



UpperCampus
Career Playbook

MODULE 1:
SELF DISCOVERY
College Edition


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In these unprecedented and challenging times, educators are being asked to navigate uncertainty like never before. UpperCampus is a free end-to-end Career Learning and Success Platform for students, helping them find fulfilling careers and enabling schools and employers to more effectively support and be part of that exploration journey. We are working to help make your transition to remote and/or hybrid learning as seamless as possible, starting with the **UpperCampus Career Playbook**.

We designed the Playbook with the goal of bringing clarity, creativity, and fun to the career exploration process. We have divided our activities into three separate learning modules: **Self Discovery**, **Career Exploration**, and **Future Planning**. The modules work together to help students identify what they are passionate about, the career paths that apply to those passions, and the steps they can take next to turn dream jobs into reality.

There are many questions that do not seem to have answers these days. We want students to know that “*What career path is right for me?*” and “*How do I make my dream job a reality?*” are not among them. The answers to those questions are within the student waiting to be discovered! The UpperCampus Playbook will help them do that and will enable counselors to guide their students towards making those plans a reality.

Welcome to the Playbook. Let's get started!

—The UpperCampus Team

Using Playbook with the UpperCampus App

Let us tell you a little secret...nothing goes together quite like our Playbook and the UpperCampus app. They are a match made in career exploration heaven. What's better than a mobile app for students, paired with unique and engaging exercises that help them think about and plan for their future? The Playbook activities utilize UpperCampus' unique functionality and custom content to make career exploration and discovery an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Make sure your students download the free UpperCampus app at:



<http://appstore.uppercampus.com>



<http://playstore.uppercampus.com>

Support

If you have any questions please contact our support team at support@uppercampus.com or visit us at uppercampus.com for more information.

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1.1: Discovering Passions and Interests

Background:

The purpose of this section is to help students think critically about their passions and interests to ultimately discover potential career paths that will allow them to flourish. Students are often told to explore careers that they're passionate about, but figuring out what exactly a student is passionate about can be challenging, unrealistic, or even impractical at times. For students who have yet to identify their passions in life, this rhetoric can be highly discouraging.

These activities, exercises, and thought-starters are meant to help students think abstractly about their passions and interests and help them realize there are plenty of career opportunities that can be both gratifying and fruitful.

Target students:

- Any college student beginning their career exploration journey
- Includes exercises for freshmen and sophomores who are undeclared

Possible Use Cases:

All of the Playbook activities are flexible. They can be distributed as in-class or remote exercises, as homework assignments, as extra credit, or as preparation for advising sessions. The possibilities are endless!

Lessons:

1. Exploring Your Interest Profile
2. Identifying Your Passions
3. Thinking Critically About Your Passions
4. Analyzing Your Past Jobs

Lesson 1: Identifying Your Passions

Student Instructions:

"What are you passionate about?" is a classic question. It's easy for some to answer, but the question can leave others wondering if they're passionate about anything at all. This exercise is designed to get you thinking about what you're passionate about. For those of you who already have a clear idea of your passion, the following thought-starters may shed light on other areas of your life that fulfill you. For those of you who are unsure about where your passion lies, hopefully, you will be provided with clarity.

You might be wondering "What does this have to do with career exploration?" and the answer is, "a lot!" To make the right educational and career decisions in your life, it's crucial that you understand what motivates, drives, and fulfills you. Understanding yourself is the first step in making your dream job a reality.

Exercise:

Pull out a sheet of paper or open up a new document and answer the following:

1. If you were forced to stand at the front of the class and educate your peers on a subject or topic for five minutes, what would you choose to talk about? List your top three choices and why you chose them.

Tip: This can be anything! Your favorite movie director, the history of social media, the decreasing population of honey bees, how to play your favorite sport, whatever you know enough about to educate your peers for a few minutes.

2. When you're bored at home, what topics do you enjoy researching, watching YouTube videos on, or reading about on the internet? Write down three things. (Keep it appropriate, please)
3. Think back to the last situation where you lost track of time because you're so engulfed or engaged in an activity. What was the activity? Are there any other activities that affect you in the same way? If so, what are they?
4. What are you doing when you feel the happiest? List three things.
5. What did you love doing as a kid? Were there any hobbies, activities, or subjects that you took a strong interest in? List at least two things and

whether or not you are still interested in them now.

6. Examine your list and highlight any commonalities among your answers. Did any of the questions make you realize a love or passion you hadn't considered previously? Write a summary of your findings.

Feeling inspired? Keep going!

