning, management consulting, non-profit management, HR, information systems, legal administration, publishing and tourism, for example. *These skills line up with the People-Leadership theme in the Motivating Interests module.*

Physical-Technical: *Interaction of the body with physical objects, including machines and technological systems.* Skills include body coordination, hand dexterity, observation, building, constructing, restoring, renovating, sketching, drawing, inspecting, testing, installing, operating equipment, repairing and athleticism—aquatics, acrobatics, juggling, rodeo, stunt performance, and cheerleading. These skills are used when working with computers, and in construction, earth sciences, engineering, health & medical technology, manufacturing & production, occupational health & safety, skilled trades, sports, and security services, for example. *These skills line up with the Things, and Sports-Activity themes in the Motivating Interests module.*

Relationship: *Interpersonal skills that directly aid individuals or groups in dealing with each other.* Skills include all the skills mentioned in the Relational Skills list in this module. The skills listed for relationship in SkillScan are collaborating, cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution, advocacy, providing care and support, serving as a liaison, customer/client care, counseling, group facilitation, and training. Other relationship skills are nursing, ministering, elder care, child care, informing, mentoring, tutoring, and explaining. These skills are used by mediators, community organizers, diversity trainers, travel and tourism agents, sales, business development, public relations, career and executive coaching, counseling, teaching and social work, for example. *These skills line up with People-Collaboration-Service theme in the Motivating Interests module.*

Another skill theme that is not included in SkillScan, but might be a theme that resonates with you is:

Nature-Outdoors: *Involvement with the earth, animal or plant life.* Skills include tending natural or cultivated plants, gardening, farming, caring for wild or domesticated animals, working with the land and its resources, and doing tasks and activities in nature. These skills are used in adventure tourism, fire protection, fishing, hunting, forestry, landscape services, agriculture, animal care, environmental protection and remediation, parks and outdoor recreating, natural resource management, oil exploration, yard and garden work, ranching, veterinary medicine, zoo keeping, botany, and recycling coordination, for example. *These skills line up with the Nature theme in the Motivating Interests module.*

Skill Set Combinations and Occupations

It is common for sets of skills to combine in certain occupations. For instance, you could combine **Analytical** and **Physical-Technical** skills to be an air-traffic controller, cartographer, computer service technician, electronics technician, aerospace engineer, chiropractor, criminologist, dentist, industrial engineer, optometrist, or facilities planner.

Combining **Creative** with **Physical-Technical** skills is helpful for architecture, audio-visual production, chef, fashion design, jeweler, medical illustrator, set design, sound engineering, special effects, or sculpting careers.

Add **Relationship** to **Physical-Technical** when you when you are considering catering, cosmetology, emergency medical technician, flight instruction, vocational education jobs.

And add **Leadership** to **Physical-Technical** skills for commercial airplane pilot, contractor, military officer, mining safety engineer, police commanding officer, plant management, fire marshal, ship pilot, small business owner, technical director, or security consultant work.

Nature-Outdoors and **Physical-Technical** skills are needed for activities such as hiking, cycling, climbing, camping, skiing, boating, surveying, and mining.

Analytical and **Creative** skills are helpful for art appraisal, cartography, editors, media specialists, television production specialists.

Analytical and **Relationship** skills are useful for accountants, administrative assistants, business educator, claim representatives, credit counselors, event planners, financial planners, project coordinators, and reservations agents.

Please do not worry if you do not see your theme combination or your present or desired occupation above. There are an infinite number of combinations and permutations for skills. The ones listed above are merely a sample. In the end you want to design the career that's just right for your unique combination of skills and interests.

Some skills you will use for work; some skills you will use as hobbies. Not all skills are used throughout your career. We use different skills at different points in our lives. That is another reason why it is more important to know yourself (personality and values) and your motivating interests. Skills will be developed and dropped, used and not, at various parts of your life.

Skill development thoughts

Use this checklist to stimulate your thinking about how to develop skills strategically.

On the Job

- ☐ Seek special assignments or membership on a task force or committee
- ☐ Teach a workshop, lunch and learn
- ☐ Train or coach less experienced coworkers
- ☐ Join a brainstorming or problem-solving group
- ☐ Take on an internship
- ☐ Initiate a job rotation or temporary assignment
- ☐ Look for opportunities to make a presentation
- ☐ Make presentation/teaching videos and post to YouTube or Internet
- ☐ Volunteer

Education & Training

- ☐ Attend workshops or seminars
- ☐ Take online courses
- ☐ Take courses at educational institution
- ☐ Participate in professional forums or conferences
- ☐ Take self-study courses

Flexible work systems

- ☐ Job-share, work part-time, or telecommute
- ☐ Work on simplifying work processes to make more time for learning
- ☐ Trade less preferred non-work or work tasks with others

No matter what your skills, choose to do what you **love** to do, not what you think you **should** do.

At this point in the *Career by Design* assessment process you may know what skills you have, what skills you need, what skills you enjoy using, and what skills match your motivating interests while being consistent with your values and personality. If that's the case for you, fantastic! If that is not the case for you, you may need to take another step or two to hone in on the right career for you.

You've now done the work to organize your thoughts about who you are and what you want when it comes to work. And that takes us to the career matrix for your career by design. Be sure to have all of your skills worksheets completed before you start working with the Career by Design Matrix.

¹ The 360 feedback tool I use, [Korn Ferry VOICES 360 / Leadership Architect](#), uses the term competency rather than skill. LA-measured competencies are a blend of skill, attitude, aptitude, and interests.

ⁱⁱ "Invisible Work: The Disappearing of Relational Practice at Work", Simmons College (free pdf download)

CAREER BY DESIGN: MATRIX MODULE

The *Career by Design* Matrix combines your motivating interests and skills to help you:

- Identify your Best Work Skills
- Design your job so that it fits your interests and skills
- Negotiate work priorities and better job positions
- Decide where to invest time, money, and energy to develop your skills
- Avoid doing work that sucks the life out of you

This matrix is the heart of the *Career by Design* approach. It organizes your skills so that you can have a career by design, rather than a career by default). The key point to remember in doing your *Career by Design* Matrix is to be clear about those skills you really **love** to use, versus those skills you learned to use but do not truly enjoy. And you can certainly love to do something but you may not feel as competent doing it as you would wish. We want to be sure to include skills associated with those activities as well. The things you love to do, no matter what your skill level, often provide clues to other talents that might become important work skills during your career.

The *Career by Design* Matrix has four quadrants. Use the information you provided on your Skills Worksheet from the Skills module to personalize the matrix. On that worksheet...

