

#### **Career Tests**

By Harrison Barnes

You need to discover your core skill set or those most compelling gifts you have that make you stand out. Being able to identify your gifts will help you transform your life and your career. I have put together a series of free career tests you can use to gauge what you should be doing in your career. Start with the first career test and work your way through all of them, and you'll be on the way to transforming your life and career.

To track down a job is one thing, but for you to be in a career where you're happy and making the most of everything is quite another. That is what I want for you.

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When I consult with job seekers, I am looking for them to achieve complete transformation. By transformation I mean that you are in a position where you know what you want out of your career, are happy, can do the work that you want, and everything comes together for you. I want you to think of yourself right now as the center of everything. That means you need to understand who you are, what motivates you, and what drives you in terms of your career.

## **Career Transformation and Possible Career Transition**

I don't care who you are. I don't care what kind of education you have. I don't care about what kind of experience you have. The process of transformation is something that is available to everyone. The more you understand this process and the more you grasp it, the bigger a difference it will make in your career.

Let me start with a story about an attorney I once knew. This person made a complete transformation, achieving exactly what I want to see happen to you as you apply this process to your life. This attorney was working in a law firm when I knew him. He was a tax attorney and earning a lot of money. He had a very good background for the job, having attended Harvard Law School. He had employment stability. From the outside, this looked like a very good job for him. It made sense, given his background.

That's how most of our careers appear from the outside. Like you, this person had this job for various reasons: he'd gone to Harvard Law School, was well paid, had been at his firm a long time, and was comfortable. Plus, he had all the right skills for the job.

Everyone out there has a particular job for a reason, just like this person did. This person had been doing this for twenty-five years or more. Because of this, the odds of him doing something else were very, very slim. This is true for many people. Once you've been somewhere doing something for a considerable length of time, it becomes less and less likely that you will leave.

If you have been doing it for a short time, you have the potential to do it for a long time. If you have been doing it for a long time, you are on a path where you could potentially be doing it for a very long time. That's okay, but it's not necessarily a good thing, especially if you feel stuck.

Now let's talk about skill sets. I want you to take a look at the job you are doing and ask yourself something: Am I using my skills as best I can? What are the skills I have that are really strong that could translate into something else?

Here is a list of common skills people have. You will be good at some and not so good at others. That's okay.

## **EXERCISE A: THE CAREER APTITUDE TEST**

(Download this exercise as a PDF here: Exercise A)

Please complete the exercise below to get a sense of where your interests and skills lie.

How to Grade Yourself on Career Interest. A grade of "F" would be "least interested" and a grade of "A" would be "most interested" in jobs involving the below skills. Everyone is naturally inclined toward certain types of work and projects and less inclined toward others. You need to see where your interests lie. Here's an example. You're presented with the term, "administering advice". If you really love to give people advice then you should grade yourself an "A". If you absolutely cannot

stand giving others advice then you should grade yourself a "D". If you like giving advice, but aren't crazy about it, you should give yourself a B.

How to Grade Yourself on Career Feedback. In the Feedback column, grade yourself based on the feedback you have received from others about a given skill set you may have. Give yourself an "A" if people always compliment you on how well you do something (regardless of whether you enjoy doing it). Give yourself an "F" if people always tell you that you are not good at something and so forth. You should give yourself a "B" if the feedback you have received from doing a given task is "good" but not glowing.

THE CAREER APTITUDE TESTS

		Feedback (F to
Skill	Interest (F to A)	A)
adapting new procedures		
administering advice		
administering programs		
advising people		
analyzing data		
analyzing problems		
assembling physical things		
auditing financial reports		
becoming actively involved		
being thorough		
budgeting expenses		
calculating numerical data		
checking for accuracy		
classifying records		
coaching individuals		
collaborating ideas		
collecting money		
comparing results		
compiling statistics		
comprehending ideas		
conducting interviews		
conducting meetings		
confronting other people		
constructing physical things		
coordinating schedules/times		
coping with deadlines		
counseling/consulting people		
creating meaningful and challenging		
work		
creating new ideas		
deciding uses of money		
defining a problem		
defining performance standards		
delegating responsibilities		
delegating responsibility		
determining a problem		
developing a climate of enthusiasm,		
teamwork, and cooperation		
developing plans for projects		1
dispensing information		1
displaying artistic ideas		1
distributing products		

