



Penna

## A self-appraisal

This marks the start of the process of mapping out your future. It is a chance to review your career and what has given you particular satisfaction.

Knowing where you are now will enable you to make informed decisions about where you want to go next. A strong view of who you are and of what you have done will be invaluable when you apply for jobs, draw up business plans or offer yourself for voluntary work or whatever role you choose.

---

### Contents

#### Know your profile

The aspects of yourself that you need to study.

#### Your life and career

How work fits in with other aspects of your life.

#### Work experience

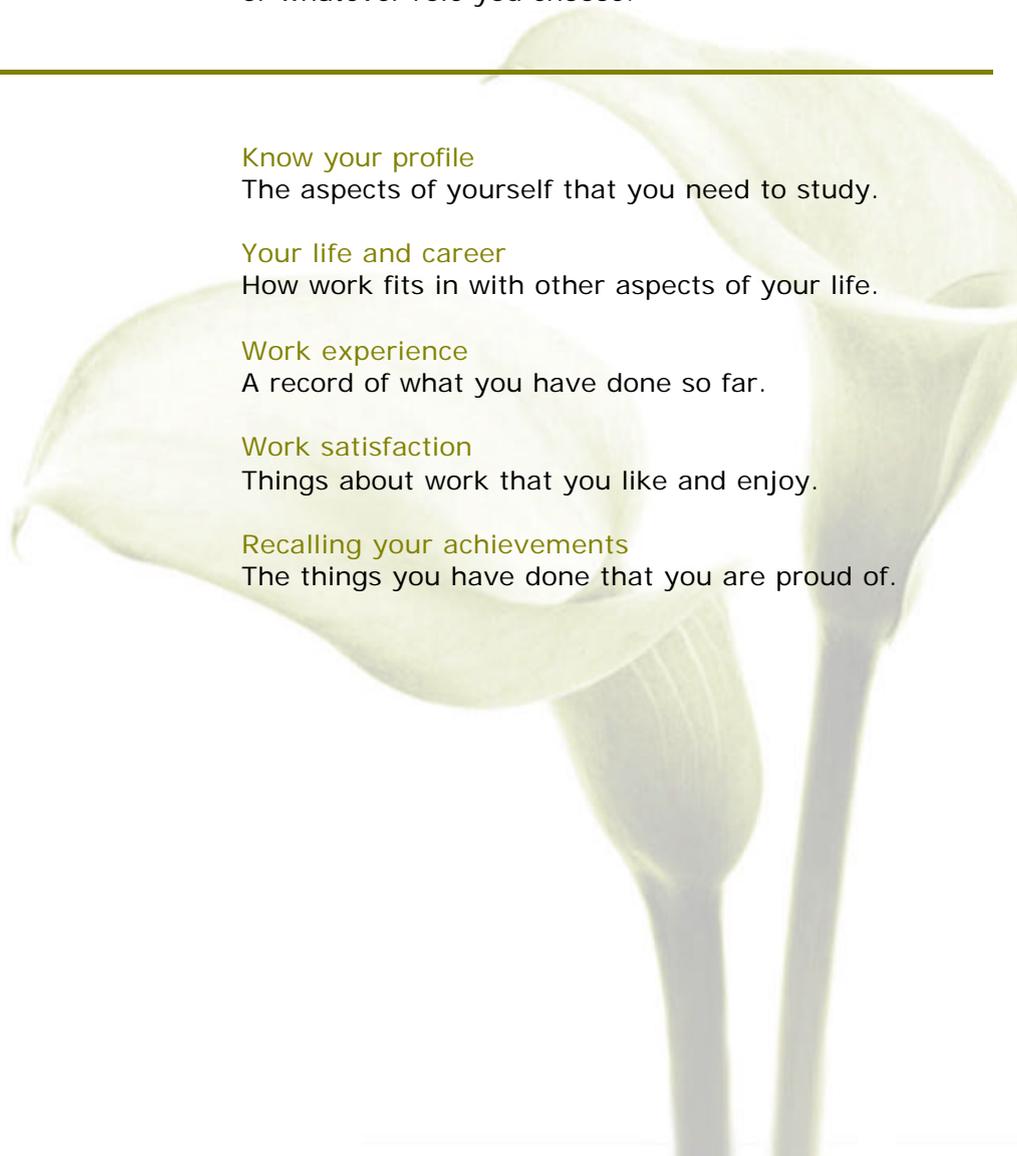
A record of what you have done so far.

#### Work satisfaction

Things about work that you like and enjoy.

