Resources to accompany Introduction to self-assessment tools

1. Pick a self-assessment tool and try it out.

Why not try out a free self-assessment tool (links below)

* Imagine PhD <https://www.imaginephd.com/>
* My IDP <https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>
* Or a more informal method of self-assessment <https://www.science.org/content/article/mine-your-mind-data-drive-your-career>

Read our blog post and follow the links therein

* Self-assessment tools: knowing me, knowing what to do’ <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/prosper/blog/prosper/self-assessment-tools/>

1. Reflect on the findings of the tool you used.

You may find some self-coaching questions help to frame your thinking. You might like to check out episode 84 of the Squiggly careers podcast ‘How to coach yourself’ [How to coach yourself | Amazing If](https://www.amazingif.com/listen/how-to-coach-yourself/)

1. Ask a friend. Not sure about where your strengths lie? Try asking a friend, family member or colleague, or why not all three?

Having been surrounded by incredibly intelligent, highly-capable people professionally – likely personally – for years, it’s not always easy to be able to identify your own qualities.

Gather feedback from three people in your life:

* a friend
* a colleague
* the colleague senior to you (this could be your PI or line manager if you’re comfortable with that, but it doesn’t have to be)

1. Email your three helpers with something like the following:

Dear [insert name],

I’m doing some self-analysis as part of my career development. To help me understand myself better, could you please tell me which are my three most prominent traits or attributes from your perspective?

Many thanks for your help.

Best wishes,

[Insert name]

2. Gather the responses into the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Friend | Colleague | Senior Colleague |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

3. When you get all of your responses back, use the questions below to help you reflect on them:

* Did anything come up more than once? If yes, do you identify with this attribute/trait?
* Did any of the answers particularly gratify you? Why?
* Did any of the answers particularly surprise you? Why?
* Can you think of examples or settings where you’ve displayed these attributes/traits?
* Is there anything you feel is missing from these responses? If yes, why do you think this is what you’re missing most?

Remember, you don’t have to take the answers at face value – they’re not necessarily accurate! This is just to stimulate your self-understanding and your engagement with the unique qualities you bring.

1. Find a buddy who’s also interested in learning more about themselves, discuss what you’ve been finding out about yourself via self-assessment tools with them.
2. Apply your findings. Now you’ve got a clearer idea of what’s important to you, use this to help develop your career. Look for opportunities to try things out in your role or beyond it.

You may wish to set yourself some goals to work towards, you may find listening to episode 72 of the Squiggly Careers podcast ‘goal setting that works’ helpful <https://www.amazingif.com/listen/goal-setting-that-works/> . Also you may find the Wikipedia page on SMART goals handy <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria>

Further reading and resources

* Designing your work life – Bill Burnett and Dave Evans (book/s and website) <https://designingyour.life/designing-your-work-life-book/>
* How to get a job you love (2021-2022 edition) – John Lees <https://johnleescareers.com/>
* The squiggly career – Helen Tupper and Sarah Ellis (book/website/podcast) <https://www.amazingif.com/>
* Find your f\*\*kyeah: Stop censoring who you are and discover what you really want by Alexis Rockley <http://www.alexisrockley.com/findyourfuckyeah>
* Careers in your ears (podcast) - <https://anchor.fm/careersinyourears>
* Nature careers podcast ‘working scientist’ - <https://www.nature.com/nature/articles?type=nature-careers-podcast>