dratting reports	
dramatizing ideas	
editing work	
encouraging others	
enduring long hours	
enforcing rules and regulations	
entertaining people	
estimating physical space	
evaluating programs	
expressing feelings expressing ideas orally to	
individuals or groups	
finding information	
gathering information	
generating accounts	
handling complaints	
handling detailed work	
imagining new solutions	
inspecting physical objects	
interacting with people at different	
levels	
interpreting languages	
interviewing prospective employees	
inventing new ideas investigating problems	
knowledge of	
community/government affairs	
knowledge of concepts and	
principles	
listening to others	
locating missing information	
maintaining a high level of activity	
maintaining accurate records	
maintaining emotional control under	
stress making decisions	
managing an organization	
managing people	
measuring boundaries	
mediating between people	
meeting new people	
meeting people	
motivating others	
negotiating/arbitrating conflicts	
operating equipment	
organizing files	
organizing tasks	
overseeing operations performing numeric analysis	
persuading others	
picking out important information	
planning agendas/meetings	
planning organizational needs	
predicting futures	
preparing written communications prioritizing work	
promoting events	
proposing ideas	
providing customers with service	
providing discipline when necessary	
questioning others	
raising funds	
reading volumes of material	
reading volumes of material recommending courses of action	
recommending courses of action rehabilitating people	
recommending courses of action rehabilitating people relating to the public	
recommending courses of action rehabilitating people	

resolving conflicts	
running meetings	
screening telephone calls	
selling ideas	
selling products	
serving individuals	
setting priorities	
setting up demonstrations	
setting work/committee goals	
sketching charts or diagrams	
skillfully applying professional	
knowledge	
speaking to the public	
summarizing information	
supervising employees	
supporting others	
taking independent action	
taking personal responsibility	
teaching/instructing/training	
individuals	
thinking in a logical manner	
thinking of creative ideas	
tolerating interruptions	
updating files	
writing for publication	
writing letters/papers/proposals	
writing reports	

You should be able to learn a ton about yourself from this exercise. This is, in fact, a roadmap for your career and life. You should also notice various patterns emerging. For example, skills involving writing may be all "A's" in terms of what other people say about your work and what you enjoy. Notice the patterns in what you see. Notice the areas that garner you the most positive feedback and what you seem to enjoy the most. Notice the areas where you receive the most negative feedback and what you do not seem to enjoy at all.

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Now, back to the attorney I knew. He had very good interpersonal skills. When people met this man they instantly liked him. They would get a warm feeling when around him, feel welcome, and liked. He gave himself "A's" in the criteria above involving interpersonal skills. He also noticed that he was given "As" by others.

Although this skill might not be integral to his **job as a tax attorney**, where he spent much of his time sitting in front of a computer and filling out papers all day, it was a very good skill to have. Additionally, when you get "A's" in an area in terms of both your interest level and what others say about you, it is a good sign that this is very likely something you should be doing as part of your career.

One day, this attorney and I were going through this exercise of listing our skills, and it came out that he has very good interpersonal skills. In addition to interpersonal skills, he also had a very strong interest in entrepreneurial-related activities. What do I mean by that? He liked to read all about entrepreneurial-related topics, such as how to start a business, how to run a business, and how to market a business. His bookshelves were filled with these sorts of books—and he studied these topic every chance he could get.

His interest in this was exceptionally strong. He spent all of his spare time reading books about starting and running a business. That was his motivation. He was passionate about entrepreneurial endeavors.

In addition, he had a strong interest in the stock market. He loved to look at stocks. He read just about anything he could get his hands on that was related to stocks. In particular, he became very interested in oil stocks. You could say that interest was another one of his strengths.

Finally, he had an exceptional work ethic. He would get up and go to work at the same time every day. He would work Saturdays and Sundays. He worked very hard and enjoyed it.

# **EXERCISE B: INTEREST INVENTORY EXERCISE**

### (Download this exercise as a PDF here: Exercise B)

Take a few moments now to grade your performance in your current profession and job.

The best way to see if you are in a job that makes the most of your skills is to choose the Top 10 skills your current job requires from the list in Exercise A then transfer these skills and your grades to the list below. This exercise can give you an idea if your current job is a good match for your skills and interests.

### INTEREST INVENTORY EXERCISE

		Feedback (F to
Current Job Skills Required	Interest (F to A)	A)
		1
	A	

If you work in a career where the highest grade you can give yourself overall is a B+ then that is going to eventually hold you back. If you are going to achieve your full potential, which includes your earning potential and happiness potential, you need to be in a job where you can give yourself an A. Every task you perform for your job should earn you an A.

