

## SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Career Planning Center's mission is to empower and give you the resources you need to develop your unique career, your job search skills and to broaden your job opportunities. This tool is design to assist you in developing your own personal career road map. It puts into words your vision for your career and identifies goals and action steps you can take – both short and long-term.

Setting goals is an essential step in creating and taking ownership of your career. For some of you, your current goal may simply be to learn more about your career options. You may already have a career goal or goals, but are open to exploring additional opportunities and experiences.

We recommend that you review, revise and add to your self-assessment as you move through law school. By mapping out a plan and stating your action steps, you can manage the process in a more self-directed manner, reducing stress and increasing your likelihood of success.

The tool begins by asking you to complete several inventories that you will use to identify career options that fit your unique set of interests, skills and values.

### Two Step Workplace Values Exercise

First step, rate the importance of each of the workplace values on the following list. We've left a few blank lines at the end of our list in case we have missed something that you consider essential.

Rate the degree of importance that you place on each of the following workplace values using this scale:

- 1 = Work values that are very important to me
- 2 = Work values that are reasonably important to me
- 3 = Work values that are not important to me or that I am indifferent about

I am interested in jobs and careers that include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ helping those in need
- \_\_\_\_\_ mental challenge/mentally demanding/problem-solving
- \_\_\_\_\_ opportunity for balance between work life and family life
- \_\_\_\_\_ flexibility in work structure
- \_\_\_\_\_ intellectual status, an acknowledged "expert" in a given field
- \_\_\_\_\_ order and structure
- \_\_\_\_\_ high degree of competition
- \_\_\_\_\_ integrity and truth
- \_\_\_\_\_ rewarding loyalty and dependability
- \_\_\_\_\_ having self-respect and pride in work
- \_\_\_\_\_ stability and security

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- \_\_\_\_\_ strong financial compensation and financial rewards
- \_\_\_\_\_ being recognized for quality of work in a visible/public way
- \_\_\_\_\_ having a positive impact on others and society
- \_\_\_\_\_ using creativity, imagination; being innovative
- \_\_\_\_\_ variety and a changing work pace
- \_\_\_\_\_ professional development and on-going learning and growth
- \_\_\_\_\_ friendships and warm working relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ teamwork and work groups
- \_\_\_\_\_ glamour, prestige, respect, or a level of social status
- \_\_\_\_\_ routine, predictable work projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ deadlines and time demand/pressure challenges
- \_\_\_\_\_ clear advancement tracks/opportunities for advancement
- \_\_\_\_\_ tranquility, comfort, and avoidance of pressure
- \_\_\_\_\_ dealing with the public/day-to-day contact with the public
- \_\_\_\_\_ using cutting edge or pioneering technologies or techniques
- \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities for supervision, power, leadership, influence
- \_\_\_\_\_ making decisions, having power to decide courses of action
- \_\_\_\_\_ respect, recognition, being valued
- \_\_\_\_\_ autonomy, independence, freedom
- \_\_\_\_\_ precision work with little tolerance for error
- \_\_\_\_\_ adventure and excitement

Your second step is to now narrow down your list to the five core values you consider most important -- that you can't live without in your job/workplace -- and write them below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace values help determine an individual's level of satisfaction with their job and career choices -- and which you can ideally use to help judge the level of "fit" with any future job, employer, or career change.

The values you have identified should be factored into the decisions you make about which opportunities to pursue.

### Geographic Preferences

On a more fundamental level, geographic and location preferences must also be factored into your career plans. As you formulate your geographic preferences, consider that many employers prefer candidates with geographic ties to their city. Moreover, the legal work in some cities lends itself to certain practice areas.

Note which of these statements is true for you:

- I prefer to live in close proximity to family \_\_\_\_
- I must live in close proximity to family \_\_\_\_
- I prefer to live in an area with an ethnically, politically and economically diverse population \_\_\_\_
- I prefer to live in an area with many cultural and social opportunities \_\_\_\_
- I prefer to live in a city \_\_\_\_
- I prefer to live in a suburban area \_\_\_\_
- I prefer to live in a rural community \_\_\_\_

Then give some thought to how much time you may be willing to commute to work.

