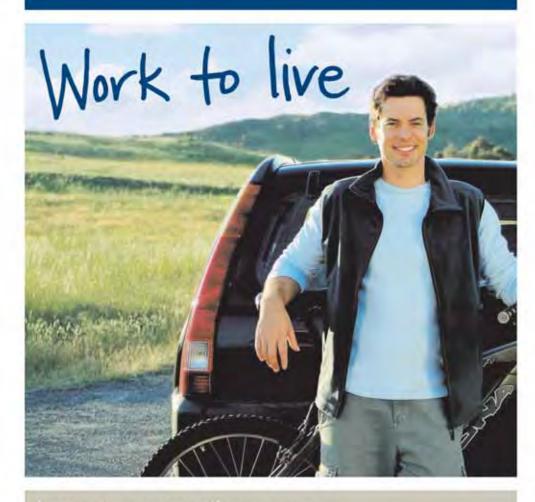


Your Career & You

Your Career & You

Self Assessment for Students and Graduates

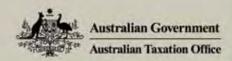
(and all lifelong career planners)



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Your Career & You

Self Assessment for Students and Graduates

(and all lifelong career planners)

Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) is the leading authority on the supply of, and demand for, new graduates in Australia. GCA fosters employment and career opportunities for graduates, in association with the higher education sector, government and business.

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This book is a substantially updated edition of *Your Career and You* which was originally written by Bronwyn Duncan for GCA. It has been an extremely valuable and well-respected resource in university Careers Services for some time.

This new edition, written by Karen Sims (with Dugald McNaughtan and Di Rachinger) for GCA, encompasses modern workplace skills and will continue to assist students and graduates of all experience levels in self assessment, a crucial component of a successful job search. Careers Service personnel from around Australia assisted with the content of this publication.

Graduate Careers Australia would like to thank the Australian Taxatlon Office for its ongoing generous financial support, which enabled the update and original release of this publication.



Your Career & You

Self Assessment for Students and Graduates

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foreword

Your Career and You is designed to assist students and graduates gain a clear understanding of their skills and attributes, by way of a number of challenging written exercises.

Careers Service staff may choose to introduce this publication in a group environment, as part of one-on-one counselling or by encouraging students to complete it independently and return for questions or discussion at a later stage.

It is recommended that students and graduates complete a couple of the written exercises at a time rather than attempt all the exercises in the one sitting. Students may prefer to actually write in the book and use extra paper where necessary or may choose to use notepaper for all of the exercises.

The publication is also suitable for more experienced job seekers, particularly those who have never undertaken this important process of self evaluation. Career planning and self assessment are ongoing activities that should be done regularly throughout one's career. New skills and knowledge are constantly acquired and, unless you regularly document your new learning, important skills and knowledge are often forgotten when it comes time to write that all important job application.

So the message is, keep your 'self audit' current and dynamic.

search and a		iii readers o	i tilis book a	iruitiui job

introduction



self assessment what is it?

Self assessment is something we do often in life, mostly in small ways; for example analysing why we didn't get the mark we expected in an exam, how we performed in a game of tennis, what we said at a recent social function.

Self assessment is about having an introspective look at your skills, goals, knowledge, values, attributes and motivations. You should consider it both healthy and sensible, not as navel-gazing or egotistical. It is also a critical component of planning a job search, irrespective of what age or stage you are at.

When applying for a job you need to be aware of your talents, interests and skills so that you can make good decisions, and can communicate clearly to potential employers. Employers will expect you to have assessed yourself and they will also be assessing you – trying to discover your potential, the sort of contribution you might make to their organisation, the nature and range of your skills and how well you communicate.

This self assessment should not be seen as a 'one-off' exercise. The majority of graduates will experience a number of job (and in many cases, career) changes throughout their working life. At each step of your career path you will need to again 'take stock' of what skills and knowledge you can take to your next employer and reflect on issues such as your values and motivations. The insights you will gain from this publication will equip you well for each phase of this future career planning. Keep a copy of this book and all that you record as you work through it. It will assist you to reflect on 'who you are' as you progress though your working life.

again or change your answers as you see fit. This isn't an exam and no one will comment your handwriting – getting your responses on paper is what is important.	

introduction

how do you do it?