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In working with the attorney, we went through and identified and graded the most important skills he needed for his job, just like they were subjects he was studying in school. He needed to find out what his strongest skills were. In terms of the top 10 skills he needed for being an attorney, despite the fact that he was very well paid and doing well at the job, he gave himself only a B+ in terms of his overall abilities, skills, feedback, and interest level.

Clearly, this attorney an example of someone who is very accomplished and I have chosen him to be an example for that very reason. This is a person who was making a million dollars a year, at least. He was well paid and respected, but his interests were in a different field. His interests were in these other things like the stock market, entrepreneurial activities, and talking to people.

So, what did this person do? He went through a transformation. Incredibly, despite being in this position, he realized that his interests were really in other areas and that his skills could be put to better use. He did this by doing the exercise above and discussing it.

With 25 years of experience as an attorney, this man put all of his efforts into his true interests. I told him that he needed to place emphasis on the things that interested him and look for opportunities in those areas.

Incredibly, this person ended up becoming involved in oil well prospecting. He talked to some people in Texas and Oklahoma and began investigating oil well–related stocks. Since he had such good interpersonal skills, people opened up to him right away so he learned about opportunities for investment. Since he had so many entrepreneurial interests and skills, he started putting together all sorts of deals. And since he had so much interest in the stock market, he was able to fully understand everything.

At the time that I met him, he was going through a divorce and was unhappy. If you are in a career that you don't like or if you're unhappy because things aren't going the way you want at work, other areas of your life can be affected. Your relationships start to suffer. That is never a good thing. I have seen so many divorces and unhappy relationships, and a lot of it is caused by poor career choices.

What's so exciting about this man is the fact that he changed careers completely and it transformed his life. He became involved in the oil well business and as a consequence, ended up becoming much more successful than he ever would have had he stayed in his ultra-prestigious job at the law firm. Not only that, but he was happier, more likeable, more outgoing, more interested in talking about the work he was doing, more motivated, and his relationships improved. All of that work ethic and all those things he was so good at made a major difference and were more effectively utilized when he started to take advantage of his most compelling gifts for his career.

You need to ask yourself: What is the most effective way to use my gifts?

If you ask yourself this question, and you take the time to seriously consider it, you might discover you should be doing something completely different than what you are doing now. So many people are in the wrong career and doing the wrong work. Many of these people aren't effectively using their skills. In reality, it isn't even about making the most effective use of your skills. The much more important thing is to do what makes you happy.

In the example of the attorney, he looked at what his interests were, really understood those and his skills, and everything kind of came together for him. He gradually took his foot off the drive pedal for his legal practice and shifted his efforts toward other things. Think of it this way: if you put effort into something that you aren't good at, your world is going to stay the same size and nothing is going to change. You will continue to make the same money. You will get the same amount of results, positive and negative.

But if you start putting effort into something you are good at, pretty soon whatever that is will grow and grow and grow. You'll see this growth in more opportunities, more money, more success, and more happiness. If you understand that concept, it is going to make all the difference. It will change your life.

## **Job Types**

The type of work you do is important to understand as far as determining what you enjoy and what you don't enjoy. Each job or career is a path. By a path, I mean that it is something you may have chosen to do, yet you may be in a position where you are doing work you don't like.

Now, I want you to be specific about what you do and don't like. Take me for example. I used to be an attorney. While I was an attorney, I did not enjoy being an attorney. I also don't enjoy bookkeeping, lots of social obligations, having to go to all sorts of events, working with super-competitive people, being sedentary, or being in a job with no potential for growth. Those are the kinds of things I need to avoid in a job.

On the other hand, I do enjoy writing. I love to write. I think it's fun. To some extent, an attorney can do that. I enjoy doing short projects. I like to be active. I enjoy helping people. I like to be appreciated for the work I am doing.

This may seem like a very elementary exercise, but in reality it is pretty complex. It is something that you need to do because it gives you a complete roadmap for your career and everything else you end up doing. The goal is to stay on this side of the fence all the time.

I am going to tell you that no matter where you live, no matter who you are, there is never a reason for you to be doing something you do not enjoy. There are plenty of jobs out there. When you are really good at something and enjoy it, this realization alone has a magical way of making that sort of job come to you.

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### **EXERCISE C: LIKES AND DISLIKES EXERCISE**

#### (Download this exercise as a PDF here: Exercise C)

Get a piece of paper and pen right now and set a timer for five minutes. Now make two lists, one for the things you enjoy and one for the things you don't enjoy. Start the timer and write down as many as you can think of.