Section A = Best Work Skills is where you list high-interest, high-importance, and high-ability skills.

Section B = High-Potential Skills are of high interest and importance to you, but your skill level is lower than you would like. So you want to develop those.

Section C = Supporting Skills are of lower interest and importance to you, yet you are highly skilled in doing these.

Section D = Low-Level Skills are of lower interest and low importance to you and your skill level is low, but these skills are still required for significant parts of your work and must be done.

The matrix format allows you to focus on what is in the four quadrants so that you can use the information strategically.

Best Work Skills

Best Work Skills are things you do well and things you are intrinsically interested in doing. You want these skills to be at the core of your career and work life. Activities associated with these Best Work Skills should be the majority of the activities you do in your job and be how you spend the majority of your work time. This is the job content that provides the greatest likelihood that you will be effective—you will be productive (because you know how to do the work), and you will be satisfied (because the work is intrinsically interesting to you.)

Use your Best Work Skills to:

- Decide what job or projects to take.
- Get credit for what you enjoy and what you do well on your performance reviews.
- Measure your contributions and accomplishments.
- Seek entrepreneurial opportunities, if you are in business for yourself.
- Put on your resume if you are seeking a new employer.
- Search the Internet, using these skills and associated jobs as keywords.
- Volunteer—make a difference

Be sure to share the stories that demonstrate your accomplishments and contributions using these skills. Being able to talk about your deep, longstanding interest in these activities brings a twinkle to your eye that people will find positive.

High-Potential Skills

High-Potential Skills are skills associated with highly motivating interests but that need to be developed. You may not have developed them yet because you do not have an obvious talent for doing those skills, you have some (emotional?) block, or you need education/training, time, experience, or opportunities to develop those skills. The good news is that you have the interest, and motivating interest provides energy to fuel actions that lead to skill development.

Use High-Potential Skills:

- For personal growth and development
- To prepare for future, desired positions
- For professional growth and development—building “competency capital”
- As indicators pointing to other career-relevant skills
- When you are seeking a mentor—learn from someone who is good at doing these activities. You are growing and you are creating a meaningful developmental relationship based in shared interests at the same time.
- To stretch—these are moderate- to low-risk opportunities to grow and improve
- To negotiate for, and receive, company support for your development
- As skills you give interviewers and managers who ask “What weaknesses do you have that you need to improve?”

This last point is a really helpful shift in career management. In performance reviews and interviews people are always asking for our weaknesses. Many people, especially women, see that question as an invitation to go into the confessional and disclose all the things they do poorly and probably don't like doing in the first place. They talk about their Low-Level Skills, which I'll discuss later. When people ask you "What do you want to improve?" don't mention your Low-Level Skills. Mention these High-Potential Skills. You're more than halfway there to making these skills work for you once they are developed because you are already intrinsically interested in them. Remember, *motivating interest* is the big factor in successfully developing and using a skill. By definition, a skill can be learned. And if it's in a performance review situation, you can actually get your company to invest in your development by negotiating for company resources toward improving these skills. Both you and your organization win.

Sometimes your High-Potential Skills don't seem like work-related skills that might be useful for your organization. But with some creative, out-of-the-box thinking, they might point to a career-relevant High-Potential Skill. For example, singing is a motivating interest for me, yet I received feedback that my singing skills were not great. I can either develop my singing voice or pursue other ways to use my voice. When I think about *why* I like to sing, and the different skills I use in singing, such as my lyrical memory and ability to mimic sounds I hear, I then find insight into another skill—speaking foreign languages. Language skills can be career-relevant, and over the years I've developed my “ear” (a talent for languages, related to a talent for singing) into a skill (verbal fluency in a second language). It is not uncommon for your motivating interest-based skills to point to a talent that, when developed, could be a work-relevant skill. I actually speak several languages and use skills similar to those I am motivated to use with singing. I don't imagine I'll ever earn my living as a singer, but being able to remember things and speaking different languages are certainly career-related skills I value. My interest in singing pointed to a high-potential career-relevant skill.

Even with creative out-of-the-box thinking, you may still have a high-potential skill that is not directly relevant to your job or career. Many organizations have volunteer, community, or social activities where you might use your High-Potential Skills to work with others who share your interests. Doing volunteer activities based on shared interests is a great way to make and build relationships with peers or mentors. And if that doesn't work, then think of ways to develop and use that high-potential skill on your own. If the interest is that powerful, you are “called” to use it.

When it comes to developing High-Potential Skills, you must make time for them by making your professional development a priority. You make time and energy to develop High-Potential Skills by making sure most of your work content uses your Best Work Skills, AND by avoiding too much work using skills from your Supporting or Low-Level Skill lists I'm going to discuss soon.

Since you are not yet as skilled as you would like when using your High-Potential Skills, despite your high interest in these skills, you may lack some confidence and therefore stick

with doing what others want you to do (often using Supporting Skills) so that you avoid feeling incompetent. But if you never make time to develop these skills, and default to using Supporting Skills to garner others' admiration or approval, you are making someone else happy in the short run, while discounting your own career satisfaction in the longer term. *Career by Design* is a long-term, lifelong approach to your career.

Sometimes you never will become as skilled with your High-Potential Skills as you would like to be. Because using those skills means tapping into a highly motivating interest (my definition of High-Potential Skills), you will gain energy and joy from just *trying*. In the Birkman Method, High-Potential Skills may also be high interests. Doing activities aligned with your high interests is a significant way to decrease your stress. Moreover, making the time to develop High-Potential Skills usually brings both joy and skill improvement. I believe that if you are deeply interested in something, you either have a talent for that activity, or that activity points to some work-related skill you could use. At the very least, you will be happier, and less stressed, in life by honoring that energy-giving interest.

Concentrating your efforts on your Best Work Skills and your High-Potential Skills is the best way to be effective in your career. Effectiveness requires that you be productive and happy (which you will be, using your Best Work Skills) and that you learn and grow in ways that are meaningful for you (which you will do, by developing your High-Potential Skills). You will also feel empowered because you are making good choices—choosing to have a career by design—a design that prioritizes your interests and best work skills.

Supporting Skills

Supporting Skills are things you do well, but the activities are not intrinsically motivating to you. Using Supporting Skills too much in your work will deplete your motivation and drain your energy over time. Overuse of these skills is the slippery slope to career discontent.

Most people have developed Supporting Skills to survive, to get a job that pays for their basic needs, or because they have received some external rewards consistently throughout their lifetimes (such as money, status, or approval). Being in jobs and careers that primarily use Supporting Skills is the path to discontent. Just because you can, doesn't mean you should! The risk is that you will become so tired and *demotivated* over time by doing work that uses skills that are not interesting to you, there will be no time or energy left to develop your gifts, talents, and other interests.