If you *analyse* things you've done or sometimes *think* about yourself, then you've already started on the road to self assessment.

To self assess, you need to have a 360 degree perspective. You need to be able to look forward, look back and also look at yourself in the present. This is quite a complex process but also a rewarding one. Self assessment gives you insight into who you are – everybody has a 'toolbox' of skills – identifying them and being able to enunciate them sets you on the path to career success.

what's in it for you?

Self assessment is vital for gaining a clearer understanding of where you may be going in life, not just in terms of a career, but also in terms of life goals and relationships.

Self assessment is a way of learning what you do well, what you don't do so well and what you might do in the future. Essentially, you can determine what makes you you – what values, skills and attributes you have. And keep in mind, if you don't know who you are, you cannot expect an employer will readily be able to determine what you have to offer.

how to use this book

This book will help you focus on the kinds of qualities you currently have (or are developing) that will be relevant in your working life. The book, by way of a number of written exercises, involves thinking carefully and objectively about yourself at a very personal level, and possibly getting others to help you work out the answers.

Self assessment is a valuable activity. If you know yourself well you will be better able to make decisions that are right for you. The idea here is that you think about general qualities in yourself at as specific a level as you can and then write down examples of situations, experiences or skills that demonstrate you have these qualities. Focus on positive qualities and achievements, but if you come up with some weaknesses, don't be too hard on yourself – everybody has them.

At the end of this book you should have a snapshot of a real person with strengths and weaknesses, talents and skills, preferences and distastes – all of which will be relevant to your future working life.

Think of it as putting yourself under a microscope, and then look for patterns of skills and qualities. Since we all change over time this snapshot can only be of you at this stage in your life, based largely on your past, with a few glimpses into the hazy future.

You can work through the written exercises on your own (perhaps doing a few at a time) however, it may be more valuable to consult the Careers Service staff at your institution who will be able to transfer some of the issues the book raises into tangible points for job applications and interviews. Find their contact details on the Graduate Careers Australia website – www.graduatecareers.com.au under 'Campus Contacts'.

Finding the right job and exploring career possibilities is an exciting time of life but it can also be quite daunting. This book will help you prepare for your job search.

personal goals

sense of direction

Have you thought about where you're going? Can you talk about what you want out of life? Apart from describing your specific career goals and personal qualities, you should be able to say something about your general sense of direction.

For example, can you name three things that are more important to you than anything else? They might be broad things, such as travel, fame, love, children, possessions, security, adventure or health. In a face-to-face situation such as a job interview, it is better if you can specifically say what you want out of life. For example, regarding travel you could say that you "would like a job which offers overseas travel". Regarding adventure you could say that "an outdoor job which challenges me physically is what I prefer".

It's important in the upcoming exercise to pinpoint the things that are so meaningful to you that vou would be unfulfilled or discontent and frustrated without them. Don't exclude things because they might be 'uncool', and don't worry that your wishes may change - you can only be expected to deal with how you are at the present time.

written exercise

Sum up your life goals in a few words or phrases. Come back to this exercise after you've worked on the others and assess how closely your sense of direction and goals match up with the rest of your profile.



goal setting and achievement

Goals can be immediate, in the near future or a long way ahead. They may be broad or very specific. What goals have you set and reached in your education and personal life so far? What goals have you set for the future regarding your work, personal life or interests? Do you prefer to wait and see, or to plan ahead - or a combination of both?

In applying for work you need to think about broad longer-term career goals as well as immediate ones that specifically relate to your first job.

written exercise

Write down some examples of different types of goals you've previously set and reached, and some that you hope to reach in the future. Also, write down why they are important to you.

past goals achieved
general:
specific:
future goals
general – (in 12 months, in three years, in 10 years)
specific - (in 12 months, in three years, in 10 years)

part two values and attitudes

the place of work in my life
How important is your working life compared with other things you value? Are you closer to the phrase 'work to live' or 'live to work'? How much are you prepared to put work first and other things second? This is important because some occupations and employers make more demands on your time and dedication than others.

