

Using an Infographic to Explore Potential Careers

By Ross Wade

The purpose of this activity is for you to assess and rank your values, interests, strengths, and identity (personal or professional) in a creative and graphic way. (Take your infographic to a career counselor at your college/university career services office for help in exploring potential careers.)

I used PowerPoint to design my infographic, but anything could be used, including pencil and paper—the point is to get creative. If you decide to use images from the web, I suggest using Creative Commons to find images that can be legally used on the web and without attribution.

Steps:

1. First, select a picture, symbol, or graphic that represents your identity. For example, I've worn big, black glasses for a long time, and they've become a part of my "look"—they also reflect my love of learning, and my personal culture. Choosing glasses also gave me a clever way of reflecting information visually in pie chart format.
2. Next, reflect on your values, interests, and skills. This could be through a card sort or brainstorm. Once you have a list completed, pick the top three of each category. Then, rank each one with its own graphic—each graphic will represent 10 percent. For example, creativity, autonomy, and security equal 100 percent of my top values; I used a ladder graphic to represent 10 percent increments, so my values are sorted 50 percent creativity, 30 percent autonomy, and 20 percent security (equaling 100 percent).
3. With your career counselor, start a discussion about other things you would like to have as a part of your career—e.g., consider topics such as amount of time with people versus things, time spent in and out of the office. Use your personal symbol in creative ways to reflect this information. For example, I used the lenses of my glasses as a very basic pie chart.

VALUES

CREATIVITY - 

AUTONOMY - 

SECURITY - 

INTERESTS

DESIGN - 

TECHNOLOGY - 

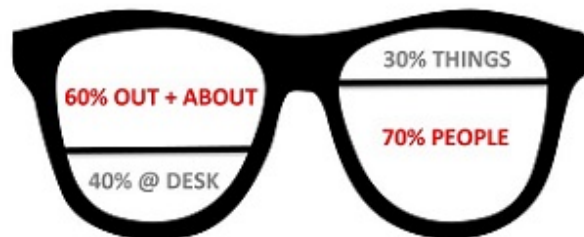
LEARNING - 

STRENGTHS

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING - 

PRESENTING - 

CONNECTING DOTS - 



This infographic can be used to assess your current values, interests, and skills, and bring to light how you view your identity. Doing it multiple times, over four years (or each semester), allows you to see how things have evolved and bring to light great opportunities to discuss why things have changed or what prompted the change.

Ask your parents, friends, or managers/supervisors to create an infographic for you, and then compare what that person created and discussed. Does your internship supervisor see the same skills and interests as you do? Does your parent choose an identity symbol close to what you chose...or are they totally different? Think of all the interesting conversations that could come from this activity about values, skill, interests, self-marketing, and professional identity!

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