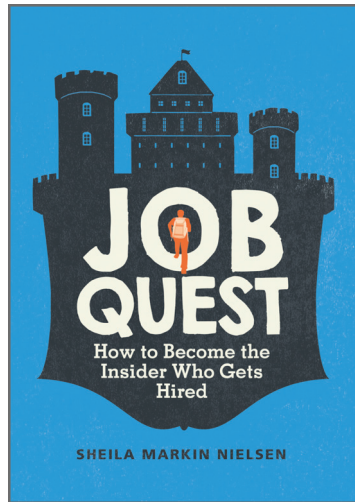


JOB QUEST: HOW TO BECOME THE INSIDER WHO GETS HIRED – APPENDICES



Job Quest: How to Become the Insider Who Gets Hired
by Sheila Markin Nielsen

Published by Nielsen Career Press and available in print and Kindle format at Amazon and for order through your local bookstore.

ISBN: 978-0-692-37277-7

Welcome!

These appendices from Sheila Nielsen's book *Job Quest: How to Become the Insider Who Gets Hired* will help you on your job quest. The first three appendices provide information about important self-assessment tools for finding out what you need from your career and job.

Appendix A - AIMS Assessment: How to find the best direction for your career

Appendix B - AILS Assessment: What to assess if you are dissatisfied with your career

Appendix C - Essential Elements Assessment: How to find your personal, unique building blocks for a satisfying career

The next two appendices are examples of items to bring with you on your job quest when you meet with people who could be trusted contacts:

Appendix D - Skills-based Résumé

Appendix E - Master List of People and Places

The final Appendix F provides an overview of the key steps to execute in your successful job quest.

If you own the book from which these Appendices come, following its advice will enable you to create the luck you need to pull off a successful job quest. If not, check it out at Amazon <amazon link> and avail yourself of its proven framework and practical guidelines for becoming the insider who gets hired.

Here is a brief look at the book's **Table of Contents**:

Introduction: A Surprising Epiphany about How People Really Get Jobs

Part I: The Basics

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Appendices

A Note on the Appendices

The assessment tools in the first three appendices are the ones I use in my practice. When I counsel people, I start with the tools in the first two appendices, AIMS and AILS. With the AIMS assessment, if you have the aptitude and interest, and the market need is there but you are missing the skills, then all you need to do is acquire the skills and you are all set to launch the search. Or let's say you are dissatisfied with your career but are not sure why. You would try to identify what AILS you. For example, if you have the aptitude and interest for a job but are not happy with the lifestyle or the culture of the workplace, you could move to a different job in the same field. Sometimes, though, a deeper assessment is required to figure out the right career direction if you are just starting out or changing fields. Some people need to go on a journey before the job quest journey begins to figure out enough about who they are to know what kind of job to look for. This is where the Essential Elements exercise is valuable.

When I work with clients, much of our early work is devoted to this self-assessment. We try to figure out and identify the building blocks a person needs to be satisfied at work. We get at that by doing a work history and personal history. Once that work is done, we can put together an Essential Elements list, identifying those elements a person needs and those elements that really need to be avoided. Then we see how much each element matters and how much give there might be for every identified element. This exercise creates greater clarity about what each person must have in her career and what should be avoided. We can use this Essential Elements list to measure a job to understand what the job has and why it is or isn't a match. The list can also be used to determine good questions to ask in an informational interview to learn what is likely to be satisfying about a possible career or job as well as what is likely to be problematic.

For some, it will be helpful to do these exercises. For others, it might be insufficient. Trying to assess ourselves can be difficult. Sometimes we do not really know ourselves very well and tools like the ones in this book might be difficult to utilize. If these tools do not provide the information you need for an effective self-assessment, use your high school or university career services office to find out about tests that could help you learn more about yourself. Myers-Briggs is a favorite, but there are others, including Highlands Ability Battery, Strong Interest Inventory, and Johnson O'Connor. Some private career counselors and career services professionals at your school should be able to help you with this process of self-assessment as well.

Appendix A: AIMS Assessment

The AIMS assessment stands for Aptitude, Interest, Market Need, and Skills. You need to assess these four elements to point yourself in the right career direction.

Who should do the AIMS assessment?

You should do an AIMS assessment if one of these describes your situation:

- You are a new graduate and want to figure out the right career path.
- You are in a field or industry already but want to move to a different segment of your current field or industry.
- You are in a field or industry but want to move to a new field or industry and you are not sure what that should be.

1. Aptitudes

What do you do well?

Most people excel at work when they are performing work and activities that play to their strengths. For example, some people are naturally good at math or science, while others are not as good at thinking that way. Some people are excellent logical, linear thinkers. Some people write well. Some people are good at understanding how other people think and are sensitive to nuances in human behavior. *Aptitudes* are our innate strengths and abilities.

For a job to be satisfying and a career path to be highly successful for you, it helps if your work utilizes your strong suits. If you are innately good at what you do, you will be more likely to be satisfied and successful at work.

Think back over your life to identify your aptitudes. Include those identified by your teachers, friends, and family. Are you the person everyone talks to because you are easy to connect with? Are you the person who loves being in the center of a group? Do you enjoy the spotlight? Are you the person who wants to help others? Are you the person everyone knows will get the right answer on the history exam? Sometimes other people can see our personal strengths more clearly than we can, so ask friends, teachers, and family to add to this list if you need help.

APTITUDE WORK SHEET

What do you do well naturally? What are your talents and gifts?
List them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

APTITUDE WORK SHEET ILLUSTRATION

This person went to journalism school after college and earned a master's degree there. She became a freelance videographer and video content producer for a magazine developing a Web presence. The job requires excellent interpersonal skills meeting with vendors and learning about their businesses and then telling their stories in a compelling and upbeat way. The job requires motivation to create video content and an eye for detail. She likes to work independently and will make deadlines without being supervised.