Make sure you keep writing for the full five minutes. Real quickly, brainstorm. Write as much as you possibly can. We are working with your subconscious mind here. Your subconscious mind is picking up all this information. It is exceptionally important that you write down everything you don't enjoy, too. Don't just write what you think you should write. You need to write everything you can. If you don't enjoy something, write it down. Don't censor yourself. Just write, write, write.

Write anything that comes to your mind. You should write at least 50 different things to get a sense of this. Do not look at the lists you did in the exercise above. Just write everything that comes to mind for you.

### LIKES AND DISLIKES EXERCISE

What I Like	What I Do Not Like

Now take a look at your lists. What do you enjoy? Whatever it is, there is a job that fits it. Maybe you enjoy yelling at people. That's okay. There is a job for that. Maybe you enjoy dancing in a bathing suit. There is probably a job for that too.

What you don't enjoy is equally important. You want to avoid jobs that require you to do those things that make you unhappy. This is your roadmap.

Type up this list and tape it to the wall. Refer to it often as you look for a job. This may be a very simplistic, elementary exercise, but it is so important. You must understand what you enjoy and what you do not enjoy if you are going to find a career that truly makes you happy.

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understand that living in a career you don't enjoy is a road to disaster. The reason is that, again, when you put effort into things you don't enjoy, things stay small. When you put effort into things you enjoy, things get bigger and bigger.

When you enjoy something, you put more effort into it because it is fun and you get more return for your effort. Take sports, for example. I used to love soccer. Because I loved it, I practiced. I went to training camps for it. I could kick the ball harder and dribble with more control. Because I loved it. I excelled at it.

I started with the example about the attorney because I want you to understand that when you are putting your effort into what you enjoy, so much more can happen to you. This man went on to become incredibly successful in the oil industry after 25 years of massive success as an attorney. But he was unhappy as an attorney. The point is you cannot do things you don't enjoy if you want to be happy.

If you don't like being a stockbroker, don't do it.

If you don't like being a doctor, you shouldn't be doing it.

If you don't like being an attorney, you shouldn't be doing it.

If you don't like being an architect, you shouldn't do it.

If you don't like working in the factory, you shouldn't do it.

If you don't like being a waitress, you shouldn't do it.

You should never, ever have to do what you don't enjoy. I am here to tell you today that you don't have to.

This process we're going through is so exciting because it will empower you to change your life. Most people who start a process like this one do not finish it. It's hard to get something out of any exercise when you don't finish it. By completing a process like this one, you are investing in yourself.

### Moving Beyond Resistance

If you find you are resisting doing these exercises, if you find yourself resisting reading this material, it is not because the material is not helping you. I know this material will help you. The reason you are resisting likely has something to do with the fact that you are afraid to change.

People often get stuck in this box and find themselves in jobs they don't enjoy because they feel like they can't get out. They are in prison. No one wants this for his or her life or career.

I feel so strongly about this, I can't even tell you how significant this point really is. Why not enjoy your time on this earth and the time in your career? I want so much for you to find and do what you enjoy. There is nothing more important than that.

I have taught so many people this process and I have seen such incredible transformations. I have seen people become so successful once they understand it. I want the same for you. I used to do some flying. When an airplane takes off, it's constantly in communication with different points on the ground. The plane may go off in one direction or off in another direction. At every stage, there are all these people and instruments telling the pilot when he gets off course. Exercise C, which gauges what you do and do not enjoy, is like a course corrector. It indicates that if you are doing something you do not enjoy, you are on the wrong path.

In your career, it is incredibly important to get on the right path. So many people are out there who think there are certain jobs they should be doing. I don't know what the reasons are, but they believe they should be doing something because of what other people have told them. Frankly, it's just not true. There is no *should* when it comes to your career and your life. Whatever you believe or whatever other people have led you to believe, it's just not true. You need to be doing what you are good at and that means doing what you enjoy.

When I talk about the things you enjoy, I am talking about the things that make you happy. You need to be doing what makes you happy in your career. There is absolutely no alternative. I would say 65 percent to 70 percent of people out there are doing things that they don't enjoy. What is so upsetting about this is that the people who are doing the things they don't enjoy are often the most talented people out there. Sometimes the people who have the most motivation are the ones who end up doing things they don't enjoy.

Another type of resistance comes from the feedback that you may have received from the world. One of the real benefits of education, I think, whether you went to high school and didn't complete it or went to graduate school, is you are always getting feedback. The feedback is pointing you into the direction of what you are good at.