I actually learned the lesson about Supporting Skills the hard way—and it's the reason I developed and teach *Career by Design*. For 10 years I was an international finance professional because I was good with numbers. I actually taught finance, cash flow forecasting, and accounting. But when I really checked in with what interested and motivated me, working with numbers and money was not high on my list. I did enjoy the international cultural exchanges, living and working in different countries, as well as the respect and approval I gained by having such a high-status job, and teaching. But I didn't love finance. And for 10 years I stayed in that profession, becoming more and more unhappy—and getting promoted every time I thought seriously of quitting. I did not

separate what I loved most from what other people were willing to pay me to do because I *could* do it. I started in a career where 80% of what I did initially used my Best Work Skills. But the higher I moved up into management, the more my job content required me to use Supporting Skills, the less I used Best Work Skills, and the less energy I had to devote to developing my High-Potential Skills. This is not an uncommon pattern in careers. Maybe your situation is somewhat like mine was, and that's why you're using this workbook to refocus your career.

Spending your life energy on skills where you are rewarded externally (with money, status, and approval) but not internally, is a path to discontent. This is the moment of a big *AHA* for many of the people I coach and teach in our leadership development programs. We often sell our life energy for these external rewards and then have no energy left to develop and contribute our talents and gifts to those activities that *DO* energize us—our motivating interests-based skills.

Go back and look at your Skills Worksheet, section A. These were supposed to be things that you do well and that you really love doing. Look at that list and if there's anything on it that you now realize does not energize you—you don't lose track of time when you're doing it; maybe you do it well, you get external kudos and impress others by doing it, but you don't love it—move that skill into section C.

Supporting Skills are the slippery slope to career dissatisfaction. When I talk to people who are successful on the surface and profoundly unhappy underneath, it's usually because they have, little by little, ended up in jobs they do well but don't love.

Don't sell your life energy for external rewards.

Jobs that use Supporting Skills leave you too distracted and too tired to develop your High-Potential Skills. What to do, then, when your job is heavily weighted toward your use of Supporting Skills?

Since you have something you do really well but have little interest in, you could mentor another person who wants to learn these skills and then delegate these activities away.

Develop and delegate!

My coaching clients have found this to be the most helpful, practical, and elegant solution for reducing the time and energy they exert in using their own Supporting Skills. This is an *elegant* solution because you build a high-quality strategic relationship at work and simultaneously get time and energy back for those things you most want to do. An ability to develop others is a core leadership skill and almost always valued in organizations.

Caution! Avoid being channeled back into jobs that use mostly Supporting Skills. Most recruiters and managers in organizations will try to keep you doing what they know you can do well, without much concern for what you yearn to do.

If you're starting this process early in your career, you have the chance to avoid being recognized as skilled at doing something you don't want to do for the rest of your career. The reward for doing a good job at a task is more of that kind of task. Be careful that you do a good job getting bottom-line organizational results, and on tasks you enjoy doing. You'll get more of those. If you are good at trivial tasks you will get more of those. If you are good at relational tasks like taking care of others, you'll get more of those. If you are skilled at doing something you don't enjoy, you'll get more of that. But even if you get externally rewarded for doing those things (and that's a big *if*), it won't be enough when you realize that you are unhappy in your life.

Low-Level Skills

Low-Level Skills are skills you lack and do not enjoy using. I haven't asked you to pay a lot of attention to the skills associated with things that don't interest you. Low-level skills are energy drainers. And the obvious thought might be "just ignore them." Unfortunately, we cannot always do that. Some things might have jumped out at you as things you greatly dislike doing when you went through the interests inventory and skills assessment. However undesirable, those skills may be needed in certain work situations. Some of these might be on that list of skills you need to develop based on your last performance review.

For me, one example would be copy-editing. When I was a full-time professor, we had to write peer-reviewed articles and publish in certain academic journals. I liked to design and do the research for these articles and I was good at that—those activities used some of my Best Work Skills. But I really disliked all of the copy-editing that was required to publish the final article. And I did not do that well. I would always miss some detail, or skip over some spelling or make a grammatical error. Copy-editing is on my Low-Level Skills list. I'm aware of it, though, because I needed the articles to be copy-edited in order to get them published. So my work content brought this Low-Level Skill to my attention.

So what do you do with Low-Level Skills? The easy answer is "Don't take a job, assignment, or task that requires you to use these skills." Even though this is an energy-draining area for you, and you'd rather not do this work, sometimes you, or someone, has got to do it.

Another option is to find partners who complement you where your Low-Level Skill is their Best Work Skill, and vice versa. You can get this kind of complementarity in teamwork. Team up with folks where your Low-Level Skills are their Best Work Skills and vice versa. Give your teammates credit for doing what they do well—and enjoy the collaboration. Organizations need collaboration, working with and through people. So you don't have to have every skill out there as *your* Best Work Skill.

And you can outsource some of this work. My copy-editor is now one of my best friends.

And although it's easy to say, "Don't choose energy-draining jobs," in practice happy, motivated, skilled individual contributors often find themselves in this situation when they are promoted to management. They started their career using their Best Work Skills, did a great job, and got promoted into management. Now they have to let go of the competencies

they loved that got them promoted, let their direct reports start doing that work, and learn a new set of skills they may not enjoy. Managers rarely like going to endless meetings, listening to excuses, being held accountable for others slacking off, giving negative feedback, and so forth. The move from individual contributor to manager is frequently a significant shift in job content from using Best Work Skills to using Supporting Skills (if you are lucky, talented, or trained) and Low-Level Skills if you are not.

So what are your options during the transition? Find tasks that use skills you do *enjoy* in the job, thereby moving the skill from Low-Level to High-Potential, and then get organizational support to develop the skill through training, education, and mentoring. These then become High-Potential Skills. With time, attention, and development, High-Potential Skills can become Best Work Skills. For those parts of the job you don't enjoy and you will never enjoy, you can still improve your skills enough with training to become better at doing them. They may become and remain Supporting Skills for you.

The *Career by Design* Matrix helps you be more strategic in using your interests and skills for managing your career. Use the matrix to design your current job to fit *you*. Use your Best Work Skills—your motivating interests and highly rated skills—as the core of your job. Put accomplishments and contributions using those skills on your performance review. You now know what to negotiate for, what to keep in your job description. You will be ready for promotion or a plum assignment when the opportunity knocks. People will have seen you performing at your best, contributing while doing work you love, using skills you've developed. Develop your High-Potential Skills—with company resources, when you can. Develop others and delegate your Supporting Skills, thereby demonstrating that you can lead and manage effectively. And partner or team with others for tasks that would use your Low-Level Skills.

