

Chapter 7

You Need to Understand More Fully Who You Are

This is a job-hunting method, and the most effective one, at that.

Why does an inventory of who you are, work so well in helping you find work, after other methods have failed? That's important to answer, because the answer will keep you motivated to finish this inventory, when otherwise you might say, *Too much work!* And just give up.

Okay, there are seven answers as to why this works so well:

By doing this homework on yourself, you learn to describe yourself in at least six different ways, and therefore you can approach multiple job-markets. Retraining, as it is commonly practiced in Western culture, prepares you for only one market. Thus construction workers are retrained, let us say, to be computer repair people. One market. No jobs to be found in that market, once they are trained? Retraining wasted.

But with an inventory of who you are, and what you love to do, you are preparing yourself for several markets. This, because you stop identifying yourself by only one job-title. In a tough economy, job-titles like, say, "computer repair person," just aren't detailed enough. New thinking is called for: you are no longer just "a computer repair person," or "a construction worker" or "accountant" or "engineer" or "minister" or "ex-military" or whatever. *You are a person who* has these skills and these experiences. If teaching and writing and growing things are your favorite skills, then you can approach the job-market of teaching, or that of writing, or that of gardening. Multiple job-markets open to you, not just one.

By doing this homework on yourself, you can describe in detail exactly what you are looking for. This greatly enables your friends, LinkedIn contacts, and family to better help you. You approach them not with, *Uh, I'm out of work; let me know if you hear of anything,* but you can describe to them more exactly what kind of "thing," and in what work setting. This greatly increases their helpfulness to you, and therefore your ability to find jobs you would otherwise never find.

By ending up with a picture of a job that would really excite you, you will inevitably pour much more energy and determination into your job-search. Previously, your job-hunt may have felt more like a duty than anything else. Now, with this vision, you will be *dying* to find *this*. So, you will redouble your efforts, your dedication, and your determination when otherwise you might tire and give up. Persistence becomes your middle name, once you've identified a prize worth fighting for.

By doing this homework, you will no longer have to wait to approach companies until they say they have a vacancy. Once done with this homework, you choose places that match who you are, and you approach them (*through a "bridge person" who knows both you and them*) knowing confidently that you will be an asset there, whether they have a job opening or not. More often than you would think, they will create a job for you. Wrote one job-hunter to me this year:

In my mind I knew where I wanted to work: a company I had had a couple of meetings

with about an imperfect job about two years ago and fell in love with. I found the CEO on LinkedIn, asked him if he remembered me and would he be up for a short meeting if I promised it would be fun. He said he would love to meet and I pitched the idea of setting up a training academy for them. About a month later, I had an e-mail to say they definitely want to go ahead with providing training as I had pitched it. The job did not exist, they had not conceived of the job, and it meets all my criteria because I thought of it. Parachute to dream job in six months is not bad is it?

When you are facing, let us say, nineteen other competitors for the job you want—equally experienced, equally skilled—you will stand out because you can accurately describe to employers exactly what is unique about you, and what you bring to the table that the others do not. These will usually turn on adjectives or adverbs, what we normally call *traits*. More on that, later.

If you are contemplating a career-change, maybe—after you inventory yourself—you will see definitely what new career or direction you want for your life. Maybe. But first, please, please, inventory who you are and what you love to do. Often you can put together a new career just using what you already know and what you already can do—with much less training or retraining than you thought you would have to do. I’m not talking about a dramatic change, like going from salesperson to doctor: for that, you will need to start over. But most career changes are not that dramatic, as I will show you, in [chapter 10](#).

It may turn out that the knowledge you need to pick up can be found in a vocational/technical school, or in a (one-or) two-year college. And sometimes, *sometimes* it can be found simply by doing enough *informational interviewing* (more about this in the next chapter).

Example here: a job-hunter named Bill had worked for a number of years in retail; now he was debating a career-change—working in the oil industry. But he knew virtually nothing about that industry. However, he went from person to person who worked at companies in that industry, just seeking information about the industry. The more of these “informational interviews” he conducted, the more he knew. In fact, coming down the home stretch, just before he got hired in the place of his dreams, he found he now knew more than the people he was visiting, about their competitors and some aspects of the industry.

In other words, with certain kinds of career-change, there is more than one way to pick up the knowledge you need.

Unemployment is an interruption, in most of our lives. And interruptions are opportunities, to pause, to think, to assess where we really want to go with our lives. Martin Luther King Jr. had something to say about this:

The major problem of life is learning how to handle the costly interruptions. The door that slams shut, the plan that got sidetracked, the marriage that failed. Or that lovely poem that didn’t get written because someone knocked on the door.

The Parachute Approach, with its demand that you do an inventory of who you are and what you love to do, before you set out on your search for (meaningful) work, helps you take advantage of the opportunity that this interruption presents.

So there you have it: the seven reasons why this inventory of who you are, works so much better as a method of job-hunting than all other methods.

Hear it speaking to your heart:

Use this opportunity. Make this not only a hunt for a job, but a hunt for a life. A deeper life, a victorious life, a life you're prouder of.

The world currently is filled with workers whose weeklong cry is, "When is the weekend going to be here?" And, then, "Thank God it's Friday!" Their work puts bread on the table but ... they are bored out of their minds. They've never taken the time to think out what they uniquely can do, and what they uniquely have to offer to the world. The world doesn't need any more bored workers. Dream a little. Dream a lot.

One of the saddest pieces of advice in the world is, "Oh come now—be realistic." The best parts of this world were not fashioned by those who were "realistic." They were fashioned by those who dared to look hard at their wishes and then gave them horses to ride.

THE INVENTORY: I Am a Person Who...

You begin by mentally stripping yourself of your past job-title. You have to stop answering, "Who are you?" with, "Oh, I'm a construction worker, or salesperson, or designer, or writer, or account executive." That locks you into your past. You must answer instead: "I am a person who ..."

"I am a person who...has had these experiences."

"I am a person who... is skilled at doing this or that."

"I am a person who...knows a lot about this or that."

"I am a person who...is unusual in this way or that."

You are a person, not a role. Throughout this inventory of who you are, you need to keep identifying what a unique person you are, under several headings.

I Am a Person Who... IS LIKE A FLOWER

Researchers¹ tell us that if you are trying to make a decision about yourself and your future, there are Three Rules about *where* you jot stuff down:

FATHER. Put everything you know about yourself on **one piece of paper**.

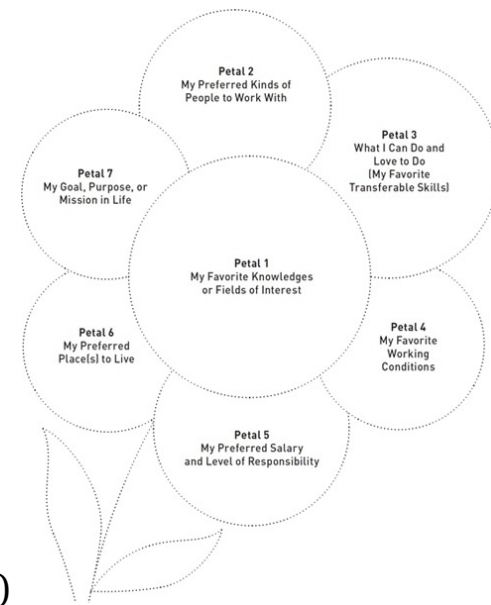
ORGANIZE. Put **some kind of graphic** on that piece of paper, in order to organize the information about yourself. A graphic—any graphic—keeps that One Piece of Paper interesting, and not just a flood of words and spaces. It also activates the right side of your

brain, the intuitive side, that looks at a whole bunch of unrelated data and says, “Aha! I see what it all means.”

PRIORITIZE. Prioritize all this information, when you have finished organizing it. Don’t just leave the data *lying there*; put it in its order of importance *to you*. Always. And every time.

Okay, that’s why this inventory of You is essentially one page, with a graphic. We call the graphic *The Flower Diagram*, or *The Flower Exercise*. Here we have a preliminary form of it (just for jotting down idle thoughts). The real **Flower**, where you will enter the final results of each exercise in this chapter, can be found near the end of the chapter.

A Preliminary Outline of The Flower



(A Note Page for Jotting Down Your Idle Thoughts and Hunches)

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I Am a Person Who... HAS SEVEN SIDES TO ME

This flower has seven petals (including the center). That’s because there are seven sides to You, or seven ways of thinking about yourself, or seven ways of describing who you are:

You can describe *who you are* in terms of **what you know**—and what your *favorite* knowledges or fields of interest are, that you have stored in your head (or heart).

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of **the kinds of people** you most prefer to *work with*, and/or the kinds of people—age span, problems, handicaps, geographical location, etc.—you would most like to *help* or serve.

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of **what you can do**, and what your *favorite* functional/transferable skills are.

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of your favorite **working conditions**—

indoors/outdoors, small company/large company, windows/no windows, etc.—because they enable you to work at your top form, and greatest effectiveness.

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of **your preferred salary and level of responsibility**—working by yourself, or as a member of a team, or supervising others, or running the show—that you feel most fitted for, by experience, temperament, and appetite.

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of **your preferred geographical location or surroundings**—here or abroad, warm/cold, north/south, east/west, mountains/coast, urban/suburban/rural/rustic—where you'd be happiest, do your best work, and would most love to live.

Or you can describe *who you are* in terms of **your goals or sense of mission and purpose** for your life. Alternatively, or in addition, you can get more particular and describe the goals or mission you want *the organization* to have, where you decide to work.

I Am a Person Who... IS ALL THESE THINGS

You could choose just one, two, or three of these sides of yourself—let us say, “what you know,” “what you can do,” and “preferred salary”—as your guide to defining what kind of work would match *You*.

But what the Flower Diagram does is describe who you are in *all seven* ways, joined together on one page, in one graphic. After all, you are not just one of these things; you are *all* of these things. The Flower Diagram is a complete picture of *You*. All of you.

And believe me, you want the complete picture. I'll tell you why. Let's say there is some job out there that matches only one petal, one side to yourself, one way of defining who you are: for example, let's say this job lets you use your favorite knowledges. Period.

It doesn't let you use your favorite skills, nor does it have you working with the kinds of people you most enjoy, nor does it give you the surroundings where you can do your best work.

What would you call such a job? I think *boring*. You would barely be able to wait for Friday to come around. *Thank God it's Friday!* Some of you have already sung that song. A lot.

But now let us suppose you could instead find another kind of work that matches all seven sides of you. All seven petals. What would you call *that* job? You would call it *your dream job*.

So, your total flower is a picture of who *You* most fully are. But at the same time it's a picture of a job that would give voice to all that you are. Your dream job. Where you would shine, because it uses the best of *Who You Are*.

So please fill in your Flower. *And try to keep it a joy rather than a duty.*

For the following exercises you will need several blank sheets of notebook paper (8½ × 11 inches) as your worksheets.



I Am a Person Who... KNOWS THESE PARTICULAR THINGS

And *loves* using that knowledge. Or knowledges. Or “know-hows.” (Call it what you will.)

First Petal

MY FAVORITE KNOWLEDGES OR FIELDS OF INTEREST

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To summarize all that you stored in your brain. *Required:* From your past, subjects you already know a lot about, and enjoy talking about. *Optional:* For your future, what you would like to learn.

What You Are Looking For: Some guidance as to what field you would most enjoy working in.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: Basically, they will all turn out to be nouns, but see below.

Example of a Good Petal: “Graphic design, data analysis, mathematics, how to repair a car, videogames, cooking, music, principles of mechanical engineering, how to run an organization, Chinese, CATIA (Computer Aided Three-dimensional Interactive Application),” etc.

Example of a Bad Petal: “Prompt, thorough, analyzing, persistent, communicating.”

Why Bad: Knowledges are always nouns. The words in the bad example above are not. In

case you're curious, they are, in order: a trait (adjective), a trait (adjective), a transferable skill (verb), a trait (adjective), and a transferable skill (verb). All in all, that is one mixed bag! All are important, but you want only knowledges on this particular petal.

There are three things traditionally called skills: **knowledges**, as here; **functions**, *also known as transferable skills*; and **traits**. As a general rule throughout this inventory, *knowledges are nouns, transferable skills are verbs, and traits are adjectives or adverbs*. If it helps knowing that, great; if not, forget it. Our overarching principle throughout this book is that if a generalization, or metaphor, or example, helps you, use it. But if it just confuses you, then ignore it!!! Please!

On this Knowledges “petal” (*actually the central part of the Flower*) you will eventually write your final results—your **Favorite Knowledges/Fields of Interest**, prioritized in the order of importance to.

Prior to that, you need here, as you will with each petal, a worksheet. Or two. Get blank pieces of notebook or paper to do this on.

WORKSHEET

Notes About My Favorite Knowledges
1. What You Know from Your Previous Jobs
2. What You Know About, Outside of Work
3. What Fields, Careers, or Industries Sound Interesting to You
4. Any Other Hunches, Bright Ideas, Great Ideas, etc.

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A worksheet is like **a fisherman's net**, where you want to cast it into the sea in order to

capture the largest haul possible, and then sort out the best of your catch, later.

This worksheet can look sloppy, unorganized, and messy. That's okay. Who cares? Only the final petal is supposed to look organized.

A worksheet is **a gathering place**, for the results of the exercises you do, but also for every bright idea, every hunch, every remembered dream, every intuition that occurs to you as you are working on that petal. Jot down *everything*.

This is an important petal—very important—so to unearth your favorite knowledges or fields of interest, four exercises are usually needed. We begin with:

1. WHAT YOU KNOW FROM YOUR PREVIOUS JOBS

If you've been out there in the world of work for any time already, you've probably learned a lot of things that you now just take for granted. "*Of course I know that!*" But such knowledges may be important, down the line. So, list them!

Things like: *bookkeeping, handling applications, credit collection of overdue accounts, hiring, international business, management, marketing, sales, merchandizing, packaging, policy development, problem solving, troubleshooting, public speaking, recruiting, conference planning, systems analysis, the culture of other countries, other languages, government contract procedures*, and so on.

To be thorough here, jot down on another piece of paper a list of all the jobs you have ever held, and then *for each job* jot down anything you learned there. For example: "Worked in a warehouse: learned *how to use a forklift and crane, inventory control, logistics automation software, warehouse management systems, JIT (just in time) techniques, teamwork principles*, and *how to supervise employees*."