Everybody is good at something. I have yet to meet somebody who isn't exceptional at something. I remember when I was growing up, I knew someone pretty well. He was not good at school at all. As a matter of fact, he was pretty much a C student. He never really got any praise or anything from teachers or from the school.

Because of that, he ended up getting in with the wrong crowd and using drugs and all sorts of things. To some extent, he did a lot of damage to his brain. That's okay; lots of people do that. But I think a lot of it had to do with the fact that he was surrounded by very accomplished family members and people that he knew who were doing exceptionally well and he wasn't.

He did get feedback about one thing, however. That one thing was chemistry. He was very good at it. I don't know why he was so good at chemistry. He just had a natural ability in the subject.

I remember that I was home during college and he had dropped out of school and was living with his parents. He was pretty unhappy for the most part, using drugs and not going anywhere. I remembered how good he was at chemistry and said, "You need to do everything you can to study chemistry. You just need to put all your effort into it."

He actually liked chemistry, too. He liked it a lot. He was interested in it, but he was horrible at English, horrible at math, and horrible at whatever else. He was just a horrible student.

And he did. He listened to me. And I think, based on the path that he was on, it saved his life. Now he makes a good living. He is respected. He has all sorts of skills all because he pursued the area in which he was getting positive feedback.

Prior to that, he thought he should be interested in business so he started ordering *The Wall Street Journal* and reading about business. He thought maybe he should be a writer so he started writing these horrible stories. He did all these things except what he was good at.

I think he had the idea that people who were interested in chemistry were nerds or whatever. He actually was a nerd, but he didn't know it. The point is that you need to go where the positive feedback is. That is what he did.

When you do things for which you receive positive feedback, it is going to make a lot of difference.

There is positive and negative feedback. When you get positive feedback, it empowers you. It pushes you forward. In terms of feedback, when you do something where you are getting a positive reaction, it makes all the difference in the world. The reason it makes a positive difference is the power of being empowered can change the entire calculus in your career.

When birds fly in formation, one bird often flies in front and then a couple of different birds fly off to the sides. They fly like this because the bird out front faces a lot of wind resistance. This resistance makes it much more difficult for the front bird to fly, so they have to flap their wings much harder. I am sure you have heard this sound, the 'whah whah' when they do that. It isn't the one that is in front that is making that sound. Rather, it's the ones on the sides. These birds are benefiting from that lead bird breaking the wind in front of all the other birds while they are flying. They are cheering him on.

Being cheered on is among one of the most important things you can have in your career. You need to be cheered on no matter what you do and no matter who you are.

When you are cheered on, you push further. Life is not easy. No career is easy, to be honest. But when you have others around you who are cheering you on, it makes all the difference in the world. You need to be in a position where you are getting positive feedback.

The people around you might say, "You are doing a good job," or "What you did is making a huge difference," or "Go, do it because you are really doing a great job of that."

When you are empowered and getting positive feedback, it changes the calculus for you. Positive feedback gives you the energy to go forward. That is important. It makes your life meaningful. It gives you the energy to be number one.

In my office in Los Angeles, we make these videos for some of our **job sites**. When you put up an ad on a casting site, you will literally see hundreds of very beautiful girls applying for these jobs within a few hours. These are for videos where they talk about how to find different types of jobs.

When you think about it, these girls are moving here from all over the United States because people are saying, "You are really pretty," or "You could be a good actress." So all these girls move to L.A. and they are doing that based on feedback they get. That is a good thing.

The funny thing is when you look at these girls who are applying to these jobs, there are obviously girls who have no business doing so. I don't mean that in a bad way. I just mean that they don't have the presence on camera. They don't have the potential skills. These people really shouldn't be doing it because they aren't getting positive feedback.

That is a really important thing to understand. When you do something where you don't get positive feedback, it's disempowering. It kind of takes the wind out of your sails. It doesn't make you feel good and it is not fun. It makes you more sluggish in terms of your work.

You are less likely to act because you are not excited about what you are doing. It puts you in a position where you are unlikely to be number one. This is a very crucial point and something you really need to grasp.

I am not telling you that you don't need to work hard or you don't need to work on obstacles or whatever, but you should be applying this effort in an area where you have gotten a lot of positive feedback. You shouldn't be doing this in something where you are getting negative feedback.

If you are good at chemistry, fine. Go get a PhD in chemistry and surprise the world, but do that because you are good at chemistry and that is where your skill set is. Don't do that in something you are bad at like English or Social Studies; do it in something you are good at.

