

I. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

The process of self-assessment requires the identification of work that is suited to your strengths and interests. According to Deborah Aaron, author of *What Can You Do with a Law Degree?*, the process of self-assessment involves finding answers to three questions:

Who am I?

What do I want?

What am I willing to give up to get what I want?

Who am I?

Determine your skills and interests; what motivates you professionally; and what type of work environment appeals to you. Define your values. Do you value independence, creativity, security, government or public service, and/or significant financial rewards?

What do I want?

Define your career plan and goals for the future. Identify situations that give you a sense of personal accomplishment, challenge your abilities and reflect your values.

What am I willing to give up to get what I want?

Determine what you are willing to give up to reach your goals. Are you willing to give up time, money, security, professional satisfaction?

The self-assessment exercises that follow are designed to assist you in identifying your future goals, the skills that you need to achieve those goals, and the skills that you already possess that will help you to achieve your goals. These three factors are an most important part of an effective job search. The transferable skills exercise can be directly translated into your resume and cover letters. Your previous experiences and your goals and interests are extremely relevant to your job search. All experience is important, not just legal or obviously related positions.

Once you have completed the self-assessment exercises, evaluate your results. Look for themes that tie your results together, then look for contradictions. Determine how well your interests and skills fit with your career path. Do your interests and your core-values coincide with your current job or future career path? During your years in law school, take advantage of your many opportunities to test your skills and interests and find a job that “fits” your personality and interests through summer and school year positions, internships, externships, and mentoring and shadow programs.