#### Recalling your achievements

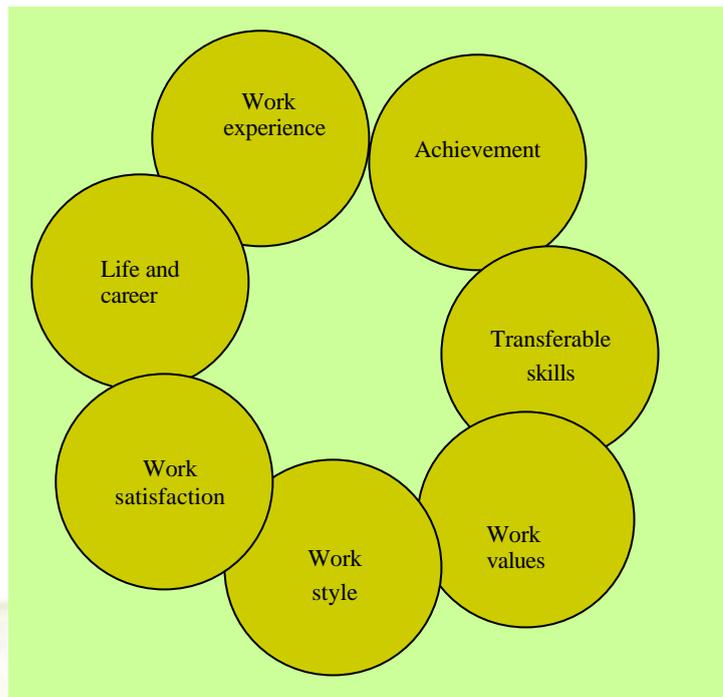
The things you have done that you are proud of.





## Know your profile

Before you can present yourself to a potential employer or backer you need to have a clear picture of who you are. You also need to know yourself – your skills, experiences and aspirations – if you are to make a sound decision about the best way forward.



No single area gives a complete profile. Only together do they add up to a fully rounded picture of you as a person at work. Your uniqueness lies in the particular balance and combination of your qualities.

## Your life and career

In order to provide an insight into those factors which have made your success as well as brought perspective to your career, please give an account of your early childhood up to completion of your formal education or up to your first full-time job. Do also include any major life events thereafter and a summary of your career to date.

Please note any particularly satisfying experiences, your attitudes to others and theirs to you, and comment on the roles you played in group activities. Completing this section may also prove helpful to you in interviews.



## A1 Activity

## Autobiography





Working lives do not exist in a vacuum. Your own career is closely connected to every other area of your life. Studying your personal history allows you to learn from the past and pick up pointers for the future. Taking your autobiography a stage further, we can look more closely at the impact of specific events by means of a lifeline.

---

## Your lifelines

### A2 Activity

#### 1 Your career lifeline

A lifeline is a graphic representation of your personal history, with all its ups and downs.

#### Draw your own career lifeline:

- Draw a line across the middle of a large sheet of paper, marking the years along the bottom and leaving plenty of space for the rest of your life. Put a cross on the line at your present age.
- Plot the significant events or periods in your career. Put them above or below the line depending on whether they were highs or lows.

#### Review your career lifeline

Look at its shape:

- 
- Are most of your plots above or below the line?
- 
- Is your line jagged or flat? Why?
- 
- Does the line suggest any patterns in your feelings or actions, or in your career events?
- 

Record what you have learned about yourself

---



### 2 Add your personal lifeline

Using a different coloured pen, do the same exercise for your personal life.

### 3 Compare your career and personal lifelines

What is the relationship between your career and your life as a whole?

- 
- How close are the lines during the highest and lowest periods?  
Do you see any tensions or conflicts?
  - What do your career and personal lifelines say about the role of work in your life?

## Case study

When Mike did this, he saw that his personal lifeline was much more jagged and less smooth than his career line; it seemed to go up and down on a much shorter timescale. But he also noticed that the down slopes in his career line were generally deeper than those on his personal life. Seeing the two lines together made him realise how important the security and stability offered by his family were.

It can be productive to talk through your career and personal lifelines with someone you trust.

You may have highlighted some areas or issues that you would like to do something about or which could have implications for your career choices. If so, enter them in your campaign or personal development plan.

---

## Managing personal change

There may have been significant changes in your life and career already. Looking at how you have already managed these changes will help you to develop your strategy for coping.



### A3 Activity

#### Coping strategies you have already used

Think of the changes you have been through: things like starting work, moving house, moving to a new organisation. Select two examples of changes that you handled well and analyse them:

Change 1

Change 2

What was the change?

Did you want this situation?  
Why/why not?

Did you make things happen  
or wait for things to happen?

What did you do?

Did you have difficulty  
making decisions? How?

Who did you turn to? Who  
was most helpful and why?

How did you look after  
yourself during the change  
period? (exercise, diet,  
relaxation techniques)

How do you cope with change?

Note any similarities in how you handled the two situations:



This activity will have given you some idea about how you cope with change – your personal change management strategy. As you may have found, successful change management depends on several things:

- Clarifying what you learn from a situation
- Identifying what you can do to make that happen
- Knowing the decision you need to make
- Believing that you can cope
- Involving your sources of support
- Taking practical steps to look after yourself.

It is likely that your strategy includes a number of these elements. There may be other things that you could usefully work on to improve your personal strategy. Bear these in mind in the following activity.

#### Your strategy for managing personal change

### A4 Activity

Building on your own coping strategy, think about the steps that you can take now to help you to manage this job loss.

Write down your strategy for dealing with this change below.

---

Steps I can take to get what I want from this situation

---

Decisions I need to make

---

What I feel about myself and my ability to cope

---

Support I can draw on

---

Steps I will take to look after myself

---



## Work experience

Now we move on from the general trends in your life to look at your work experience. You will use this information in later activities and when you prepare your CV.