The hidden questions here concern how ambitious you are, what you are prepared to give up for your work and how much you expect to get out of work compared to other areas of satisfaction in your life.

Considering what you have said about your personal goals earlier how

written	exercise

would you describe the degree of importance your career and work is likely to have in your life? (After doing this exercise, think how an employe might respond to your answers.)			ork is	
	,			



rewards

What sort of rewards are you after in a career? This is a fundamental element of career choice. You should be able to compose a list of essential and desirable rewards and a list of things you want to avoid.

A simple way to classify rewards is to separate them into external (or extrinsic) and internal (or intrinsic) rewards. External rewards include salary and other financial benefits, good working conditions, job security and opportunities for advancement. Internal rewards are those that come from actually doing a job; therefore, they depend on what you like to do and what you are proficient in. Some examples are the enjoyment of a task for its own sake, organising events, a cooperative environment, being independent, stretching your intellect, using your hands, being physically active, working with people, variety, risk-taking, responsibility or authority to name a few.

written exercise

Make lists of the external and internal rewards you would like in a career and the things you want to avoid or minimise.

external rewards – essential
internal rewards – essential
external rewards – desirable
internal rewards – desirable
what I want to avoid or minimise in my job/career:

part two values and attitudes

personal commitments

Personal commitments may include family, friends, environmental or charitable causes, strong beliefs, lifestyles, dedicated interests, sense of duty or perhaps an obligation to others.

Do you have or do you foresee commitments in your life that you would be likely to put ahead of your career if you had to make a choice? Are you willing or able to put your job ahead of your personal commitments? Is so, which ones?

Obviously, your situation will change over time. You need to think about whether you have any commitments now that prevent you from taking up certain jobs.

You may be able to plan your working life so that you defer certain choices to fit in with your commitments and vice versa.

List the commitments that are important to you and indicate whether

written exercise

o how they m	ngrit accorr	iniodate e	acii otilei.	

part three

interests

Interests can be called hobbies, pastimes, recreational pursuits or extracurricular activities. They may be work-related, they may not. Employers often assess the interests of a candidate, not so much for who they are, as for what they reveal about a person's attributes, approach to life, approach to others and capacity for enthusiasm.

If you have interests in which you excel and which take up much of your time and energy, you might be able to incorporate them into your working life. If not, and you want to continue a high degree of involvement in them, you'll need to seek paid work that allows this flexibility.

Examples of work-related interests include professional sport and coaching, web design, non-fiction writing, model-making, dressmaking, conservation issues, food, health and nutrition, animal husbandry, the arts, travel and fund raising.

written exercise

List the interests of most importance to you. Try to rank them – say whether you want to incorporate any of them in your work, keep them for leisure time only, or both.

interests	work-related	leisure/personal	both
very important			
vory important			
fairly important			

part four personal attributes

intellectual capacity and style
Intelligence is a complicated quality. It concerns not just how well or how quickly you learn and retain knowledge, but what kinds of things you learn most easily and to what level, as well as the way in which you learn, how you apply your knowledge and understanding and the creativity and insight you bring to different kinds of problems.

Some people are better as specialists, others as 'generalists'. By the time you near the end of your tertiary education you have usually demonstrated your intelligence in various ways, through your studies and in other parts of your life.

written	exercise

Written exercise Thinking of your academic work and your life experiences: what examples best indicate your intellectual capacity and the ways you put it to use?		



imagination and creativity

Imagination and creativity relate to intelligence and are considered extremely valuable attributes in the work environment. They are also hard to define. Imagination in a work context is about seeing new ways of doing a job, solving problems or organising work that don't merely follow set practices.

Creativity does not mean only artistic talent. It means a way of thinking constructively and being inventive as well as following up with practical suggestions. It means asking yourself, "Is there a better way of doing this?" Sometimes there are good reasons why new ideas can't be implemented such as safety legislation. However, exhibiting an interest in finding better ways to do things, will show your employer that you have imagination and creativity; this in turn may result in being asked to participate in new projects.

written exercise

Describe some situations in which you've used imagination and creative thinking to improve things or to solve problems.		

part four personal attributes

sense of responsibility

Are you someone who recognises what needs to be done and is willing to do it? Do you take responsibility for yourself, and in some situations for others? Are you tactful and diplomatic?