THE CAREER BY DESIGN MATRIX

HIGH INTEREST		LOW INTEREST	
HIGH SKILL	BEST WORK SKILLS	SUPPORTING SKILLS	HIGH SKILL
	<p><i>Combine your top skills and highly motivating interests</i></p> <p>Core of your work Most satisfying job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put on your job description• Design the perfect job• Add to resume• Accumulate contributions• Articulate accomplishments	<p><i>Top skills, but not intrinsically interesting/energizing for you</i></p> <p>Take time and energy away from developing your interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use sparingly• Mentor others• Delegate away	
LOW SKILL	HIGH-POTENTIAL SKILLS	LOW-LEVEL SKILLS	LOW SKILL
	<p><i>Highly motivating interests, but skills need development</i></p> <p>Can become Best Work Skills Point to talent or strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give these as “need to improve” in performance reviews• Negotiate for company resources to develop• Invest your time, resources, energy• Participate in volunteer activities• Link to others with shared interests	<p><i>Not interested/energized, nor very skilled, but the work needs doing</i></p> <p>Take energy out of your work, make you feel like a failure (incompetent), reduce confidence, increase stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid jobs with these, if you can• Partner with others who have these as Best Work Skills• Get training and make Supporting Skills• Reframe to pay attention to what energizes you to make High-Potential Skills	
HIGH INTEREST		LOW INTEREST	

CAREER BY DESIGN: CAREER CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT MODULE

A Career Contribution Statement is a super useful tool. It is the 2-minute speech you give to:

- get the next job, or job interview
- have a meaningful conversation with your boss, a prospective manager, or mentor
- introduce yourself to new clients (or prospective clients if you are an entrepreneur), or
- explain who you are and what you do at cocktail parties and networking events.

A Career Contribution Statement summarizes the conclusions you have reached about your career direction. In it you state your areas of experience, your value to your organization, and what you believe could be your future contribution. Such a statement is helpful for you to be able to succinctly summarize your value to your current employer, a prospective employer, or to introduce you to people who may be significant in your career development network. It would also be an appropriate way to introduce your self to executive recruiters, potential mentors, or for significant leadership-project management roles.

A Career Contribution Statement is NOT a resume, nor is it a biography or linear recitation of your past. The Career Contribution Statement is focused. It sets the tone and direction of actions you intend to take to support your career now and in the future. When it is done and refined, it should fit on one page.

A Career Contribution Statement focuses more on your contribution to your company, than on you. It has a more executive tone as you make it clear through your communication that you are a committed contributor to your existing organization or industry.

The content of your Career Contribution Statement will communicate to the listener:

- Who you are. (Long term employee, prospective project manager-leader, employee, intern, etc.)
- Data to support your assertion or examples of situations to illustrate how you used your skills and made a contribution. (What have you done for your existing company, past companies, clubs, and volunteer activities?)
- What you want. Give potential areas where you can help the listener or they can help you. If your Career Contribution Statement is to a mentor, coach, or supporter, sometimes they may help by giving you feedback, asking you clarifying questions, or suggesting the next person you should meet. If you are an entrepreneur, you may be asking a prospective client to try out your services or products.

While there is no single “correct” format for an effective Career Statement, experienced career researchers and counselors suggest four parts:

1. A statement of (continuing) interest in the organization (and why)
2. A concise summary of past contributions (to that organization, clubs, or industry)
3. Potential areas where you can and wish to provide value to the organization.
4. A suggestion about ways this person can support your career direction (particularly relevant if this is a statement to a future employer, mentor, coach, or supporter)

This statement works best if it is specific and concise, factual and practical. While it is appropriate to include information about your priorities, work philosophy, and motivation, these should be addressed in the context of experience, skills, and abilities you wish to apply to specific activities within the organization.

Remember too, that your Career Contribution Statement is intended as a basis for discussion, not as a personal sales presentation. The four parts might be in a dialog - separated by comments from the other person.

This statement, when written, should not be longer than one double-spaced typed page. You should then practice speaking the statement since it is what you would say during a short conversation with someone at a cocktail party, company event, or during a shared taxi ride. After sharing this statement, you want to leave that person believing that you have valuable skills. Aim to have 2 or 3 positive adjectives that come to their mind when they think of you, based on what you said and how you said it. And finally, let them know what to do to hire you, use your skills, or help you.

A sample Career Contribution Statement starts on the next page.

** A variation on the Career Contribution is a Career Development Statement. The Career Development Statement focuses more on you and the direction you would like your career to take. It is appropriate for initial job interviews, and at the early stages of your career before you have a strong track record for making a contribution to any particular organization. A Career Development Statement could also be the basic format you would use in conversations with a recruiter or a cover letter if you were searching for a job.*

Career Contribution Statement - Example

(Statement of continuing interest in your company)

I've been with Sempra fifteen years in engineering and project management positions. I really enjoy the work I do here and I look forward to the kinds of projects and opportunities I am likely to work on in the future.

(Summary of strengths and past contributions)

I started as a Field Service Engineer and progressed to Project Engineer and then to Project Manager. I have been told that I have a strong ability to assess complex situations, set priorities, and translate them into practical and cost-effective action plans. In the last two years alone my projects have come in 5% under budget and are generating 13% growth in my division's revenues. I am also recognized for attention to detail, good supervisory and team building skills, and the ability to coordinate complex, technical, organizational, political, and personal factors.

(Potential areas for future contributions)

Given my skills and experience, two potential productive directions interest me here at Sempra. The first would be a senior strategic planning and business analysis role in determining major project opportunities, priorities and sites. The second would be a broad management role that would involve responsibilities for and overall control of ongoing projects, perhaps focusing particularly on those outside the United States. Global exposure, I believe, would represent both a greater potential contribution to this organization and a closer match with my own interests and aptitudes than moving into a senior-level staff position.

(Suggest framework for future)

I know you've had some global experience, and you know a lot about our current strategic issues. I would like to have a meeting to hear more about what you learned in those positions and hear your thoughts on what direction I might take. I also know you're plugged into HR, and maybe you could help me think about how to approach them to learn more about present staffing levels and requirements and perhaps exploring the possibility of configuring a new position if that makes sense. I really love working here. I'm proud of what I've contributed so far. And I think with your guidance, I can position myself to make an even greater contribution in the future.

Now let's work on your Career Contribution Statement. Complete the worksheet on the next page before you start crafting your Career Contribution Statement. The instructions for the worksheet are on the page following the worksheet. And then there's space to craft your draft statement in this module.