Activities to do next:

Self Discovery Module

Lesson 3: Thinking Critically About Your Passions

Lesson 2: Thinking Critically About Your Passions

Background:

The purpose of this exercise is to help students realize that the underlying qualities of their passions can be used to guide them towards a major or career. It is easy to say that one enjoys running, but harder to answer what one truly loves about running and what keeps them motivated to run. In this exercise, students will think critically about their passions to help them better understand the underlying factors that motivate and inspire them.

Modes of delivery:

Duration: 10-15 minutes

- Virtual/remote exercise
- Classroom exercise
- Take-home exercise
- Student-advisor exercise
- Student-parent exercise

Possible Use Cases:

- An exercise to help students kick-start their career exploration process.
- A student claims to not know how to find a career they're passionate about and/or doesn't think a career in their passion area exists.
- A student is worried that the careers they are interested in aren't practical or realistic.
- A student is having a difficult time determining what types of careers they'd find rewarding and/or excel in.

Class Discussion Questions:

- "Have you ever thought about what makes you passionate about the things you love doing?"
- "How do you think your passions will change over time?"

Lesson 2: Thinking Critically About Your Passions

Student Instructions:

Have you ever heard someone tell you to find a career involving what you're passionate about? How about the adage "do what you love and the money will follow"?

Many people take their passions and interests at face value, failing to realize that the qualities that drive their passions can be found in countless careers. To put it simply, if you're passionate about music, becoming a famous musician or working in the music industry aren't your only avenues for finding a rewarding career. And if working in the music industry is your dream, then shoot for the stars! Nothing is stopping you from achieving that goal. However, it's important to realize the other options out there, and this exercise will help you identify those options.

Thinking critically about your passions is designed to help you uncover insights about yourself that you might not have considered previously. For example, a competitive baseball player might realize that their love for baseball is rooted in their innate competitive nature, their passion for comradery, and the structured nature of team practices and workouts. Competition, comradery, and structure can be found on and off the field, and the player can seek out careers in which these qualities shine.

The point is, thinking critically about your passions is an important exercise in learning more about yourself, the factors that drive your passions, and the qualities that make your interests and motivations unique to you.

Exercise:

Let's do some critical thinking!

1. Take out a sheet of paper and write down one of your passions at the top. Anything that you participate in, see or study can be a passion! If you are stuck, here is an [extensive list](#) of examples to get your brain thinking.
2. Write a list of the underlying qualities or characteristics that comprise your passion. Take a few minutes and brainstorm (on paper or in your head). Consider the following questions:

- What do you love about your passion area?
 - What makes it your passion?
 - What about your passion motivates or inspires you?
 - Did your passion stem from an earlier interest from your childhood?
3. If you have other passions, hobbies, or strong interests, repeat #1 and #2.
 4. Combine your lists and highlight any commonalities across your passions. Summarize your findings.

Nice work! Hopefully, you have a better understanding of what motivates you and the underlying factors that fuel your passions. Whether you're exploring what to major in or which career path is right for you, refer to your list and ask yourself, "Is this a career I'd be passionate about?" and/or "will this opportunity allow my passions and interests to flourish?"

Understanding your passions opens you up to countless career opportunities that allow you to achieve enjoyment and gratification every day. Now get on our UpperCampus app and start exploring!

Lesson 3: Analyzing Your Past Jobs

Background:

In this exercise, students will analyze their current or former jobs and internships. The goal is to determine the aspects of each job that they enjoyed and did not enjoy, to establish expectations they may have for future careers. Students who haven't had a job before can still complete this exercise by thinking about the experiences they have had working with a team, student organization, or volunteer group.

Modes of delivery:

Duration: 15-20 minutes

- Online exercise
- Classroom exercise
- Take-home exercise
- Advising preparation

Possible Use Cases:

- An exercise to help students kick-start their career exploration process.
- A student is having a difficult time determining what types of careers they'd find rewarding and/or excel in.

Class Discussion Questions:

- "What can you learn about yourself from your first jobs?"
- "How can your first jobs help your career exploration?"

Lesson 3: Analyzing Your Past Jobs

Student Instructions:

Whether you've worked a part-time job to help pay for school, for extra spending money, or because your parents didn't like how many video games you were playing, your initial work experience can help you learn a lot about yourself. In this exercise, you'll begin to think about the things you liked and disliked about your current or previous work experiences. If you don't have any previous jobs, reference experiences you've had working with a team, student organization, or volunteer group.