At work, responsibility can extend to recognising or anticipating a problem and being willing to help solve it, even if it's not strictly your job to do so. It means doing more than the bare essentials. Taking responsibility also involves understanding that the 'buck stops with you' that is, that you are directly answerable for your actions and performance. It's the kind of attitude that helps get you a job in the first place and career advancement later.

Give some examples of how you've taken responsibility, whether in a job, as

written exercise

a student, in your personal life or in following interests in your leisure time. Explain why they might be valuable to an employer.				



temperament and personal style

Like intelligence, temperament and personal style (also known as personality or disposition) have many components. These personal traits relate to your typical way of thinking, feeling and acting in different situations.

In nearly all kinds of work your temperament is significant in terms of your ability to perform the job or the amount of satisfaction you derive from it. Regardless of the job, employers like to get a sense of what you would be like to have around every day in the organisation.

Here are a few words to describe certain types of temperament: aggressive; apathetic; assertive; bold; calm; cautious; cheerful; confident; critical; decisive; deep; energetic; extroverted; friendly; good-humoured; introverted; lazy; lively; meticulous; modest; nervous; optimistic; outspoken; pessimistic; polite; proud; quiet; relaxed; reserved; responsible; restless; sceptical; sensitive; shy; sincere; solitary; stubborn; talkative; thick-skinned; tolerant; trusting; unconventional; warm.

written exercise

Think about the situations in which you've showed these qualities. You may like to seek the opinion of someone who knows you well.			

personal attributes

competitiveness

Are you willing and able to compete with others and have your performance measured against theirs? Do you actually enjoy competition, and if so in which circumstances? What sort of competition do you dislike? Do you prefer to work cooperatively?

Healthy competition in the workplace can spur employees on to new heights. It can also add excitement and foster teamwork.

written exercise

Give some examples of competitive situations you've been in, write down how you approached them and how you felt at the time. Then, describe some cooperative situations, explaining how you approached them and how you felt about them.

competition - (examples: study, sport, prizes, clubs, jobs, family, friends)						
ooperation - (e	examples: teamv	ork, family, fr	iends, study.	iobs. commur	nity activities)	
	'	,,,	,,,	, ,	,	
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initiative

Do you make decisions easily and then follow through with them? Do you get things done without waiting to be asked? Employers sometimes use the word 'selfstarter' or 'self-motivated' to describe these qualities. Another word is 'enterprising'. It means they expect you to be resourceful and use your own discipline and energy to achieve projects or tasks. It may also mean that you will be expected to take the lead in a situation.

Most students have to use their initiative just to complete their studies, but it is developed in other ways too, even in social situations. Have you had to think of clever, unusual ways to raise funds for an organisation connected with one of your hobbies?

written exercise

List some situations in which you saw a need and filled it, or found yourself facing a problem and acted independently to solve it. Also, list some situations where you started something from scratch either alone or with others.

20 part four personal attributes your career & you Graduate Careers Australia

personal attributes



self confidence

Self confidence is a changeable quality. You can have it, lose it, get it back, have it in some circumstances and not in others. Some people seem full of confidence but you can be sure there are times when they're not. Even the appearance of self confidence can be just that – an illusion that hides fear or uncertainty. Remember, appearing self confident can actually help you feel that way.

Confidence grows with preparation and practice, and you are right to feel confident about things you do well, just as it's natural to feel hesitant or unsure about things you do poorly or have never done before.

It is important to be positive and confident with prospective employers about your skills and abilities, as well as showing that you believe in your potential to succeed in new situations.

written exercise

Put your good points into words using the expressions below, which all show confidence without conceit or arrogance.

■1 can		
■ i find it easy to		
■ i have a flair for		
■ One of my aptitudes is		
7 1 2222		

= 1 to get good or the hint
■ people have told me I'm
■ i've done well in
■ i found (x) hard at first but now
■ i need more experience in (y) but I do know about
■ my experience in (z) has taught me to

i've got good skills in

personal attributes

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leadership

This is another tough quality to define. Leading people is not about telling people what to do. It means making people want to do something, or be willing to do it. Any job which involves directing a team, managing a project, supervising people or teaching a skill is essentially about leadership.