Or, again, "Worked at McDonald's: learned *how to prepare and serve food, how to wait on customers, how to make change, how to deal with complaints, how to train new employees, etc.*"

Do this with all the jobs you have ever held: where you worked, what you learned there. Then look over everything you've written in *this* exercise, and decide which are your favorite knowledges or interests, that you're glad you picked up. Jot them down on your worksheet, in the space provided for this exercise.



"I CAN REMEMBER WHEN ALL WE NEEDED WAS SOMEONE WHO COULD CARVE AND SOMEONE WHO COULD SEW."

2. WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT, OUTSIDE OF WORK

Jot down knowledges you've picked up outside of work, such as: *antiques, gardening, cooking, budgeting, decorating, photography, crafts, spirituality, sports, camping, travel, repairing things, flea markets, scrapbooking, sewing, art appreciation at museums, how to run or work in a volunteer organization*, and so on.

- Also think of anything you learned in high school (or college) that you prize knowing today: *keyboarding? Chinese? accounting? geography?* What? Jot it all down.
- Think of anything you learned at training seminars, workshops, conferences, and so on, possibly in connection with a job you had at the time. Jot it all down.
- Think of anything you studied at home, via online courses, mobile apps, tape programs (likely played in your car while commuting), PBS television programs, *etc.* Jot it all down.
- Think of anything you learned out there in the world, such as *how to assemble a flash mob, how to organize a protest, how to fundraise for a particular cause, how to run a marathon, how to repair a toilet, etc.* Jot it all down, in the space provided for this exercise on your worksheet.

3. WHAT FIELDS, CAREERS, OR INDUSTRIES SOUND INTERESTING TO YOU

If you want to pick some career or field from a list of them all, it helps if you start broadly, and then drill down.

Broadly speaking, then, the job-market consists of the following four arenas: *agriculture, manufacturing, information, and services*. Any ideas about which of these four is most attractive to you? If so, jot it down, in the space provided for this exercise on your worksheet.

In order to drill down further than that, your best bet is the government's O*Net Online (www.onetonline.org). *Note that is .org, not .com.*

To begin with, this site has various lists of **career clusters** or **industries** or **job families**. Below is a mashup of these. Please read this list over, and check off any of these that you want to explore further (*multiple choice preferred, here, in order to have alternatives and therefore hope*):

Accommodation and Food Services ▪ Administrative and Support Services ▪ Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources ▪ Architecture, Engineering, and Construction ▪ Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications ▪ Business, Operations, Management, and Administration ▪ Community and Social Service ▪ Computer and Mathematical ▪ Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media ▪ Distribution and Logistics ▪ Education, Training, and Library ▪ Entertainment and Recreation ▪ Farming, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting ▪ Finance and Insurance ▪ Food Preparation and Serving ▪ Government and Public Administration ▪ Green Industries or Jobs ▪ Health Care, Health Science, and Social Assistance ▪ Hospitality and Tourism ▪ Human Services ▪ Information and Information Technology ▪ Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security ▪ Life, Physical, and Social Sciences ▪ Management of Companies and Enterprises ▪ Manufacturing ▪ Marketing, Sales, and Service ▪ Military Related ▪ Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction ▪ Personal Care and Service ▪ Production Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services ▪ Protective Services ▪ Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing ▪ Religion, Faith, and Related ▪ Retail Trade, Sales, and Related ▪ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics ▪ Self-Employment ▪ Transportation, Warehousing, and Material Moving ▪ Utilities

Now, the nice thing about O*Net Online is that once you have chosen anything on the list above, the site has drop-down menus which allow you to go deeper into each *career cluster*, *industry*, or *job family* that you have checked off. It drills down to **career pathways**, and then drills down further to **individual occupations**, and then drills down still further to **tasks, tools, technologies, knowledges, skills, abilities, work activities, education, interests, work styles, work values, related occupations**, and **salary**.

The only limitation here, as you will see in [chapter 10](#), “Five Ways to Change Careers,” is that O*Net *only does this for about 900 occupations*. Its predecessor, the D.O.T., had 12,741 occupations.² So, this does not offer a complete map of the job-market by any means.

And even for those occupations that are listed in O*Net, remember: jobs, industries, and careers are mortal; they are born, they grow, they flourish, they mature, then decline and ultimately die. Sometimes it takes centuries, sometimes merely decades, sometimes even sooner than that. But, eventually, most jobs, industries, and careers are mortal. So, always have a plan B.

Okay, now you're done with the worksheet for this petal. What next? Well, sort them. Copy the diagram below onto a piece of notebook paper, and then sort everything—everything—you have on that worksheet into one of the four bins below (well, you can forget bin #4, if you'd rather).

Copy the top four or five results from bin #1 and maybe, maybe, an item from bin #2, onto your Favorite Knowledges or Fields of Interest petal, found on [this page](#).

Now you're ready to move on, to consider another side of Who You Are.

YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECTS MATRIX

HIGH

E
X
P
E
R
T
I
S
E

3. Subjects for Which You Have Little Enthusiasm but in Which You Have Lots of Expertise

1. Subjects for Which You Have Lots of Enthusiasm and in Which You Have Lots of Expertise
BINGO!

4. Subjects for Which You Have Little Enthusiasm and in Which you Have Little Expertise

2. Subjects for Which You Have Lots of Enthusiasm but in Which You Have Little Expertise

LOW

ENTHUSIASM

HIGH



I Am a Person Who...
HAS THESE FAVORITE KINDS OF PEOPLE

Second Petal

MY PREFERRED KINDS OF PEOPLE TO WORK WITH

Why do *the people you prefer* matter at all in the larger scheme of things? Because, the people we work with are either energy drainers or energy creators. They either drag us down, and keep us from being our most effective, or they lift us up and help us to be at our best, and perform at our greatest effectiveness. We'll get into that, in a minute.

Keep in mind, "people-environments" are another way of describing jobs or careers. So,

we'll cover that here, too. Now, let us begin.

You'll probably need to copy the following [chart](#) to a larger piece of paper—8½ × 11 inches—before you start filling it in. And, by the way, you can fill it out alone, or in company with up to five other job-hunters (recommended, because it's a lot more fun to see how other people are bugged by the same kinds of people that you are).

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To avoid past bad experiences with people at work, since who (er, *whom*) you work with can either make the job delightful, or ruin your day, your week, your year.

What You Are Looking For: (1) A better picture in your mind of what kind of people surrounding you at work will enable you to operate at your highest and most effective level. (2) A better picture in your mind of what kind of people you would most like to serve or help: defined by age, problems, geography, and so forth.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: They can be adjectives describing different kinds of people (“kind,” “patient”) or it can be types of people, as in the “[Holland Code](#)” or “[MyersBriggs](#)” typologies.

Example of a Good Petal: (1) *Kind, generous, understanding, fun, smart.* (2) *The unemployed, people struggling with their faith, worldwide, all ages. Holland code: IAS.*

Example of a Bad Petal: *People in trouble, young, smart, in urban settings. RCI.*

Why Bad: It doesn't distinguish between (1) people surrounding me at work and (2) people I want to help or serve. It lumps both together. Not much help. Too vague.

MY FAVORITE PEOPLE CHART

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Places I Have Worked Thus Far in My Life	Kinds of People There Who Drove Me Nuts (from the first column) (No names, but describe <i>what</i> about them drove you nuts; e.g., <i>bossy, always pestering me with their personal problems, always left early before job was done, etc.</i> List these in any order; it doesn't matter—at least in <i>this</i> column . . .)	Kinds of People I'd Prefer Not to Have to Work With, In Order of Preference (This is now a ranking of the items in the second column, in exact order of: which is worse? next? etc. Use the Prioritizing Grid, page 121, to do this.) 1a. 2a. 3a. 4a. 5a.	Kinds of People I'd Most Like to Work With, in Order of Preference (The opposite of those qualities in the third column, in the same order) 1b. 2b. 3b. 4b. 5b.

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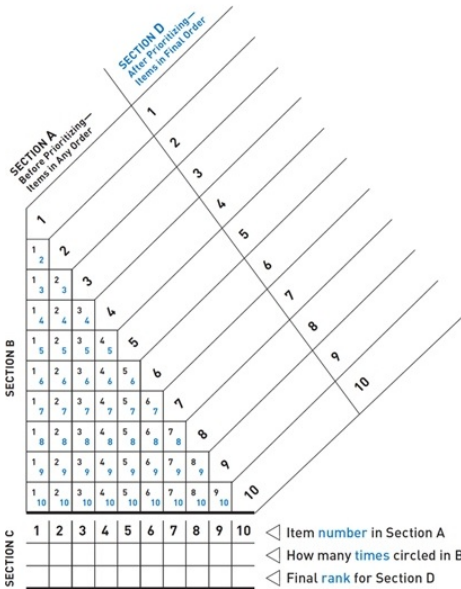


Start, of course, by filling in the first column in the chart, and then the second. This will

bring you to the third column, and here you're gonna need some help. How do you look back

PRIORITIZING GRID FOR 10 ITEMS OR LESS

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at that stuff in the second column, and prioritize it? Well, you use:

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The Prioritizing Grid

I give you my Prioritizing Grid. It asks you to decide between just two items at a time. There are two forms of it: one prioritizing twenty-four items, the other prioritizing just ten or fewer. I will explain the latter in some detail here. You will then see the twenty-four item grid is done in the same manner.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE PRIORITIZING GRID

Section A. Write down, in any order, the factors you listed in the second column of the [chart](#). The grid above will accommodate up to ten factors. If you originally listed more than ten, take a guess at which ten factors you disliked the most, and list *those ten*.

Section B. Compare just two items at a time. Begin with that little tiny box to the left of factor #1 and factor #2, in which you will see the tiny numbers 1 and 2. The numbers are clearly shorthand for those factors written out in Section A. The question you would frame for yourself, here, would be as follows: Which of these two factors do I dislike the most? Then, in that little tiny box you circle either the tiny number 1 or 2, depending on which factor you dislike the most.

In similar manner you work your way down the little boxes *nearest* Section A, which as you can see lie in a diagonal running from northwest to southeast. The next little tiny box has the tiny numbers 2 and 3 in it. Same question, except now it's between factor #2 versus factor #3. Circle the appropriate number in that tiny box. Why *diagonal*, rather than just straight across horizontally or straight down, vertically? Because you can get into a knee-jerk reaction if you do it that way ("Well, I checked factor #5 each time so far, so I guess I should check factor #5 this next time, too.") Diagonal defeats knee-jerk reactions.

So, work your way on down that diagonal direction. When you've reached the little box at the bottom of that first diagonal (containing the little numbers 9 and 10), go back up to the top and work down the next diagonal (beginning with the little box containing 1 and 3; then the little box containing 2 and 4; then the one containing 3 and 5, *etc.*

When you've reached the box at the bottom of *that* diagonal direction, go back up to the top, and work down the next diagonal (the little box containing 1 and 4, then the box containing 2 and 5, and so on, down to box containing 7 and 10).

Back up to the top to the next diagonal, the box containing 1 and 5, then the box containing 2 and 6, and so on. Keep this up until you've made a decision about every little box (the final one being 1 versus 10).

Section C. The bottom of the grid has three rows to it, as you can see. The first row is already filled in for you: it's the numbers of the factors in Section A. The second row, just below that, asks how many times each number got circled in *all* of the little tiny boxes. Let's say item 1 got circled 7 times. In the row right beneath #1 in the first row of Section C, you enter the number 7. Next, count how many times item 2 got circled; let's say it was 1 time; put the number 1 right below #2. Continue up through item 10.

Look now at the numbers in that second row. If no number is repeated in that second row of Section C, great! But, most likely you'll find a tie. That means two items got circled the same number of times—let's say 2 and 10. How do you resolve the tie? Well, you look back at Section B, to find the little tiny box that had 2 and 10 in it, and see which of those two you circled there; let's say it was 2. Well then, in that second row, give #2 an extra half point. Now its "count" is $1\frac{1}{2}$. Leave #10 as it is (count just 1). Do this with each two-way tie.

What do you do if you have a three-way tie—three items each got circled the same number of times? This always means that you contradicted yourself somewhere along the way: one time you said *this* was more important, another time you said, no it wasn't. The only way to resolve the three-way tie is to just guess what is the proper order (for you) as to which of the three you dislike the most, which next, which next. Let's say the tie was that 3, 4, and 7 all got circled the same number of times. You dislike #7 the most, #4 next, and #3 next. Okay, so give an extra $\frac{3}{4}$ point (*that's three-quarters of a point*) to #7, an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ point to #4, and no extra points to factor #3. Now, no two factors or items have the same count in the second line of Section C.

Go down now to the bottom row there in Section C, and now **rank** the items, according to their circle count in the second row. The factor that got circled the most, let's say it was item #6, must be given a *final rank* of 1. Therefore, write 1 in the third row, down below item #6. Let's say item #8 got the next most circles; write a 2 down below item #8. Let's say item #1 got the next most circles; write a 3 down below it, on the bottom rank line in Section C. And so on. And so forth.