1. Good at projects that require creativity and visual ability.
2. Good at talking with anyone about anything. Meets new people easily.
3. Loves putting music and visual content together.
4. Independent projects that require close attention to detail.
5. Good at helping people feel at ease, a good hostess.
6. Natural sense of humor.
7. Interested in popular culture and music.

2. Interests

Interests are not necessarily the same as aptitudes.

What is an interest? It's the thing that gets you out of bed in the morning. It's the motivator for your work-life. You really look forward to doing this activity or thinking about this topic. For some people, it's a passionate excitement about something. For others, it is a strong interest in something. And for others it's a sense of fulfillment or engagement that may not rise to a level of passion or even strong interest, but when doing the activity, the person enjoys life more.

To have a career that works, we want to have an interest in what we are engaged in doing on a daily basis. Certainly it is not possible for a job to be totally interesting all of the time. Most people understand that. But if there is a very low level of interest in any aspect of the work we do a lot, and there is nothing else in the work setting that captures our interest currently or has the prospect of future gratification, then the job will not be compelling. If the job is not compelling, you will have a hard time staying committed.

Interests can include such things as spending time with people we enjoy interacting with; learning how to be better at something we value; learning how to manage and execute a project; or contributing to a compelling cause that we believe in. For some, the work itself might not be interesting, but other factors could outweigh that fact. If the person enjoys the workplace culture and interactions with coworkers and clients and he can have a full life outside of work, that can create enough interest to maintain long-term motivation. In that situation, the lifestyle is the motivator.

In this exercise, try to list your strong interests. If you have an interest in having a life that includes many activities that you engage in outside of the workplace setting – training for a marathon, helping out at a shelter for battered women, learning karate, teaching Sunday school, traveling, writing fiction – list them as well. If you are strongly motivated to engage in activities outside of work, you will need to plan to have a job that allows you to have time for these activities.

Another way to figure out your interests is to imagine all of the blogs, books, and magazines in the world on a table in front of you. What would you pick to read about? Where do you spend your browsing time on the Internet? Do you read blogs? Which ones? What topics interest you? What do you gravitate toward?

There are many people whose strong interests shift as priorities change. Interests can change radically when a person has a change of status. Examples of a change of status include marriage, a child, or an illness of a loved one or oneself.

Finally, are you interested in the field? Do you like thinking about whatever it is the job will require you think about? If not, that is important. Many people go into a field for the wrong reasons. They are encouraged by friends and family. They want to make money. They do not know what else to do. It is remarkable to me as a career

counselor how many people I have worked with who really do not like thinking about the concepts or the day-to-day content of the work they are doing. If you lack that basic interest that is a very important piece of information about yourself that probably should lead you to consider leaving the field for a career that does engage your interests, as long as your economic situation does not stop you from that move. You want to be aware of and “listen” to your interests to lead you into the right career.

An example of how to think about listening to your interests to lead you to the right career comes from one of my clients who got into the wrong industry after graduation. He entered the field of finance after majoring in political science and economics at a top tier university. Most of his friends chose finance, so he did too. He soon realized that he had no interest in the topics or the daily work of the job he did, and looking ahead, he had no interest in becoming an expert in the field he worked in. Interactions with coworkers were not gratifying enough to make up for the deficits of the career. His strong interests throughout his early life would have led him to think about becoming an engineer or an architect. He was the guy who made drawings and models of houses just for fun. He was the guy who took apart the alarm clock and put it back together. But none of his friends were going into those fields, so he did not even consider them. He did not take engineering classes or art design classes in high school or college. To become an architect, he would need to go back to school and take those classes. In our work together, it became clear that he had some talent and an interest in the field of architecture, and if he could do it over, he would go to school to become an architect. After a year of continuing to try to make something else work and continuing to be unhappy with that choice, he decided to go back to school, take the classes he had missed and apply to architecture school. He did that and is very happy about his decision. He really enjoys his classes and is excited about a future in a field that fits his strong interests.

Transitions to a new career might sometimes be made through a portal that is related to the original field. To use law as an example, fields such as professional development for a law firm, higher education administrative work starting out in career services for a law school, marketing for a law firm, public relations, recruiting lawyers either in a corporate setting or law firm setting, financial planning using the contacts made in the field of law and branching out from there, developing of a line of business apparel for professionals, or sales for an entity that services the industry of origin may be possible ways to transition out of the original field and into a new field without fully re-credentialing and going back to school. There are benefits, however, to a full re-credentialing. You learn basics that can help you be successful long-term, and returning to school will help jump-start your relationship building in this new field.

Always try to follow your interests when planning your career moves.

List your strong interests below and rate them on the scale by circling the number that reflects your level of interest; 10 is the highest. The same rating can be used for more than one interest. There is no magic number of interests to include on this list. Some people have only 2 or 3 and others have more than 10.

STRONG INTERESTS WORK SHEET

1. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
12. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
13. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
14. _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONG INTERESTS WORK SHEET ILLUSTRATION A

Writing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Counseling, coaching, teaching	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Making the world a better place	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Human psychology	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Interior design	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Politics/current events/law	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Organizing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
The gamesmanship of trial work	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Dance and exercise	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Above is a partial list of my strong interests. I really love being a career coach and I used to enjoy being a social worker and then a prosecutor. I thought about being a dance instructor and interior designer, but after exploring these fields decided they lacked some of the other elements I needed in a career.

STRONG INTERESTS WORK SHEET ILLUSTRATION B: VIDEO CONTENT PRODUCER

Watching movies	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Studying movie techniques	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Learning about cultural trends	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Engaging in wide variety of the arts	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Trying new restaurants	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Eclectic activities such as cross fit, skating, flying trapeze, music	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

This is a partial interest list of the video producer from the aptitudes section above.