You may have gained leadership skills via a scout group, sporting team, committee, part-time job or even organising an event. Particularly if you have been in a role of captain, chair, president, trainer or team leader there will be tangible evidence of skills and experiences you will be able to demonstrate.

Your first job is not likely to involve these roles, but employers will be looking for evidence of potential. Respect for others, sensitivity when dealing with honest reactions, sharing information and ideas, showing genuine concern, being willing to take risks and show initiative, having a sense of vision as well as proportion, communicating clearly about objectives – these are all components of good leadership. Sometimes it involves making personal sacrifices or showing you're willing to make them if necessary.

written exercise

What qualities of leadership do you think you've already developed, or are developing? These may show up in any part of your life. Give a few examples that may interest an employer.

persistence

Can you hang in there when the going gets tough? If you're an ideas person, can you follow through and put them into practice?

Persistence requires self-discipline as well as a strong desire to reach a goal. It's what is behind the 'hard work' part of any task or goal, the long haul between the first moment of inspiration and the champagne bottle that launches the ship.

Clearly, you'll have shown persistence by completing your tertiary studies. But there are other examples in your life as well. Have you given up on something and found an alternative that suited you better, or have you returned eventually to your earlier path and completed what you set out to do? It's not wise to be blindly persistent and therefore inflexible, but you should be able to show your capacity to reach a difficult goal, large or small. Examples might be learning a musical instrument or foreign language, maintaining a fitness program, overcoming a disability or weakness and so on. We all know what we find hard – it's how we tackle something difficult that shows our persistence and determination.

Describe some examples of your ability to persist towards a goal in difficult

written exercise

circumstances, or your determination to complete a difficult task.			

personal attributes



flexibility

This is connected to imagination and creativity. It concerns openness to new ideas and changing circumstances, a willingness to adapt and make the best of the opportunities presented by change rather than automatically resisting them. It can also mean being prepared to consider different ways of achieving the same goal before choosing just one of them. Your personal circumstances and commitments may determine whether more or less flexibility is possible in your career, and at different times in your life.

written exercise

Describe some examples of your flexibility and capacity to manage change. If you have experience in evaluating different approaches to solving a problem and using your judgement to make a decision, give some examples – think of family, personal, study, travel, work or moral and ethical situations.

energy and health

Is your health good, average or poor? Are you fit? Do you have energy to burn or does daily life take its toll? Chances are that if you're in your twenties and healthy, you'll be energetic enough to manage a demanding job and a vigorous social life. Being fit and healthy contributes to doing well at work and enjoying it. Some work environments are bad for some people, for example, a chronic ailment may be made worse in some settings.

If you have any health problems you should look carefully at the demands a career will make on you. Some can be physically and psychologically demanding. Some jobs have certain physical requirements, eg. excellent vision or hearing, manual dexterity or a maximum or minimum height. The majority of jobs for graduates, however, can accommodate minor disabilities and health problems.

Written exercise List any aspects of your health and fitness that could affect your choice of work in either a positive or negative way.					our choice	

personal attributes

notes	

part five

Skills and personal attributes overlap. A skill is a developed capacity, flair or aptitude which is usually expressed as a combination of 'know-how' and knowledge. The concept of transferable skills is important for new graduates, who need to see how the skills they've acquired through formal study and other activities can be applied to employment. It's important to avoid a rigid or narrow interpretation of your skills in terms of the label 'accountancy', 'history', 'biology' or whatever your major subjects are. These only inform an employer about what you have studied rather than what you can do (which, after all, is what they really want to know!).