Section D. Recopy the list that you randomly put down in Section A, but now here in Section D put the list in its exact order of *one you disliked the most, next most, etc.*—according to the ranking in the bottom row of Section C. In terms of our examples above, you would copy item #6 as it was called in Section A, and put it on the very top line in Section D, because it got circled the most. You would copy item #8 as it was called in

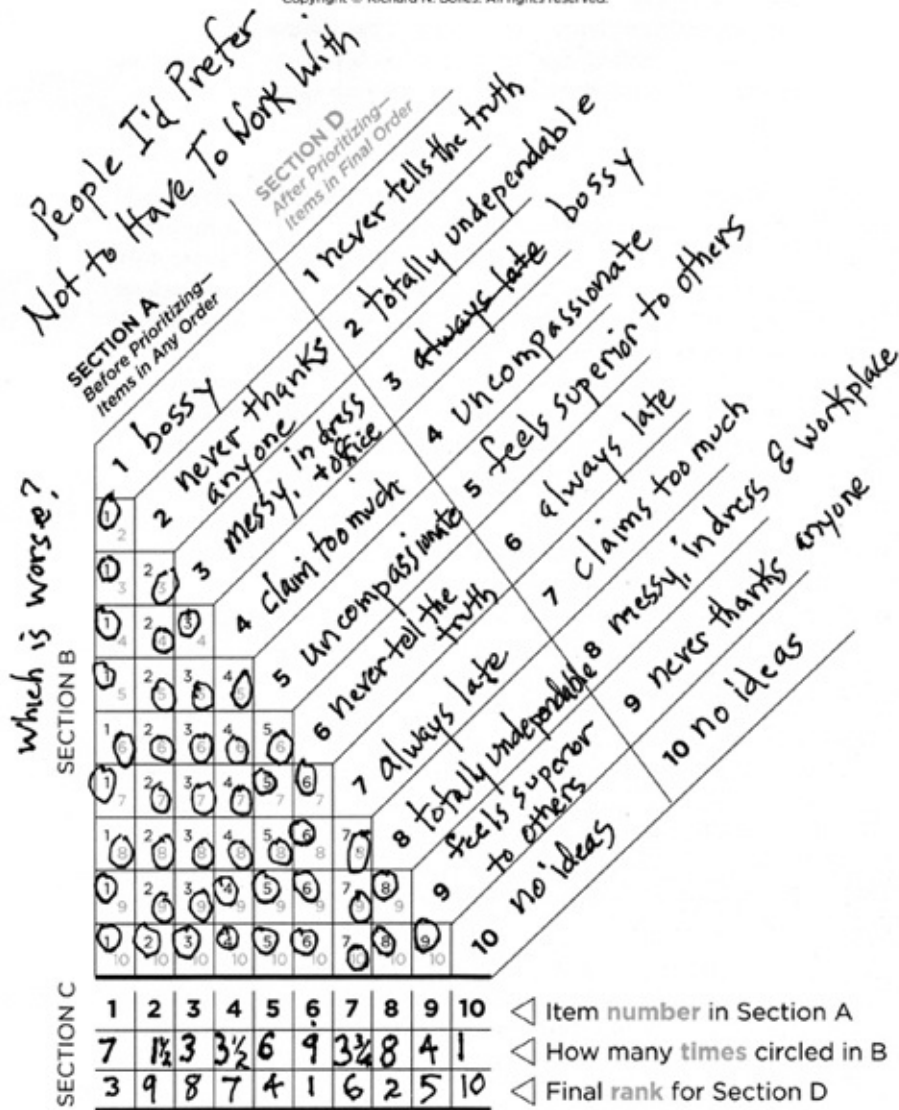
Section A onto the second line in Section D, because it got circled the next most times. And so on, until you've copied all ten factors in exactly the order of "dislike-ness" (new word) this grid revealed.

Now, what do you end up with, there in Section D? A list of your preferences, regarding people environments: *"I would most prefer not to have to work with ... and I next most prefer not to have to work with ..." etc.*

I knew you'd like an example of a finished Prioritizing Grid, which is what you have below. Note that there is a mistake on line 3 in Section D. No matter if you make a mistake. Just cross it out and put the correct information. It's okay not to be perfect.

PRIORITIZING GRID FOR 10 ITEMS OR LESS

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Now, back to the [chart](#). Copy the first five factors in Section D of the *grid*, into the third column of the *chart*. What you've got there, now, is a *negative* list of what you're trying to avoid. What you want is a *positive* list of what you're trying to find.

So, look at the five negative items you just put up there, in the third column of the *chart*, and write *the opposite*, or something near *the opposite*, directly opposite each item, in the fourth column of the *chart*. By "opposite" I don't necessarily mean "the exact opposite." If one of your complaints in the third column was: "I was micromanaged, supervised every hour of my day," the opposite, in the fourth column, wouldn't necessarily be "No supervision." It might be "Limited supervision" or something like that. Your call.

Note that by first putting your *negative* list in exact order of what you **most want to avoid** (third column in the chart), your related *positive* list (fourth column) will have its factors in the exact order of what you **most want to find** in a future job.

You might want, both here and elsewhere in this chapter, a Prioritizing Grid that allows you to work with more than ten items. So, [this page](#) has a twenty-four item grid, done in the same way as the ten-item. It just takes longer.

Whichever grid you decide to use, when you're done, copy the top five on your *positive* list,

onto the petal, [My Preferred Kinds of People to Work With](#).

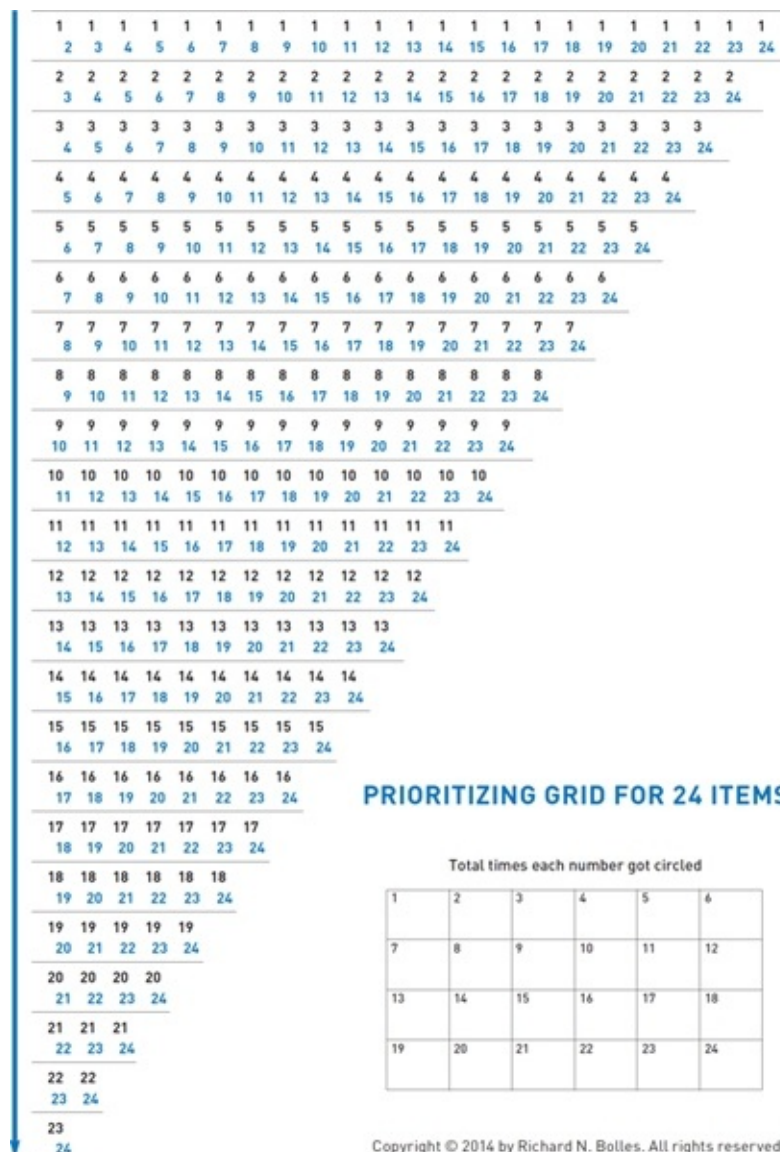
Then we move on, to do the rest of the petal.

The Party Game Exercise

This people exercise isn't just a matter of figuring out who irritates you and who doesn't. Though that is important. But, as mentioned earlier, *people* are also a way of identifying careers.

That's because every career has a characteristic **people-environment**. Tell us what **career** interests you, and we can tell you, in general terms, what people-environment it will offer—described in terms of six factors.

Or tell us what people-environment you want—in terms of those same six factors—and we can tell you what careers will give you *that*. As I always like to give credit where credit is due, you should know that it was the late Dr. John L. Holland who came up with the system for doing this.³



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Surveying the whole job-market, he said there are basically six people-environments. Let's tick them off:

Realistic People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “the explicit, ordered, or systematic manipulation of objects, tools, machines, and animals.” “Realistic,” incidentally, refers to Plato’s conception of “the real” as that which one can apprehend through the senses. (“Knock on wood!”) *I summarize this as: **R** = people who like nature, or plants, or animals, or athletics, or tools and machinery, or being outdoors.*

Investigative People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “the observation and symbolic, systematic, creative investigation of physical, biological, or cultural phenomena.”

*I summarize this as: **I** = people who are very curious, liking to investigate or analyze things, or people, or data.*

Artistic People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “ambiguous, free, unsystematized activities and competencies to create art forms or products.”

*I summarize this as: **A** = people who are very artistic, imaginative, and innovative, and don't like time clocks.*

Social People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “the manipulation of others to inform, train, develop, cure, or enlighten.”

*I summarize this as: **S** = people who are bent on trying to help, teach, or serve people.*

Enterprising People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “the manipulation of others to attain organizational or self-interest goals.”

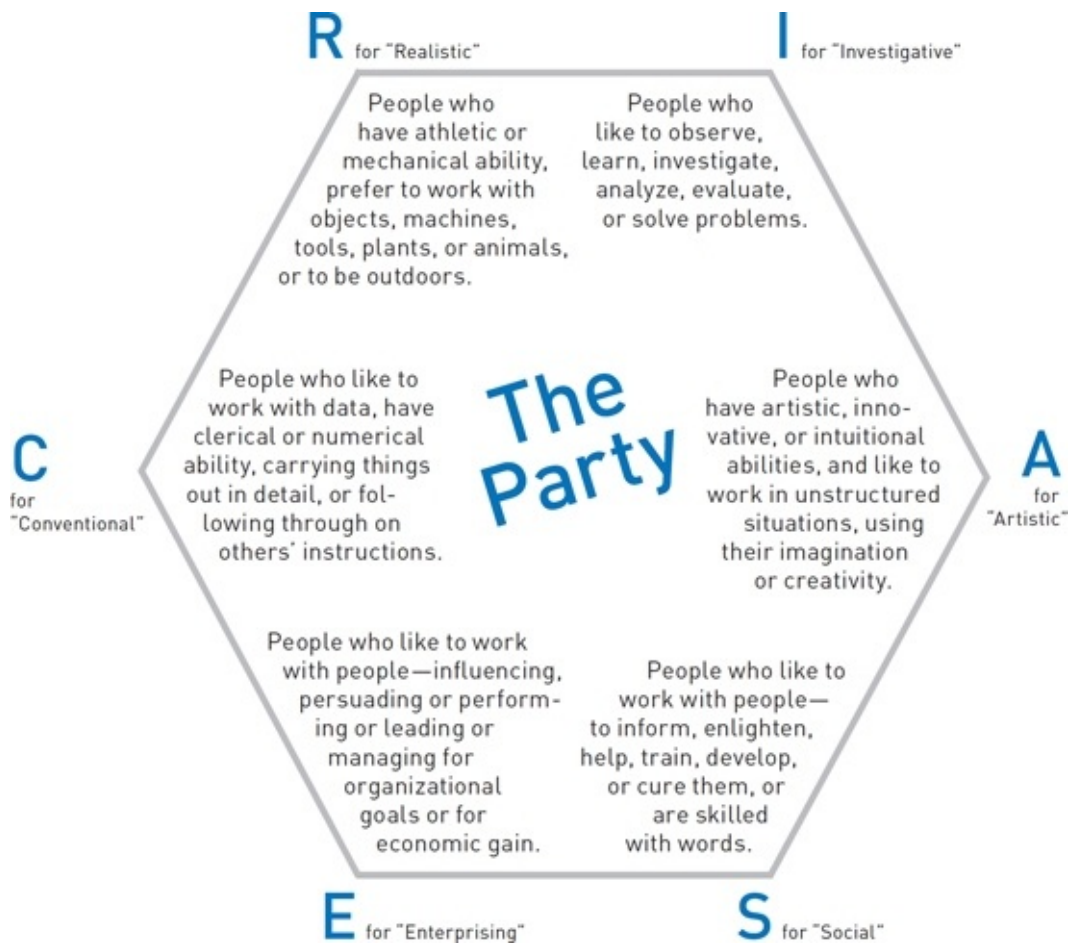
*I summarize this as: **E** = people who like to start up projects or organizations, or sell things, or influence and persuade people.*

Conventional People-Environment: filled with people who prefer activities involving “the explicit, ordered, systematic manipulation of data, such as keeping records, filing materials, reproducing materials, organizing written and numerical data according to a prescribed plan, operating business and data-processing machines.” “Conventional,” incidentally, refers to the “values” that people in this environment usually hold—representing the central mainstream of our culture.

*I summarize this as: **C** = people who like detailed work, and like to complete tasks or projects.*

According to John’s theory every one of us has **three** preferred people-environments, from among these six. The letters, above, for your three preferred people-environments gives you what is called your “Holland Code.” The question is, Which three?

Back in 1975 I invented a quick and easy way for you to find out, based on John’s system. It’s turned out it corresponds to the results you would get from the SDS, 92% of the time.⁴ So if you want a much more certain answer, you should take the SDS. But when you’re in a hurry, this is close. I call it “The Party Exercise.” Here is how the exercise goes (*do it, please*): On the next page is an aerial view of a room in which a party is taking place. At this party, people with the same interests have (for some reason) all gathered in the same corner of the room. And that’s true for all six corners.



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1. Which corner of the room would you instinctively be drawn to, as the group of people you would most enjoy being with for the longest time? (Leave aside any question of shyness, or whether you would have to actually talk to them; you could just listen.) Write down that letter on a separate piece of paper.
2. After fifteen minutes, everyone in the corner you chose leaves for another party crosstown, except you. Of the groups that still remain now, which corner or group would you be drawn to the most, as the people you would most enjoy being with for the longest time?

Write down that letter on a separate piece of paper.
3. After fifteen minutes, this group too leaves for another party, except you. Of the corners, and groups, which remain now, which one would you most enjoy being with for the longest time?

Write down that letter on a separate piece of paper.

The three letters you just chose are called your "Holland Code."⁵

Now, copy that code on to the petal, [My Preferred Kinds of People to Work With](#). And we are done (with that petal).

Time now to move on to another side of Who You Are.

I Am a Person Who... CAN DO THESE PARTICULAR THINGS

And *loves* having these transferable skills. Or gifts. Or talents. Or abilities. (Or whatever you want to call them.) There is a trend these days toward speaking of your gifts in terms of categories like “action verbs,” or “communication or people skills,” “technical skills,” “research and analytical skills,” “management, supervision, and leadership skills,” “clerical and administrative skills,” “problem-solving and development skills,” “financial skills,” *etc.* I prefer breaking transferable skills down into simpler categories: are they skills with information, data, and the like, or are they skills with people, or are they skills with things?”



