Goal Evaluation

Skill Set & Passions Inventory

No one is expert at everything, and, in fact, employers won’t expect you to be, as today’s executive job market requires subject matter expertise. You’ll need to identify your weaknesses as well as targeted areas of excellence and tasks you enjoy. Take inventory of your strengths and preferences to guide the direction of your job search. Ask yourself honestly:

- What am I great at?
- What am I not-so-great at?
- What am I excellent at but unexcited by?
- What do I excel at and become passionate about?

Billboard Top Hits

Adapted from The Five O’Clock Club® “Seven Stories” exercise

If you’re having difficulty answering the last question, think back to your most rewarding and satisfying accomplishments over the course of your career. Brainstorm 10 accomplishments below. Then choose which 5 you are most proud of.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
Goal Evaluation

Billboard Top Hits
continued ...

Please answer the following questions for your top 5 accomplishments:

- Why were these accomplishments most important to me? What about them did I enjoy most?
- What was my involvement? Was I tasked with the project, or did I initiate it on my own?
- What was my key motivation? (Personal or social recognition, large-scale, companywide recognition, et al.)
- What was the environment like? Was it entrepreneurial and fast-paced? Slower but controlled?
- What was the focus of the project? (The arts, new program development, social consciousness, et al.)
- What core values drove my work during this project? (Collaboration, empowerment, accountability, innovation, efficiency, diversity, service excellence, et al.)
Goal Evaluation

9 Lives
Adapted from Karen James Chopra, LPC, MCC, NCC of Chopra Careers

Rules of the Game:
• You have 9 different lives. You must work in all 9 lives.
• You will not win the lottery, marry rich, or receive a huge inheritance.
• Whatever skill set or experience you need to do the job, you have it.
• However much money you need to make to be happy, you make it.
• Every job has equal prestige.

Challenge: what job would you hold in each of those 9 lives?

1.  

2.  

3.  

4.  

5.  

6.  

7.  

8.  

9.  

Once you’ve written out that list, take a step back and review it. What do you see? What don’t you see? Are there any themes (i.e. nature lover, autonomous worker, creative, corporate setting - or lack thereof)
Goal Evaluation

Career Run-Down
Adapted from Karen James Chopra, LPC, MCC, NCC of Chopra Careers

Take a piece of paper and make 3 columns:

- Column 1: Make a list of every job you've held (just job titles/company names) in your career.
- Column 2: List (in nitty-gritty detail) what you liked about each of those jobs. Be as specific as possible.
- Column 3: List (in nitty-gritty detail) what you disliked about each of those jobs. Be as specific as possible.

You can also mark up a copy of your resume and perform the same exercise. Similar to the 9 lives challenge, take a step back and look for themes in what you’ve loved and been passionate about, and what type of work or working environment you did not enjoy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role/Company</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Dislikes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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5 Tips on Making a Career Transition

Do your research.
Focus on an industry that is strong or emerging in your targeted area and has similarities to your current industry experience. If you’re unsure which industries are easiest to transition to, look for former colleagues who held a similar role to you and have moved on to other companies – what industries are they working in? What companies have accepted their previous experience? This is a good place to start.

Choose one direction.
Transitioning to a new career takes a lot of time and work. Once you’ve done your research, choose one direction to pursue. Immerse yourself in their terminology by subscribing to industry-specific online newsletters and blogs, joining professional groups, and attending networking events or trade shows where you’ll learn more about the industry and meet new people. Identify connections in your current network that work in your targeted industry, and take them out for a cup of coffee to pick their brain. This is a great way to gain valuable insight into the market and uncover unpublished opportunities.

Focus on job requirements, your qualifications & results.
Your cover letter and elevator pitch should focus on your ability to deliver results. In your resume, play down the industry of your former positions and play up other aspects of the company (revenue, number of people, ranking, etc.) that may be similar to the companies you’re now targeting. If you’re struggling with repositioning your resume and online brand, don’t be afraid to reach out to the experts for help – that’s what they’re here for. There are lots of services out there, including TheLadders, which will help you rewrite your resume with a switch in mind.