For convenience, skills are often grouped under broad headings, such as organising skills, communication skills and so on. The following table is a useful way of classifying and naming many of your transferable skills. Additionally, the following pages explain some of these categories more fully, and the accompanying exercises will help you to describe your most important skills.

written exercise

Using the following chart, circle the skills in which you believe you are competent, put a square around the skills in which you consider yourself as being competent and put a triangle around the skills that you are unsure about or need to develop further.

notes			

skills



personal skills chart*

porsonia		ti t	
	social	communication	
organising	group	and Linguistic	creative
Time structuring and management	Encouraging, monitoring, criticising	Technical presentation	Formulating hypotheses
Setting and achieving goals	Networking	Expressing ideas, feelings, opinions, judgements	Demonstrating a capacity for inventiveness
Thoroughness and attention to detail	Effectiveness in group interaction	Presenting information and ideas in effective written form appropriate to the purpose and to the reader	Perceiving likenesses among things apparently unlike
Effective decision making	Working cooperatively and constructively	Editing	Working with analogues, parallels
Helicopter view – being able to look from above and see all aspects	Participating in team work	Communicating orally in large or small groups	Extrapolating from the known to the unknown
Managing others	Sharing responsibilities	Giving and receiving feedback	Capacity for vision
Motivating others	Willingness to learn from others	Active listening	Ability to think laterally
Leading	Assessing and evaluating others	Ability to move to closure	Use of metaphors and analogies
Planning	Recognising, accepting, allowing for differences	Questioning	Suspending judgement
Political awareness	Dealing with conflict/negativity/ apathy/passivity	Reflecting	Building on the ideas of others
Contracting	Handling controversy	Clarifying	Being proactive
Initiating	Explaining, persuading, negotiating, influencing	Non-verbal communication	
Delegating	Constructive disagreement confrontation resolution	Clarity of expression	
	Empathising	Fluency	
	Openness	Foreign language competence	

^{*}Source: Personal Skills Unit, University of Sheffield, UK.

cognitive	contingency	self-managing	physical
Numerical competence	Responding effectively to change	Self-awareness	Psychomotor coordination
Collecting, selecting and ordering data	Adapting concepts, skills and materials to new situations	Responsibility – planning own work	Fitness appreciation and development
Making effective use of information	Adjusting to individual differences and to changing group characteristics and reactions	Operating independently	Spatial awareness
Observing and recording	Recognising need for change	Ability to de-centre	Psychosomatic cues
Applying judgement and discrimination	Coping with the unexpected	Developing self-esteem	Performance inhibitors
Evaluating, data, values, issues	Showing capacity to improvise	Developing self-confidence	Diet, exercise
Identifying and solving problems	Dealing with ambiguity	Coping and managing stress	
Analysing key factors into components	Role adaptability	Being assertive	
Inductive/deductive reasoning	Transfer and application of ideas and concepts	Identifying personal potential and routes to achieving it	
Synthesising and integrating disparate elements	Anticipating problems and building in ways to manage them	Ability to self-disclose	
Formulating and testing hypotheses		Personal power	
Evaluating evidence		Personal presentation	
Extrapolating		Managing personal/professional boundaries	
Summarising		Self-evaluation and assessment	
Assessment		Elimination of prejudice and stereotypes	
Diagnosis			





interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are the ones you use most in dealing with others, and they can take many forms in the work environment. They may involve making contact with new people, motivating others, negotiating, reasoning, supervising, teaching, explaining, listening, directing, accepting direction, advising, counselling, sharing and being open, competing, anticipating, operating under stress, handling and resolving conflict, making unpopular decisions and just getting on well with all sorts of people. Interpersonal skills are closely linked to communication skills.

written exercise

Try to think of successes and weaknesses in your relationships or interactions with others and what part your interpersonal skills play in these. Give examples from your personal, study or working life that seem important, and describe briefly the skills and approaches you use in different situations. It may be helpful to ask someone who knows you well to help with this exercise.

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communication skills

Good communication is the key to being successful and satisfied in many situations - work, personal or social. At work, communication skills are most commonly shown in your ability to use and understand language, whether spoken or on paper. You need a good command of language to get your ideas, opinions and feelings across clearly. Listening carefully is a fundamental communication skill, as is the ability and confidence to ask questions when you need to understand something or get information from someone. Competence in a language other than English also counts as a communication skill.