And now, to the Petal:

Third Petal

WHAT I CAN DO AND LOVE TO DO (MY FAVORITE TRANSFERABLE SKILLS)

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To discover what your transferable skills are, that can be used

in any field or interest. These are your skills with people, or your skills with data, or your skills with things. They are things you probably were born knowing how to do, or at least you began with a natural gift and have honed and sharpened it since.

What You Are Looking For: Not just what you *can* do, but which of those skills you most *love* to use.

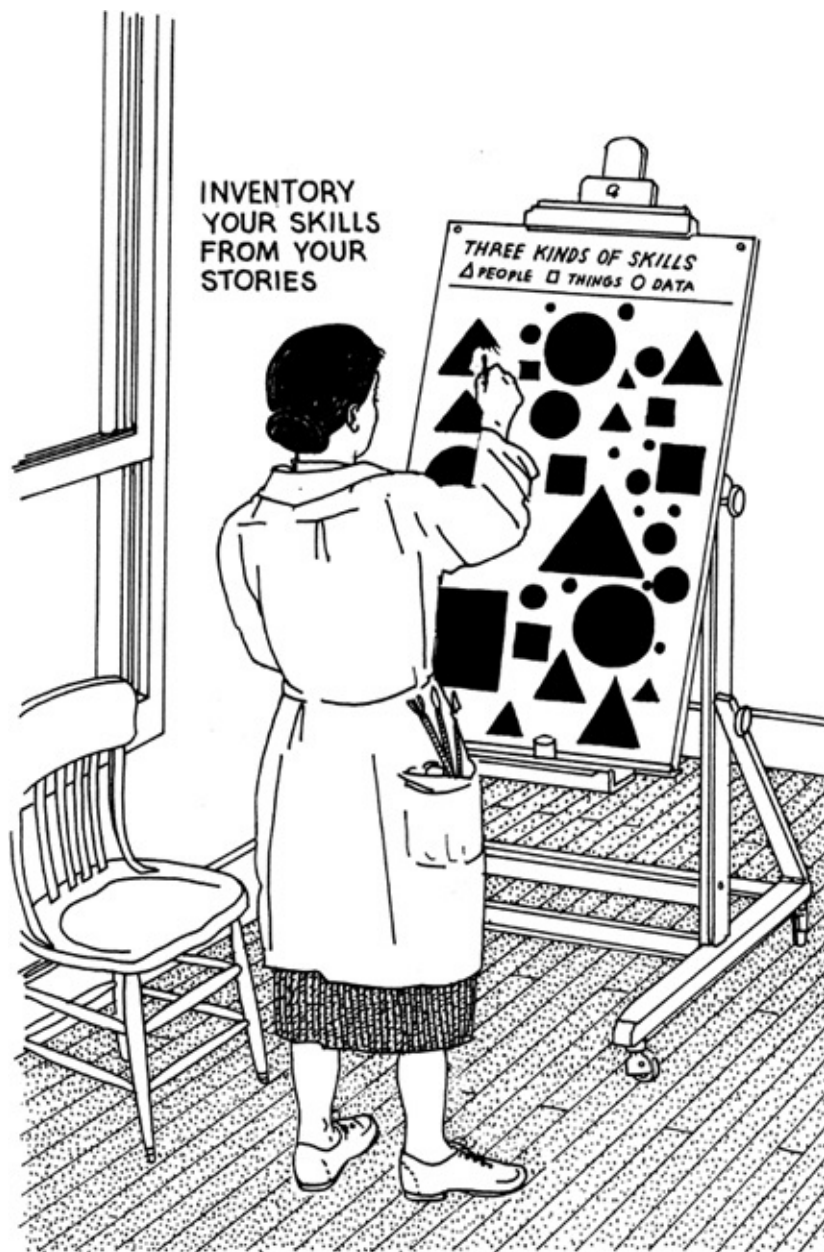
Form of the Entries on Your Petal: Verbs, usually in pure verb form (e.g. *analyze*) though they may sometimes be in *gerund* form (ending in -ing, e.g., *analyzing*).

Example of a Good Petal: (These stories show that I can) *innovate, manipulate, analyze, classify, coach, negotiate*; OR (These stories show that I am good at) *innovating, manipulating, analyzing, classifying, coaching, negotiating*.

Example of a Bad Petal: *Adaptable, charismatic, reliable, perceptive, discreet, dynamic, persistent, versatile*.

Why Bad: These are all *traits*, that is, they are the style with which you do your best, favorite, transferable skills. They are important, but they are not transferable skills. Incidentally, there is a new category floating around in the past ten years, called “soft skills.” These are really just another way of speaking about traits, because examples typically given are things like “a good work ethic,” “a positive attitude,” “acting as a team player,” “flexibility,” “working well under pressure,” and “ability to learn from criticism.”

Here, you are looking for what you may think of as the basic building-blocks of your work. So, if you’re going to identify your dream job, and/or attempt a thorough career-change, you must, above all else, identify your functional, transferable skills. And while you may think you know what your best and favorite skills are, in most cases your self-knowledge could probably use a little work.



A weekend should do it! In a weekend, you can inventory your *past* sufficiently so that you have a good picture of the *kind* of work you would love to be doing *in the future*. (You can, of course, stretch the inventory over a number of weeks, maybe doing an hour or two one night a week, if you prefer. It's up to you as to how fast you do it.)

A Crash Course on “Transferable Skills”

Many people just “freeze” when they hear the word “skills.”

It begins with high school job-hunters: “I haven’t really got any skills,” they say.

It continues with college students: “I’ve spent four years in college. I haven’t had time to pick up any skills.”

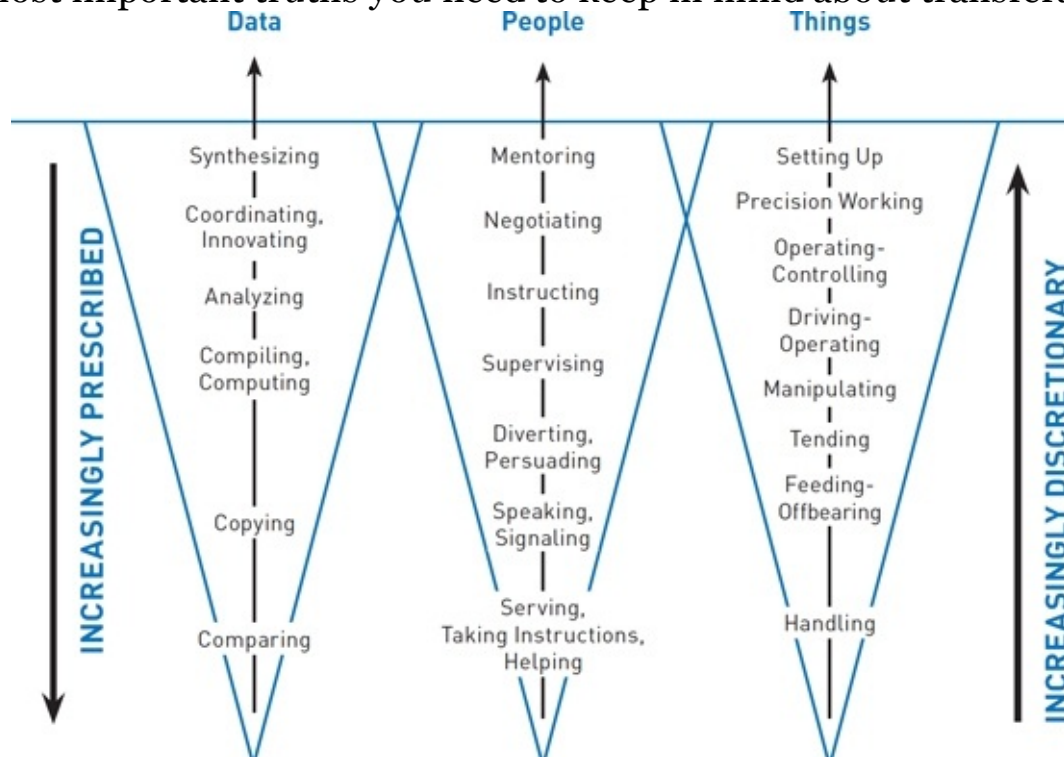
And it lasts through the middle years, especially when a person is thinking of changing his or her career: “I’ll have to go back to college, and get retrained, because otherwise I won’t have any skills in my new field.” Or: “Well, if I claim any skills, I’ll start at a very entry kind of level.”

All of this fright about the word “skills” is very common, and stems from a total misunderstanding of what the word means. A misunderstanding that is shared, we might add, by altogether too many employers, or human resources departments, and other so-called “vocational experts.”

By understanding the word, you will automatically put yourself way ahead of most job-hunters. And, especially if you are weighing a change of career, you can save yourself much waste of time on the adult folly called, “I must go back to school.” I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again: *maybe* you need some further schooling, but very often it is possible to make a dramatic career-change without any retraining. It all depends. And you won’t really *know* whether or not you need further schooling, until you have finished all the exercises in this section of the book.

All right, then, if transferable skills are the heart of your vision and your destiny, let’s see just exactly what transferable skills *are*.

Here are the most important truths you need to keep in mind about transferable,



functional skills:

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1. **Your transferable (functional) skills are the most basic unit—the atoms—of whatever career you may choose.**

Above is a famous diagram of them, invented by the late Sidney A. Fine (reprinted by his permission).

2. **You should always claim the highest skills you legitimately can, on the basis of your past performance.**

As we see in the functional/transferable skills diagram above, your transferable skills break down into three *families*, according to whether you use them with Data/Information, People, or Things. And again, as this diagram makes clear, within each family there are *simple* skills, and there are higher, or *more complex* skills, so that these all can be diagrammed as inverted pyramids, with the simpler skills at the bottom, and the more complex ones in order above it.

Incidentally, as a general rule—to which there are exceptions—each *higher* skill requires you to be able also to do all those skills listed below it. So of course you can claim *those*, as well. But you want to especially claim the highest skill you legitimately can, on each pyramid, based on what you have already proven you can do, in the past.

3. **The higher your transferable skills, the more freedom you will have on the job.**

Simpler skills can be, and usually are, heavily *prescribed* (by the employer), so if you claim *only* the simpler skills, you will have to “*fit in*”—following the instructions of your supervisor, and doing exactly what you are told to do. The *higher* the skills you can legitimately claim, the more you will be given discretion to carve out the job the way you want to—so that it truly fits *you*.

4. **The higher your transferable skills, the less competition you will face for whatever job you are seeking, because jobs that use such skills will rarely be advertised through normal channels.**

Not for you the way of classified ads, resumes, and agencies. No, if you can legitimately claim higher skills, then to find such jobs you *must* follow the step-by-step process I am describing here.

The essence of our approach to job-hunting or career-changing is that once you have identified your favorite transferable skills, and your favorite special knowledges, you may then approach *any organization that interests you, whether they have a known vacancy or not*. Naturally, whatever places you visit—and particularly those that have not advertised any vacancy—you will find far fewer job-hunters that you have to compete with.

In fact, if the employers you visit happen to like you well enough, they may be willing to create for you a job that does not presently exist. *In which case, you will be competing with no one, since you will be the sole applicant for that newly created job*. While this doesn't happen all the time, it is astounding to me how many times it *does* happen. The *reason* it does is that the employers often have been *thinking* about creating a new job within their organization, for quite some time—but with this and that, they just have never gotten around to *doing* it. Until you walked in.

Then they decided they didn't want to let you get away, since *good employees are as hard to find as good employers*. And they suddenly remember that job they have been thinking about creating for many weeks or months, now. So they dust off their *intention*, create the job on the spot, and offer it to you! And if that new job is not only what *they* need, but is exactly what *you* were looking for, then you have a dream job. Match-match. Win-win.

From our country's perspective, it is also interesting to note this: by this job-hunting initiative of yours, you have helped accelerate the creation of more jobs in your country, which is so much on everybody's mind here in the new millennium. How nice to help your country, as well as yourself!

5. **Don't confuse transferable skills with traits.**

Functional/transferable skills are often confused with traits, temperaments, or type. People think transferable skills are such things as: *has lots of energy, gives attention to details, gets along well with people, shows determination, works well under pressure, is*

sympathetic, intuitive, persistent, dynamic, dependable, etc. As mentioned on in the section on the **Third Petal**, these are not functional/transferable skills, but traits, or the *style* with which you do your transferable skills. For example, take “*gives attention to details.*” If one of your *transferable skills* is “*conducting research*” then “*gives attention to details*” describes the manner or style with which you do the transferable skill called *conducting research*. If you want to know what your traits are, popular tests such as the *MyersBriggs Type Indicator* measure that sort of thing.⁶

If you have access to the Internet, there are clues, at least, about your traits or “type”:

Working Out Your MyersBriggs Type

www.teamtechnology.co.uk/mb-intro/mb-intro.htm

An informative article about the MyersBriggs **The 16 Personality Types**

www.personalitypage.com/high-level.html

A helpful site about Myers types

What Is Your MyersBriggs Personality Type?

www.personalitypathways.com/type_inventory.html

www.personalitypathways.com

Another article about personality types; also, there’s a MyersBriggs Applications page, with links to test resources **MyersBriggs Foundation home page**

www.myersbriggs.org

The official website of the Foundation; lots of testing resources **Human Metrics Test (Jung Typology)**

www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp

Free test, loosely based on the MyersBriggs **MyersBriggs Type Indicator Online**

www.discoveryyourpersonality.com/MBTI.html

On this site you can find the official MyersBriggs test, \$60

The Keirsey Temperament Sorter

<http://keirsey.com>

Free test, similar to the MyersBriggs

“I WOULDN’T RECOGNIZE MY SKILLS IF THEY CAME UP AND SHOOK HANDS WITH ME”

Now that you know what transferable skills technically *are*, the problem that awaits you now, is figuring out your own. If you are one of the few lucky people who already know what your transferable skills are, blessed are you. Write them down, and put them in the order of preference, for you, on the **Flower Diagram**.

If, however, you don’t know what your skills are (and 95% of all workers *don’t*), then you will need some help. Fortunately, there is an exercise to help.

It involves the following steps: 

1. Write a Story (The First of Seven)

Yes, I know, I know. You can't do this exercise because you don't like to write. *Writers are a very rare breed.* That's what thousands of job-hunters have told me, over the years. And for years I kind of believed them—until “texting” came along. Let's face it: we human beings are “a writing people,” and we only need a topic we have a real passion for, or interest in, for the writing genie to spring forth from within each of us, pen or keyboard in hand.