When applying to jobs, focus demonstrating how you meet the main job requirements. A “t-format” cover letter can be a really great way to showcase how you fit these core must-haves. If you’ve worked in multiple industries in the past (especially if you’re in sales), mention this in the cover letter to prove that you have been successful in a variety of industries, and can do it again for this organization.

For example: “Over the past 10 years I have met or exceeded quota in every role I’ve taken on, in industries ranging from financial services to pharmaceuticals. I excel at immersing myself in new industries, and then applying that knowledge to deliver above-average results. I am eager to put this practice to work for you.”

Don’t rely on applications alone.
Even with an excellent, well positioned resume and tailored cover letter, you may have difficulty getting a call on your applications. You are ten times more likely to land a job when your application is accompanied by an employee referral. Use your network – and continue building it – to learn about hidden job opportunities and bypass the gatekeepers. You will also gain valuable insight into the hiring process for that industry, and be able to navigate it more smoothly as a result.

Show passion … and patience.
Let your passion for this new industry shine. Why are you interested in this industry? Why is this company so appealing? How does it relate to your previous work? Have you worked in the industry in the past? If so, why are you so interested in returning to this type of work? Remember, this is your sales pitch. You need to find some element of the company or industry that you find particularly interesting or appealing and play that up in your elevator pitch and during interviews.

Keep in mind that transitioning to a new role can be a long process, especially in this saturated job market. Be prepared to be in the job hunt for many months – many career coaches agree it takes an average of 8 months to find a new job these days, even when you’re not looking to make major changes to your career. And that’s only the average! The greater the gap between your job goals and most recent experience, the more challenging this transition can be. It may be necessary to compromise on compensation and job title in your next job in order to get you on the right track towards your targeted role. Think of this job as a ‘stepping stone’ along the way to your dream job.
How to Master the Informational Interview

In this turbulent market, it seems that many people are reevaluating their careers. Some know exactly they’d like to do: they want to switch from Wall Street to Silicon Valley or transition from product marketing to sales – while others aren’t sure of the next step.

Similarly, there are a lot of recent graduates out there looking for their first professional job and having difficulty getting a foot in the door. If I had one piece of advice to give these groups, it would be this: master the “informational interview.”

What does this mean exactly? It means reaching into your network, finding connections (friends, friends-of-friends, friends-of-your-relatives’-friends … you get the idea) that are in your target field of work, and asking them out for a cup of coffee or a phone chat to pick their brain.

This not only helps you clarify your job goals and eliminate options; it can also help open doors to your next role. Below are 5 practical tips to help you master the informational interview:

- **Come prepared** with a copy of your resume, a pad of paper and pen and a list of questions.
- **Remember: you’re not asking for a job** in these meetings. Your goal is to learn more about the industry, finding a job within that line of work (including websites and other resources to use, and common hiring processes), and career options available for someone with your background and skill set.
- **You want to ask each person for their story** – what did they want to do when they first graduated, how did they find their first job, how did they end up in their current job, and what do they like or dislike about their work. Don’t feel as though you are pestering this person or begging for anything – most people like to talk about themselves, and many want to offer their ‘pearls of wisdom’ to an earnest job seeker.
- **You’ll naturally end up sharing your experience and interests** during this conversation as well. Take this time to explain what you love about this line of work (show your passion!). Your goal is to walk away from each informational interview with a more refined list of career options and resources. Ideally you also want an introduction to another person in the field so you can continue setting up new informational interviews.
- **Don’t be afraid to give back.** When you’re in the job hunt, you become immersed in industry news, career resources and job listings. You’ll end up joining new and interesting groups associated with your targeted industry or line of work. You can offer up tidbits of information that may be of interest to the other person. This way, you’re also providing value in the conversation.
- **As you meet more people, get your personal brand out there, and become more knowledgeable about navigating the job-search process in your chosen field, you’ll become better at identifying and pursuing positions that you’re qualified for. And one of these contacts may remember you when the right opportunity pops up.**