Think of some recent examples of how you have used communication

written exercise

What do yo improvementalking with	u judge to be nt through me groups or inc	e your best sore training dividuals? D	skills in this a or experience o you enjoy	area and whi ee? Do you f making form	nicated better. ich ones need eel more at easo nal presentation is or debates?

skills



organising and planning skills

The ability to organise your work and your life, to work out your priorities sensibly and plan realistically and the ability to manage your time and resources, are very important in a career. Prioritising your work and attending to the most important tasks first, as well as spending less time and energy on non-essential work and effectively delegating tasks to others, are highly regarded skills in almost any job.

Student life regularly makes demands on many of these skills, so you will already have some experience of using them. We all know when we've done well in this area, and equally we know when we've let too many deadlines accumulate without enough time to meet them all.

Do you organise things well most of the time so that your life proceeds smoothly? Can you plan and set priorities so that the most important things get done? Which parts of your life do you find easiest to manage and which are harder? Can you think of ways to improve the situation?

written exercise

Write down some examples of how you have applied these skills successfully and how they might be relevant to your career.

modern workplace skills

There are also some skills which have increased in importance in the eyes of graduate employers in the last 10 years. These include enterprise skills, computer literacy and self-reliance skills, all proving to be of considerable importance in the workplace of the new millennium.

employability skills framework

In 2002, the Business Council of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) produced the report *Employability Skills for the Future.* The report aimed to improve the understanding of what employers consider makes a good employee.

The key skills identified are outlined in the graph on the following pages:

,		0.0

employability skills framework

Personal attributes that contribute to overall employability:

- Loyalty
- Commitment
- Honesty & integrity
- Enthusiasm
- Reliability Personal
- presentation
- Commonsense
- Positive self-esteem ■ A sense of humour
- A balanced attitude to work & home life
- An ability to deal with pressure
- Motivation
- Adaptability

Skill

communication

...that contributes to productive & harmonious relations across employees & customers

Skill

team work ...that contributes

to productive working relationships and outcomes

Skill

problem solving ...that contributes to productive outcomes

Skill

self management

...that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth

Skill planning & organising

...that contributes to long- and short-term strategic planning

Skill technology

...that contributes

to effective execution of tasks

Skill learning

...that contributes to ongoing improvement & expansion in employee & company operations & outcomes

Skill initiative and enterprise

...that contribute to innovative outcomes

Element*

Listening and understanding

Speaking clearly and directly

Writing to the needs of the audience

Negotiating responsively Reading independently

Empathising

Speaking and writing in languages other than English

Using numeracy effectively Understanding the needs of internal and external customers Persuading effectively

Establishing and using networks

Sharing information

Being assertive

Element*

Working effectively with people of different age. gender, race, religion and political persuasion

Working as an individual and as a member of a team

Knowing how to define a role as part of the team Applying team work skills to a range of situations. ea. futures plannina. crisis problem solvina

Identifying the strengths of the team members

Coaching, mentoring and giving feedback

Element*

Developing creative, innovative solutions

Developing practical solutions

Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them

Solving problems in teams

Applying a range of strategies to problem solvina

Using mathematics including budgeting and financial management to solve problems

Applying problem solving strategies across a range of areas

Testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account

Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex projects issues

Element*

Having a personal vision and goals Evaluating and monitoring own performance

Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and visions

Articulating own ideas and visions Taking responsibility

Element*

Managing time and priorities - setting time lines, coordinating tasks for self and with others

Being resourceful Taking initiative and making decisions

Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies

Establishing clear project goals and deliverables

Allocating people and other resources to tasks

Planning the use of resources including time management

Participating in continuous improvement and planning processes

Developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it

Predictina – weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria

Collecting, analysing and organising information

Understanding basic business systems and their relationships

Element*

Having a range of basic IT skills Applying IT as a management tool

Being willing to learn new IT skills

Using IT to organise

Having the OHS knowledge to apply technology

Having the physical capacity to apply technology, ea. manual dexterity

Element*

Managing own learning Contributing to the learning community at the workplace

Using a range of mediums to learn mentoring, peer support, networking, IT, courses

Applying learning to 'technical' issues (eq. learning about products) and 'people' issues (eq. interpersonal and cultural aspects of work)

Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning

Being willing to learn in any setting - on and off the job

Being open to new ideas and techniques

Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills

Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change

Element*

Adapting to new situations

Developing a strategic, creative, long-term vision

Being creative Identifying opportunities not obvious to others

Translating ideas into action

Generating a range of options

Initiating innovative solutions

36 part five skills your career & you Graduate Careers Australia

^{*}Facets of the skill that employers identified as important noting that the mix and priority of these facets would vary from job to job

special talents and skills

Do you have a special talent or aptitude you might use in some way in your work? For example, it could be a strong natural ability which you have developed (or are developing) into a strong skill, perhaps through training or experience. Examples include musical skills, a flair for selling or persuading, superior skill in a particular sport, an outstanding gift for logical deductive thinking, well-developed intuitive judgement, skill in capturing and presenting ideas in visual form or the capacity to concentrate simultaneously on both the details and the wider context of a situation. The point is that, if you believe you have a special talent, you should include it in your thinking about your career and life choices. You may decide to try and use it in your first job or set time aside for further training. It's important not to ignore your potential in any direction, however trivial it may seem at present. It could well be central to your long-term satisfaction and sense of identity in life.

written	exercise

Written exercise Write down any special talents or skills that should be considered in you career planning, either now or in the future. How important are these to you			

part six

self assessment profile

Before you complete this profile, remember this: you are much more than the sum of your goals, values, interests, attributes and skills. Working through this book has been an analytical activity to make you think about the different qualities you should take into account in your career planning. Employers assess these qualities when selecting candidates for jobs. This process is as much about assessing your potential, as about what you have already achieved. And don't forget, you're also dynamic - you'll change and grow and seek different things at different times in your life.

qualities in relation to careers and work. As a result, when you apply for jobs and go for interviews, you'll be in a better position to 'call up' these highlights from memory. This means you'll be able to describe yourself to employers both in terms of the job you are after now, and the career you hope to pursue later on.

part six self assessment profile

Graduate Careers

personal goals

the things I want most in the rest of my life are	
my main immediate goals are	
my main long-term goals are	
my main long torm godio dro	
in five to 10 years time I expect to be	
'	

values and attitudes

would describe the position of work in my life as
ny current and expected commitments are
he most important rewards for me in a career are

part six self assessment profile

Graduate Careers

interests

my strongest interests are	
my strongest work-related interests are	
whatever my career, I regard as top priority my interest in	
whatever my career, I regard as top priority my interest in	
whatever my career, I regard as top priority my interest in	
whatever my career, I regard as top priority my interest in	
whatever my career, I regard as top priority my interest in	
i would like to develop interests in	

personal attributes

the attributes I most value in myself are	
the attributes employers are most likely to value in me are	
the attributes I would like to strengthen are	

part six self assessment profile

Graduate Careers

skills
i have outstanding skills in
i have good skills in
i am competent in
i would like to improve in

i believe the skills most relevant to my career interests are
careers and jobs of interest to me which seem most compatible with my profile are
careers and jobs of interest to me which seem least compatible with my profile are
notes
notes

last word

There are numerous publications available on all aspects of career planning – self assessment is only one component. Other topics include career choice, cover letter and résumé building, interview preparation and interview skills. Visit the Careers Service at your institution, your Career Advisor or peruse bookstores and the web to find publications that will help you. A great place to start is also Graduate Careers Australia (GCA).

The GCA website – www.graduatecareers.com.au – is an easy-to-use, central source of information about graduate careers, which can help students and graduates to:

- search for a graduate position
- investigate work in different industries
- find vacation work
- write a winning job application and résumé
- get in touch with university Careers Services
- explore options for further study
- research graduate starting salaries and employment rates (through GradsOnline www.gradsonline.com.au).

GCA also provides quality education products covering many other aspects of employment and career exploration to students and graduates. As well as this self assessment guide – *Your Career and You*, GCA produces the employer directory *Graduate Opportunities*, industry career information booklets, the *Graduate Destination Survey* reports and videos such as *Getting the Job* and *Out in Front with an Arts Degree*. Many GCA products are available to students free of charge from Careers Services on campus, or by visiting its website – www.graduatecareers.com.au.

For further information contact the GCA Helpdesk on ph: 03 9349 4300, fax: 03 9347 7298 or email: info@graduatecareers.com.au.

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