So, call the *Seven Stories* you're about to write your personal *offline blog*, if you prefer. But start writing. Please.

Here is a specific example:

A number of years ago, I wanted to be able to take a summer trip with my wife and four children. I had a very limited budget, and could not afford to put my family up in motels. I decided to rig our station wagon as a camper.

First I went to the library to get some books on campers. I read those books. Next I designed a plan of what I had to build, so that I could outfit the inside of the station wagon, as well as topside. Then I went and purchased the necessary wood. On weekends, over a period of six weeks, I first constructed, in my driveway, the shell for the “second story” on my station wagon. Then I cut doors, windows, and placed a six-drawer bureau within that shell. I mounted it on top of the wagon, and pinioned it in place by driving two-by-fours under the station wagon's rack on top. I then outfitted the inside of the station wagon, back in the wheel-well, with a table and a bench on either side, that I made.

The result was a complete homemade camper, which I put together when we were about to start our trip, and then disassembled after we got back home. When we went on our summer trip, we were able to be on the road for four weeks, yet stayed within our budget, since we didn't have to stay at motels. I estimate I saved \$1,900 on motel bills, during that summer's vacation.



Ideally, each story you write should have the following parts, as illustrated above:

Your goal: what you wanted to accomplish: *“I wanted to be able to take a summer trip with my wife and four children.”*

Some kind of hurdle, obstacle, or constraint that you faced (self-imposed or otherwise): *“I had a very limited budget, and could not afford to put my family up in*

motels.”

A description of what you did, step by step (how you set about to ultimately achieve your goal, above, in spite of this hurdle or constraint): *“I decided to rig our station wagon as a camper. First I went to the library to get some books on campers. I read those books. Next I designed a plan of what I had to build, so that I could outfit the inside of the station wagon, as well as topside. Then I went and purchased the necessary wood. On weekends, over a period of six weeks, I ...”* etc., etc.

A description of the outcome or result: *“When we went on our summer trip, we were able to be on the road for four weeks, yet stayed within our budget, since we didn’t have to stay at motels.”*

Any measurable/quantifiable statement of that outcome, that you can think of: *“I estimate I saved \$1,900 on motel bills, during that summer’s vacation.”*

Now write *your* story, using the sample as a guide.

Don’t pick a story where you achieved something *big*. At least to begin with, write a story about a time when you had fun!

Do not try to be too brief. This isn’t Twitter.

If you absolutely can’t think of any experiences you’ve had where you enjoyed yourself, and accomplished something, then try this: describe the seven most enjoyable jobs that you’ve had; or seven roles you’ve had so far in your life, such as: wife, mother, cook, homemaker, volunteer in the community, citizen, dressmaker, student, *etc.* Tell us something you did or accomplished, in each role.

2. Analyze Your Story, to See What Transferable Skills You Used

On the next page, write the title of your first story *above* the number 1. Then work your way down the column *below* that number 1, asking yourself in each case: “Did I use this skill in *this* story?”

If the answer is “Yes,” color the little square in, with a red pen or whatever you choose.

Work your way through the entire Parachute Skills Grid that way, with your first story.

Voilà! You are done with Story #1. However, “one swallow doth not a summer make,” so the fact that you used certain skills in this first story doesn’t tell you much. What you are looking for is patterns—transferable skills that keep reappearing in story after story. They keep reappearing because they are your favorites (assuming you chose stories where you were *really* enjoying yourself).



THE PARACHUTE SKILLS GRID



Your Seven Stories

In the space to the left, write above each number, in turn, the name you give to each story. Begin with Story #1. After you have written it, give it a name. Enter that name here (turn page on its side) above #1.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Skills with People; as my story shows, I can . . .
							Initiate, lead, be a pioneer
							Supervise, manage
							Follow through, get things done
							Motivate
							Persuade, sell, recruit
							Consult
							Advise
							Coordinate
							Negotiate, resolve conflicts
							Help people link up or connect
							Heal, cure
							Assess, evaluate, treat
							Convey warmth and empathy
							Interview, draw out
							Raise people's self-esteem
							Instruct
							Teach, tutor, or train (individuals, groups, animals)

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Skills with People; as my story shows, I can ... (continued)
							Speak
							Listen
							Counsel, guide, mentor
							Communicate well, in person
							Communicate well, in writing
							Divert, amuse, entertain, perform, act
							Play an instrument
							Interpret, speak, or read a foreign language
							Serve, care for, follow instructions faithfully
							Skills with Data, Ideas; as my story shows, I can ...
							Use my intuition
							Create, innovate, invent
							Design, use artistic abilities, be original
							Visualize, including in three dimensions
							Imagine
							Use my brain
							Synthesize, combine parts into a whole
							Systematize, prioritize
							Organize, classify
							Perceive patterns
							Analyze, break down into its parts
							Work with numbers, compute
							Remember people, or data, to unusual degree
							Develop, improve
							Solve problems

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Skills with Data, Ideas; as my story shows, I can . . . (continued)
							Plan
							Program
							Research
							Examine, inspect, compare, see similarities and differences
							Pay attention to details
							Use acute senses (hearing, smell, taste, sight)
							Study, observe
							Compile, keep records, file, retrieve
							Copy
							Skills with Things; as my story shows, I can . . .
							Control, expedite things
							Make, produce, manufacture
							Repair
							Finish, restore, preserve
							Construct
							Shape, model, sculpt
							Cut, carve, chisel
							Set up, assemble
							Handle, tend, feed
							Operate, drive
							Manipulate
							Use my body, hands, fingers, with unusual dexterity or strength

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3. Write Six Other Stories, and Analyze Them for Transferable Skills

Now, write Story #2, from any period in your life, analyze it using the grid, etc., etc. And keep this process up, until you have written, and analyzed, seven stories.

If you are finding it difficult to come up with seven stories, it may help you to know how others chose one or more of their stories:⁷

“As I look back, I realize I chose a story that:

Is somehow abnormal or inconsistent with the rest of my life ▪ Reveals my skills in a public way ▪ Is in a field (such as leisure, learning, etc.) far removed from my work ▪ I remembered through or because of its outcome ▪ Represented a challenge/gave me pride because it was something:

I previously could not do

My friends could not do

I was not supposed to be able to do • Only my father/mother could do, I thought • Only authorized/trained/experts were supposed to be able to do • Somebody told me I could not do

My peers did not do/could not do

The best/brilliant/famous could or could not do • I did not have the right degree/training to do • People of the opposite sex usually do

I would like to do again:

In a similar/different setting • With similar/different people

For free for a change/for money for a change

Excited me because:

I never did it before

It was forbidden

I took a physical risk

I was taking a financial risk

No one had ever done it before

It demanded a long and persistent (physical/mental) effort • It made me even with someone

I loved doing it because:

I kind of like this sort of thing • The people involved were extremely nice • It did not cost me anything

It will support/justify the professional goals I have already chosen”

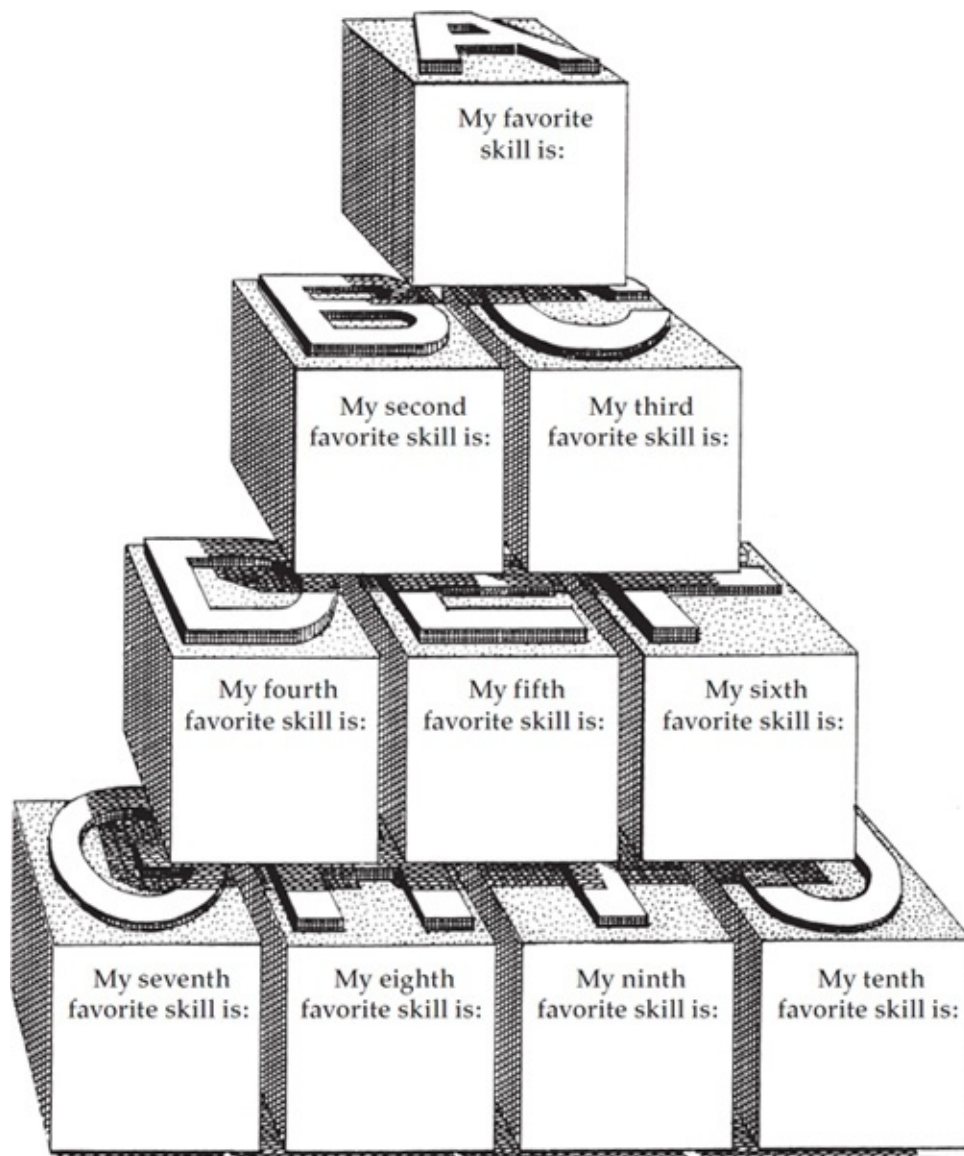
4. Patterns and Priorities

When you’ve finished this whole inventory, for all seven of your accomplishments/achievements/jobs/roles or whatever, you want to look for PATTERNS and PRIORITIES.

- a. For Patterns, because it isn’t a matter of whether you used a skill once only, but rather whether you used it again and again. “Once” proves nothing; “again and again” is very convincing.
- b. For Priorities (that is, which skills are most important to you), because the job you eventually choose may not be able to use all of your skills. You need to know *what you are willing to trade off, and what you are not*. This requires that you know which skills, or family of skills, are most important to you.

So, after finishing your seven stories (or if you’re in a hurry, at least five), look through that Skills Grid, and now *guess* which *might* be your top ten favorite or your top twenty-four favorite skills. These should be your best *guesses*, and they should be about *your favorite* skills: not the ones you think the job-market will like the best, but the ones *you* enjoy using the most.

At this point you want to be able to prioritize those ten or those twenty-four *in exact order of priority*. We need something a little more scientific than *guesses*. Time for the **Prioritizing Grid** again, either the ten-item one, or the twenty-four (or fewer) one. Your choice. Run your *guesses* through the grid you choose, and when you’re done with that grid’s Section D, copy the top ten (from either grid) on to the building blocks diagram below, as well as onto your **Favorite Transferable Skills** petal.



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A word of explanation about this building blocks diagram. Its purpose is to show, as the Skills Petal cannot, how rearranging your skills can define a new career. Suppose for example I end up with these top ten favorite skills: analyze, teach, research, write, diagnose, synthesize, entertain, classify, convey warmth, lead, motivate. (*I might prefer to put them in their gerund form: analyzing, teaching, researching, writing, diagnosing, synthesizing, entertaining, classifying, conveying warmth, leading, motivating.*) Either way, if I enter these terms onto those building blocks, the top one helps to define the kind of job or career I'm looking for. Put "analyzing" in the top block, I might seek a job as an analyst. But, if instead I move "teaching" to the top block, then I might seek a job as a teacher. And so on, with "researching," "writing," "diagnosing," *etc.*

PRIORITIZING GRID FOR 10 ITEMS OR LESS

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SECTION A
Before Prioritizing—
Items in Any Order

SECTION D
After Prioritizing—
Items in Final Order

SECTION B

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

SECTION C

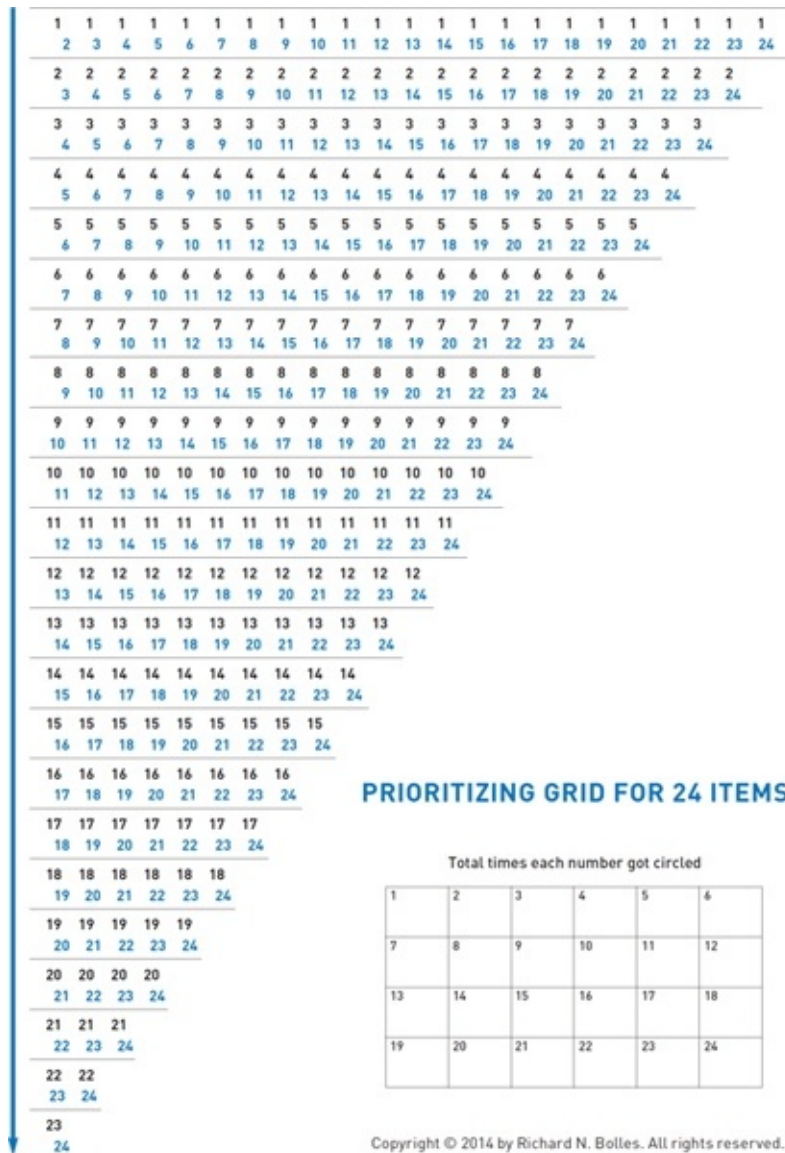
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

◁ Item **number** in Section A

◁ How many **times** circled in B

◁ Final **rank** for Section D

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Here we see the folly of most training programs for the unemployed. They deal with roles when they should be dealing with skills. An unemployed construction worker, for example, is typically *retrained* for just one role: say, *computer repair person*. But if we see ourselves not as one role, but as ten different skills, then after retraining, there are several careers (or roles) we can pursue.

