

We tend to be good at doing what we enjoy. It is helpful to assess what you are good at and why this might be. Reflect on a moment when you felt very absorbed in your work and able to achieve what you set out to do.

Write down:

1. A description of the activity or achievement
2. What factors contributed to your success
3. A list of skills that this required

This exercise can help when applying for a job or preparing for an interview, as well as working out the type of environment in which you thrive.

Example

Activity - I wrote an induction programme for a new staff member on the ward.

Contributing factors - I had a very supportive ward manager who encouraged me to do this. I was given time out to complete the activities and felt able to do a good job. I put into practice lots of ideas I had about improving staff orientation on the ward. I found the task stimulating and motivating. I was able to lead on the task and given free rein to do so.

Skills - Communication (talking to staff about what could be included); writing (updating and summarising materials); organisation (breaking the task into manageable chunks); teaching (I delivered some of the programme myself).

Challenges ahead

Development support - Make sure you are able to access workplace support through 1:1s with your manager and an annual appraisal in which you discuss your objectives.

Your employer may have policies on career development, access to training and shadowing, so contact your HR Department to find out more.

Career planning takes a lot of time and energy, but it can reap many rewards. If you are contemplating a career change or need help finding your first job, then try to set aside some time each week to consider:

- What you want from your career
- Ways to meet and network with key contacts
- Visiting recruitment websites and signing up to job alerts