The purpose of this section is to help you form the foundation of your job search. It is difficult to find a job that will be rewarding in the long-run without first identifying those factors most important in your life and those characteristics of a job that will bring you the most satisfaction. The following sections will help to identify these factors. Your self-knowledge will furnish points of comparison as you gather career information through informational interviews and networking. The following areas are covered by the exercises: Personality, Interests, Work Values, Skills and Job Satisfaction.

**Personality**

You need to have a sense of who you are, what motivates you, how you act and what you like to do. This knowledge, although seemingly obvious, will help you make more satisfying life choices. The exercises in the “personality” section focus on identifying personal preferences and acknowledging how these preferences help people make better job and career choices.

If work is consistent with your preferences, it is more likely to be satisfying. Personal preferences affect the way people function and determine the environments in which they feel most comfortable, what skills they most enjoy using, and what types of work they find the most interesting. It is essential that students understand who they are and what motivates them.

There are two personality exercises at the end of this section. Exercise 1 focuses on personal characteristics and asks you to select those characteristics that best describe you. As you complete this exercise, take note of the characteristics that most please you, as well as the ones that most concern you. Exercise 2, “Negative Attributes,” asks you to consider which of your personal characteristics may be impeding rather than enhancing your success. What attitudes, beliefs, fears, or behaviors work against you in your professional life and prevent you from achieving your goals? Being aware of positive and negative attributes will enable you either to eliminate characteristics that impede your professional success or to select a job or career in which both your positive and negative attributes are valued and appreciated. In both exercises select as many of the characteristics or statements as apply to you.
Interests

Your interests are a reflection of what gives you enjoyment. Exercise 3 asks you to take into account a number of considerations to identify what is or is not important. The primary objective of the exercise is to increase your base of self-knowledge for career planning purposes and, accordingly, the questions are designed to suggest or elicit information that will support this effort.

Work Values

Values are those qualities and principles that individuals consider important and that give their lives meaning. Generally, people feel most comfortable with individuals who share similar values and in situations where their values are appreciated. In addition, they derive greater enjoyment and personal satisfaction from doing work that is consistent with their values. Exercises 4 and 5 are tools to help you identify and prioritize your work values. Knowledge of your work values and their relative importance to each other will assist you in making satisfying job and career choices.

Skills

Skills are yet another piece of the puzzle to help you assess what type of work you will feel content performing. Each person possesses a different set of skills, and each employment situation requires individuals to use a different combination of skills. To determine which job and career opportunities would be realistic for you to pursue, you will need to take an inventory of your skills and assess whether you will need to develop additional skills or to improve your competency in different areas. In addition, in order to market yourself to potential employers, you will need to inventory your skills, convert your legal skills into transferable skills, and effectively communicate your skills in a way that will persuade the employer that you are qualified for a particular position. Each step in the process is essential.

The degree to which individuals can competently perform the tasks required of them in their jobs has a significant impact on their work satisfaction. Individuals are generally most content doing work that they feel able to effectively perform. However, people do not always enjoy performing tasks just because they are good at them. It is important for you to
identify what your skills are, and then to determine which of those skills you most enjoy using in your work. Exercise 6 will help you identify the types of skills that you possess, your competency in using these skills, and the degree to which you enjoy using them.

**Job Satisfaction**

In her book, *How to Make the Right Career Moves*, Deborah Bloch identifies 20 factors related to job satisfaction and presents readers with an exercise that measures their satisfaction doing a particular job. These factors and their definitions, along with an application of these factors to your most recent job experience, comprise Exercise 7 and are taken from pages 21–22 of her book. This exercise will help you identify which factors are the most and least important contributors to your job satisfaction.
SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Exercise 1 (Personality): Personal Characteristics

Check all the characteristics that you believe describe you.