3. Market Need

If there is not a strong need for workers in the field you are considering, that could mean you would need to be a total standout to be successful, and future jobs could be hard to find. Assess market need by looking at ads and postings, reading local trade journals and newspapers, and talking with people in your field of interest. Always try to be aware of the shifts in market need over time. If you are as innately talented as a Megyn Kelly, then take a shot at broadcast journalism. But if you are not, then stay in the faster current of the workflow. Look for a career that has more opportunities because jobs are plentiful.

4. Skills

Your skills need to match up with the job you seek. If they do not, your chances for getting hired are diminished. To check whether your skills match the workplace requirements, look for postings for jobs in the field you are considering and study the list of required skills. Do you have what the employers are looking for? Is it close? For example, many jobs in the field of communications require a degree in journalism or communications or might be open to skills gained in another field where the experiences are translatable, such as the field of law. It helps to talk with people in the field and learn what they do on a daily basis. Good informational interviews can help you figure out what you need to gain in terms of a viable skillset for the field you are considering.

Find the Intersection of Your AIMS Assessment

Where is the match up of your aptitudes, interests, market need, and your skills? If you do not have the skills you need, how could you get them? Brainstorm with friends, teachers, and family members to try to find the right career direction. If you are stumped, consider taking tests, such as the Strong Interest Inventory or the Highlands Ability Battery. There are many books and articles about these and other tests that can help you uncover or identify your aptitudes and interests. Check with career services at your school to find out about testing services.

Appendix B: AILS Assessment

If you start off in the wrong career direction, it can take time and money to reboot, not to mention the emotional toll of that process. It makes the most sense to try to choose the right direction from the start of your career, if at all possible. The AIMS assessment should be coupled with the AILS assessment to be certain you find a personally satisfying career with the likelihood of success in your search efforts. AIMS will tell you where your talents, interests, and the market need indicate you should look. AILS will help you figure out why you are dissatisfied with your career. It can also help you figure out if you are likely to be happy and satisfied in your work-life. Even though there are no guarantees that you will be able to make a perfect match, the likelihood of a good enough match is greater if you use these assessment tools to guide you. In addition, there are some people who are not satisfied with any job or any career. I have worked with some of them. They are pretty grumpy folks and usually can be negative about almost anything. These assessment tools will not overcome that personality problem.

If you have not yet begun your career, use the AILS assessment as a predictive tool to figure out the likelihood of satisfaction with a future career or job. If you are searching for the right area within your field and are currently dissatisfied, use this assessment tool to find the most promising area within your industry.

1. Aptitude

Return to the AIMS assessment and use the aptitude work sheet here.

2. Interest

Return to the AIMS assessment and use the interest work sheet here.

3. Lifestyle

Our work needs to support the lifestyle we want to be happy. Lifestyle includes the amount of money we want to make and the work-life balance equation.

Some people are content to make \$40,000, and others will not feel accomplished or safe unless they make far more. There are plenty of people who envision a lifestyle that is sustainable on a compensation level that lies in between these extremes. The

lower your salary expectation, the more your career options tend to open up. There are more jobs that pay in a mid-range than there are in a high range. The path to the higher pay scale jobs also tends to involve an outlay of more money to achieve the academic credentials that open the door to those jobs. There are websites like Payscale.com that can help you figure out salary ranges for most careers and jobs. Career services at your high school or university should have information you can access to help you determine pay scales as well.

Lifestyle also includes the issue of balance between work and life outside of work. Many people need a work-life balance that is hard to find in a hard-charging professional environment in a large city. There are many more relaxed work settings, however. Some of these settings are in small towns, others are in government, and others are in companies, trade associations, or not-for-profits. A better match of lifestyle needs to the workplace setting and compensation level can add to career satisfaction. Many people are also willing to put in longer hours if the work they are doing is rewarding and engages their aptitudes and interests.

How do you envision the relationship between your ideal life and your work life? Even if you cannot achieve the best match right away, you can plan for a career that will help you achieve a match in the future. You might need to pay off your student loans by going to a large company or firm where you need to work long hours for a period of time, but your long-term plan could include a move to a small company or small town or a government job after a few years of work. Different settings outside of a large city may have somewhat more reasonable hours and may be less stressful settings. The countervailing factor may be that the work may be less complex, complicated or glamorous, which can be disappointing for some people.

However, if you have a long-range career goal of working closer to a 40- to 50-hour week or having a very flexible or part-time schedule, you will want to enter a field that is likely to permit that career transition in the future, especially once you develop a valuable skill that is in demand. This is really important for people who anticipate wanting to be there when children are young. Many workplaces have been slow to recognize the need for work-life balance and pay little attention to personal needs of employees. Work-life balance is supposed to be the employee's problem. Until there is an economic shift and workers are in demand instead of replaceable, it is imperative to take charge of your career planning and understand the likelihood of eventual flexibility or part-time work in your future career if this matters to you. Look for work-life balance trends in your career of choice. Get the most prestigious credentials you can and earn the most stellar work references you can earn because these can create leverage when you want a more balanced life. Make yourself valuable to the industry you are in. Make sure employers really want your skillset. Plan ahead for your future work-life balance needs.

4. Self-Actualization

Our workplaces shape us. The culture of the workplace, our colleagues, the activities we do to fulfill the requirements for our jobs, the mission we are engaged in, the people we interact with who are our clients and our bosses, the amount of time we spend alone or with others – these and many other elements in the work setting affect the person we are and are becoming.

