# EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT – CHARACTER STRENGTHS, VALUES, INTERESTS AND CAREERS

*This task is one of an integrated but adaptable set developed by the Careers and Employability team for Flinders University educators to improve student preparedness for the 'world of work'. Use it as the basis for an assessment, non-graded assessment, or activity. Further information and the full framework is* [*located here*](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit)*. Topic Coordinators are welcome to adapt these to purpose.*

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| **Task** | Character Strengths, Value, Interests and Careers  |
| **Task type** | Presentation and Reflective Essay |
| **Length** | 1000 words |
| **Learning outcomes\*** |  |
| **Employability skills** | **Reflection; self-management; digital literacy** |
| [**Employability Toolkit Category**](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit) | **Deepen knowledge of self and sector**  |
| **ABCD\*\*** | **Personal Management: students will improve abilities to build and maintain a positive self-concept (C1, P4)** |

*\*Topic Coordinator to map to learning outcomes; \*\*Mapped to* [*Australian Blueprint for Career Development*](https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Australian-Blueprint-for-Career-Development.pdf)

## Task Objectives

1. Identify personal character strengths, values and interests and relate these to career meaning, goals and satisfaction

## Task Rationale

This task invites introspection and reflection, foundational ingredients and key skills in self-managing your career.

Our strengths are enduring and unique, something we’re consistently good at and, when we use them we feel good, deriving intrinsic satisfaction. Understanding and maximising our strengths, therefore, can give meaning to our work as well as offer opportunity for growth.

Values are how we want to behave as human beings. Like our inner compass, they guide our decisions, define who we are, the relationships we want to have, how we spend our spare time, and the work that we do. Where our work (and life) aligns with our values we have a sense of purpose.

Our interests and alignment with our careers have also been linked to occupational satisfaction.

## Task Description

There are TWO parts to this task. You must complete both tasks.

**Part 1**

Create and deliver a 5-minute presentation introducing:

* your top 5 character strengths (also called signature strengths)
* your top 10 values
* your top 3 interests/activities you enjoy

Use a selection of images that are personally meaningful to you to depict your strengths/values/interests. The format of the presentation is flexible; you might use Prezi, PowerPoint, Powtoons etc. Deliver this presentation to a small group during a scheduled workshop.

**Part 2**

Write a 1000 word reflective essay in which you outline your character strengths, values and interests and reflect on how these connect to your career.

In your essay you must:

* Provide examples of how you have (or could) use your strengths more in helping to progress your career goals
* Consider how your values and interests align/connect with your sector
* Reflect on your experience in completing this activity and your key learning outcomes

## Resources to help you

Attend a [Career Planning Hack](https://careerhub.flinders.edu.au/students/infoPages/detail/275) or access a [recording](https://flo.flinders.edu.au/course/view.php?id=16394).

**Identify your Strengths**

Find someone who knows you well – ideally you will have worked or studied closely with them and they are someone whose opinion you value. Ask them:

* To identify 3 things you are really good at
* To identify 2 areas where you could use your strengths more

You may also complete the free [VIA Character Strengths Survey](https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register) tool. Obtaining your top 5 strengths through [Clifton Strengths](https://store.gallup.com/p/en-au/10108/top-5-cliftonstrengths) is also an option but note that it comes with a fee.

**Identify your Values**

* Complete the [Find your Inner Compass: Identify your top 10 values](https://careerhub.flinders.edu.au/docs/273/InnerCompass_onlinevalues_cardsort.pptx) online card sort exercise

**Identify your Interests**

* What do you look forward to? What excites you? What do you love doing? What activities give you energy? What activities make you feel proud and fulfilled? What activities can you get lost in – where time flies by?
* You could also try the [JobOutlook Quiz](https://joboutlook.gov.au/careerquiz) or [Holland Code career test](https://www.truity.com/test/holland-code-career-test) which links your interest to careers. Just remember your results aren’t prescriptions.

## Information for Topic Coordinators

Where students use a vocational assessment tool – e.g. a quiz or strengths assessment – it is important to caution that they are an opportunity for self-reflection, not prescriptive advice. This is particularly so where assessments lead to advice matching results to careers: students should take these as areas to consider/explore not rigid prescriptions. The important thing is that they invite self-reflection and often enhance our vocabulary when talking about our strengths, interests and values – students can discard the results if they disagree with them.

**Job Hacks sessions**

The Careers and Employability team also run regular [Job Hacks sessions](https://careerhub.flinders.edu.au/students/infoPages/detail/275) on Career Planning, open to all students. With sufficient notice, these sessions may be aligned with teaching or students may be encouraged to book into a session outside of teaching. Contact the Careers and Employability Service careers@flinders.edu.au or 8201 2832 if you would like to discuss options.