CAREER CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT (CCS) WORKSHEET

POSITION / TITLE	Relevant Job 1	Relevant Job 2	Relevant Job 3
Accomplishment(s)			
Contribution - words			
Contribution - numbers			
Skills Used In Job			
1			
2			
3			
4			

CCS Step 1: What 3 relevant (to the position you're seeking) jobs have you had since you started working (or volunteer positions and roles in clubs or organizations)? List those jobs/position titles under Jobs 1, 2 and 3 respectively in the worksheet.

CCS Step 2: What accomplishments did you value most highly in each job? What were you most proud of? How does this accomplishment demonstrate a **Best Work Skill**? List your answers to those questions in the accomplishments row for each job respectively.

CCS Step 3: What contribution did you make in each job? Use words and put them in the Contribution–words row of your worksheet.

CCS Step 4: What contributions did you make in each job that you can quantify? Use numbers and put those in the Contribution–numbers row for each job in your worksheet.

CCS Step 5: What skills did you use to make those contributions? List them on the bottom of the worksheet. Ideally you will be demonstrating that you have made organizational contributions through the intentional use of your skills. You definitely want to include some of your **Best Work Skills** from the **Career by Design Matrix** module.

CCS Step 6: Draft a statement of interest in the company. Mention the number of years with that organization and if you intend to stay and are looking to move within the company. Mention the number of years in your industry/profession if you are trying to get a job with a different company. Mention what attracts you to that company if you are trying to get your first job.

CCS Step 7: Craft a summary of your strengths, **Best Work Skills**, and past contributions. Be specific. Use numbers; back up your contributions from the worksheet.

CCS Step 8: Write a statement addressing potential areas where you might make a contribution to this organization in the future. What areas, projects, and positions are you interested in? You might want to consider and mention **Best Work Skills** and **High Potential Skills** from your **Career by Design Matrix** in this paragraph.

CCS Step 9: Suggest a framework for the future. How can this person help you? When you are done with your mini speech, what three adjectives do you want the listener to say when they think of you?"

Your Career Contribution Statement – First Draft

(Statement of interest in the company. Mention number of years with that organization.)

(Summary of strengths, (best work) skills and past contributions. Be specific. Use numbers back up your contributions from the worksheet).

(Potential areas for future contributions. What areas / projects, positions are you interested in?)

(Suggest framework for future. How can this person help you?)

CAREER BY DESIGN: PLANT A S.E.E.D. MODULE

Sideways, Enriching, Exploring, Downshifting Moves

Sometimes you are not happy with your current job, but you do not want to quit. And promotion may not always be an option due to economic circumstances and competition in your industry or organization. In her book [*Up Is Not the Only Way*](#) Dr. [*Beverly Kaye*](#)ⁱ suggests that when it comes to a lifelong career, “up or out” are not the only options. Indeed, when it comes to the careers of women, people of color, multicultural employees, and people interested in work–life balance, research suggests that quitting might be one of the worst choices. It takes time to accumulate social capital in organizations that provides the basis for future promotions, and quitting a job where you have a good reputation may be costly.

So what are the other options when your career seems to have flattened out but you don’t want to quit? Beverly suggests (and I agree) that you might plant a S. E. E. D.—consider a

Sideways move,
Enriching your current job,
Exploring your options fully before moving, or
Downshifting.

Here are some of the benefits to each of these strategies.

Sideways move: A sideways or lateral move is a good action option when you want to do something about your work, but you do not want to leave that job. Staying with your organization can demonstrate commitment to the company in the long run, help you widen and deepen your network of colleagues, and if you pick a place in the company that is growing or moving into new markets, the sideways move can be a very good strategic choice for the long run.

Enrichment: Job enrichment is a way to reframe how you think about your work. Now that you have identified your motivating interests and skills, it will be easier for you to look for opportunities within your existing job that will use your Best Work Skills from the **Career by Design Matrix**. Remember to mentor and then delegate away Supporting Skills–based activities, or negotiate with your organization to have them pay for developing new skills from your High-Potential Skills area. Or, cruise in your current job and use your own resources to develop interests you may have put on hold when you were busy climbing the corporate ladder. By enriching your existing job, you can also demonstrate mastery of work (especially if your work is in a key or growth area of your company) and gain exposure to key people who will see you at your best. When growth opportunities knock, you will be ready to open the door and step into them.

Exploration: Investigating your options by looking at what’s out there in the job market for your field is a good way to get a reality check. You may find that the grass is not greener on the other side. Perhaps others in situations similar to yours share the same kinds of

challenges you're having at work. You may discover that there are things you can negotiate and change to enrich your existing job to increase your satisfaction. Sometimes exploration leads to a job offer at another organization, and then you are in the position of choosing to stay—or go—with your organization. The sense of psychological empowerment that comes from choosing your situation can make you feel less trapped. An alternative to staying in a less than fulfilling situation makes a huge difference emotionally for most people. So exploration helps you reframe things.

Downshift: Sometimes it is helpful to take a lower-level job with less pay and fewer responsibilities—to downshift voluntarily. Many people join organizations as individual contributors, doing work they love and seeing the results of their efforts. The best workers are often promoted to management as a result. So a common reason to downshift is to leave management—with its very different skill requirements, salary versus hourly (overtime) wages, long hours, and heavy meeting expectations—and go back to contributing as an individual because the work content is more consistent with your interests and skills. Some people downshift to gain a better work-life balance to accommodate a new child in the family, getting a degree at night, medical reasons, or a time-consuming hobby. A downshift is also a good option if your current skills are dated and you want to learn new skills (but have to start at a lower level) to position yourself in a higher growth area of your company. And, finally, you may wish to downshift while you develop skills more consistent with your motivating interests.

ⁱ Kaye, Beverly L. Up is Not the Only Way: A Guide to Developing Workforce Talent (2nd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Davies Black Publishing (a subsidiary of Consulting Psychologies Press, Inc.), 1997.

CAREER BY DESIGN: WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODULE

Work-Life Balance requires us to consider how all the aspects of our lives are interconnected. What happens in our relationships affects our professional/career life and our health. What's going on with our bodies affects our interactions with our friends. Money issues can make it difficult to work out relationship challenges or to have fun and relax. And so on.

Below you will find 12 domains of daily life to which we must all pay attention, to one degree or another. Using the form on the next page, I'd like you to start by giving each of those areas of life your subjective satisfaction rating. Zero "0" means "completely dissatisfied"; ten "10" means 100% satisfied. Choose any number between 0 and 10. As you give your rating, think about why you are giving that rating and what would make you 100% satisfied with that aspect of your life. Everybody's satisfaction ratings are different. What bothers each of us and causes us to have lower ratings differs. What makes each of us happy differs. This is not an objective test. You cannot pass or fail it. Be as open and insightful as you can with yourself. What you are doing is the first step in raising your awareness about each area of work-life balance.

