

GAP ANALYSIS EXERCISE

STEP ONE: Analyze Your Strengths – those skills, behaviors and attributes that you are most proud of and are recognized and observed by others. To help you, here are some questions to ask yourself?

- What are you best at?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What do you get compliments and recognition for that you may take for granted?
- What have you been recognized for in your performance evaluations?
- What skills do you have that make you able to do your job well?
- What skills have you honed over the years that have led you to where you are?

If you have a hard time listing out your strengths, you can also ask others what they value most about you. This strategy can also work to calibrate your list and ensure that it's an accurate reflection of your skills.

List them out in an excel spreadsheet. See <<insert Alumni Career Services website link>> for additional ways to leverage this list to prepare for interviews. You can also ask take the answers to each of the above questions and take it one step further to ask yourself “why do you think that’s the case?”, which can help you uncover when you find yourself working at your best and what you find most meaningful.

STEP TWO: Analyze the Skills That Will Drive Success in your current role and as you look to the future? To help you, here are some questions to ask yourself?

- What are the skills that drive success in your role and your organization?
- What do you have to get better at to improve in your current role?
- What are the skills that will be required to stay competitive over the next five years?
- What skills would you look for if you were hiring your replacement?
- What skill needs are the changes in the marketplace driving?
- Think of someone in the role you aspire to, what skills do they have that you admire? How can you acquire these skills?

If you aren't sure what skills will be important for the future, leverage a mentor, talk with a headhunter or recruiter, leverage other alumni, read HBR, or follow talent management companies on twitter.

List them out as well.

STEP THREE: Compare the Lists. Look for gaps, i.e. what are the skills that drive success but aren't currently on your strengths list?

Prioritize and rank order them in terms of importance to either current role and/or future roles. You can leverage this list to have a conversation with your manager or a mentor about development opportunities. Or, you can leverage for yourself by picking 1-2 skill areas that you'd like to focus on for future growth. Build a plan to help you get there.

Also, what are the skills you listed as strengths but that weren't listed as a driver of success for your current or aspirational role? How could you make them be seen as more valuable?

TIP: In doing this gap analysis, don't lose sight of celebrating your successes, those skills that were strengths of yours and also on the list that drives success moving forward. Be looking for ways to leverage those strengths.