___Active  ___Clever
___Accurate  ___Competent
___Adaptable  ___Competitive
___Adventurous  ___Confident
___Affectionate  ___Conscientious
___Aggressive  ___Conservative
___Alert  ___Considerate
___Ambitious  ___Cooperative
___Artistic  ___Courageous
___Assertive  ___Creative
___Attractive  ___Curious
___Bold  ___Daring
___Broad-minded  ___Deliberate
___Businesslike  ___Democratic
___Calm  ___Dependable
___Capable  ___Determined
___Careful  ___Dignified
___Cautious  ___Discreet
___Cheerful  ___Dominant
___Clear-thinking  ___Eager

__Easy-going
__Efficient
__Emotional
__Energetic
__Enterprising
__Enthusiastic
__Fair-minded
__Far-sighted
__Firm
__Flexible
__Forceful
__Formal
__Frank
__Friendly
__Fun-loving
__Generous
__Gentle
__Good-natured
__Happy-go-lucky
__Healthy
__Helpful
__Honest
__Humorous
__Idealistic
__Imaginative
__Independent
__Individualistic
__Industrious
__Inflexible
__Informal
__Ingenious
__Intelligent
__Intellectual
__Inventive
__Kind
__Leisurely
__Light-hearted
__Likable
__Logical
__Loyal
__Mature
__Methodical
__Meticulous
__Mild
__Moderate
__Modest
__Natural
__Obliging
__Open-minded
__Opportunistic
Optimistic  Reserved
Organized    Resourceful
Original     Responsible
Outgoing     Retiring
Painstaking  Robust
Patient      Self-confident
Peaceable    Self-controlled
Persevering  Sensible
Pleasant     Sensitive
Poised       Serious
Polite       Sincere
Popular      Sharp-witted
Practical    Sociable
Precise      Spontaneous
Progressive  Spunky
Prudent      Stable
Purposeful   Steady
Quick        Strong
Quiet        Strong-minded
Rational     Sympathetic
Realistic    Tactful
Reasonable   Teachable
Reflective   Tenacious
Relaxed      Thorough
Reliable     Thoughtful
Tolerant
Tough
Trusting
Trustworthy
Unaffected
Unassuming
Understanding
Uninhibited
Verbal
Versatile
Warm
Wholesome
Exercise 2 (Personality): Negative Attributes

A. At work it is difficult for me to (check as many as apply):

- ___Control my feelings
- ___Be open minded
- ___Stop complaining
- ___Avoid being defensive
- ___Compete with others
- ___Develop reasonable expectations
- ___Express anger
- ___Generate alternatives
- ___Manage details
- ___Make decisions
- ___Manage stress
- ___Plan ahead
- ___Relate to others
- ___Sell myself
- ___Sustain concentration
- ___Defer to authority
- ___Repress envy of others
- ___Ignore what others think of me
- ___Stay healthy
- ___See humor
- ___Avoid conflict
- ___Be dependable
- ___Be neat
- ___Anticipate problems
- ___Be involved
- ___Share power
- ___Hide my anxiety
- ___Speak up in public
- ___Accept criticism
- ___Deal with ambiguity
- ___Value my contribution
- ___Accept responsibility
- ___Remain motivated
- ___Act confident
- ___Act diplomatically
- ___Be flexible
- ___Be patient
- ___Interact socially
- ___Resist judging others
- ___Accept the “new”
- ___Depersonalize things
- ___Say “no”
- ___Follow rules
- ___Understand politics

B. The following aspects of my personal appearance or work habits impede my success (check as many as apply):

- ___My hair
- ___My teeth
- ___My skin
- ___My weight
- ___My height
- ___My age
- ___My style of dress
- ___My smoking
- ___My ____________________
- ___My ____________________
- ___My ____________________
- ___My ____________________
- ___My ____________________

---

Exercise 3 (Interests): Personal Interests Inventory

Please answer these questions as completely as possible.

1. What would you do with your life if money were not an issue?

2. What organizations or causes would inspire you to contribute generously with your money or time? Why?

3. If time were not an issue, what hobbies or activities would you pursue or like to pursue more frequently? Explain.

4. Outside of the required reading for work or school, what do you regularly read for pleasure? What interests are reflected by this?