A few notes about what you might consider for each of the areas:

1. Health: Your energy and vitality, any health issues, diseases, warning signs, mobility issues that bother you, sleeping, etc.
2. Body: How you look, weight, hair, shape, etc.
3. Friends: Relationships with friends from all times and walks of your life, keeping in touch, college/high school, neighborhood?
4. Family: Relationships with your biological family members, extended and nuclear family, children, "friend-family," responsibilities to or for family.
5. Personal growth: Activities you do to help you grow and develop, personal growth workshops, coaching, etc.
6. Spirituality: Any religious or spiritual practice, meditation, prayer, attending religious services, etc.
7. Rest and relaxation: What you do for fun that relaxes you, expresses you creatively, dancing, writing, walks in nature, vacations, art, etc.
8. Career: Job content, status, title, respect, work relationships, responsibilities, authority, meaningful work, etc.
9. Significant other: Time for romance, sensual/intimate activity, commitment, mutual trust and respect.
10. Finances: Do you have/earn enough money? Have a sense of financial freedom? Savings? Debts? Assets? Positive net worth? Know what any of this means?
11. Home: How you feel about your private space. Is your garage clear? Is your home decorated to be restorative? Comfortable? Does it reflect your taste?
12. Environment: Country, community, sunshine, seasons, diversity, your "sort" of people, surrounding aesthetics, city/urban/suburban, views, nature, etc. Might also include your company office space.

Work-Life Balance Ratings

Step 1: Record your satisfaction level with each of these areas of your life in the “Rating” column. Note your reasons for that rating in the “Why?” column. Describe what a 10 would look like for you in the “10 would be?” column.

LIFE ARENA	RATING	WHY?	10 WOULD BE?
Health			
Body			
Friends			
Family			
Personal growth			
Spirituality/religion			
Rest, relax, rejuvenate			
Career			
Significant other/romance			
Finances			
Home			
Environment			

Step 2: Look at all the areas of your life and your ratings. What insights do you glean from looking at your satisfaction ratings? (You might want to share those insights with a friend or coach).

Step 3: Look at areas you gave the lowest ratings, and then what would be a 10 for you. That is your ideal scene. What actions are you willing to take to get you from your low rating to your 10?

Action 1:

Action 2:

Action 3:

Here are some resources that point to possible actions you might take for each of the areas where you have less than 10. As you read through the information, highlight actions you are willing to take to move you toward work–life balance.

Body: The most common reason for less than 10 is not being at your ideal body weight. The weight management industry has lots of suggestions for this.

- * Physical hunger
 - * Eat the right foods, right time, in the right portion
- * Emotional hunger
 - * Watch out when you're eating your feelings. Check by using the acronym HALT: Are you really . . .
 - * Hungry?
 - * Angry?
 - * Lonely?
 - * Tired?
- * Under stress adrenaline pours from the adrenal glands (hence the name), your heartbeat increases, you start to sweat, and your pupils dilate. With chronic stress you're like that all the time; eventually your body releases steroids that cause you to grow *omentum* (belly fat, to be ready for famine and a quick response).
- * Life energy comes from the sun—eat foods closest to that life (not processed) and with range of colors.
- * The Indian life science of Ayurveda says that we should eat the six tastes of life: sweet (milk, pears), salt, sour (citrus, yogurt, cherries), pungent (radishes, ginger, cinnamon), bitter (greens and yellows), and astringent (cause you to pucker up, like Asian mushrooms, figs, lentils, green or black tea).
- * Right times: Breakfast within hour of waking (after exercise); lunch 4 hours later; dinner around 7 (sunset), followed by constitutional walk.
- * Portion = size of palms; two-thirds full.

Friends: Pay attention to who you hang out with, and cultivate your nourishing relationships. There's something called *social contagion*. We “catch” the emotions of the people around us. Social contagion is the transmission of ideas and emotions from one individual to another that increases in strength over time. We become the average of the five people we're closest to (emotionally, length of time, proximity). How nourishing are those relationships in your life?

Family: Families are simultaneously a source of strength and a source of wounds for many of us. The key is to have realistic expectations. Many a therapist's work is based on helping people deal with family issues.

Personal growth: Since growth activities are often important, but not urgent, it is your job to make time for those experiences. You can always listen to growth gurus using audio and video programs, or read some of the many self-help books available. I think an annual

retreat is a great gift to your self. Here are some links that offer these kinds of personal growth retreats:

- * retreatfinder.com
- * Omega Institute—eomega.org
- * Insight meditation society—dharma.org
- * Spirit Rock Insight Meditation - spiritrock.org
- * Vipassana meditation—dhamma.org

Spirituality/Religion: Your spiritual or belief system can give your life a sense of intention/purpose/meaning. You must do what's meaningful to you.

Apart from any particular set of beliefs, most traditions agree that it is helpful to have an attitude of gratitude. Creating some practice in your life that allows you to focus on what you are grateful for and what is going well in your life can bring enormous inner satisfaction. For many young people I have worked with using the *Career by Design* process, the question "What do I believe?" can seem like an easy question. Usually they point to the teachings of their family's religion. But college is a time when beliefs can and should be put to the test. Beginning to understand religion for themselves and coming up with their own religious practice and ideology is a process through which many students go. In the Values List you saw variations on religious/spiritual values you could choose. Here are some key words to consider as you think about your rating for religion / spirituality that may be helpful also.

Dogma is the established belief or doctrine held by a religion, or by extension by some other group or organization. It is authoritative and not to be disputed, doubted, or diverged from, by the practitioner or believers.

Praxis is the practice of faith, especially worship.

Religious means relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity.

It may be that you are interested in the dogma of a particular religion, or not. You may find yourself attracted to the practices of a particular religious or spiritual path. Maybe you are not religious or devotional at all, but you do have a spiritual side. For some people the questⁱⁱ for the meaning of life is what they rate.

Rest, relaxation, rejuvenation: Remember your motivating interests. Remember to regularly engage in a motivating interest. Do it weekly, if not more often.

Career: This *Career by Design* workbook provides strategies for having a career that is a 10!