We are going to do another exercise. I want you to do this exercise, but I want to go through what my experience has been with the feedback I've received. I have gone through this exercise myself and it has really made a difference for me in terms of my life.

When I completed the feedback exercise, it really showed me what I should be doing. And everybody I have ever gone through this exercise with has realized what he or she should be doing.

I've received positive feedback in things like public speaking, public writing, coming up with new ideas, and that sort of thing.

Negative feedback I've received has been for things like: details, doing lots of socialization, going to lots of events and that kind of thing, and anything to do with math. I just don't like it. I hope you can start seeing a pattern here.

When I told you the things I like and the things I didn't like, the things that I like are along the positive feedback lines, and the things I don't like are along the negative feedback lines. That is very important to understand. It is really going to make a difference.

I would like to tell you the way I view this. It is called a course corrector. In the example of the airplane flying and getting its course corrected, and the example of a bird, when you get positive feedback, it puts you on a certain course. It makes you go a certain direction.

The negative feedback drives you away from that course and back on to the right course. I want you to do this exercise. I want you to spend some time on it. I want you to make two columns, one listing the times you've received positive feedback, and one listing the times you've received negative feedback.

Please don't think that you are too important or that you don't have time to go through this exercise. I have done this exercise with investment bankers who have made millions and millions of dollars a year. I have helped them with this to improve their careers. This is really what you need to focus on.

What encouragement or discouragement have you received over your lifetime—when you were a kid, when you were a teenager, when you were in college? What do people say to you today? I want you to really think through this and write down whatever comes to mind. Think back; think long term. Go as far back as you possibly can. Go into as much detail as you can and keep writing.

Consider these questions:

- What do people ask you to do more of?
- What have people said you are the greatest at?
- What have people applauded you for?
- What have people asked you to do again?

- What are you best at?
- Where have you not gotten any encouragement?

That is how it works. People won't necessarily tell you that you are good at something or you are bad at something. If you are putting a lot of effort into something and not receiving any encouragement, that is a good sign that maybe something is wrong. Just think about that.

Go deep. I want you to think back to when you were five or six years old and what people said to you. Think back to when you were 10 years old, 12 years old, 15 years old, and 20 years old. Just keep thinking and going back and forth in your mind about everything people have said you are good at.

You have special abilities and I know there is something out there you are exceptionally good at. That is really what I want to find for you today. I want you to grab onto whatever it is that you are exceptionally good at. I want you to understand it. I also want you to understand the negative feedback.

In terms of understanding the negative feedback, when you think about the feedback you have received, you need to think in terms of the big picture. What have people said to you over and over again? You have to understand, too, that there are people out there who are competitive with you. They may give you negative feedback that isn't even true. You must sort through this type of discouragement and throw out the comments from people who do not have your best interests at heart.

Work through this list to better understand the positive and negative feedback you have received.

You need to understand where you are getting your feedback from, and more specifically, where your negative feedback is coming from. This exercise will you help you figure this out. Here, you should jot down the first things that come to mind: Only you know what should be listed. Your positive feedback could be from being a good long-distance runner, for example. Your negative feedback could be that you are a bad cook. I really do not care what it is—you just need to go through the exercise as exhaustively as possible.

### **EXERCISE D: YOUR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEEDBACK EXERCISE**

(Download this exercise as a PDF here: Exercise D)

What I've Gotten Positive Feedback For	What I've Gotten Negative Feedback For

A lot of time people don't take the time to think about these sorts of things and they are exceptionally important for your life and career. You need to understand your biggest gifts.

Now we are going to bring this list of positive and negative feedback home to you. Exercise E, "Career Mapping," is going to be really cool.

EXERCISE E: CAREER MAPPING

### (Download this exercise as a PDF here: Exercise E)

I want you to think about your life. Think about your career and write down every job that you have ever done that you were paid for and even the things you weren't paid for. This includes schooling, volunteer work, and summer jobs. Every job you've ever done.

Make a big circle in the middle of your paper and label it "My Career". In the middle of the circle, write all these different jobs you've done. Once you have this collection of all the jobs you've done, it's time to investigate how they fit in your career path.



For each position you've held, ask yourself:

- 1. Was I good at this job?
- 2. Did I get positive feedback?
- 3. Could I do this job forever?
- 4. Do I like it?

