Learning about yourself from others

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]

1. Gather the responses into the table below:

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

1. 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.