There is a certain amount of plasticity in people in terms of how we grow as individuals. For example, if you need to pay attention to minute details for your job, you will probably get better at picking up small discrepancies not only at work but outside of work. If you need to be outspoken in a courtroom to be effective, you are likely to become more forceful in your dealings with people generally, even outside of the workplace. If you are a judge or a boss managing a large project or a marital therapist, you not only can but often must, interrupt people, order people to do things to move matters along, and be decisive. We tend to carry our learned behaviors at work into the world at large, including our home and social lives. At work we learn behaviors and are shaped by behaviors that become part of our personalities for better or worse.

In addition, the experiences we have at work with coworkers and bosses, clients, and others, can and often will shape our behavior as well as our view of ourselves. For example, if you are a young professional doing the best you can to learn how to do your job, but you are consistently given negative feedback by your boss, that constant negative interaction might affect your sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Instead of becoming more competent over time, you might become more and more uncertain and even turn into a procrastinator, afraid to begin work on a project for fear it will not turn out well. On the other hand, if the boss is able to convey information with the goal of helping you to do a better job and you are open to that criticism and eager to learn, that interaction could be an extremely positive experience that enhances professional development. It is that mixture of who you are and the environment you are working in, plus the people you work with most closely that can deeply affect your satisfaction at work.

Every workplace is a unique mixture of people, workplace culture, overarching mission, and work that needs to be done. The people who work in that particular setting will be affected by that particular environment. To make matters more complex, however, every person is also unique. Two people in the very same workplace can and will react very differently to events and situations. For example, a woman working in a small office with a number of men who tell dirty jokes and laugh about their sexual exploits might well experience that workplace as offensive and even intolerable. She might have actionable grounds for a harassment lawsuit. But another woman joining that same group might feel comfortable talking and laughing about her own sexual exploits. She might find the workplace to be not

only tolerable, but collegial and lots of fun. People are unique and will experience the same place very differently. We really need to be aware of personal differences in sensibilities and sensitivities, including our own.

What this means for you as you try to find right career direction is that you want to figure out for yourself how your workplace is affecting you. Given who you are, what is happening to you? And would this be likely to happen at other workplaces doing the same kind of work? Or is this workplace idiosyncratic? This can be difficult to figure out.

If you are someone who values honesty and prides yourself on being ethical, but your job calls for you to engage in devious tactics or hide the truth, that is probably affecting you in a negative way. This kind of workplace culture will not make you happy.

If you are a team-oriented person who loves interaction with others but your job or career requires that you spend 90% of your time alone in front of a computer doing research, and no one in the office says hello or smiles or talks with you, that will affect you in a negative way. Is there something else in the work you do that counterbalances that negative culture?

If you are working in a place where you are valued and listened to, your opinion matters, and you have developed some expertise, you are probably becoming more confident not only as a worker, but as a person outside of work. You want to try to keep working at a place like this, all things being equal.

How is your workplace shaping you? How are you responding to the people and the work you are doing? Do you like the person you are becoming? What is working for you? What is not working for you?

Use the exercise on the next page to write down the ways the workplace is hurting you and/or helping you become the person you want to be by identifying your goals and then assessing the effect of your workplace on the achievement of your goals. Write down whether your job is helping or hurting your ability to be the person you want to be.

GOALS WORK SHEET

1. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

2. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

3. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

4. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

5. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

6. _____

Hurting?

Helping?

Figure Out What AILS You or Creates Dissatisfaction in Your Career

Now that you have done this exercise, take a minute to review what you have learned. How closely matched are your aptitudes, interests, lifestyle needs, and personal goals with your current career/job? Overall, are you well-matched for your current career/job? If you have at least some satisfaction in all four categories – aptitude, interest, lifestyle, and self-actualization – you are likely to have a reasonably satisfying career or job. If one or more of these categories is missing the mark for you, you may need to work on changing the job or the career or your responsibilities, adding more of one kind of work and doing less of the sort of work you do not do as well or have less of an interest in doing. This exercise can start to help you figure out what you need to shift or tweak.

If, on the other hand, you are totally lacking one or more of these basic elements of career satisfaction, it is likely that you are dissatisfied with your career, and unless you change your field or industry, your workplace, the type of job you do, or another key component of your work situation, you will be likely to continue to experience your work life in a negative way.

Many people who are missing one or more of these four elements of career satisfaction are wearing out their loved ones by complaining about how unhappy they are. This exercise can help you at least start to identify where the dissatisfaction is coming from. If you have determined there is a serious disconnect between what you need from your career or job and what you are getting, do the Essential Elements Assessment to identify what would be a better career or job for you.

The next exercise, Essential Elements, will help you to more closely identify and hone a career direction that will be a better fit.

Appendix C: Essential Elements

You should do the Essential Elements assessment if one of the following describes your situation:

1. You do not enjoy your current job/career and want to find a better fit.
2. You have more than one choice of job and you want to check to be sure you are choosing a job that matches your needs reasonably well.
3. You are starting a job search, and you want to make sure you are looking for a job that suits your needs reasonably well.

Who does not need to do the Essential Elements exercise:

Anyone who already knows that his current job/career is working well for him and is conducting a job search for the same kind of job that he had before does not need to do the Essential Elements exercise.

What Is the Essential Elements Exercise?

Every person has a unique set of building blocks or elements that helps him have a satisfying career and enjoy his work-life. These building blocks are such things as a need for a mission that motivates you, control over your hours, a collegial group and a team approach to work, and many others. These elements will be different for each person. If you can identify what you need from your job, you will be in a better position to conduct a job search for a position that will meet your unique needs. This exercise helps you identify the building blocks of a career that will be more sustaining for you by creating a template for a job that works well for you personally. Once you have this template, you can vet your potential job or career for your needs, and you will be more likely to find work that will satisfy you and in which you will excel.

The Essential Elements exercise starts with a work history to figure out what your particular building blocks are.