5. “Flesh Out” Your Favorite Transferable Skills with Your Traits

We discussed traits earlier ([this page](#) and [this page](#)). In general, traits describe: How you deal with time, and promptness.

How you deal with people and emotions.

How you deal with authority, and being told what to do at your job.

How you deal with supervision, and being told how to do your job.

How you deal with impulse vs. self-discipline, within yourself.

How you deal with initiative vs. response, within yourself.

How you deal with crises or problems.

You need to flesh out your skill-description for each of your favorite skills so that you are

able to describe each of your talents or skills with more than just a one-word verb or gerund, like *organizing*.

Let's take *organizing* as our example. You tell us proudly: "I'm good at organizing." That's a fine start at defining your skills, but unfortunately it doesn't yet tell us much. Organizing WHAT? People, as at a party? Nuts and bolts, as on a workbench? Or lots of information, as on a computer? These are three entirely different skills. The one word *organizing* doesn't tell us which one is yours.

So, please look at your top ten favorite transferable skills, and ask yourself if you want to flesh out any of them with **an object**—some kind of Data/Information, or some kind of People, or some kind of Thing—or with **a Trait** (adverb or adjective).

Why adjectives here? Well, "I'm good at organizing information painstakingly and logically" and "I'm good at organizing information in a flash, by intuition," are two entirely different skills. The difference between them is spelled out not in the verb, nor in the object, but in the adjectival or adverbial phrase there at the end. So, expand the definition of any of your ten favorite skills that you choose, in the fashion I have just described.

A CHECKLIST OF MY STRONGEST TRAITS

I am very...

- Accurate
- Achievement-oriented
- Adaptable
- Adept
- Adept at having fun ▪ Adventuresome ▪ Alert
- Appreciative ▪ Assertive
- Astute
- Authoritative ▪ Calm
- Cautious
- Charismatic
- Competent
- Consistent
- Contagious in my enthusiasm ▪ Cooperative
- Courageous
- Creative
- Decisive
- Deliberate
- Dependable/have dependability ▪ Diligent
- Diplomatic
- Discreet
- Driving

- Dynamic
- Effective
- Energetic
- Enthusiastic ▪ Exceptional
- Exhaustive
- Experienced
- Expert
- Extremely economical ▪ Firm
- Flexible
- Humanly oriented ▪ Impulsive
- Independent
- Innovative
- Knowledgeable ▪ Loyal
- Methodical
- Objective
- Open-minded
- Outgoing
- Outstanding
- Patient
- Penetrating
- Perceptive
- Persevering
- Persistent
- Pioneering
- Practical
- Professional ▪ Protective
- Punctual ▪ Quick/work quickly ▪ Rational
- Realistic
- Reliable
- Resourceful
- Responsible
- Responsive
- Safeguarding ▪ Self-motivated ▪ Self-reliant ▪ Sensitive
- Sophisticated, very sophisticated ▪ Strong
- Supportive
- Tactful

- Thorough
- Unique
- Unusual
- Versatile
- Vigorous

When you are face-to-face with a person-who-has-the-power-to-hire-you, you want to be able to explain what makes you different from nineteen other people who can basically do the same thing that you can do. It is often the adjective or adverb that will save your life, during that explanation.

Now, on to another side of Who You Are.

I Am a Person Who... HAS FAVORITE WORKING CONDITIONS

Fourth Petal

MY FAVORITE WORKING CONDITIONS

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To state the working conditions and surroundings, that would make you happiest, and therefore enable you to do your most effective work.

What You Are Looking For: Avoiding past bad experiences.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: Descriptors of physical surroundings.

Example of a Good Petal: *A workspace with lots of windows, nice view of greenery, relatively quiet, decent lunch period, flexibility about clocking in and clocking out, lots of shops nearby.*

Example of a Bad Petal: *Understanding boss, good colleagues, fun clients, etc.*

Why Bad: These all belong on the petal called Preferred Kinds of People to Work With, not this one, which is just about the physical surroundings at your work. Of course, since this is your Flower Diagram, you can put any info you like on any petal you like. It's just that if you want your thinking to be clear, it's useful to preserve the difference between "what is my physical setting going to be like?" and "who will I be working with?"

Your physical setting where you work can cheer you up or drag your spirits down. It's important to know this before you weigh whether to take a particular job offer, or not. So,

let's start with working conditions that made you unhappy in the past, and then flip them over into positives, by filling out the chart below.

DISTASTEFUL WORKING CONDITIONS CHART

	Column A — Distasteful Working Conditions	Column B — Distasteful Working Conditions Ranked	Column C + The Keys to My Effectiveness at Work
Places I Have Worked Thus Far in My Life	I Have Learned from the Past That My Effectiveness at Work Is Decreased When I Have to Work Under These Conditions	Among the Factors or Qualities Listed in Column A, These Are the Ones I Dislike Absolutely the Most (in Order of Decreasing Dislike) 1a. 2a. 3a. 4a. 5a. 6a. 7a. 8a. 9a. 10a.	I Believe My Effectiveness Would Be at an Absolute Maximum, If I Could Work Under These Conditions (The Opposite of the Qualities in Column B, in Order): 1b. 2b. 3b. 4b. 5b. 6b. 7b. 8b. 9b. 10b.

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Plants that grow beautifully at sea level, often perish if they're taken ten thousand feet up the mountain. Likewise, we do our best work under certain conditions, but not under others. Thus, the question: "What are your favorite working conditions?" actually is a question about "Under what circumstances do you do your most effective work?"

As I just mentioned, the best way to approach this is by starting with the things you *disliked* about all your previous jobs, using the chart below to list these. Copy this chart onto a larger piece of notebook paper if you wish, before you begin filling it out. *Column A may begin with such factors as: "too noisy," "too much supervision," "no windows in my workplace," "having to be at work by 6 a.m.," etc.*

If you are baffled as to how to prioritize the Column A list in the space provided for that ranking (Column B), I recommend you use the ten-item Prioritizing Grid on the next page. (For a refresher on how to use it, turn to "[Instructions for Using the Prioritizing Grid](#),".) This time, when you compare each two items, the question you must ask yourself is, "If I were offered two jobs, and in the first job offer I would be rid of my first distasteful working condition (1) but not the second (2), while in the second job offer I would be rid of my second distasteful working condition (2), but not the first (1), which job offer would I take?"

PRIORITIZING GRID FOR 10 ITEMS OR LESS

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SECTION A
Before Prioritizing—
Items in Any Order

SECTION B

SECTION D
After Prioritizing—
Items in Final Order

SECTION C

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										

◁ Item **number** in Section A
 ◁ How many **times** circled in B
 ◁ Final **rank** for Section D

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After you've finished prioritizing, what have you ended up with, in Section D? The exact list you copy into Column B of your [Distasteful Working Conditions chart](#).

Now that you have that list in Column B, ranked in terms of most distasteful down to least distasteful working conditions, turn to Column C in that chart and write *the opposite*, or something near *the opposite*, directly opposite each item in Column B.

Copy the top five items in Column C, onto the Favorite Working Conditions petal of your [Flower Diagram](#).

Now, on to another side of Who You Are.



"THE VALUE OF MY HOUSE IS WAY DOWN, THE VALUE OF MY CAR IS PRACTICALLY NOTHING, AND I FOUND OUT THIS SUIT IS ONLY WORTH \$23."

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I Am a Person Who... PREFERS A CERTAIN LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SALARY

Fifth Petal

MY PREFERRED SALARY AND LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To gain a realistic picture of how much money you will need to earn, or want to earn, at whatever job you find.

What You Are Looking For: A range, because most employers are thinking in terms of a range, too. When you negotiate salary, as you will almost certainly have to, you want the bottom of your range to be near the top of theirs.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: Total dollars needed, weekly, monthly, or annually. Stated in thousands (symbol: K).

Example of a Good Petal: \$75K to \$85K

Example of a Bad Petal: \$300K

Why Bad: Well, it's not a range, which it needs to be; and it's too high unless you put on the petal the reason why such a high income is expected, and justified.

Money is important. Or else we've got to barter for our food, clothing, and shelter. So, when we're out of work, unless we have huge amounts of money in our savings account or investments, we are inevitably thinking: "What am I going to do, so that I have enough money to put food on the table, clothes on my back, and a roof over our heads for myself—and for my family or partner (*if I have one*)?"

Happiness is important, too. So, we may find ourselves thinking: "How much do I really need to be earning, for me to be truly happy with my life?"

Are these two worries—money and happiness—related? Can money buy happiness?

Partly, it turns out. Partly. A study, published in 2010, of the responses of 450,000 people in the U.S. to a daily survey, found that the less money they made, the more unhappy they tended to be, day after day.⁸ No surprise, there. And, obviously, the more money they made, measured in terms of percentage improvement, the happier they tended to be, *as measured by the frequency and intensity of moments of smiling, laughter, affection, and joy all day long, vs. moments of sadness, worry, and stress.*

So, money does buy happiness. But only up to a point. That point was found to be around \$75,000 annual income (*at the end of 2011, median household income was \$51,413*⁹). If people made more money than \$75,000, it of course further improved their *satisfaction* with how their life was going, but it did not increase their happiness. Above \$75,000, they started to report reduced ability to spend time with people they liked, to enjoy leisure, and to savor small pleasures. Happiness depends on things like that, and on other factors too: good health, a loving relationship, loving friends, a feeling of competence, gaining mastery, respect, praise, or even love, because we are really good at what we do.

So, this petal cannot be filled out all by itself. It is inextricably tied to the other petals—most particularly, to what you love to do, and where you love to do it.

Still, salary is something you must think out ahead of time, when you're contemplating your ideal job or career. Level goes hand in hand with salary, of course.

1. The first question here is at what level would you like to work, in your ideal job?

Level is a matter of how much responsibility you want, in an organization:

Boss or CEO (this may mean you'll have to form your own business) ▪ Manager or someone under the boss who carries out orders ▪ The head of a team ▪ A member of a team of equals ▪ One who works in tandem with one other partner ▪ One who works alone, either as an employee or as a consultant to an organization, or as a one-person business

Enter a two-or three-word summary of your answer, on the Preferred Salary and Level of Responsibility petal of your [Flower Diagram](#).

2. The second question here is what salary would you like to be aiming for?

Here you have to think in terms of minimum or maximum. Minimum is what you would need to make, if you were just barely "getting by." And you need to know this *before* you go in for a job interview with anyone (*or before you form your own business, and need to know how much profit you must make, just to survive*).

Maximum could be any astronomical figure you can think of, but it is more useful here to put down the salary you realistically think you could make, with your present competency

and experience, were you working for a real, *but generous*, boss. (If this maximum figure is still depressingly low, then put down the salary you would like to be making five years from now.) Make out a detailed list of what you will need monthly, in each category:¹⁰

Housing

Rent or mortgage payments: \$_____

Electricity/gas: \$_____

Water: \$_____

Phone/Internet: \$_____

Garbage removal: \$_____

Cleaning, maintenance, repairs¹¹: \$_____

Food

What you spend at the supermarket and/or farmer's market, etc.: \$_____

Eating out: \$_____

Clothing

Purchase of new or used clothing: \$_____

Cleaning, dry cleaning, laundry: \$_____

Automobile/transportation

Car payments: \$_____

Gas (*who knows?*¹²): \$_____

Repairs: \$_____

Public transportation (*bus, train, plane*): \$_____

Insurance

Car: \$_____

Medical or health care: \$_____

House and personal possessions: \$_____

Life: \$_____

Medical expenses

Doctors' visits: \$_____

Prescriptions: \$_____

Fitness costs: \$_____

Support for other family members Child-care costs (*if you have children*): \$_____

Child-support (*if you're paying that*): \$_____

Support for your parents (*if you're helping out*): \$_____

Charity giving/tithe (*to help others*): \$_____

School/learning

Children's costs (*if you have children in school*): \$_____

Your learning costs (*adult education, job-hunting classes, etc.*): \$_____

Pet care (*if you have pets*): \$_____

Bills and debts (*usual monthly payments*) Credit cards: \$_____

Local stores: \$_____

Other obligations you pay off monthly: \$_____

Taxes Federal¹³ (*next April's due, divided by months remaining until then*): \$_____

State (*likewise*): \$_____

Local/property (*next amount due, divided by months remaining until then*): \$_____

Tax-help (if you ever use an accountant, pay a friend to help you with taxes, etc.):

\$_____

Savings: \$_____

Retirement (*Keogh, IRA, SEP, etc.*): \$_____

Amusement/discretionary spending

Movies, Netflix, etc.: \$_____

Other kinds of entertainment: \$_____

Reading, newspapers, magazines, books: \$_____

Gifts (*birthday, Christmas, etc.*): \$_____

Vacations: \$_____

Total Amount You Need Each Month: \$_____

Multiply the total amount you need each month by 12, to get the yearly figure. Divide the yearly figure by 2,000, and you will be reasonably near the *minimum* hourly wage that you need. Thus, if you need \$3,333 per month, multiplied by 12 that's \$40,000 a year, and then divided by 2,000, that's \$20 an hour.