5. Looking at your lifestyle (actual or aspired), how do you think it reflects your personal interests?

6. What do you fantasize or dream about? What interests do your fantasies suggest that you have?

7. What are some of the ways that you can/will maintain your personal interests?
Exercise 4 (Work Values): Identifying and Prioritizing Your Work Values

The following list describes 15 work values that are often strong factors in motivating people to work. These values and goals are related to work satisfaction. The more you understand about what is important to you, the better able you are to make decisions about jobs and careers. To help you recognize work values, circle those that are important to you.

Altruism: a value that enables individuals to contribute to the welfare of others.

Aesthetics: a value that permits or inspires individuals to contribute to the beauty of the world.

Creativity: a value that permits or inspires individuals to invent new things, design new products, or develop new ideas.

Intellectual Stimulation: a value that provides opportunity for independent thinking and for learning how and why things work.

Achievement: a value that gives individuals a feeling of accomplishment in doing a job well.

Independence: a value that allows or encourages individuals to control the manner in which they perform their work.

Prestige: a value that gives individuals standing in the eyes of others and evokes respect.

Management: a value that permits individuals to plan and assign work of others.

Economic Returns: a value that pays well or that enables individuals to obtain the things they want.

Security: a value associated with work that provides individuals with confidence in their continued employment.

Surroundings: a value for having work performed in pleasant conditions.

Supervisory Relations: a value associated with maintaining a collegial relationship with an individual’s supervisors.

4 Adapted from Super, Donald E. Work Values Inventory. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
Associates: a value associated with having enjoyable interpersonal working relationships with colleagues.

Way of Life: a value associated with the kind of work that allows individuals to live the kind of life they choose and to be the type of person they wish to be.

Variety: a value that permits individuals the opportunity to perform different types of jobs.
Exercise 5 (Work Values): Work Values Inventory

Each of the following statements represents one of the work values defined above. This exercise will give you the opportunity to identify and prioritize your work values. Read each statement carefully, and indicate how important it is to you by circling the appropriate number.

5 means “Very Important”
4 means “Important”
3 means “Moderately Important”
2 means “Of Little Importance”
1 means “Unimportant”

1. Requires me to solve new problems.  
2. Allows me to help others.  
3. Provides reasonable monetary awards.  
4. Provides variety.  
5. Allows me to act independently.  
6. Is considered prestigious.  
7. Requires creative ability.  
8. Invokes teamwork.  
9. Provides job security.  
10. Allows me to be myself.  
11. Is evaluated by a supervisor who is fair.  
12. Is in a pleasant setting.  
13. Gives a feeling of having done a good day’s work.  
14. Gives me authority over others.  
15. Allows me to try out new ideas and theories.  
16. Allows me to create original work.  
17. Leaves the feeling that I have done a good job.  
18. Is managed by a reasonable boss.  
19. Is unlikely to be eliminated.

5 Adapted from Super, Donald E. Work Values Inventory. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
20. Adds beauty to the world. 5 4 3 2 1
21. Allows me to make my own decisions. 5 4 3 2 1
22. Provides pay increases that keep up with the cost of living. 5 4 3 2 1
23. Is mentally challenging. 5 4 3 2 1
24. Allows me to use leadership ability. 5 4 3 2 1
25. Has adequate lounge, toilet, and other facilities. 5 4 3 2 1
26. Allows me a way of life, while not on the job, that I like. 5 4 3 2 1
27. Allows me to form friendships with co-workers. 5 4 3 2 1
28. Is considered important by others. 5 4 3 2 1
29. Does not require me to do the same thing all the time. 5 4 3 2 1
30. Gives me the feeling that I have helped another. 5 4 3 2 1
31. Adds to the well-being of other people. 5 4 3 2 1
32. Allows me to do many different things. 5 4 3 2 1
33. Is respected by others. 5 4 3 2 1
34. Allows good relations with fellow workers. 5 4 3 2 1
35. Allows me to lead the kind of life I enjoy. 5 4 3 2 1
36. Occurs in good working conditions, e.g. work space, lighting, etc. 5 4 3 2 1
37. Requires that I plan and organize the work of others. 5 4 3 2 1
38. Requires me to be mentally alert. 5 4 3 2 1
39. Pays me well enough to live well. 5 4 3 2 1
40. Allows me to be my own boss. 5 4 3 2 1
41. Results in quality work products. 5 4 3 2 1
42. Provides me with alternative job opportunities if my present job ends. 5 4 3 2 1
43. Is supervised by a considerate person.
44. Makes me feel like I have accomplished something.
45. Allows me to contribute new ideas.
**Scoring Instructions for Exercise 5**