Work History

List work you have done, paid or unpaid, whether or not it was termed a “job.” Include internships, work you did for fundraising events, and volunteer work of any kind, and include college and professional school on the list of work you have done.

Under each work entry make a list of what you liked and did not like about the work. Include your reaction to the people, the hours, the type of work you did, and

anything else about the job or work that stands out in your mind. Ask yourself “what could have been changed about this job to make it better for me?” In other words, pretend you are going to fix this job so that it would be a good one for you. What would be different? This is a good way to identify your building blocks.

It is important to assess every position you have ever had whether they were paid or unpaid jobs, but you can lump early jobs together. For example, if you had many waitressing jobs or camp counselor jobs and your experiences in each instance were similar, you can group them under one heading.

WORK HISTORY WORK SHEET

Job 1: _____

Liked:

Disliked:

Job 2: _____

Liked:

Disliked:

Job 3: _____

Liked:

Disliked:

Job 4: _____

Liked:

Disliked:

WORK HISTORY ILLUSTRATION

Job: Working at Joe's Fish Place as a server in high school

Liked

Loved the people I worked with – blue collar, salt-of-the earth guys
Great customers – friendly and talkative
Hours were good
When work was over I was done
I didn't take work home with me

Disliked

The pay was too low
The work was stressful when we got very busy
Work was too menial to do this job for long
Didn't use my mind or feel challenged

Job: Project Assistant for small personal injury firm

Liked

Liked research and writing a lot
Really respected and liked the lawyers I worked for
I knew what I was supposed to do
I didn't bring work home at night

Disliked

Work was boring
Did not get to interact with clients
The mission of plaintiff's personal injury cases wasn't right for me

Job: College

Liked

Loved college!
Independence
Learning new things
Great people
Some terrific professors
Great parties and social life
Relaxed atmosphere mostly

Disliked

Studying for exams was very stressful

Job: Residential Assistant in college

Liked

Liked counseling the students a lot

Enjoyed the independence

I like it when I could help someone handle tough situation

Disliked

Role of policeman

Lack of guidance about how to handle tough situations

Job: Campus Newspaper – getting and writing up stories

Liked

Really enjoyed hearing people's stories

Loved seeing my work in print – product was cool

When we finished the paper we were done and didn't take work home

Disliked

Deadline stress

Low pay

Office politics about who got the good stories

Job: Law School

Liked

Some of the people were nice

Liked learning new ideas and concepts

Disliked

Hated law school! Even though I did well

Hated the competitive people

Hated the Socratic method

Hated studying the law and did not know how to do it well until the third year

Job: Large Law Firm Litigation Associate

Liked

Liked the partner I worked with most closely
Enjoyed learning new concepts
Liked the money

Disliked

Didn't like the mission of litigating or getting more money for rich people or companies
Hated the stress
Hated having to work when my disorganized partner gave me a job to do at the last minute
Not enough mentoring
Not sure what I was doing
Lack of structure made me crazy
Did not get to work with clients
Felt isolated working behind closed doors doing research

Work History Analysis

What emerges from this work history are the following themes:

1. Enjoys *learning new things*
2. Enjoys *structured setting* with clear information about what to do
3. Likes to interact with people in a *team/collegial* setting
4. Wants to make enough *money* to feel secure
5. Likes personal interaction; needs to *interact with people* as part of the job
6. Likes the *role of helping*, giving advice, teaching, guiding others
7. Needs to *avoid excessive stress*
8. Prefers *projects that end* so that work does not spill over to life outside of work
9. Likes to be *trusted* by the boss
10. Prefers a more *relaxed pace*
11. Needs to have a *mission* that he feels is worthwhile
12. Needs to *avoid isolation*

Once you identify the major themes, you have the elements that make up Essential Elements. You can create a list of the elements you need to have to be satisfied with your work, and create a list of elements you need to avoid to be satisfied with your work. Review the illustrations given here and then use the worksheets at the end to create and rate your own lists.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS ILLUSTRATION

Using the work history illustration and analysis example above, here is a list of essential elements for this person to seek out in the job search.

Essential Elements to Achieve in Work Life/Needs to Have in Career:

1. Uptick on the learning curve – learn new things on the job
2. Structure and clear definition of expectations
3. Team, collegial culture
4. Enough money to feel secure: at least \$_____
5. Interactive role involving people as part of the job
6. The role of the helping person, teacher, guide, counselor
7. Projects that end; finality
8. Trusted to do the job
9. Mission that matters (to him)
10. Casual, relaxed pace
11. Mentoring

Here is a list of what this person should try to avoid.

Irritants to Avoid

1. High stress workplace
2. Fast pace
3. Isolation
4. Boredom
5. Lack of trust
6. Lack of structure
7. Lack of mentoring
8. Low pay
9. Projects that go on and on with no end in sight
10. Mission that does not matter to him

Try to put only the most irritating elements on the irritants list – the ones you feel “allergic” to – for example, the “micromanager” boss, isolation, the “screamer” boss, the backbiting coworkers, or lack of control over your free time because of last-minute assignments. These are elements that drive some people crazy. Every person has his own unique list. The work history is a chance to think through these irritants to avoid those that are particularly annoying for you.

In some cases, you may not have enough work experience to know what your hot buttons are, or, for that matter, to know what you absolutely have to have in your work life to be happy. The work history is a more useful vehicle for people who have had

at least some work experience. The work history is also a work in progress. Some elements will be added or taken off the list as a work life evolves over the course of a career.

The themes that emerge in this exercise will usually continue to reappear throughout a person's work life. In some cases, however, the theme will become less salient over time. For example, a person who wants to have control over handling matters, interacting with clients, and being trusted to do the work will, in fact, grow into that role over time. If this person keeps working hard, eventually he will become the boss who does have client contact and who is fully trusted to do the work. The work history is a snapshot of current work desires.