Romance/significant other: The book by Gary Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts* (and all the subsequent books in his series), starts from the

premise that we all have a primary and secondary preferred love language, and that we respond (believe we are loved) when our significant others “speak” to us in one of those two preferred languages. The 5 “languages” are:

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Problems occur when we speak our love language to our significant others, but their love language is not the same as ours. In short, when we use the golden rule in love relationships—which looks like loving them the way *we* want to be loved—we miss the mark. We need to use the platinum rule: love them the way *they* want to be loved.

Some people may crave focused attention; others need regular praise. Gifts are highly important to one person, whereas another sees fixing a leaky faucet, ironing a shirt, or cooking a meal as filling his or her “love tank.” Some partners might find that physical touch makes them feel valued: holding hands, giving back rubs, and sexual contact.

Gary Chapman describes why a person who does yard work, dishes, car maintenance (Acts of Service), etc., is floored when the significant other says, “You never show me you love me. You never cuddle with me, or caress my hair, or make the first move for sex” (Physical Touch). Or, “Why don’t you spend time with me? Why do you work so much?” (Quality Time). And, “Why don’t you buy me flowers? Why don’t you ever get me cards or balloons . . . just because?” (Gifts) Or “You never tell me what I mean to you. Why don’t you ever share with me what I mean to you, or what my good qualities are?” (Words of Affirmation). His books help you figure out what *your* languages are and what *their* languages are. Sometimes you have a clue to your preferred languages by noticing what you complain about most in your relationships. The books also contain questionnaires to help you determine your love languages.

The concern some people have with Chapman’s books is that they have a strong Christian and heterosexual bias. That can be comfortable and affirming for people with those beliefs, values, and lifestyle—but quite off-putting for others. I think his basic framework is helpful, but because I work to be as respectfully inclusive as possible, I share that caveat about his bias along with my recommendation.

Finances: The most common issue for people who have low satisfaction scores in this arena is the desire to move from debt to financial freedom. I cannot give financial advice. You need to get support from licensed professionals in this area. I can recommend the following:

- Book: [*Your Money or Your Life: 9 Steps to Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Achieving Financial Independence*](#)—revised and updated for the 21st century by Vicki Robin. Many people are surprised to discover the hidden costs of certain work situations. And of course her approach is consistent with using motivating interests,

strengths, and skills effectively. It is in the line of another good book [*Do What You Love, the Money Will Follow: Discovering Your Right Livelihood*](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

- Website, TV shows, books, workshops, and programs by [Suze Orman](#). Millions of people find her approach helpful.
- Weekend workshop: [Millionaire Mind Intensive](#) by T. Harv Ecker includes a lot of activities that help you examine your emotions and beliefs about money. Be careful not to spend a lot of money buying all the products sold at the workshops, however.

Home: I think of the home as an outer structure reflecting your inner realities. Does your home feel like *home*? Reflect you? What does the architecture and design of your home say about you and your family? How are the entry, movement, key rooms, cleanliness and usability of the basement/attics? Is your home welcoming, passable, cluttered, etc.?

To get some suggestions for your 10 home, consider:

- Feng Shui—an ancient Chinese system of aesthetics designed to harmonize energy in physical structures.
- Cable TV design shows
- Organizational consultant assistance to eliminate clutter.

Environment: I talked about space in the mission statement module. Other environmental factors include sustainability and community. One thing I will say is that most emergency help comes from your neighbors, not emergency techs. Choose a community where you feel comfortable and engage in community activity. Get to know your neighbors, and be a good neighbor. You'll enjoy your community more. Plus you may need each other in an emergency.

ⁱ If you decide to explore the Work of Byron Katie and her methods, I suggest starting by watching the [free online videos](#) or listening to the [audio CD version of Loving What Is](#). In the video and audio you can hear her tone-of-voice and that is important for appreciating her approach.

ⁱⁱ See Quest spiritual orientation in Values List.

ⁱⁱⁱ [*Do What You Love, the Money Will Follow: Discovering Your Right Livelihood*](#) by Marsha Sinetar

CAREER BY DESIGN: TIME MANAGEMENT MODULE

Make Time for Your Priorities

In his very famous book [*The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*](#), Covey shares a matrix for the third habit, putting [*First Things First*](#).

Step 1: Assess where you are and where what you are doing fits. Think about the activities in your days and see where those activities fit in the First Things First Matrix. How much time is spent in the all-important quadrants 1 and 2 versus the unimportant (to you) quadrants 3 and 4?

Priority Matrix—First Things First

IMPORTANT	URGENT TO YOU	NOT URGENT	IMPORTANT
	1. HIGH-PRIORITY QUADRANT	2. QUADRANT OF QUALITY	
	URGENT & IMPORTANT TO YOU Performance review–based crises, problems needing immediate attention, deadline-driven projects, key meetings, prep for important presentations <div>1</div>	NOT URGENT, BUT IMPORTANT TO YOU Life balance, prep, problem prevention activities, values-based work, planning, growth, relationships, recreation <div>2</div>	
NOT IMPORTANT	3. QUADRANT OF DECEPTION	4. QUADRANT OF WASTE	NOT IMPORTANT
	URGENT BUT NOT IMPORTANT TO YOU Interruptions, some calls, email, reports, meetings, many popular busyness activities that are important to other people <div>3</div>	NOT URGENT, NOT IMPORTANT TO YOU Trivia, busywork, some phone calls, time wasters, escape activities <div>4</div>	
	URGENT TO OTHERS	NOT URGENT	

Step 2: Reframe time management now as **Time Mastery**. Time Mastery is about priorities, not about time. We all have the same amount of time. Time Mastery is using the time we have to do activities consistent with our work–life–values priorities. You decide what you want your life to look like and then do the right things to get you there.

When people say they don't have enough time to do what they need to do, they could have any number of reasons for saying that. Here are some of them. Put a checkmark next to any that sound like you.

- ☐ Not sure of your priorities, goals, values
- ☐ You focus more on what you don't want, rather than on what you do want
- ☐ You have no plan, you act randomly (in the moment)
- ☐ You lack consistency or discipline
- ☐ You feel demotivated
- ☐ You feel like a victim—you *have* to do this or that
- ☐ You are easily distracted
- ☐ You are a people pleaser
- ☐ You have too many activities
- ☐ You tend to avoid conflict (you need to push back, negotiate, set boundaries, or manage conflict)

One way to become a time master is to budget time in ways similar to how you would do financial budgeting. To do financial budgeting, you would total up money you make, note all your expenses, and allocate the money you have to pay the expenses. If you run short for a bill, you must “take” money from somewhere else or go into debt. So you can use a similar process for assessing your time situation:

- * Total up the hours in a day (24)
- * Make a list of the activities you want to accomplish in a day
- * Divide up your activities among your 24 hours
- * If there isn't enough time to cover one of your activities, choose:
 1. to “steal time” from one of your other activities
 2. to figure out how to streamline activities so they take less time
 3. to leverage—go for activities that achieve multiple goals
 4. to get someone else to do the activity for you
 5. to drop the activity
 6. to stay stressed out (go into psychological debt)

The sixth option is not one people are consciously choosing, but by not making a choice consciously, they *are* living with the psychological and physical impact of that conscious non-choice/unconscious choice.