Parenthetically, you may want to prepare another version of this budget: one with the expenses you'd ideally *like* to make.

Now, enter the salary figure and any notes you want to add, about the level of responsibility you want to take on, to justify this salary, plus any "non-monetary" rewards you seek (from the Optional Exercise below), on the [Preferred Salary and Level of Responsibility](#) petal.

Optional Exercise

You may wish to put down other rewards, besides money, that you would hope for, from your next job or career. These might be:

- Adventure
- Challenge
- Respect
- Influence
- Popularity
- Fame
- Power
- Intellectual stimulation from the other workers there
- A chance to be creative
- A chance to help others
- A chance to exercise leadership
- A chance to make decisions
- A chance to use your expertise
- A chance to bring others closer to God
- Other:

If you do check off things on this list, arrange your answers in order of importance to you, and then add them to the petal.

I Am a Person Who...

PREFERS CERTAIN PLACES TO LIVE

Sixth Petal

MY PREFERRED PLACE TO LIVE

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To define where you would most like to work and live, and be happiest, if you ever have a choice. Or, to resolve a conflict between you and your partner as to where you want to move to, when you retire.

What You Are Looking For: Having a clearer picture about what you hope for, in life. Now or later. Now, if you're able to move and want to make a wise decision as to *where*. Later, If you're currently tied down to a particular place because "I need to be near my kids or my ailing parents, or whatever," in which case this becomes a planning for the future: retirement, or earlier. It's important to think about the future *now*, because an opportunity may come along when you least expect it, and you might pass right by it, unless you've given it some thought, and instantly recognize it.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: You can stay general (*city, suburbs, rural, up in the mountains, on the coast, or overseas*); or you can get very specific if you're really ready to move, naming names and places—as this exercise will teach you to do.

Example of a Good Petal: *First preference: Jackson, Wyoming; Second preference: Honolulu; Third preference: New York City.*

Example of a Bad Petal: *The West; a suburb; snow.*

Why Bad: Too broad. Doesn't really offer any help in making a decision. And it isn't prioritized, as the good petal is.

DIRECTIONS FOR DOING THIS EXERCISE

1. Copy the chart that is on the next two pages, onto a larger (11 × 17-inch) piece of paper or cardboard, which you can obtain from any arts and crafts store or supermarket, in your town or city. If you are doing this exercise with a partner, make a copy for them too, so that each of you is working on a clean copy of your own, and can follow these instructions independently.
2. In *Column 1*, each of you should list all the places where you have ever lived.
3. In *Column 2*, each of you should list all the factors you disliked (and still dislike) about each place. The factors do not have to be put exactly opposite the name in *Column 1*.

The names in *Column 1* exist simply to jog your memory.

If, as you go, you remember some good things about any place, put those factors at the bottom of the next column, *Column 3*.

If the same factors keep repeating, just put a checkmark after the first listing of that factor, every time it repeats.

Keep going until you have listed all the factors you disliked or hated about each and every place you named in *Column 1*. Now, in effect, throw away *Column 1*; discard it from your thoughts. The negative factors were what you were after. *Column 1* has served its purpose.

4. Look at *Column 2*, now, your list of negative factors, and in *Column 3* try to list each one's opposite (or near opposite). For example, "the sun never shone, there" would, in *Column 3*, be turned into "mostly sunny, all year 'round." It will not always be *the exact opposite*. For example, the negative factor "rains all the time" does not necessarily translate into the positive "sunny all the time." It might be something like "sunny at least 200 days a year." It's your call. Keep going, until every negative factor in *Column 2* is turned into its opposite, a positive factor, in *Column 3*. At the bottom, note the positive factors you already listed there, when you were working on *Column 2*.

My Geographical Preferences Chart DECISION MAKING FOR JUST YOU					Our Geographical Preferences DECISION MAKING FOR YOU AND A PARTNER		
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8
Names of Places I Have Lived	From the Past: Negatives	Translating the Negatives into Positives	Ranking of My Positives	Places That Fit These Criteria	Ranking of My/Her Preferences	Combining Our Top Lists (Columns 4 & 6)	Places That Fit These Criteria
	Factors I Disliked and Still Dislike about Any Place		1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.		a. b. c. d. e. f. g. h. i. j.	1. b. 2. 3. d. e. 5. f. g. 7. 8. 9. 10.	
		Factors I Liked and Still Like About Any Place					

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5. In *Column 4*, now, list the positive factors in *Column 3*, in the order of most important (to you), down to least important (to you). For example, if you were looking at, and trying to name a new town, city, or place where you could be happy and flourish, what is the first thing you would look for? Would it be, good weather? or lack of crime? or good schools? or access to cultural opportunities, such as music, art, museums, or whatever? or would it be inexpensive housing? etc., etc. Rank all the factors in *Column 4*. Use the ten-item [Prioritizing Grid](#) if you need to.
6. If you are doing this by yourself, list on a *scribble sheet* the top ten factors, in order of importance to you, and show it to everyone you meet for the next ten days, with the ultimate question: "Can you think of places that have these ten factors, or at least the top five?" Jot down their suggestions on the back of the *scribble sheet*. When the ten days are up, look at the back of your sheet and circle the three places that seem the most interesting to you. If there is only a partial overlap between your dream factors and the places your friends and acquaintances suggested, *make sure the overlap is in the factors that count the most*. Now you have some names that you will want to find out more about, until you are sure which is your absolute favorite place to live, and then your second, and third, as backups. Enter in *Column 5*.
Put the names of the three places, and/or your top five geographical factors, on [the Flower Diagram](#), on the Preferred Place(s) to Live petal.
7. If you are doing this with a partner, skip *Column 5*. Instead, when you have finished your *Column 4*, look at your partner's *Column 4*, and copy it into *Column 6*. The numbering of *your* list in *Column 4* was 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Number your partner's list, as you copy it into *Column 6*, as a, b, c, d, etc.
8. Now, in *Column 7*, combine your *Column 4* with *Column 6* (your partner's old *Column*

- 4). Both of you can work now from just one person's chart. Combine the two lists as illustrated on the chart. First your partner's top favorite geographical factor ("a"), then *your* top favorite geographical factor ("1"), then your partner's second most important favorite geographical factor ("b"), then yours ("2"), etc., until you have twenty favorite geographical factors (*yours and your partner's*) listed, in order, in *Column 7*.
9. List on a *scribble sheet* the top ten factors, and both of you should show it to everyone you meet, for the next ten days, with the same question as above: "Can you think of any places that have these ten factors, or at least the top five?" Jot down their suggestions on the back of the *scribble sheet*. When the ten days are up, you and your partner should look at the back of your sheet and circle the three places that look the most interesting to the two of you. If there is only a partial overlap between your dream factors and the places your friends and acquaintances suggested, make sure the overlap is in the factors that matter the most to the two of you, i.e., the ones that are at the top of your list in *Column 7*. Now you have some names of places that you will want to find out more about, until you are sure which is the absolute favorite place to live for both of you, and then your second, and third, as backups. Enter in *Column 8*.

Put the names of the top three places, and/or your top five geographical factors, on [the Flower Diagram](#), on the Preferred Place(s) to Live petal.

Conclusion: Does all this seem like just too much work? Well, there's a shortcut that *may* work for you. It's a website called Find Your Spot (www.findyourspot.com). Try it! See if it helps you at all. Final alternative: throw darts at a dart board to which you've pinned a map of the U.S. (or wherever). One family did this. It came out: "Denver"! So, *Denver* it was!

And now we turn to the last side of Who You Are.

PRIORITIZING GRID FOR 10 ITEMS OR LESS

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Items in Any Order

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SECTION D
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SECTION C

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Item number in Section A

How many times circled in B

Final rank for Section D

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I Am a Person Who... HAS A CERTAIN GOAL, PURPOSE, OR MISSION IN LIFE

Seventh Petal

MY GOAL, PURPOSE, OR MISSION IN LIFE

Goal in Filling Out This Petal: To know the moral compass or spiritual values by which you want to guide your life. The most victorious life is one that is dedicated to some larger cause or mission.

What You Are Looking For: Some definition of the purpose and mission of your life. This may

help you pick out the kinds of organizations or companies you'd like to work for, if you find ones that are serving the same mission as yours.

Form of the Entries on Your Petal: A description of what kingdom of life you want to make better, with some attending details.

Example of a Good Petal: *My purpose in life is to help the human spirit. I want there to be more faith, more compassion, more forgiveness, in families, because I have lived.*

Example of a Bad Petal: *More justice in the world.*

Why Bad: An admirable goal, but it is too vague. Doesn't give you any guidance as to what kind of work to look for.

As John L. Holland famously said, "We need to look further down the road than just headlight range at night." The road is the road of Life. You need to dream about the broad outcome of your life, and not just this year's job-search. What kind of footprint do you want to leave on this Earth, after your journey here is done? Figure that out, and you're well on your way to defining your life as having purpose and a mission.

The Nine Kingdoms of Mission and Purpose

Generally speaking, mission breaks down into nine kingdoms—corresponding to our nature. As you look these over, the question is, which one appeals to *you* the most? Time for some hard thinking (ouch!). So, read on, *slowly*. Take time to ponder and think.

1. **The Mind.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more knowledge, truth, or clarity in the world, because you were here? Knowledge, truth, or clarity concerning what in particular?* If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the mind.
2. **The Body.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more wholeness, fitness, or health in the world, more binding up of the body's wounds and strength, more feeding of the hungry, and clothing of the poor, because you were here? What issue in particular?* If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the body.
3. **The Eyes and Other Senses.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more beauty in the world, because you were here? If so, what kind of beauty entrances you? Is it art, music, flowers, photography, painting, staging, crafts, clothing, jewelry, or what?* If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the eyes and senses.
4. **The Heart.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more love and compassion in the world, because you were here? Love or compassion for whom? Or for what?* If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the heart.
5. **The Will or Conscience.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more morality, more justice, more righteousness, more*

honesty in the world, because you were here? In what areas of human life or history, in particular? And in what geographical area? If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the conscience.

6. **The Spirit.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more spirituality in the world, more faith, more compassion, more forgiveness, more love for God and the human family in all its diversity, because you were here? If so, with what ages, people, or with what parts of human life? If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the spirit, or (if you prefer) The Kingdom of God.*
7. **Entertainment.** The question is: *When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be more lightening of people's loads, more giving them perspective, more helping them to forget their cares for a spell, do you want there to be more laughter in the world, and joy, because you were here? If so, what particular kind of entertainment do you want to contribute to the world? If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of entertainment.*
8. **Our Possessions.** The question is: *Is your major concern the often false love of possessions in this world? When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be better stewardship of what we possess—as individuals, as a community, as a nation—in the world, because you were here? Do you want to see simplicity, quality (rather than quantity), and a broader emphasis on the word “enough,” rather than on the word “more, more”? If so, in what areas of human life in particular? If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of possessions.*
9. **The Earth.** The question is: *Is the planet on which we stand, your major concern? When you have finished your life here on Earth, do you want there to be better protection of this fragile planet, more exploration of the world or the universe—exploration, not exploitation—more dealing with its problems and its energy, because you were here? If so, which problems or challenges in particular, draw your heart and soul? If this is You, then your sense of purpose is pointing you toward the kingdom of the Earth.*

In sum, remember that all of these are worthwhile purposes and missions, all of these are necessary and needed, in this world. The question is, which one in particular draws you to it, *the most?* Which one do you most want to lend your brain, your energies, your skills and gifts, your life, to serve, while you are here on this Earth?¹⁴

When you are done, enter a summary paragraph of what you have decided your purpose or mission is, on the [Goal, Purpose, or Mission in Life](#) petal.

P.S. There are two challenges you may run into, in doing this particular exercise. First Challenge: you just come up empty on this exercise, despite hard thinking. No harm done. If you want an answer, just keep the question on the back-burner of your mind; eventually some insight is going to break through. Tomorrow, next week, next month, or a year from now. Be patient with yourself.

Second Challenge: This subject doesn't grab you at all. Okay. Then instead of writing a statement of purpose or mission for your life, you can write instead a statement outlining

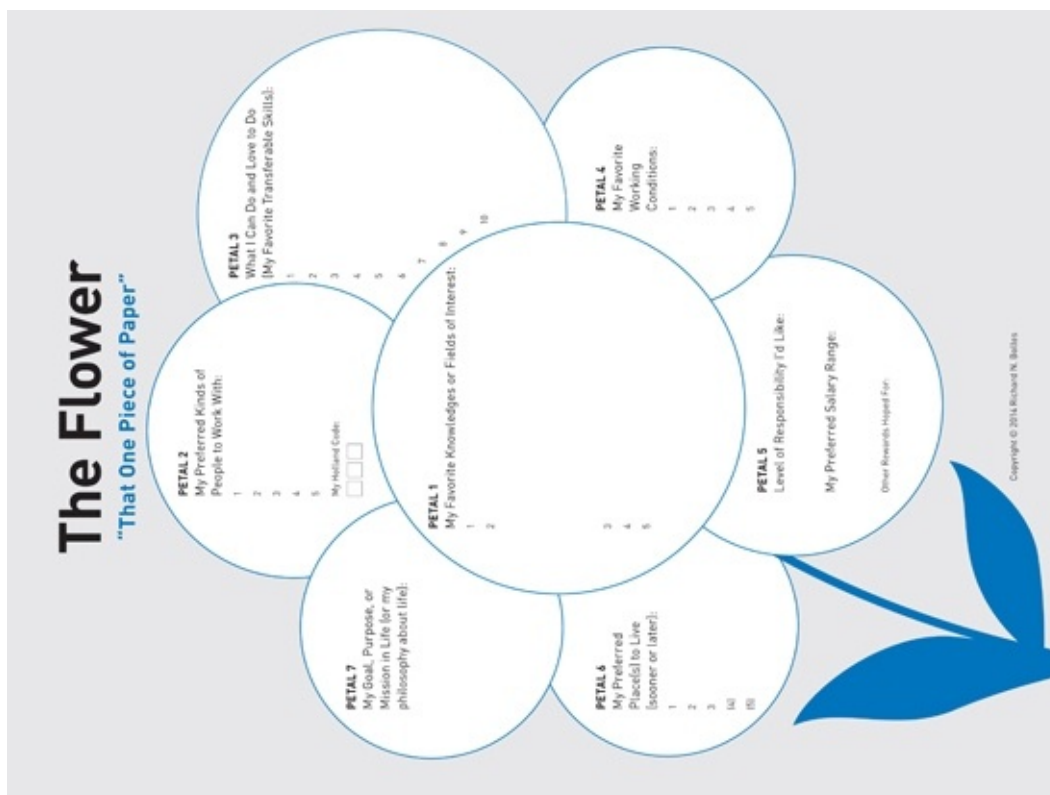
what you think about *life*: why are we here, why are *You* here, and so on. This is often called “Your Philosophy of Life”: In writing a philosophy of life, it should be no more than two pages, single spaced, and can be less; it should address whichever of these elements you think are most important; pick and choose. You do not have to write about all of them. In most cases, you will only need two or three sentences about each element you choose to comment on.

