

Assessing Your Career Skills

Use this self-assessment to discover your strengths in the areas of Leadership and Management, Problem Solving and Decision Making, Communication, Time Management and Personal Mastery skills. It is a great starting point to begin considering your career development plan.

Instructions:

For each statement, select the column that best describes you. Please answer questions as you actually are rather than how you think you should be.

15 Statements to Answer		Not at All	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very Often
1	I routinely set realistic goals for myself, and I track my progress until I've reached them.					
2	When I have to make a decision, I pick the first good solution I find.					
3	I approach life with confidence, and I have high self-esteem.					
4	When it comes to managing my workload, I know my priorities.					
5	Team development is an area I admit to cutting back on when time and resources are limited.					
6	I lose time during the day because I'm not sure what I need to get done.					
7	When I want to motivate people, I try to use the same approach with each person.					
8	The work I do on a daily basis reflects my values, and is consistent with the goals I've set for myself.					
9	I'm able to communicate my needs, and I make sure that my message is heard and understood.					

Adapted from:

Website: <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/get-started.htm>

15 Statements to Answer

		Not at All	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very Often
10	When I encounter a problem, I immediately begin looking for potential solutions.					
11	When there's conflict, I use my communication skills to find solutions and work things through.					
12	I'm aware of the differences between leadership and management.					
13	When discussing an issue with someone, I try to stay one step ahead in the conversation, and I actively think about what I'm going to say next.					
14	When I encounter a setback, I have difficulty focusing on the situation positively and objectively.					
15	I'm motivated to complete all of my work in a timely manner.					

Now, review your responses for the questions in each of the following five areas to decide where to start building your skills.

Leadership and Management (Questions 5, 7, 12)

Whether you're in a formal leadership position or not, you need good leadership and management skills if you're going to make best use of the opportunities open to you. After all, you can get much more done when you have the help of other people. The good news is that you can learn how to lead and manage effectively!

Problem Solving and Decision Making (Questions 2, 10, 14)

Problem solving and decision making are two areas where you'll need to excel to be a success in your career. Together with people skills, they're what make up "good judgment" and "wisdom." Like leadership and management, these two areas are closely related.

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Communication Skills (Questions 9, 11, 13)

The ability to communicate clearly is key to your success, whatever role you're in. Consider your strengths and weaknesses related to your communication skills and make sure that you know how to plan your communications effectively.

Don't forget that active listening is a very important communication skill. This is when you focus on the other person and you make sure that you understand exactly what he or she is trying to say. Conflict resolution and negotiation are other areas that you'll need to work on to be a great communicator.

Time Management (Questions 1, 4, 6, 15)

Time management is one of the most important career skills areas. Not only does it help you to be more productive but you'll also be much less stressed!

To manage your time better, make sure that you know how to prioritize and schedule your time effectively. It's also important that you avoid procrastination so you don't put off tasks and activities that you should be focusing on right now.

Personal Mastery (Questions 1, 3, 8, 14)

When you know how to "lead yourself" and make good choices for your future, you'll be that much further ahead when it comes to the other skills areas that we've already looked at.

Start by setting personal goals including the principles of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound). Analyze your strengths and make sure you understand the values that you hold.

No matter how positive you feel now, it's also important to learn how to deal with negative thinking. From there, you can build on your self-confidence and self-esteem as you move towards achieving the goals that really matter to you.

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