Record next to each item the number you circled on the corresponding Work Values Inventory Exercise. Record below the total of the items for each scale. Finally, list your top three and bottom three work values (the scales with the top three totals) from highest to lowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>15 16 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>14 24 37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>13 17 44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surroundings</td>
<td>12 25 36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory Relations</td>
<td>11 18 43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way of Life</td>
<td>10 26 35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>9 19 42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates</td>
<td>8 27 34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>7 20 41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>6 28 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>5 21 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>4 29 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Return</td>
<td>3 22 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>2 30 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>1 23 38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Three Values**

1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________

**Bottom Three Values**

1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
Exercise 6 (Skills): Skills Identification

This exercise focuses on “Transferable Skills,” which are general competencies utilized in the performance of daily tasks and which can be readily applied to a wide range of work contexts. This exercise will furnish you with a “measuring stick” so that you will have a sense of the degree to which you feel competent in your skills and the degree to which you enjoy utilizing various skills.

Scoring

Competency levels for each listed skill have been assigned these values:

4 means you feel very confident about your ability.
3 means you feel your ability to perform is competent.
2 means you feel cautious about your ability.
1 means you feel your ability is untested = cannot assess.

Adjustment for Enjoyment Level: Add the value of 1 if a high level of satisfaction or pleasure is associated with the performance of the skill. Subtract the value of 1 if you strongly dislike using the skill. Otherwise, no adjustment is necessary. Record your totals for the various skill cluster areas. Remember, law school is designed to help you develop many of these skills. Consequently, be reasonable, but do not limit your vision of the future based solely on your past. With focus and work, these skills can be improved.

Evaluation

Written Communication TOTAL

Correspondence (answering/initiating letters, soliciting business)
Editing
Creative/Expository Writing
Writing (reports, memos, proposals)
Technical Writing
Translating (foreign language, American Sign Language)

6 Adapted and reprinted with permission from Bloch, Deborah Perlmutter. How To Make the Right Career Moves. Lincolnwood, Ill.: VGM Career Horizons, 1990.
Verbal Communication

- Teaching/Training
- Public Speaking
- Persuading/Promoting/Selling
- Explaining
- Articulating
- Social Chatting

TOTAL

Interpersonal

- Listening
- Advising/Counseling
- Interviewing (obtaining information)
- Handling Complaints
- Confronting
- Negotiating
- Mediating
- Group Facilitating
- Getting Along with Others
- Politicking
- “Reading” Others

TOTAL

Organizational

- Anticipating/Estimating
- Prioritizing
- Coordinating/Arranging (events)
- Compiling/Gathering Data
- Classifying/Ordering Information
- Programming
- Planning and Scheduling
- Record Keeping

TOTAL
Meeting Deadlines

**Intellectual**

- Conceptualizing
- Analyzing (events, data, people)
- Theorizing (drawing generalizations)
- Comprehending Materials Read Quickly
- Comprehending Highly Technical Materials
- Predicting or Forecasting Trends
- Experimenting
- Remembering Information

**Managerial**

- Supervising or Leading
- Organizing/Coordinating
- Motivating Others
- Initiating
- Risk Taking
- Delegating
- Exercising Good Judgment
- Accepting Responsibility
- Deciding

**Problem Solving**

- Examining
- Reviewing
- Assessing (the performance of others)
- Evaluating (programs/services)
- Appraising (values)
- Applying Knowledge (to improve a situation or to benefit others)
Troubleshooting
Resolving Conflicts

Coping

Working Effectively and Calmly under Pressure
Managing Time
Tolerating Delays/Waiting
Persevering
Accepting Criticism
Working through Problems
Adjusting to Changes, Flexibility
Competing with Others