When you look at every job you've done, you start getting a road map and understanding where everything is pointing. As you discovered in earlier exercises, there are certain things for which you are getting positive or negative feedback. With this exercise, you can find out what jobs you liked. Taking those two pieces of information will tell you a lot about what the right career is for you. That really gives you the answer.

When I went through this exercise for myself, I listed all the jobs I've had. I was an asphalt contractor, for example. I asked myself:

Was I good at it? I was okay. Did I get positive feedback? Yes, people told me I was good at it.

Did I like it? Yes, I liked it. But could I do it forever? No. Why? It is just too taxing. It is taxing physically. It is stressful. It is a little bit dangerous.

One of the things you'll start to understand is the job that is right for you may not be on this list. I will tell you why. When you start putting everything together like, what you enjoy, what you do not enjoy, the things for which you've received positive feedback, the jobs you've done, all the careers you've had, the jobs you like, the jobs for which you've received positive feedback, the jobs you were good at, and the jobs you think you could do forever, you'll start to see a pattern.

You will see a pattern between what you enjoy and what's earning you positive feedback. And you will see a pattern between jobs you like and jobs you do not like. There are a lot of very sophisticated career testing programs out there. You are welcome to take them. But I don't think you need to invest the money in them. The information you've uncovered with these few exercises is all you need to know to find the job that is the best fit for you.

When I was an attorney, I was definitely in a place that I did not like. I didn't enjoy the work. I didn't like getting up in the morning. It wasn't something I liked. I was even a law professor, too, but I'm not going to get into that. That wasn't any fun either.

The feedback I was getting was mixed. I was getting good feedback, but at the same time I wasn't always getting positive feedback. Did I think I could do it forever? No way could I do it forever. Was I good at it? Yes, I was good at it, but there were a lot of other people who were good at it, too.

Despite being good at it, it wasn't really something that lit a fire under me and made a big difference. It wasn't something that I really found myself enjoying very much.

One day, like you, maybe, I went out and started looking into all these jobs on various job sites and investigating the market. I was really trying to understand what I wanted to do with my life and with my career. In the course of doing that, I started talking to legal recruiters. I started meeting them. They were wearing fancy watches. They seemed tanned and happy. They seemed to enjoy what they were doing. But at the same time, I noticed that a lot of them didn't have very good skills.

These recruiters didn't necessarily have the kinds of skills that I developed practicing law like being very detailed-oriented, doing research, and some other things. That was a very interesting thing to me. I thought to myself, if they had these skills, they would be much better at their jobs. For example, you can find lots of locations for the jobs these recruiters were recruiting for if you did enough research. You have to do intensive research that could take weeks, but you could find them. And they weren't doing it.

I knew that I could do it. They didn't have good writing abilities, either. Writing is a very important component of recruiting because you have to put together a case for why a law firm or other organization should hire someone. I started noticing all these things.

I started thinking about what I enjoy and all the aspects of recruiting were things that I enjoyed and where I got the most positive feedback. I enjoyed the idea of selling things and sales. I enjoyed the writing component. I enjoyed the research. I enjoyed all these things despite the fact that these items on the list of things I enjoyed, I realized right then and there that recruiting was a job that I would not only be good at, but I would enjoy and it would make a huge difference in my career and life.

I knew what I enjoyed and I knew what I got the most positive feedback from. I knew if I went into it, good things would happen.

So, what happened?

As I was looking at different job opportunities with these recruiters and going out and interviewing with big prestigious law firms, I got job offers. Even though I wasn't happy at my current firm, I realized that I really wouldn't be happy doing any other type of job. The problem wasn't the practice of law. The problem was me and my interests.

Despite getting all these jobs, I kept coming back to the idea that I thought recruiting was cool and that it was something I would enjoy. I just instinctively understood that my likes, my skills, and where I had gotten positive feedback, all kind of led to recruiting. I didn't make this decision consciously for several weeks.

Then I decided that I had to do this. That is what I have to do. I had to take a recruiting job.

At the time, I was twenty-nine years old. This was back in 1999, a long time ago, and I was making \$170,000 a year. I said to myself, "I'm not doing this anymore. I don't like it." So I quit.

For four months, nothing happened. I think my wife at the time was astonished. How could somebody that young walk away from such a good job and start doing something with no experience that anybody can do? I set up an office in our house and we had no money, nothing. We just jumped off the face of the earth really to do this. I did the work for several months.

I had been doing it for four months and I hadn't brought in any money. The way recruiters get paid is a recruiter makes 25% of the annual salary of someone they place in a job, but I hadn't done that yet.