Note that every person has a different idea about what matters and what does not matter when it comes to the mission. For one person, helping companies be successful is a perfectly good mission. For another person, the mission has to be about helping poor people, helping women and children, or trying to make the world a better place. This determination is idiosyncratic and personal. There are other missions as well. What one person seeks may not resonate with another person. I have counseled people who wanted to be sure that Libertarian values were represented in Congress and felt strongly about that goal, while another person I counseled at the same time was working tirelessly to be sure that Libertarian values were not represented in Congress.

Now that you have a list of Essential Elements, you should grade each one on a scale of 1 to 10 to reflect how much this element matters to you.

If you give an element a "10" (the highest need), then you should not take a job if you will have to do without this element in the workplace. As you rate each element, ask yourself these questions:

"How much do I have to have this in my work life?"

"How much am I willing to 'give a little' on this?"

If you give an element something lower than a "5," it may not be important enough for you to keep on the list.

After you finish grading each Essential Element, then grade your list of Irritants to Avoid. When you are assessing your irritants, you are grading them on a scale of 1 to 10, with "10" reflecting your highest level of hate and irritation. As you go through your list of irritants, ask yourself these questions:

"How much do I hate this on a scale of 1 to 10?"

"How much am I willing to 'give a little' on this?"

See the sample of completed Essential Elements and Irritants to Avoid.

This exercise helps you assess your level of dissatisfaction. If there is a severe mismatch between what someone needs in her work life and what she is getting on the job, that person may need to conduct a job search for a better fitting job or career.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS SAMPLE

Here is a list of what this person gave as a grade for each essential element.
(How much do you need this on a scale of 1-10, with 10 the highest?)

Essential Elements to Have in Work Life

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Uptick on the learning curve – learn new things on the job | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7(8)9 10 |
| 2. Structure and clear definition of expectations | 1 2 3 4 5 6(7)8 9 10 |
| 3. Team, collegial culture | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 4. Enough money to feel secure: at least \$_____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6(7)8 9 10 |
| 5. Interactive role involving people as part of the job | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 6. The role of the helping person, teacher, guide, counselor | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9(10) |
| 7. Projects that end, finality | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7(8)9 10 |
| 8. Trusted to do the job | 1 2 3 4 5 6(7)8 9 10 |
| 9. Mission that matters (to him) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9(10) |
| 10. Casual, relaxed pace | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7(8)9 10 |
| 11. Mentoring | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7(8)9 10 |

Here is a list of what this person gave as a grade for each irritant to avoid.
(How much do you hate this on a scale of 1-10, with 10 the highest?)

Irritants to Avoid

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. High-stress workplace | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 2. Fast pace | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 3. Isolation | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9(10) |
| 4. Boredom | 1 2 3 4 5 6(7)8 9 10 |
| 5. Lack of trust | 1 2 3 4 5(6)7 8 9 10 |
| 6. Lack of structure | 1 2 3 4 5(6)7 8 9 10 |
| 7. Lack of mentoring | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 8. Low pay | 1 2 3 4 5 6(7)8 9 10 |
| 9. Projects that go on and on with no end in sight | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(9)10 |
| 10. Mission that does not matter to him | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9(10) |

If you follow these instructions, you can create a template for the type of job that would work well for you. We know no job is perfect, but if you can try to get many of these elements into your work life, you will be happier. Additionally, if you can avoid or minimize exposure to elements you hate, you will be happier.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS WORK SHEET

(How much I need this element on a scale of 1-10 with, 10 the highest.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IRRITANTS TO AVOID WORK SHEET

(How much I hate this element on a scale of 1-10, with 10 the highest.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you are dissatisfied with your current work situation, you can use the work sheets to assess your current job to see why you are not satisfied.

Use a different colored pen for this exercise. Go through each element and evaluate your current workplace. You are grading your workplace against your worksheets to see how it is doing in terms of *your needs*. For example, if you need to learn new things and you graded that an “8,” and your job gives you that uptick on the learning curve you want, then put a colored dot about the “8” you circled. The job is meeting your needs on that score. If your job is only giving you a “2” or a “3” then it is falling short of your needs.

Look for serious mismatches between your wished-for elements and the job you currently have. Any time there is a mismatch of 4 or more points, that should be considered serious.

For example, if you need the role of the helping person and you have given that a “10,” and your current job gets a grade of “2” or “3,” then you have a serious mismatch between what you need and what you are getting. This is one of the reasons you are not satisfied with your job.

What if you need a “Mission that Matters to me” and you give that a “10” but you grade your current job at a “1”? That is a mismatch of 9 points. Here is another serious mismatch of your aspirations and needs with a job that is not meeting those needs.

Whenever you have a serious mismatch of a deeply felt need with a job that is flunking your needs, you have the seeds for career or job dissatisfaction. If you have even one of these mismatches, you are likely to be dissatisfied until and unless you can find work that is a better match, change your role within the workplace, or find opportunities to meet that need outside of work and have the time to engage in them. You want to develop a career plan to eventually meet that need.

If you have only slight mismatches between your worksheet needs and the current job you are doing, you probably can hang in there and keep your current job to put bread on the table, while conducting a quest for a workplace or career direction that is an even better fit.

Next, grade your current workplace using the Irritants to Avoid worksheet. Are you able to avoid high stress? You are looking for a “9” – how is your workplace doing on this score?

You really hate isolation. You give that a “10” on the hate scale. How much are you able to avoid isolation at your job?

If you have a very high level of irritation and an inability to avoid the irritants that you really hate, you have a serious problem in terms of matching up your deeply felt needs to the reality of your job. You will need to look for a new job or an altered culture at work unless there is some other way to avoid the things you cannot stand.