Exercise:

1. Pull out a sheet of paper and write down two or more jobs you've had.

Tip: If you haven't had a job before, reference experiences you've had working with a team, student organization, or volunteer group.

2. For each job, create a column for likes and a column for dislikes. Begin filling in all of the things you liked about each job and the things you disliked about each job.

Tip: Try to consider your job duties and responsibilities, as well as the nature of your job. Examples of these may include working with people, collaboration, sitting for hours on end, fast-paced, etc.

3. Highlight or underline any common likes or dislikes across your different jobs.
4. What did this exercise tell you about your skills, interests, and job preferences?

Tip: Pay close attention to the job duties or characteristics that were the most fulfilling or gratifying and those that were unfulfilling and/or you strongly disliked.

5. Explore your UpperCampus app and find at least one career that can satisfy one or more of your "Likes." Explain how it can do so.

1.2: Discovering Skills

Background:

The purpose of the next set of exercises is to help students identify their unique skills and traits and think about how they can be leveraged to better understand potential career paths of interest.

Target students:

- Any college student beginning their career exploration journey
- Early in academic career (freshman-sophomore level)

Modes of delivery:

The following exercises and activities are appropriate for the following settings/situations.

- Online exercise
- In-class exercise
- Take-home exercise
- Advising preparation

Use Cases:

- An exercise to help students kick-start their career exploration process.
- A student is having a difficult time determining what types of careers they'd find rewarding and/or excel in.

Lessons:

5. Identifying Your Skills
6. Your skills through the eyes of friends
7. Seeking advice from people you look up to

Lesson 4: Identifying Your Skills

Background:

This exercise is designed to help students identify their unique skills and strengths. Through a series of thought-provoking questions, students will expand their self-knowledge and begin considering the different ways in which they provide value in their personal and professional lives. The exercise also helps students understand the difference between hard and soft skills.

Modes of delivery:

Duration: 10-15 minutes

- Virtual/remote exercise
- In-class exercise
- Take-home exercise
- Advising preparation

Use Cases:

This exercise is ideal for students who have yet to consider what they're good at and how their skills are derived from a variety of life situations.

Lesson 4: Identifying Your Skills

Student Instructions:

Put simply, a skill is something you're good at. Despite this simple definition, sometimes it's difficult to truly understand and articulate your skill sets. This exercise will help you identify your unique skills and strengths.

We often think of skills as concrete: being good at a sport, video games, writing, or math. We call these "hard skills," or skills that are teachable or measurable. These are wonderful to have and you'll certainly learn additional hard skills as you progress through your college journey.

However, there's a separate group of skills that we often overlook when attempting to understand ourselves and the things we're good at. These "soft skills," are the subjective skills and traits that are unique to you and are much more difficult to quantify or measure. Examples of soft skills include: being a good decision-maker, listener, communicator, or problem solver. They also include things like having time management or leadership skills, being adaptable or coachable, being empathetic or organized, etc.

The combination of your hard and soft skills sets you apart from your peers and ultimately, plays a huge role in determining your education and career path. In this exercise, you're going to think about all the things you're good at and how they may relate to your future careers.

Exercise:

1. What are you good at? Write a list of all of your skills, strengths, and positive traits.

Tip: To help you organize your skills, consider organizing them into these categories:

- Personal: Staying organized, being reliable, time management, listening, etc.
 - Academic: Teamwork, math, reading, science, talking to people, idea generation, etc.
 - At your job, on a team, or while volunteering: Staying on task, work ethic, persuasion, being efficient, etc.
 - Specialties: Writing code, drawing pictures, researching, video editing, etc.
2. Create a separate list and organize it into two categories: "*Hard Skills*" and "*Soft Skills*"

Tip: See the next page for a list of hard and soft skills if you are stuck (exhibit 1). Take an ample amount of time thinking about your soft skills (your list of soft skills should be longer!)

3. Refine your list and identify 5-10 skills that you're best at and/or enjoy the most.
4. Explore your UpperCampus app and identify three careers or career-related posts that interest you and relate to your skills. Explain why you chose each.

Additional thought starters to brainstorm your skills:

- What compliments have you received?
- What unique expertise do you have?
- What's your best school subject/what classes have you received the highest grades?
- What subjects "click" the most with you and/or do you enjoy learning about?
- What do you spend your free time doing?

Reference Exhibit 1 on the next page to view a list of hard and soft skills.

