STRENGTHS & SKILLS
Consider the tasks and duties you would want to do in a job every single day. What are you good at? What doesn’t feel like “work” or what are you doing when you lose track of time?

A “best fit” match encompasses your personal interests but plays into your capabilities, skills & strengths

INTEREST AREAS
Think about when and where you find enjoyment. How do you like to spend your time outside of school or work? Is there an industry or organization that is exciting or fun to you?

Major doesn’t equal career
Your major is preparing you for a wide variety of career paths. In your major, you are learning specific disciplinary methods and content as well as developing versatile general skills. These may include the ability to think analytically, to view issues from multiple perspectives, to address societal implications, communicate complex ideas and more.

Major skills = marketable skills
Employers might not know that they need to hire your major—it’s up to you to convince them! Be able to articulate the types of skills you gained in your education. For example, a Comparative Literature major could share how their studies taught them to identify themes and messages from cryptic or lengthy information.

3 categories of jobs
1. Your major is required or preferred, and the job’s primary responsibilities directly relate to your major (Ex: Engineer, Nurse)
2. Your major is required or preferred, but the job’s primary responsibilities are not directly related to your major (Ex: Market Research Analyst, Business Analyst)
3. Your major is not required or preferred, but your other transferable skills make you highly qualified (Ex: Community Outreach Coordinator, Recruiter)

Self-awareness
You should also think about what motivates and makes you happy in your work or other pursuits. Career choice should take into account your: Values + Interests + Strengths.

Ask yourself:
What energizes you?
What gives you joy?
What situations bring out your best?
What is a source of pride for you?

Top 5 skills employers look for:
1. Clear communication
2. Interpersonal & teamwork skills
3. Problem-solving & decision-making
4. Able to find & process info
5. Skills in planning, organization & prioritization

The next pages are designed to help you identify your values, interests and strengths.
How do values help me with career choice?

Your values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live and work. Values can play a significant role in deciding what type of work you want to do and in what type of environment that work will happen.

1a. Identifying my values:

Circle the values (beliefs, principles and things) that are important to you

Accomplishment
Achievement
Activity
Advancement
Adventure
Affection
Affiliation
Ambition
Assisting others
Authority
Authenticity
Autonomy
Beauty
Belonging
Broad/Open-minded
Caring
Challenging
Cheerful

Cleanliness
Comfortable life
Community
Companionship
Competitiveness
Compassion
Competent
Conformity
Contentedness
Contribution to others
Control
Cooperation
Courteous
Creativity
Dependable
Disciplined

Diversity
Economic Security
Effective
Equality/Fairness
Excitement
Faith
Fame
Family happiness
Family security
Financial security
Flexibility
Forgiveness
Freedom
Friendship
Fun
Genuineness
Growth

Happiness
Health
Helpfulness
Honesty
Hope
Independence
Improving society
Innovation
Integrity
Intellectual
Involved
Imagination
Joy
Learning
Leisure
Logical
Obedience

Order
Love
Loving
Nature
Peace
Personal development
Pleasure
Polite
Power
Pride
Professional respect
Rational
Recognition
Reliability
Religion
Reputation
Respectful
Responsible
Self-controlled
Self-reliance
Service
Stability
Status
Self-respect
Sincerity
Social justice
Spirituality
Spontaneity
Status
Success
Symbolic
Taking risks
Teamwork
Tolerance
Tranquility
Trust
Truth
Wealth
Other:

Do you see the values you identified reflected in the choices you have made at UW? Think about clubs, jobs, classes, social group, volunteering and other ways you have been involved during your time at UW.

1b. My 10 most important values:

From the circled list above, narrow it down to the 10 you consider most important to you personally:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

From this list of ten, rank your five most important values, with "1" being the most important value to you. Think about how you could discuss these with an employer or interviewer.

Values-at-Work case study

See how Alison’s top 5 values are connected to her work as an adviser and educator:

1. **Independence** – she works in an autonomous office with freedom to make decisions
2. **Helping others** – she meets regularly with clients to provide advice
3. **Friendship** – she works in an environment that promotes collaboration and camaraderie
4. **Self-respect** – she is proud and confident in her work, and her organization places emphasis on respecting diverse points of view
5. **Fun** – she incorporates dynamic activities into the class she teaches
Because careers encompass more than a specific college degree, it's important to consider more than just your major in your career exploration. Consider factors like your interests, skills, goals, life circumstances, strengths, personality and more. To get started, reflect on how you have spent your time at UW so far.

### 2. Reflect on your personal activities and interests

*Write a list of your favorite 5 activities, classes, projects, jobs, volunteer experiences or ways you spend your time outside of school. What are all the things you enjoyed or not about each activity? What tasks or actions were positive or brought deep engagement? What parts didn't feel like "work"? Specifics are good! Try to cover both academic and non-academic experiences.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity or Experience</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Dislikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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</table>
IDENTIFY STRENGTHS & SKILLS

Now, looking at your list from the previous page, are there any similarities in the "likes" column? Any similarities across the "dislikes"? Note those in box 3a. Can you think of other activities where you've been able to have many "likes"? Looking for patterns and themes across experiences provides insight into possible interests, tasks and skills you might like to carry over into a career.

3a. Identify patterns or themes in your interests from your "likes" and "dislikes"

3b. Can you identify strengths or skills you used in those themes?

Additional assessments

1. **Dependable Strengths**: self-directed method through which you identify multiple Good Experiences (things you: 1. did well, 2. enjoyed, and 3. are proud of) and use those detailed stories to identify repeated, or "dependable," strengths you used. Take the assessment at [WOIS.org](http://WOIS.org) (sitekey: fgv271), attend a strengths workshop at the Career & Internship Center or discuss with a career counselor.

2. **Strong Interest Inventory**: helps you explore your interests and generate related career options. Take the assessment at the UW Counseling Center.

3. **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**: helps you understand your natural preferences, personality and explore related job families. Visit the UW Counseling Center to take it.

Examples of skills or strengths may include: analyzing, communicating, collaboration, management, researching, developing systems/procedures, writing

Look for patterns! They can relate to anything! Do you see patterns related to an interest in: helping & supporting; problem solving; creating & designing; research & investigation; leading & influencing; analysis & evaluation?
After you have developed some ideas about your skills and interests from past experiences, you can use those factors as a way to search for and test out career options. To get started, we recommend small experiments to try out career ideas. Some examples are:

- Informational interviews (ask a professional about the skills and tasks they use! What do they like? Does it match with your list? See page # for details)
- Shadow a professional for a few hours or a day at their job
- Attending a Career & Internship Center workshop on that career area
- Reading blogs and articles about the industry (start with interest area blog posts at www.careers.uw.edu)

As you conduct small experiments, check in with yourself to see how it goes. What have you learned about career options? What ideas are still intriguing? Then, try testing out your career interests through larger commitments: internships, volunteer experiences, senior research projects & papers, and more!

4. "Career Challenge" - research and investigate the world of work

1. **What employers have missions/values/products/services that appeal to you?** Use the websites on the next page to identify 2-3 possible good-fit industries or organizations and list them below.

2. **Do 1-2 informational interviews with a professional from one of the organizations you listed above in the next month (see page #).** Write down questions you would like to ask a professional about strengths, skills and values in their work based on your self-reflection from the previous pages.

3. **Brainstorm ways you could gain experience developing the skills or abilities this professional recommended to you.** Internship, part-time job, extracurricular involvement, student activity, research, volunteering, etc.? 

49% of college graduates work in a job unrelated to their undergrad major.