Numerical

Accounting/Bookkeeping
Allocating Resources
Managing Budgets
Using Computational Abilities
Estimating/Projecting (costs, income)
Developing Mathematical or Economical Models
Working with Precision
Financial Record Keeping
Inventorying
Using Statistical Abilities

Presenting

Exhibiting or Setting Up
Displaying Ideas in an Artistic Form
Dramatizing (ideas, social concerns)
Designing Exhibits
Making Layouts (media print, public displays)
Representing (an idea to the public)
Meeting the Public

Creativity

Inventing
Imagining
Designing
Applying Theory
Being an “Idea” Person
Displaying
Constructing or Building
Assembling
Fixing

TOTAL

Playing

Music (singing, composing, playing an instrument)
Dancing
Drawing, Painting, Sculpture
Competing at Sports
Acting
Using Humor
Other “Play”

TOTAL
Exercise 7 (Job Satisfaction): Measuring Job Satisfaction

Review the factors below. You will refer to them in the exercise that follows:

1. Recognition: Acts or statements that show your supervisor knows how good or bad your work is.

2. Achievement: Seeing the results of your work in such ways as the completion of a project or finding the solution to a problem.

3. Possibility of Growth: How you judge opportunities to rise in the organization.

4. Advancement: Actual changes in your status in the organization.

5. Salary: Your current compensation and increases you have received.

6. Interpersonal Relations: How you get along in the working situation with your associates and people who work under you.

7. Technical Supervision: The knowledge and ability of your supervisor to judge your work fairly and to help you do it better.

8. Supervisory Consideration: The extent to which you feel your supervisor thinks of you as a human being rather than just as someone to get the work done.

9. Influence on Decision Making: The opportunities you have to participate in making decisions that affect your work.

10. Responsibility: How much authority you have over your own work and the work of others.

11. Company Policy and Administration: How well you feel the organization does as a whole in setting policies for personnel and carrying them out.

12. Working Conditions: How you feel about physical conditions such as lighting and ventilation and getting the equipment that you need.

13. Hours of Work: How comfortable you feel with the usual schedule of work and any need for work outside the regular schedule such as overtime, evening, or weekend work.

---

7 Adapted and reprinted with permission from Bloch, Deborah Perlmutter. How To Make the Right Career Moves. Lincolnwood, Ill.: VGM Career Horizons, 1990.
14. **Effect on Personal Life:** How the job affects you through travel, transfer policy, and other matters that directly affect your life outside of work.

15. **Status:** Any aspects of your job such as having a private secretary, a corner office, or the key to the executive restroom, which set you above or below others in the organization.

16. **Job Security:** Company policy on tenure and the stability or instability of the company itself.

17. **Work of the Job:** How you feel about the tasks or responsibilities you carry out.

18. **Interest in the Job:** How bored or stimulated you feel during the actual carrying out of your job duties.

19. **Control of Work Methods:** How much freedom you have to carry out your job in the way you feel works best.

20. **Use of Skills and Abilities:** How much of your talents, knowledge, skills, and abilities are used in carrying out your work.

The exercise that follows asks you to evaluate your current or most recent job in terms of the extent to which the above factors have impacted your level of job satisfaction. The objective is to evaluate whether those factors that you have identified as being most important to you have been satisfied.

**Review the List and Identify the:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Five Factors Most Important to Me</th>
<th>Degree to Which I Was Satisfied by My Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. _____________________________</td>
<td>High          Average          Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. _____________________________</td>
<td>High          Average          Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. _____________________________</td>
<td>High          Average          Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. _____________________________</td>
<td>High          Average          Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. _____________________________</td>
<td>High          Average          Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Factors Somewhat Important to Me</td>
<td>Degree to Which I Was Satisfied by My Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Five Factors Less Important to Me</th>
<th>Degree to Which I Was Satisfied by My Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Five Factors Least Important to Me</th>
<th>Degree to Which I Was Satisfied by My Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. _________________________</td>
<td>High  Average  Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>