Exhibit 1: Hard vs Soft Skills

Hard Skills		Soft Skills	
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	Problem-solving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graphic Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic thinker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adaptability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talking on the phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Team player	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer programing/coding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong work ethic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microsoft Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-motivated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking multiple languages	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Videography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bookkeeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	Entrepreneurial	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research	<input type="checkbox"/>	Creative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Passionate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energetic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attention to detail	<input type="checkbox"/>
Editing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>
Event planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multitasking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Event promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quick learner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationship building	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>

Lesson 5: Your Skills Through The Eyes of Friends

Background:

This exercise is designed to help students identify their skills with the help of their closest friends. The goal is for students to learn more about their unique qualities and characteristics that they may overlook or would not consider on their own.

Modes of delivery:

Duration: 20-25 minutes

- Virtual/remote exercise
- Take-home exercise

Use Cases:

- An exercise for an individual student or class to help identify/define their skills.
- A student is having a difficult time determining what they're good at and/or what major or career path to take.

Class Discussion Questions:

- "How can your friends help you learn more about yourself and what careers to explore?"
- "Have you ever considered what careers your friends would excel in?"

Lesson 5: Your Skills Through The Eyes of Friends

Student Instructions:

The people we spend the most time with frequently have insights into our unique skills and qualities. Friends are often a source of guidance when making important decisions, and career exploration shouldn't be any different. In this exercise, you'll communicate with your comrades to gain their perspective on what you're good at!

Exercise:

First, answer the following questions:

1. In your friend group or with family members, what are you the "go-to" person for?
2. How have you helped people in the past?
3. What do you think your friends will think you're good at?

Next, approach three friends (or people who know you well/have seen you work in various capacities) and ask them what positive attributes they see in you. Ask the following questions and do your best to record/paraphrase their responses:

4. What do you think I'm good at?
5. I go to you for (whatever you go to them for.) What do you or would you come to me for?
6. In the past, how have I helped you with something important?
7. Is there a career, career path, or industry that you think I would excel in? If so, what is it and why do you think it's an area I'd excel in?
8. Use your UpperCampus app to identify at least one career that a friend suggested.
9. Explain what you learned about the career and whether or not it's a career you're interested in exploring further.

Lesson 6: Seeking Advice From People You Look Up To

Background:

This exercise is designed for students to seek guidance and perspective of individuals they look up to. The goal is for students to learn more about their unique qualities and characteristics that they may overlook or fail to consider on their own. For best results, students should work on this exercise outside of class and it can be delivered as a homework assignment or a constructive exercise assigned by a advisor.

Modes of delivery:

Duration: 15-20 minutes

- Take-home assignment
- Online/virtual exercise

Use Cases:

- A student is working on defining their skills.
- A student is having a difficult time determining what they're good at and/or what major or career path to take.
- A student needs inspiration/influence from others to help determine their path.

Class Discussion Questions:

- "How often do you seek guidance or advice from loved ones and/or people you admire or look up to?"
- "Has their guidance or advice changed the way you viewed yourself and your positive characteristics?"

Lesson 6: Seeking Advice From People You Look Up To

Student Instructions:

Sometimes when we're unsure of which path to take in life, the advice and perspective of the people we look up to and admire can provide the clarity and confidence we need. When someone we admire sees something in us that we cannot see ourselves, it helps us think more deeply about our unique qualities, build our confidence, and illuminate the path forward.

For example, you may not consider yourself a good public speaker until a professor pulls you aside and complements your communication skills. Or maybe you don't think much about your writing abilities until a parent or loved one is impressed by your work and encourages you to keep writing. Instances like this can be life-changing, build your confidence, and shine a light on potential career paths of which you would excel. In this exercise, you'll actively seek the guidance and perspectives of individuals whom you admire or look up to.

Exercise:

Approach at least two individuals whom you look up to or admire. This can be a parent, aunt or uncle, volunteer leader, favorite professor, coach, family friend, etc. Ask the following questions and do your best to record/paraphrase their responses:

1. What are my most positive traits or qualities?
2. What do you think I'm good at?
3. In your career, field, or industry, where do you think I'd excel?
4. What career or career path do you think would be best for me? Why?
5. What advice can you give me related to choosing a career path or field of study?

Bonus Question:

- In the past, has the encouragement or advice of someone you admire changed the way you view yourself and your abilities? If so, how?

Feedback

UpperCampus Playbook is designed for *you*. Therefore, your feedback is important to us. Our Academic Advisory Council is in place to accurately assess the value of our activities in an academic setting. In addition to this, we ask that you send us any feedback, thoughts, ideas, and/or questions you may have for Playbook.

To get in touch, please email us at support@uppercampus.com.