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Name three states where you would prefer to live. If there are cities or towns within those states where you would like to live, identify those as well.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Practice Area & Setting Interest Inventory

Please circle those practice areas which currently pique your interest.

|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Administrative Law & Regulatory Practice | Food and Drug Law              |
| Air, Sea, & Space Law                    | Government Contracts           |
| Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)     | Health Care Law                |
| Animal Rights                            | Housing/Homelessness           |
| Antitrust/Competition Law                | Immigration/Refugee Law        |
| Appellate Law                            | Insurance Law                  |
| Banking and Commercial Finance           | Intellectual Property Law      |
| Bankruptcy Law                           | International Law              |
| Business Law                             | Labor and Employment Law       |
| Children's Advocacy/Juvenile Justice     | Legislative Practice           |
| Civil Litigation                         | LGBT Law                       |
| Civil Rights/Civil Liberties             | Litigation, General            |
| Communications/Media Law                 | Migrant Worker Advocacy        |
| Community Economic Development           | Military Judge Advocates I JAG |
| Constitutional Law                       | Municipal Finance Practice     |
| Consumer Protection                      | National Security Law          |
| Corporate Practice                       | Poverty/Legal Services         |
| Criminal Law                             | Prisoners' Rights              |
| Cyberspace Law                           | Privacy Law                    |
| Disability Law                           | Public Defense/Death Penalty   |
| Drug Law                                 | Real Estate & Property Law     |
| Education Law                            | Securities Law                 |
| Elder Law                                | Tax Law                        |
| Election Law Noting Rights               | Telecommunications Law         |
| Employee Benefits                        | Tort Law                       |
| Entertainment & Sports Law               | Trade Law                      |
| Environmental & Energy Law               | Trusts and Estates Law         |
| Ethics                                   | White Collar                   |
| Family Law                               | Women's Rights                 |

Circle three to five practice settings to explore further:

Practice Settings within the law include:

Academic

General Counsel's Office  
Law School Administration  
Law School Faculty

International

Non-Government  
Organization  
Government  
Law Firm

Alternative

Investment Banking  
Journalism  
Entrepreneurship

Judicial

Trial  
Appellate

Associations

Professional Associations  
Bar Associations  
Trade Associations

Law Firms

Large  
Medium  
Small

Businesses & Corporations

In-House Counsel  
Government Affairs

Non-Profit

Legal Services  
Public Policy  
Advocacy

Government

Federal Government  
State Government  
Local Government

Prosecutor/Public Defender Offices  
Solo Practitioner

**26 Lawyering Effectiveness Factors (Skills) Inventory**

Please circle the number corresponding to your level of experience with each of these factors. (They are defined on the next page.)

1 = Little to no experience with this factor  
2 = Moderate experience with this factor  
3 = Lots of experience with this factor

|                                   |                                       |   |   |                                    |   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|
|                                   | Writing<br><br>1 2 3                  | Problem Solving<br><br>1 2 3                                      | Able to See World Through Eyes of Others<br><br>1 2 3 | Creativity/Innovation<br><br>1 2 3 |   |
| Fact Finding<br><br>1 2 3         | Questioning Interviewing<br><br>1 2 3 | Strategic Planning<br><br>1 2 3                                   | Influencing & Advocating<br><br>1 2 3                 | Passion & Engagement<br><br>1 2 3  | Organizing & Managing Own Work<br><br>1 2 3 |
| Researching the Law<br><br>1 2 3  | Listening<br><br>1 2 3                | Providing Advice & Counsel/Building Relationships<br><br>1 2 3    | Organizing & Managing Others<br><br>1 2 3             | Integrity/Honesty<br><br>1 2 3     | Self-Development<br><br>1 2 3               |
| Analysis & Reasoning<br><br>1 2 3 | Speaking<br><br>1 2 3                 | Networking & Business Developing<br><br>1 2 3                     | Evaluation, Development & Mentoring<br><br>1 2 3      | Diligence<br><br>1 2 3             | Stress Management<br><br>1 2 3              |
|                                   | Negotiating Skills<br><br>1 2 3       | Developing Relationships within the Legal Profession<br><br>1 2 3 | Community Involvement & Service<br><br>1 2 3          | Practical Judgment<br><br>1 2 3    |   |