You can also use your worksheets to vet future job opportunities. When you have located an opportunity that you think could be good for you, go back to your worksheets and think about whether this job is going to meet your needs.

If you gave the role of the helping person a “10,” are you likely to get that?

If you gave feeling good about the mission a “10,” will you feel that way about this job?

If you gave interacting with people a “9,” will that be part of your work life?

How can you figure out if you will get what you need from a potential job? Your networking effort is the key to learning this information. LinkedIn is a valuable tool.

As you make your way on your quest, meeting with and talking with the people who have on-the-ground information about the workplace you are vetting, you can ask questions that help you to learn what you need to know.

“What is Chris like as a boss? Is he a micromanager? Is he a screamer? Disorganized? Does he trust his co-workers to do the job?”

“What kind of work pace do people have over there? Do they bring work home at night and over the weekends?”

If you talk with people in confidence, you can get information that is helpful to you to figure out if this work setting will be closer to your needs. One good way to learn this information is to find people who have recently left the workplace (within the past year or two), and call them up and ask if they would be willing to talk with you. It sounds like this:

“I am considering taking a job at the firm you worked at two years ago. I was wondering if you would be willing to talk with me in absolute confidence about your experiences over there. I just want to be sure I will be able to obtain what I am looking for if I take this job.”

How do you find people who have left that workplace? LinkedIn is a valuable resource for this information. Use LinkedIn and try to meet in person or by phone or via the Internet if an in-person meeting is not possible. Search for people who have worked at these places you are interested in to learn more about the workplaces so you can make educated guesses about the likelihood your needs will be met.

Another source of this kind of information is anyone who is loosely affiliated with the workplace, such as spouses or friends of people who are or have been working at the workplace you are trying to vet.

Conclusion

The value of these exercises lies in the understanding you gain from identifying the elements you need for a satisfying career. When you are developing relationships and seeking opportunities, people will ask you what you want from your career. You need to know what you want. When you interview for a job, the interviewers will ask you what your long-term plan is for your career. You need to be able to articulate that. If you are not happy with your career, you need to understand why that is and have an idea about what would make you happier.

Even though no job is perfect, some are better than others. When we know ourselves well enough to know what we are looking for, and understand the work settings that will bring out the best in us, we will have more productive and effective job searches, and more productive and satisfying work lives.

Appendix D: The “Basket of Skills” or Skills-Based Résumé

Many job seekers prepare a chronological résumé. There is nothing wrong with that. That type of résumé highlights longevity at one workplace, a consistent job history, and loyalty.

In a relationship-building search, however, the job seeker is meeting in person with many people. The idea of an in-person meeting is to show up for a breakfast, lunch, dinner, or coffee, or by invitation at the contact person’s office, and have a conversation that opens doors.

There is a lot of information that a job seeker is trying to talk about with the contact person. In fact, it may be difficult to cover all of the topics that she wants to try to cover in the time frame of a lunch or a cup of coffee.

For that reason, it is important to prepare a résumé for purposes of the in-person meeting that makes it very easy for the contact person to grasp your background immediately. The “skills-based” résumé does a good job of that.

As illustrated on the following pages, a skills-based résumé or “basket of skills” style résumé has a skills summary at the top of the résumé. That summary can be altered depending on the contact person you are meeting with. The skills summary should highlight the core competencies that match up with the contact person’s likely connections for you.

See the next page for a sample of a skills-based résumé.

The new graduate, without a lengthy work history, will usually do better to start the résumé with education, highlighting academic successes, honors, leadership experiences, and other indicators of future success. Internships and work experiences follow in the next section of the résumé. Some new graduates will opt for a “Objectives” or “Goals” section at the top of the résumé, but that is probably not necessary if you are meeting in person and can clearly articulate what you are looking for with the contact.

Your name
Your home address
Your phone number
Your e-mail address

SKILLS SUMMARY

[Start with your current skills, and highlight your area(s) of expertise.
This shows what you can do for the employer without further training. Quantify results.
Use numbers to help the reader understand your skill level.]

Income partner with eight years of litigation and regulatory experience. Responsibilities include counseling, drafting motions and briefs, taking over 30 depositions, preparing pretrial memoranda, participating as lead attorney in over 40 regulatory hearings, legal research and writing, analyzing and drafting legislation, managing large document reviews including associate oversight in complex litigation matters.

EXPERIENCE

[Next, tell the reader in brief form where you have worked, when you were there, and your role at that job.]

Firm A LLP, Chicago, Illinois
Associate, Commercial Litigation, 2000–Present; Summer Associate, 1999

Firm B LLP, Chicago, Illinois
Summer Associate, 1998

EDUCATION

[Next, tell the reader your education, including honors you earned.]

University of Illinois College of Law. J.D. *with distinction* 1996, Law Review Notes Editor, Research Assistant for Prof. — on regulatory issues and sustainable energy, co-author of “—”.

Bradley University B.S. Psychology, *cum laude*, 1993

[Next, list professional publications, memberships, community involvement, and interests, especially if the interests are ones that might open the door to a conversation with your contact person, such as a shared interest or unusual pursuit. Try to keep all of this on one page.]

[You can also have a second page of Professional Accomplishments that briefly describe in bulleted form your significant achievements. These can be talking points for your meeting.]

Appendix E: The Master Lists of People and Places

The focus of your networking meetings should be on learning what is happening in the neighborhood(s) you think you want to join, and what is going on in the villages behind the castles you want to be a part of.

To that end, your conversations with knights and wizards should focus at least in part on the places you are finding out about that could be good matches for you, and the other people in the neighborhood doing the work you think you want to do.

The Master List of People and Places should grow as you learn more about your targeted neighborhoods.

