



Career Advancement Career Exploration *Discover Your Passion “To Do” Guide*

Learning about yourself is an important first step on your career exploration journey – and UChicago Career Advancement is excited to help you on your way! Reflecting on your interests, skills, and values will help you make the most of your UChicago experience and explore your career options and interests.

To get you started, we’ve broken this process down into three different key areas with activities and reflection questions.

I. Interests

An easy first step in identifying your career interests is to consider the activities, hobbies and topics that you enjoy and do on a regular basis. Identifying your interests can help you generate ideas of possible career paths and academic majors to explore. The activity below can help you begin identifying and clarifying your areas of interest.

1. Review and complete an **energy-engagement map**. See a template and learn more here: [Energy – Engagement Map](#) (adapted from *Design Thinking*).
2. Keep a **journal** and select the one activity that you enjoyed the most at the end of each day. After a week, see if you notice any patterns or trends with your favorite activities.
3. Questions to consider:
 1. What insights do you see from your energy pattern?
 2. What is an achievable change you can make to improve your well-being based on the Energy Engagement Map?
 3. Do you see any themes with the projects, classes, or current/past experiences that bring you energy and fulfillment?
 4. What is a next step you can take to help translate this into potential career paths?

It’s important that you consider what gives you energy and what you enjoy and find ways to incorporate that into your future career!

II. Skills and Abilities

Skill is an ability to do something well. These can be natural talents or abilities that you’ve acquired through education or training. A great way to identify your skills and abilities is to ask yourself: what you do well, where you have been most successful, or which subjects have others sought out your help. Complete these assessments to take a deeper dive.

1. [Skills Inventory Chart](#)
2. [StrengthsQuest](#) (Reach out to careeradvancement@uchicago.edu for information on receiving your personalized access code to take the StrengthsQuest assessment)
3. Questions to consider:
 1. What is one skill you possess and how do you use this skill on a typical day?
 2. What is one skill you would like to grow, and what first step can you take to do this? (consider joining an RSO, participating in job shadowing, or attending a trek)



Finding career interests that leverage your skills, or help you grow ones you enjoy or are excited about, will help keep you motivated and engaged – and ultimately more fulfilled!

IV. Values

Values determine what we consider important and meaningful in our lives. Reflecting on your values can help you identify what you want out of your career. Some value economic security, so salary is the most important consideration for their career. For others, the most important thing is the opportunity to serve others or do groundbreaking work in their field. Some people will seek jobs that allow sufficient free time for other interests, whereas others will want a job that is the primary activity in their life. Here are a couple self-assessments for you to complete on your own and some reflection questions to help connect the dots.

1. [Values Sort Activity](#)
2. [Intake Survey Assessment](#)
3. Questions to consider:
 1. What are your top five values that are most important to you?
 2. How can you see these values fitting in with your career interests?
 3. Identify what types of career fields encompass your work values.
 4. What is one way you could explore your values further?

Values are a part of who you are. Identifying and pursuing opportunities that align with those values will help you build a satisfying and meaningful career.

V. Connecting the Dots

Now what? Here's a list of first steps you can take:

1. **Get started!** You can start experimenting by taking advantage of Career Advancement experiences like shadowing an alum, participating in a trek, attending a Career In program, and more! For a full list of student opportunities, please visit [here](#). *By exploring and experiencing many different things, you can narrow down what gives you energy, what you enjoy doing and what aligns to your interests, skills, and values more easily. This can guide you to the right career field for you!*
2. **Let us help!** Make a Career Exploration appointment on [UChicago Handshake](#) (by choosing the General Career Advising Category) and bring these activities to continue the conversation. *We're here to help you continue this reflection and exploration, and connecting you to even more experiential opportunities to guide you on your career journey.*
3. **Hear from alumni!** Use the Alumni Directory, LinkedIn, and Wisr to connect with alumni who are experts in your field of interest. View our [Networking 101](#) page for more information. *Hearing about their career exploration journeys and experiences can give you new ideas and inspiration!*

We're thrilled you are starting your exploration journey – and Career Advancement looks forward to supporting you along the way!