The second thing to do is to make structure your friend. I'm going to show you a scheduling matrix you can use as a supportive structure to help you. But don't schedule so tightly that you feel like you're in a time prison. Let the structure support you while giving you freedom within your time boundaries. Balance scheduled time with free time.

For instance, I use the Time Mastery Scheduling Matrix for activities 5½ days a week. Saturday afternoons and Sundays are unscheduled days in my week. I actively refrain from scheduling any activities there so that I have free, unstructured, unscheduled time to do what I want to do. During the other days of the week I work, admittedly some long hours at times. And I have some "me" time scheduled during those days too. The benefit of the nonscheduled time is to give space without the pressure of the clock.

Avoid a couple of common pitfalls. I've noticed in my life that when I focus on what the clock says, versus what I need to do, I feel stressed. It's not really the clock that's stressing me out, but *my beliefs* about not having enough time or not controlling my time that's stressing me out. I am always choosing what to do with my time. As are you. You are always choosing; you can choose with victim language or you can choose in a way that empowers you. Blaming time for your stress is a handy way to avoid being responsible for your choices. It's also self-sabotaging. Some choices/priorities might require patience, sacrifice, negotiation, or creativity—but they can be managed.

Personally, I don't waste time on calendars, phone systems, planners, coaches, etc., when it comes to time management. They often take more time to set up and update than it would take to do activities that are important to me. I know many people swear by them and think they work. If you're one of those, please do continue to use them (but then if they're working you're probably not reading this section). What I've noticed is that the planners don't change bad habits of reacting to other people's needs as if they were more important than your own.

Step 3: Think of your roles and goals. When you decide what to put in your important quadrants 1 and 2, think about what kind of person you want to be. Where do you want to make a difference? A contribution? How do you want to be known or remembered? What kind of legacy do you want to leave? The answers to these questions reveal your true priorities. What roles do you have where you live out your priorities? Roles are who you are; activities are what you do in your roles. Roles can be chosen by you or given to you. Roles typically change across the lifespan, and we must adjust to those changes in roles. You don't have to explain why the roles are important, but it helps to think about why they are important to you. Role #1 is SELF. Self is included because you can only help others and achieve your goals if you are take care of yourself. Set goals for each role. What kind of person/spouse/parent/boss, etc., do you want to be? Answering these questions will reveal your life goals. Prioritize those roles and goals. You start to recognize role priorities by pondering "What would I spend my time doing if I had only 2 years to live? Where would I want to make the most progress? See the most gain? Invest the most time?" This is not a bucket list of activities, but *meaningful* priorities for you.

Step 4: Break your goals down into bite-size chunks of regular activities. Small wins are the habit of major achievers. Progress toward your goals is the most motivating thing there is. Think of three to five appropriate activities for each of your roles. Choose daily activities that "fit" who you want to be. "What can I do as a 'role,' on a daily or weekly (regular) basis, that will move me toward being [description of goal for role]?" For example: What can I do as a parent, on a daily or weekly basis, that will move me toward being present, helpful,

encouraging, supportive, and gracious? Make these activities SMARTER—Specific, Measured, Achievable, Realistic, Timed, Enjoyable, and positively Reinforced (for you and them). SELF activities should include sleep, exercise, alone time (especially if your personality is introverted), relaxation, and recreation.

Step 5: Check your activities against your priorities and list them in the **Time Mastery Scheduling Matrix** below by priority.

Time Mastery Scheduling Matrix

Non-Negotiable and Fixed	Negotiable and Fixed
Non-Negotiable and Flexible	Negotiable and Flexible

Non-negotiable activities are based on your priorities; they are activities you cannot or are completely unwilling to give up. These should not get squeezed out by busyness and others' priorities. Sleep should be a non-negotiable activity (so to speak).

Negotiable activities are lower-priority activities. You'd like to keep doing them, but you will modify or drop them if absolutely necessary.

Fixed means that the time to do this activity is determined by someone else and you can't change it.

Flexible means that you determine the time you do the activity.

Step 6: Get out your calendar and use the matrix to make your schedule for next week. Start with the non-negotiable, fixed activities, since you know when they have to go into your schedule.

Then add the non-negotiable flexible activities. Choose times that work for you for those activities based on your energy patterns. Choose to do things that are important during the parts of your energy cycle where you have the most energy, the best attention and focus.

Next schedule negotiable and fixed activities. This is tricky because it looks like you may have to do this activity at a time set by someone else. The negotiable part trumps the fixed part, however. You can decide not to do that activity, leverage your time by doing something else that is from your non-negotiable side too, or push back (negotiate) to do the activity at a better time for you.

Finally, if you have time left over, add the negotiable, flexible activities to your schedule.

Psychologically, the hardest part of this process is to own that you're in control of most of your time (all of it, really). And so you have to choose what to cut when all the activities you have listed will not fit into your schedule.

Don't put, or allow anyone else to put, something on your schedule just because there's room. *Decide what goes on your schedule based on your priorities.*

CAREER *by Design*

Tips and Tools for Re-Inventing, Re-Focusing & Re-Balancing Your Work-Life

Use this program to:

- boost your productivity • enjoy your work more
- get promoted and recognized for your contributions
- develop people who work with you • eliminate energy draining work activities

This workbook includes inventories and guides you through a step-by-step process that will enable you assess your personality, values, needs, interests, strengths and skills. This updated version of Dr. Robin's popular workshop references and integrates information from the Birkman Method, and Lominger VOICES 360 Feedback. Each Career by Design tip has an associated tool so you can strategically re-invent, re-focus, and re-balance your life.

TIPS

Use your values-based mission statement for making decisions consistent with your most cherished values.

Plant a **S.E.E.D.** when you are not happy with your current job but you do not want to quit - Sideways move, Enrich your job, Explore options, or Downshift strategically.

Prepare a 2-minute speech delineating the direction your career is taking.

Negotiate in your performance reviews to focus more on what you do well and skills you want to develop.

Balance work with the other aspects of life.

Make time for your priorities.

TOOLS

Mission-based decision matrix

Career by Design Matrix

Career Contribution Statement

Career by Design Matrix

Work-Life Balance Worksheet

Time Mastery Worksheet



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