The way to create a Master List is to simply list every person you know about or have learned about in your online and interpersonal research that you want to meet up with. On another page list every workplace you would like to learn more about. You keep growing these lists as your knowledge grows. Every time you go to a relationship-building meeting, print off the list and bring it to the meeting.

At the meeting, pull out your lists and do the following:

- Ask your contact person to review the list of people and check off people he knows. Then ask if this person is someone who is “nice” or “friendly” or “helpful” and would be open to talking with you to learn more about the market in general and specific workplaces.
- If appropriate, ask if he would be willing to send an e-mail on your behalf to that person to help you learn more about the field, neighborhood, realm.
- You also want to ask your contact person to review the list of places that you think could be a good match for you and add to the list.
- Then ask him what, if anything, he has heard about the places where he knows people and whether he has heard if any of these places are busy, active, and growing, and have a good reputation, meaning people like to work there. You are looking for useful gossip, on-the-ground information, and market knowledge.

Another way to create useful Master Lists of people and places is to use the format on the following page. In these Master Lists, the networker has figured out the castles of interest, and is filling in the key keepers, the knights, and the wizards and is keeping notes about her progress.

Master List of People and Places

Castles	Key Keepers	Knights/Wizards	Notes

Appendix F: Checklist and Guide for Your Job Quest

1. DO ASSESSMENT WORK IF YOU NEED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF

Are you looking for your first job or are you looking for a better career direction? If so, do exercises that help you **find your career “sweet spot”**:

- A. **AIMS**: *Aptitude, Interest, Market Need, Skillset*
- B. **AILS**: *Aptitude, Interest, Lifestyle, Self-Actualization*
- C. **Essential Elements**

If you like your career direction and want the same type of job you have currently, you may skip over the “sweet spot” exercises and go directly to 2. QUEST PREPARATION CHECKLIST.

2. QUEST PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- + Create a **basket of skills** résumé
- + Locate the **work-flow**
- + Create a **master list of people and places**
- + Know the **formula for landing jobs**
- + Articulate your **dream and dilemma**
- + Be prepared for your **interview** before you set out

If you are feeling upset or depressed:

- + Do a **mental status check** before you set out
- + Get **support** or **help** if you need it

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE QUEST

- ✦ Start your quest with close friends (knights/wizards)
- ✦ Meet with people suggested by your knights/wizards
- ✦ Try to meet more villagers in the right neighborhood by going to conferences, meetings, and other places frequented by that group
- ✦ Meet in person as much as possible
- ✦ Breakfast, lunch, dinner, or coffee
- ✦ Expand your encounters with knights/wizards everywhere

Use the **starter conversation** to open up relationship potential

Avoid the “J” word when you start out

Try to have long, gossipy, rumor-filled conversations to learn more

Use the **voice test** to find natural counselors

The voice of the natural counselor goes up

Be open and engaging, creative and bold

But not aggressive or a pest

Cultivate lucky attitudes:

Interaction

Optimism

Pragmatism

Intuition

Tenacity

Opportunism

Generosity

Create a virtual round table by asking helpful people to join it. Consult the knights and wizards of your roundtable when you question your judgment or need help

- ✦ Look for **treasure chest** people
 - You never know. . . .*
- ✦ Use **opportunism** to enhance your luck
 - Adventurous attitude*
 - Good research*
 - Connections with key people*

- ✦ Engineer meetings with key people
 - Be careful to conform to workplace practices*
 - Never be a pest or aggressive or a fraud*

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR IN-PERSON MEETINGS

In conversations with knights and wizards, follow these principles:

- ✦ Create a **zone of comfort** first
 - Friendship lite*
 - Trust relationships are created by listening and giving back*
- ✦ Discuss your contact's **biography**
 - ... but do not get stuck on that topic*
- ✦ Tell your knights/wizards your **dream and dilemma or goal and problem**
 - Describe your goal*
 - Explain your problem*
- ✦ Focus the conversation on your **Master List**
 - People doing the work you want to be doing*
 - Places or castles you seek*
- ✦ Learn the on-the-ground information:
 - Gossip (what is happening in the village)*
 - Work-flow (busy, active, growing work places)*
 - Culture of the place (people like to work there)*
 - Try to learn the keeper of the keys*
- ✦ Give your knights/wizards clear **prototypes**
 - Illustrations of castles you are seeking*
 - Use Master Lists of People and Places to brainstorm with people you meet with*
- ✦ Find more **nice people** in the village to learn from
 - Everyone knows who is nice and who is not*

5. DO GOOD DEEDS

- ✦ Give back to your knights and wizards

Create a positive buzz

- ✦ Give gifts or good deeds

A gift of attention

A gift of information

A gift of promotion

A gift of connection

Volunteered help

A more tangible gift

6. ONCE YOU KNOW A LIKELY CASTLE, YOU REACH A TIPPING POINT: MOVE FROM QUEST TO CAMPAIGN WITH RESPECT TO THAT CASTLE

In your campaign to be hired, follow these principles:

- ✦ Use the formula for landing jobs to know if you are at the tipping point

Your skill set matches the needs of the workplace

The work-flow is there

The culture is likely to be a good fit

You try to come to their attention through a trusted contact

- ✦ Ask for endorsement if the elements are there

Your contact knows you, likes you, knows your work and work ethic

Your contact knows someone on the castle staff who is respected or a gatekeeper

There could be a need for help at this castle

- ✦ Seek out villagers and others who could help you find the keeper of the keys or meet other staff

Keep developing trust relationships

7. REACH THE GOALS OF YOUR JOB QUEST

- ✦ Find and meet the key keepers and have an excellent interview
- ✦ Create a supportive network of knights and wizards who will help and sustain you for your entire career
- ✦ Land the job you want