## 26 LAWYERING EFFECTIVENESS FACTORS

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1. **Analysis and Reasoning:** Uses analytical skills, logic, and reasoning to approach problems and to formulate conclusions and advice.
2. **Creativity/Innovation:** Thinks "outside the box," develops innovative approaches and solutions.
3. **Problem Solving:** Effectively identifies problems and derives appropriate solutions.
4. **Practical Judgment:** Determines effective and realistic approaches to problems.
5. **Providing Advice & Counsel & Building Relationships with Clients:** Able to develop relationships with clients that address client's needs.
6. **Fact Finding:** Able to identify relevant facts and issues in case.
7. **Researching the Law:** Utilizes appropriate sources and strategies to identify issues and derive solutions.
8. **Speaking:** Orally communicates issues in an articulate manner consistent with issue and audience being addressed.
9. **Writing:** Writes clearly, efficiently and persuasively.
10. **Listening:** Accurately perceives what is being said both directly and subtly.
11. **Influencing & Advocating:** Persuades others of position and wins support.
12. **Questioning & Interviewing:** Obtains needed information from others to pursue issue/case.
13. **Negotiation Skills:** Resolves disputes to the satisfaction of all concerned.
14. **Strategic Planning:** Plans and strategizes to address present and future issues and goals.
15. **Organizing and Managing (Own) Work:** Generates well-organized methods and work products.
16. **Organizing and Managing Others (Staff/Colleagues):** Organizes and manages others' work to accomplish goals.
17. **Evaluation, Development, and Mentoring:** Manages, trains and instructs others to realize their full potential.
18. **Developing Relationships within the Legal Profession:** Establish quality relationships with others to work toward goals.
19. **Networking and Business Development:** Develops productive business relationships and helps meet the unit's financial goals.
20. **Community Involvement and Service:** Contributes legal skills to the community.
21. **Integrity & Honesty:** Has core values and beliefs; acts with integrity and honesty.
22. **Stress Management:** Effectively manages pressure or stress.
23. **Passion & Engagement:** Demonstrates interest in law for its own merits.
24. **Diligence:** Committed to and responsible in achieving goals and completing tasks.
25. **Self-Development:** Attends to and initiates self-development.
26. **Able to See the World Through the Eyes of Others:** Understands positions, views, objectives, and goals of others

Which of the 26 Lawyering Effectiveness Factors would you most enjoy using at work?

Identify 10:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the 26 Lawyering Effectiveness Factors would you most like to develop?

Identify 5:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Setting Goals

Using the self-awareness that you have gained through the self-assessment inventories you have completed, we highly recommend that you set at least one very specific goal for your career development each semester.

A goal setting worksheet is attached along with a sample of a completed worksheet. Note that on the worksheet you will be asked to identify a specific goal. Here are some areas that you may want to consider as you formulate the action steps necessary to complete your goal or goals:

### Skill Building

Are there events that I can attend this year both on and off campus that will heighten my practice area skills?

Are there events that I can attend this year both on and off campus that will allow me to improve my networking skills?

Are there specific externship, clinics and pro bono opportunities that I can become involved in that will allow me to learn more about my practice areas of interest and improve my legal skills?

Are there opportunities in private firms and corporations that will allow me to learn more about my practice areas of interest and improve my legal skills?

### Building My Network: Who will help me!

Can I connect or reconnect meaningfully with one law school professor this semester?

Have I connected with my undergraduate school for alumni contacts?

Have I signed up for the Alumni Mentor Program at Valparaiso Law?

Do I have a master list of past, current and target contacts to refer to?

Are there bar association and practice area subcommittees I should join?

Have I used LinkedIn?

Are there on-campus student groups I should join and if so, how can I become meaningfully involved in these groups?

### Financial Planning and Market Research

Have I designed a financial plan for the period between now and when I begin a post-graduate legal or law related position?

Have I completed market research in my geographic preference areas?

### Goal Setting Worksheet

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this goal important to you?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What actions will you take to achieve your goal? Be specific.

| Action Steps | Due Date |
|--------------|----------|
| 1. _____     | _____    |
| 2. _____     | _____    |
| 3. _____     | _____    |
| 4. _____     | _____    |

Obstacles/Challenges & Strategy for Overcoming

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |

Additional information/Resources

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Goal Setting Worksheet SAMPLE

*Goal:* To learn more about career options in environmental law.

*Why is this goal important to you?* I am attending law school because of my strong interest in environmental issues, but I don't know what options I have.

What actions will you take to achieve your goal? Be specific.

| Action Steps   | Due Date    |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Locate 2-4 environmental lawyer alumni            | _____ 11/15 |
| 2. Schedule meeting with environmental law professor | _____ 12/1  |
| 3. Research environmental internships on PSJD        | _____ 11/30 |
| 4. _____   | _____       |

#### Obstacles/Challenges & Strategy for Overcoming

1. 

I don't know how to find alumni. So I will talk to a counselor and use LinkedIn.
2.
3.

#### Additional Information/Resources

Counselor and student generated websites, books, contacts, alumni, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_