



PART I

PART I

Your personal assessment

This personal assessment is an introspective step that will help you get to know yourself better. **Take the time to understand your tastes, motivations, values and skills**, as this is the best way to get a good overview in order to validate your career direction.

You can choose a job that is in step with who you are; one that fits in with both your skills and your aspirations.

You can begin this continuous process of assessment from your first year of study and then record each new experience throughout your academic and professional life (e.g. projects, internships, your program of study, etc.).

The assessment can be done alone (as a self-assessment) or with external support (from parents, peers, teachers, careers advisers).

Five different exercises are provided for your guidance:

- Exercise 1: My motivations
- Exercise 2: My skills
- Exercise 3: My significant achievements
- Exercise 4: My tastes/skills
- Exercise 5: My strengths and weaknesses

My motivations



We invite you in this exercise to think about what motivates you.

Identify your values, dreams and favorite activities.

For help, please see the example questions below.

What is a value?

Broadly speaking, a value is something that we attach importance to.

It can refer to a **moral** value (e.g. justice, generosity, respect, etc.) or a **material** value (e.g. social status, success, work-life balance, etc.).

In all cases, a value is a source of motivation, and neglecting your values can often lead to demotivation.

When you feel content in your profession, it is in line with your values, which, in turn, give your work meaning. It is for this reason that we suggest you find out which values are most important to you.



► **Most important for me:**

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining work-life (or study-life) balance | <input type="checkbox"/> Constant learning and training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having important responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Solving complex problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working in an international environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming an expert in my field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earning lots of money | <input type="checkbox"/> Managing others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding a secure job | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing to research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Starting my own business | <input type="checkbox"/> Innovating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working to help others | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working as part of a team | |
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► **My dream job...**

- What was my dream job as a child?

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- Do I still want to do this job today? If not, why?

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- What would give me meaning in my job today?

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- Without thinking of any constraints, what would be my ideal job?

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- What are or could be any potential obstacles in the way of achieving this goal?

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- How can I get around or reduce such obstacles?

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➤ **What are my favorite activities?**

In my extra-curricular life:

Sport: which one(s)?

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In my academic life:

What are my favorite subjects?

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- Film
- Literature
- DIY/arts and crafts
- Voluntary work
- Travel
- Involvement in an association/in my community
- Music
- Singing
- Others:

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What kind of study am I most drawn towards (research, studying for professional life, general studies, specialist studies, etc.)?

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Others:

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Describe your three favorite activities.

For example, if you listen to music, indicate which genre you like and the concerts you have attended. If you play a sport, how do you do so (number of hours per week, competitive or leisure, etc.)? If you like math, mention what you like in particular. How is this subject useful to your academic career?

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➤ Have I had any experiences that affected me? If yes, which one(s)? In what context? How did I feel?

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My skills

What do we mean by skills?

The concept of skills can be defined as a combination of learning, learning to do and learning to be.

Learning: "I know, I understand, I have learned..."

All the knowledge, both theoretical and practical, gained in one or more areas (rules, procedures, techniques, tools, methods, etc.) from specific accomplishments throughout my academic or professional career or any other type of life path (sports, culture, associations and charity work).

Learning to do: "I am able to..."

My capacities, both technical and operational, in using certain tools and implementing certain techniques or methods in order to carry out a specific task (e.g. knowing how to use a word processor to write a letter). This involves calling on what I have learned (what I have already accomplished, completed, executed etc.) in order to do something practical.

Learning to be/soft skills: "I am; I am not..."

The ability to control my behavior, my attitudes, my personal and professional relationships, my mindset, etc. according to a particular situation or an activity that needs completed. This includes all the qualities, faults and attitudes that make up my personality.

NB: Skills can only be appreciated and developed through specific cases of use, for example a particular situation at work or elsewhere. In other words, they may only be evaluated depending on the circumstance.

FOCUS: skill transferability is the practice of appointing a skill that was developed through an experience for use in another context, e.g. the ability to analyze and summarize, organization, structuring and planning.

We are not born skilled; we become skilled!

Learning and learning to do

In the table below, analyze the theoretical and practical skills you gained from specific achievements (projects, internships, etc.). Give the context, duration, type of activity, conditions and constraints, actions that were carried out, and, if possible, any results that were obtained.

Description of skill (learning and learning to do)	"Proof" of the skill contextualized through results
Conducting rigorous scientific research work <i>(Learning to do)</i>	<i>"During my French Classes Préparatoires and my first two years at École Polytechnique or my undergraduate studies, I was able to benefit from in-depth, high-quality physics teaching. Physics is a field I particularly enjoy and in which I have obtained excellent results."</i>
Understanding of physics <i>(Learning)</i>	<i>"During my foundation year and my first two years at École Polytechnique, I was able to benefit from in-depth, high-quality physics teaching. Physics is a field I particularly enjoy and in which I have obtained excellent results."</i>
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Learning to be

In the table below, draw on your real experiences to analyze the soft skills you gained from them.