I knew deep down, instinctively, that this was what I was good at and I would succeed. It has been like that, too, for a lot of the recruiters who have joined our company. At the same time, it was very taxing. My wife used to get phone calls from her family wondering if I was sane for doing what I was doing. It was just a very difficult time.

I remember she would get the phone calls and actually walk out onto the front lawn of the house to talk because she didn't want me to hear her talking.

Then I remember another quick incident. She had some friends who were over at our house and they had come into my office. I could tell they were kind of concerned for her and for me because I had just taken this huge leap in my career.

They said, "What are you doing?"

I told them and I remember expressing enthusiasm with them about one of the candidates I had that I thought was excellent. I went back to what I was doing at my desk. A few moments later I turned around and I saw them expressing that I was absolutely nuts and this was insane.

After that incident, a couple of weeks went by. I think it was the next week and I remember one Sunday evening my wife and I were watching 60 Minutes. By this point it was early 2000 and they were talking about dotcoms and how successful some of them were.

This giant cricket, almost as big as this marker, came and jumped on the mantle of the fireplace and started singing. I went to bed that night and the next Monday I woke up very early in the morning. A major law firm named Latham & Watkins called. They told me they wanted to hire one of my attorneys that had already gone on an interview.

That placement fee ended up being over \$50,000. To make a long story short, by the end of the week I had made four placements. One of them was actually much larger than \$50,000, and I made close to double what I had made the previous year as an attorney. My life had changed.

Within a few years, I had offices for this recruiting company all around the United States. A few years after that, our company had expanded so much that there were over 600 employees with offices all around the world. It has just been a complete transformation.

None of that would have happened had I not decided to follow the things I both enjoy and receive the most positive feedback for.

I really hope you understand the significance of what I just told you. If you understand it, nothing is ever going to be the same for you, in your career and in your life, ever again. Nothing will ever be the same. It is all going to change.

I get a little bit emotional when I think about this because I am thinking about the impact this is going to have on you. You need to follow your heart and go after where that positive feedback is.

You need to go after it and make it happen.

I want you to go through this process. I know you have written down the things you like and where you have gotten the positive feedback. I want you to understand that once you go through this process, you are going to be so empowered. This alone is going to change your life.

Your perfect career path can be anything you do. It doesn't need to be what you think it is or what other people think it is. It doesn't need to be anything in particular.

Consider this story about a window washer. When I was an asphalt contractor in Detroit, there was a man in Grosse Pointe who had a collection of Ferraris. He used to sit out in his driveway and rev his Ferrari just because he loved the sound of

them. He lived in a very nice house or giant mansion. It was one of the nicest houses in Grosse Pointe.

Every year I would come by and service his driveway, and one day I had the opportunity to talk to him.

I asked him, "What do you do?"

He said, "I have a window washing company."

"Really, where do you do it?"

"Just in Grosse Pointe. I walk around and wash the windows in Grosse Pointe."

I thought about that. Here is the guy with one of the nicest houses in the city and he is a window washer for the local people. Turns out this guy used to work at a large bank in Detroit where he had been a manager. He was successful, but it wasn't a job he enjoyed.

He used to get his windows washed at his house three or four times a year. He noticed two things: one, these window washers were clearly very happy, and two, they made a lot of money doing it. They worked outside in fresh air all day, and they were paid about \$200 for fifteen or twenty minutes of work.

So this man went out and started washing windows by knocking on doors around his neighborhood on weekends. Sure enough, after washing these windows alone for several weekends, he realized that he was making more money just working on Saturday and Sunday than he was making working the entire week in the bank, and he was having fun doing it, so he quit the bank.

The point is that it doesn't matter what you do. You have to do what you like. You have to do what appeal to you. You have to follow your heart. You have to go where the positive feedback is, and you have to go with what you like. That is the most important thing. That is what is going to make a difference in your career.

I am glad that you took the time to go through these career tests. Do these exercises and think about it, even sleep with it. Look at it before you go to bed.

The path is going to open up for you. The path you want comes through thinking and it comes through going through these exercises and doing this work. The path you want is there.

It may be doing what you are doing right now. But you can be even stronger at that, too, if that is what you want to do. The most important thing for you to know is whether or not you are on the right path. If you aren't on the right path, you need to get on the right path. You need to start understanding what it is and get on it right now to make a difference in your life.

Once you understand what path you need to be on, use Gig to find the job that will make you happy and successful in your life. Not only is it free to job seekers, but it contains thousands of jobs from employer websites, newspapers, and many other sources that most job sites miss.

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