Beauty: what kind of beauty stirs us, what the function of beauty is in the world
Behavior: how we should behave in this world **Beliefs:** what our strongest beliefs are
Celebration: how we like to play or celebrate, in life **Choice:** what its nature and importance is **Community:** what our concept is about belonging to each other; what we think our responsibility is to each other **Compassion:** what we think about its importance and use **Confusion:** how we live with it, and deal with it **Death:** what we think about it and what we think happens after it **Events:** what we think makes things happen, how we explain why they happen **Free will:** whether we are “predetermined” or have free will **God:** see Supreme Being **Happiness:** what makes for the truest human happiness **Heroes and heroines:** who ours are, and why **Human:** what we think is important about being human, what we think is our function **Love:** what we think about its nature and importance, along with all its related words: compassion, forgiveness, grace **Moral issues:** which ones we believe are the most important for us to pay attention to, wrestle with, help solve **Paradox:** what our attitude is toward its presence in life **Purpose:** why we are here, what life is all about **Reality:** what we think is its nature, and components **Self:** deciding whether physical self is the limit of your being, deciding what trust in self means **Spirituality:** what its place is in human life, how we should treat it **Stewardship:** what we should do with God’s gifts to us **Supreme Being:** our concept of, and what we think holds the universe together **Truth:** what we think about it, which truths are most important **Uniqueness:** what we think makes each of us unique **Values:** what we think about ourselves, what we think about the world, prioritized as to what matters most (to us)

When you are done writing, put a summary paragraph on your [Goal, Purpose, or Mission in Life](#) petal.

And, finally:

I Am a Person Who...
HAS COMPLETED MY FLOWER



To download a printable PDF of this image, please visit <http://rhlink.com/wciyp2015017>

Readers have asked to see an example of “That One Piece of Paper” all filled out. Rich W. Feller—a student of mine back in 1982, now a world-famous professor and the 2012–2013 President of the National Career Development Association—filled out his flower as you see, on the facing page. He said “That One Piece of Paper” has been his lifelong companion ever since, and his guiding star. (The petals then were slightly different.) *Rich Feller first put his personal “picture” together over thirty years ago. Here are his comments about its usefulness since, and how “That One Piece of Paper” helped him, how he’s used it, and how it’s changed.*

WHAT THE PARACHUTE FLOWER HAS MEANT TO ME

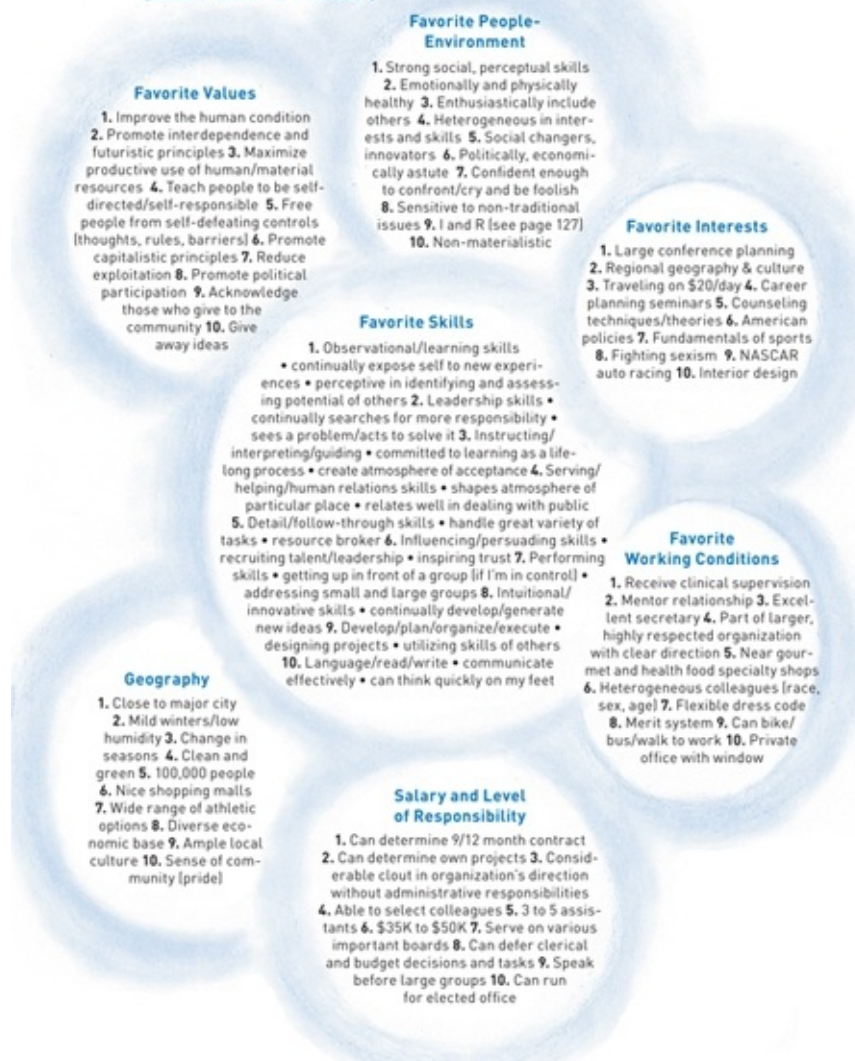
More than anything I’ve gained from an academic life, my Flower has given me hope, direction, and a lens to satisfaction. Using it to assess my life direction during crisis, career moves, and stretch assignments, it helps me define and hold to personal commitments. In many ways it’s my “guiding light.” Data within my Flower became and remain the core of any success and satisfaction I have achieved.

After I first filled out my own Flower Diagram in a two-week workshop with Dick Bolles back in 1982, I decided to teach the Flower to others. My academic position has allowed me to do this, abundantly. Having now taught the Flower to thousands of counselors and career development and human resource specialists, I continually use it with clients, and in my own transitional retirement planning.

I’m overwhelmed with how little has changed within my Flower, over the years. My Flower is the best of what I am. Its petals are my compass, and using my “favorite skills” are the mirror to a joyful day. I trust the wisdom within “That One Piece of Paper.” It has guided my work and my life, ever since 1982, and it has helped my wife

and I define our hopes for our son.

Example (Rich Feller's Flower)



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The process of filling out and acting on “That One Piece of Paper” taught me a lot. Specifically, it taught me **the importance of the following ten things, often running contrary to what my studies and doctoral work had taught me previously.**

I learned from my Flower the importance of:

1. Chasing after passions, honoring strengths, and respecting skill identification 2. Challenging societal definitions of balance and success 3. Committing to something bigger than oneself 4. Living authentically and with joy 5. Being good at what matters to oneself and its relationship to opportunity 6. Finding pleasure in all that one does 7. Staying focused on well-being and life satisfaction

8. Personal clarity and responsibility for designing “possible selves”

9. Letting the world know, humbly but clearly, what we want 10. “Coaching” people amidst a world of abundance where individuals yearn for individual meaning and purpose more than they hunger for possessions, abject compliance with society’s expectations, or simply fitting in

This technologically enhanced, global workplace we now face in the twenty-first century certainly challenges all we thought we knew about our life roles. Maintaining clarity, learning agility, and identifying development plans have become elevated to new and critical importance, if we are to maintain choice. As a result I've added the following four emphases to "Rich's Flower": Have, do, learn, and give. That is to say, I try to keep a running list (constantly updated) of ten things that I want to:

1. Have 2. Do
3. Learn 4. Give

Through the practice of answering the four questions listed above, I can measure change in my growth and development.

I feel so fortunate to have the opportunity to share with others how much I gained from the wisdom and hope embedded within "Rich's Flower."

I humbly offer my resume, home location and design, and family commitments on my website at www.mychhs.colostate.edu/Rich.Feller. I'd be honored to share my journey, and encourage others to nurture and shine light on their garden as well. I believe you'll find about 90% of the Flower's items influence our daily experience.

Rich Feller Professor of Counseling and Career Development University Distinguished Teaching Scholar Colorado State University Fort Collins, CO

Okay, like Rich, you've now got your completed Flower.

Nice diagram. What do you do with it?

Well, that's the subject of our next chapter.

1. Such as (the late) Barbara B. Brown, who was the first to coin the term *biofeedback* and to bring it to the public's awareness back in 1974, with her groundbreaking book (at the time) *New Mind, New Body*. She made these points in a public lecture in 1976. See her bio on www.wikipedia.com.

2. By the way, if you want to use or visit the D.O.T. it's now online at www.occupationalinfo.org, and can be downloaded to your computer.

3. There is, incidentally, a relationship between the **people** you like to be surrounded by and your **skills** and your **values**. Most of us don't need to go down that road, but if you're curious, you'll need John Holland's book, *Making Vocational Choices* (3rd ed., 1997). You can procure it on Amazon.com for around \$25 or by going to the Psychological Assessment Resources (PAR), Inc., website at www4.parinc.com, and entering the word "Holland" in the search engine there. PAR also has John Holland's instrument, called The Self-Directed Search (or SDS, for short), for discovering what your Holland Code is. PAR lets you take the test online for a small fee (\$9.95) at www.self-directed-search.com.

4. Amusing anecdote: John was a good friend of mine, and when I first showed him this Party Exercise I had invented, I asked him what he thought of it. With a twinkle in his eye he snorted, "Huh! Probably put me out of business!" Nope, it didn't. His SDS has sold more than twelve million copies, and is the basis for many other career tests or instruments.

5. Incidentally, John always encouraged people to write down somewhere all six versions (technically called *permutations*) of your code. Thus, if your code were, say, SIA, its permutations would be: SIA, SAI, IAS, ISA, ASI, AIS. This is especially useful if you are ever going to look up careers that correspond to your code. Put "Holland codes for careers" into your favorite search

engine, and you will find such sites as www.vista-cards.com/occupations.

Further, he and I worked together on this application of his system to daydreams: list all the things you've ever dreamed of doing. Then, to the right of each, try to *guess*—guess!—at what you think the three-letter Holland code would be for each. When done, look at each code and assign a value of 3 to any letter in the first position; assign a value of 2 to any letter in the second position; and assign a value of 1 to any letter in the third position (e.g., in the case of IAS, you'd give 3 points to "I," 2 points to "A," and 1 point to "S"). Do this for every code you've written down, then total up all the points for each letter. How many points did "R" get, how many points did "I" get, etc. Choose the top three with the most points, in order, when you're done, and you have the Holland Code of your daydreams. As John said to me, "This is the most reliable way of determining someone's code, but who would believe it, except you and me?"

6. The MyersBriggs Type Indicator, or "MBTI," measures what is called *psychological type*. For further reading about this, see:

Paul D. Tieger, Barbara Barron, and Kelly Tieger, *Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type*, Fifth Edition, Little, Brown & Company, 2014. For those who cannot obtain the MBTI, this book includes a method for readers to identify their personality types. This is one of the most popular career books in the world. It's easy to see why. Many have found great help from the concept of personality type, and Paul and Barbara are masters in explaining this approach to career-choice. Highly recommended.

Donna Dunning, *What's Your Type of Career? Unlock the Secrets of Your Personality to Find Your Perfect Career Path*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2010. This is a dynamite book on personality type. Donna Dunning's knowledge of "Type" is encyclopedic! David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character & Temperament Types*, B&D Books, 1984. Includes the Keirsey Temperament Sorter—again, for those who cannot obtain the MBTI.

7. This list copyright © 1994 Daniel Porot.

8. Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Early Edition, September 6, 2010.

9. According to Sentier Research, reported by Paul Davidson, "U.S. Median Household Income Up 4% at End of 2011," *USA Today*, February 9, 2012.

10. If this kind of budget planning is just not *you*, there is help available. Online, you will find that www.moneysavingexpert.com has a free budget-planner (click on Banking at the top, then under Current Accounts you will see BudgetPlanner; click on that). Offline, think of some buddy, friend, relative, family member, or other, who is a whiz at this type of thing and can volunteer to help you. If you come up empty, consider any groups you belong to in the community: local religious center, church, synagogue, mosque, gym, social club, and ask the manager there if they can suggest anybody who is wise and generous with their time. Ask them, gently, for help. Thank them afterward.

11. If you have extra household expenses, such as a security system, be sure to include the quarterly (or whatever) expenses here, divided by three.

12. Your checkbook stubs and/or online banking records will tell you a lot of this stuff. But you may be vague about your cash or credit card expenditures. For example, you may not know how much you spend at the supermarket, or how much you spend on gas, etc. But there is a simple way to find out. Keep notes on your Smartphone or iPad for two weeks (there are apps for that), jotting down everything you pay cash (or use credit cards) for—on the spot, right after you pay it. At the end of those two weeks, you'll be able to take that notepad and make a realistic guess of what should be put down in these categories that now puzzle you. (Multiply the two-week figure by two, and you'll have the monthly figure.) 13. Incidentally, for U.S. citizens, looking ahead to next April 15, be sure to check with your local IRS office or a reputable accountant to find out if you can deduct the expenses of your job-hunt on your federal (and state) income tax returns. At this writing, some job-hunters can, if—big IF—this is not your first job that you're looking for, if you haven't been unemployed too long, and if you aren't making a career-change. Do go find out what the latest "ifs" are. If the IRS says you are eligible, keep careful receipts of everything related to your job-hunt, as you go along: telephone calls, stationery, printing, postage, travel, etc.

14. And by the way, if you want to have fun, if you have a computer go to the Internet, choose a browser like Google or Bing, and type your kingdom (*the Mind*, etc.) into the search line, and see if anything pops up that intrigues you.