To do so, indicate the following information for each experience:

- Context (type of activity, duration, conditions and constraints, actions that were carried out, and any results that were obtained);
- What you learned from this experience;
- What the experience taught you about yourself.

NB: To help you, see the "learning to be" table after this exercise.

Description of skill (learning to be)	"Proof" of the skill, contextualized through results
Speaking skills	<i>"At the end of our first-year internship, we were given a seminar on soft skills. Throughout this seminar and after prep work carried out in small groups, I had to reproduce the result of our work in front of the entire year group. This public speaking opportunity revealed to me that I was finally able to express myself in front of an entire lecture theater, conveying to the listeners the emotion that I had felt during the experience I was describing."</i>
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Skill	Definition
SELF-CONFIDENCE	<p>Being able to carry out work without the constant need for support or supervision.</p> <p>Accepting the risk of encountering difficulties or criticism.</p> <p>Being assertive, making your own decisions and taking your own actions.</p>
SELF-CONTROL	<p>The ability to overcome your emotions, remain calm and avoid strong reactions (panic, anger, etc.) when confronted with an unexpected or challenging situation, or when working under pressure. Being able to remain focused even during an extended period of stress. The ability to control yourself and master your emotions, to take a step back in order to get a better look at a situation, and to maintain a clear view of what action needs to be done, then carrying it out.</p>
ADAPTABILITY	<p>The ability to change your behavior when faced with new environments, situations and people.</p> <p>The ability to adapt to different situations and adjust your behavior according to characteristics of the environment, situational challenges, and different types of discussion partners.</p>
INITIATIVE	<p>The action of doing something yourself, without seeking others' opinions or advice.</p> <p>Quality of someone who knows to make the necessary decision readily and spontaneously, without necessarily waiting for permission to do so.</p> <p>Being able to act when faced with the unexpected, to anticipate ways to respond to future circumstances and foreseeable problems.</p>
LISTENING	<p>Seeking to understand other discussion partners and the message they want to get across. Seeking to adapt to their ideas and keeping an appropriate level of perspective, without judgment or prejudice. This involves being attentive and not interrupting when others are speaking and rephrasing and confirming what they have said (to show that you have understood). This practice leads to a proper exchange of information that is constructive and productive both for you AND your work partners.</p>
INFLUENCE	<p>Convincing, helping and influencing your direct and indirect work partners, in order to take action and make decisions in the right direction. This involves getting others to adopt your point of view, persuading and convincing, having an impact and effect on others to try to lead everyone towards a common goal, for the good of the organization or community.</p>

Skill	Definition
COOPERATION	From the Latin "cooperare", meaning "to work together", this type of behavior stimulates non-confrontational, non-competitive relations and exchanges between group members. Cooperation seeks to promote the appropriate methods for analyzing and sharing situations together, allowing, in the same vein, collaboration toward an outcome that is common or acceptable for everyone.
LEADERSHIP, TEAM MANAGEMENT	To act as a leader, you must be able to bring group members together around a common project, idea or concept; convincing others while also adopting a more reflective stance. This involves building on experience, and sharing and transmitting your expertise, as well as demonstrating relational and emotional intelligence.
TEACHING SKILLS	Being able to share your knowledge and expertise in both a top-down and a lateral perspective.
OPEN-MINDEDNESS	Being able to step back in order to gain perspective, remaining curious and willing to change.
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	Being at ease when making contact with others and demonstrating good ability to be part of a group.
TEAM SPIRIT	Actively striving to maintain the cohesiveness of the group and facilitating the integration of new members; having a flair for working in a team.
ABILITY TO CONVINCEN	Being able to assert yourself and defend your point of view in line with the hierarchical structure. Knowing how to make yourself understood without any ambiguity.
DYNAMISM	Being able to demonstrate and share your energy for work.
EFFICIENCY	The quality of someone who produces the most results with the least amount of effort or methods.
SENSE OF COMMON INTEREST	Appreciating a sense of selflessness and serving others.
SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY	Being aware of your obligations and accepting responsibility for your actions and decisions.
PERSEVERANCE	Appreciating the level of commitment required for a task.

Skill	Definition
WRITING SKILLS	Writing in a clear and appropriate manner.
SPEAKING SKILLS	Speaking and presenting in a clear and appropriate manner.
SKILLS OF INNOVATION	Suggesting ideas to develop your professional activity.
IDEA OF GOOD WORK	Completing good-quality work.
OTHER SKILLS	



My significant achievements

What is a significant achievement?

A significant achievement or accomplishment is a task followed through to completion; an assignment that you carried out during your academic or professional career (e.g. internship, program of study) of which you felt particularly satisfied or proud.

Goals:

- To draw lessons from your achievements and conceptualize what you have learned
- To gain self-confidence.

Significant achievements also help you to:

- Impress recruiters during interviews, by providing proof of what you have achieved
- Structure your oral communication (for job interviews) and your writing (for cover letters, your résumé, etc.).

1. What makes up a significant achievement? 5 elements:

- The circumstances (Who with? Where? When? Etc.)
- Your task/assignment
- The work you did
- Your results
- The skills you put to use.

2. When should I draw on my significant achievements?

- When preparing written materials (cover letters, résumé, etc.)
- During interviews.

3. What kind of achievements should I choose?

Choose:

- Significant achievements from internships, projects, etc.
- Successful achievements: what concrete results were obtained? How did you contribute?
- Achievements that will impress recruiters and capture their interest
- Achievements that are pertinent to the job on offer or that highlight your transferable skills.

4. Structure of a significant achievement

Name of achievement No 0: Satisfaction survey

Year: 2018

Context/circumstances

Example:

Three-month internship at company xxx, which manufactures chemical compounds for industrial use.

Your assignment/your role

Example:

I was in charge of carrying out a satisfaction survey of the quality control system, following the company's takeover of two subcontractors.

Challenges and goals of your task/assignment

Example:

*- Evaluate the pros and cons of the system.
- Draw on the results of the survey to make decisions on the integration of the two new subcontractors.*

Difficulties to overcome

Example:

*- Understanding the operation of the different production departments following the takeover of the two subcontractors.
- The production rate had to remain unaffected by my intervention.*

Interventions/actions/solutions used or found

Example:

*- Research phase on the quality control system in use.
- Creation of a survey on satisfaction criteria for the quality control system; interviewing main workers involved in quality control.
- Written report; presentation of recommendations before the board of directors.*

Concrete results

Example:

*For the company
- Clear view of the conditions of the quality control system.*

For me

- My recommendations were put into practice within two months after the end of my internship.

Skills used

Example:

*I demonstrated:
- Listening skills and the ability to analyze and summarize over a short time period.
- Confidence and ease when appearing before a board of directors for the first time.*

Name of achievement No...: Year:

Context/circumstances

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Your assignment/your role

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Challenges and goals of your task/assignment

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Difficulties to overcome

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Interventions/actions/solutions used or found

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Concrete results

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Skills used

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Name of achievement No...:

Year:

Context/circumstances

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Your assignment/your role

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Challenges and goals of your task/assignment

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Interventions/actions/solutions used or found

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Concrete results

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Skills used

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Below, we have provided a list of verbs to help you identify and formulate your skills and significant achievements.

DECIDE		NEGOTIATE		CAPITALIZE	
stop	install	appease	put forward	acquire	finance
take on	establish	mediate	engage	pay off	merge
choose	set up	argue	obtain	budget	earn
conclude	opt	conclude	persuade	clear up	manage
determine	take over	consult	propose	keep count of	invest
remove	sort out	convince	select	consolidate	regulate
hire	resolve	demonstrate	handle	save	optimize
undertake	settle	discuss	sell	boost	reduce
set		distribute	vendre	balance	select
enforce		influence		make use of	stabilize

EVALUATE		INVESTIGATE		DIRECT	
assess	specify	analyze	observe	support	guide
compare	streamline	calculate	explore	help	urge
monitor	supervise	look for	prove	assist	advocate
test	oversee	consult	research	clarify	propose
examine	summarize	study	collect	understand	endorse
measure	try out	examine	solve	advise	follow up
observe	confirm	experiment	survey	recognize	recommend
	verify	identify		clarify	

DO		COMMUNICATE		ORGANIZE	
complete	perform	communicate	speak	arrange	prepare
apply	practice	address	share	rearrange	prevent
put together	make	consult	present	anticipate	foresee
ensure	provide	converse	write up	combine	schedule
build	group together	discuss	meet with	coordinate	look ahead

compose	deliver	exchange	report	distribute	divide up
construct	produce	listen	inquire	standardize	replace
contribute	achieve	express	send	improvise	structure
carry out	transform	inform		plan	streamline

INCREASE			MANAGE		
expand	start up	launch	conduct	encourage	institute
update	develop	progress	order	involve	mobilize
adapt	broaden	promote	drive	steer	motivate
improve	balance	amend	entrust	guide	pilot
amplify	spread out	straighten out	determine	boost	preside
advance	experiment	strengthen	delegate	urge	support
change	found	fix	lead	integrate	stimulate
compete	gain	succeed	energize	inspire	follow up
conquer	set up	upgrade	hire		
consolidate	introduce	highlight			

DESIGN		ARRANGE		TRAIN	
adapt	implement	operate	measure	conduct	coach
create	put in place	put together	order	learn	test
construct	set in motion	construct	organize	drive	explain
discover	install	catalog	list	develop	stimulate
formulate	open up	rank	regulate	educate	instruct
generate	renew	count	gather	teach	make aware
think up	transform	decentralize	itemize		mold
innovate	find a way	record	put together		
invent		establish	store		
work out		take stock	sort		
		join	break down		