### Work experience includes unpaid work

As well as paid work you should consider unpaid work such as voluntary or committee work or managing a domestic budget. This is because unpaid work may have given you useful skills or knowledge that could influence your options and provide useful experience.

---

### Case study

Steve had been a personnel director for six years, and had extensive experience of recruitment and selection and negotiating pay and benefits. Outside work, Steve was also vice-chair of the Board of Governors of his local comprehensive school and chair of the finance committee. Handling the introduction of the local management of schools (LMS) had given him some experience of setting up financial monitoring and planning systems.

---

### Your work record

#### 1 Your work experience (paid and unpaid)

### A5 Activity

Start to build up a portfolio of your work experience. Enter the details of all your paid and unpaid work below.

Work experience	From/to	Main responsibilities
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		



2 Key features of your work experience  
Next, analyse the main features of each work experience, using the following criteria as a starting point:

**Function**

e.g. general management, marketing and sales, finance

**Sector**

e.g. retail, pharmaceuticals, services, utilities, manufacturing

**Organisation**

e.g. large centralised, small entrepreneurial

**Status**

e.g. employed or self-employed, full- or part-time

**Role**

e.g. work on own or teamwork

**Other criteria**

	Function	Sector	Organisation	Status	Role	Other criteria
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

**Case study**

Steve was a personnel specialist, but also had more general experience of financial management from his work as a school governor. He had started his career with a major multinational but his present post was with a smaller and more specialised outfit.

You can now describe key features of your work. In addition, you have an overview of the range and type of work you have done.

Some of it you have enjoyed, some not. If you identify what you liked and disliked about your



work, you will know what to look for and what to avoid next time.

## A6 Activity

### Work I enjoy

Go back over each job and record:

	What I liked most and why	What I liked least and why
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

What themes emerge?

Are there common elements in the work you enjoy?

How have you managed the aspects you do not enjoy?

## Factors shaping your career path

You have looked at the content of your work experience. Now is the time to look at the factors that have shaped its direction.

Most of us are influenced by other people when we make career decisions. People often persist for years in posts where they feel unhappy. On reflection they often realise that they have been influenced by someone close to them or discovered they had continued on a career path although the original reason had changed.



### A7 Activity

#### Your career path

Look back at your career line and your work experience:

How did you get the job? e.g. networking, via an advertisement

Who or what attracted you?

Family and friends' views?

Why did you leave?

1

2

3

4

5

6

To what extent does your career path show you directing your own career?

What other influences have there been?

### Summary

You have reviewed the key features and direction of your work experience. The rest of this module builds upon this information. You may wish to summarise the information you have gathered below.

Key features of my work experience

Factors directing my career path

1

1

2

2

3

3



## Work satisfaction

This section explores your enjoyment of what you do. The more you find work enjoyable and rewarding, the better you are likely to perform, so this section will establish:

- What aspects of work you find rewarding – your work satisfiers.
- What motivates you to perform well.

---

### 'Quality peaks'

These are sometimes moments when everything seems to click in our working lives and we can cruise along in fifth gear. These quality peaks offer clues to our sources of work satisfaction.

### A8 Activity

#### 1 Identify quality peaks at work

Look back over your career for times you felt really good about yourself, your work and the influence you had on others. List them in the left-hand column. Then think about why those quality peaks were so satisfying and add your reason to the right-hand column.

The 'quality peak'

The satisfier

---

---

#### 2 Review the evidence

Use your insight to identify further work satisfiers and work dissatisfiers. Look back over your career lifeline (A2), work record (A5), career path (A7) and achievements (A9). List the significant ones here:

My work satisfiers

My work dissatisfiers

---

You will return to these later.



## Recalling your achievements

Achievements are a rich source of information. They are concrete and tangible evidence of what you have done so far. They are also the best indicators of what you might do in the future.

### What is an achievement?

An achievement is something you have done which has made a difference to you or to others. You have done it on your own or with and through others. It is not necessarily momentous or world-shattering, but should be something that you feel good about, for example:

- Convincing colleagues of the need to change work practices
- Negotiating and managing a difficult contract
- Completing an ambitious project on time and within budget
- Raising money through a sponsored swim
- Completing an MBA course at the same time as juggling the demands of a family and a job.

Achievements can relate to unpaid as well as to paid work and also to leisure activities.

---

## Your significant achievements

### A9 Activity

#### 1 Identify your achievements

Look back over your own life – go back as far as you want – and remember the occasions when you did something you were proud of. Choose examples both from work and outside and list them on the following pages.

#### 2 Reviewing your list

- Do your achievements tend to involve just your work or other people's?
- Are they mostly to do with work or are there some from other parts of your life?
- Is there a theme to your achievements and if so what?

#### 3 Choosing your achievements

Some of your achievements may come from outside paid employment. Think about the nature of every achievement and its outcome. For example:



- **Nature of achievement**  
Researched, drafted, negotiated and implemented a standardised contract for all supervisory and middle-management grades.

**Outcome**

Helped to create a flatter organisational structure with better opportunities for staff to move between departments.

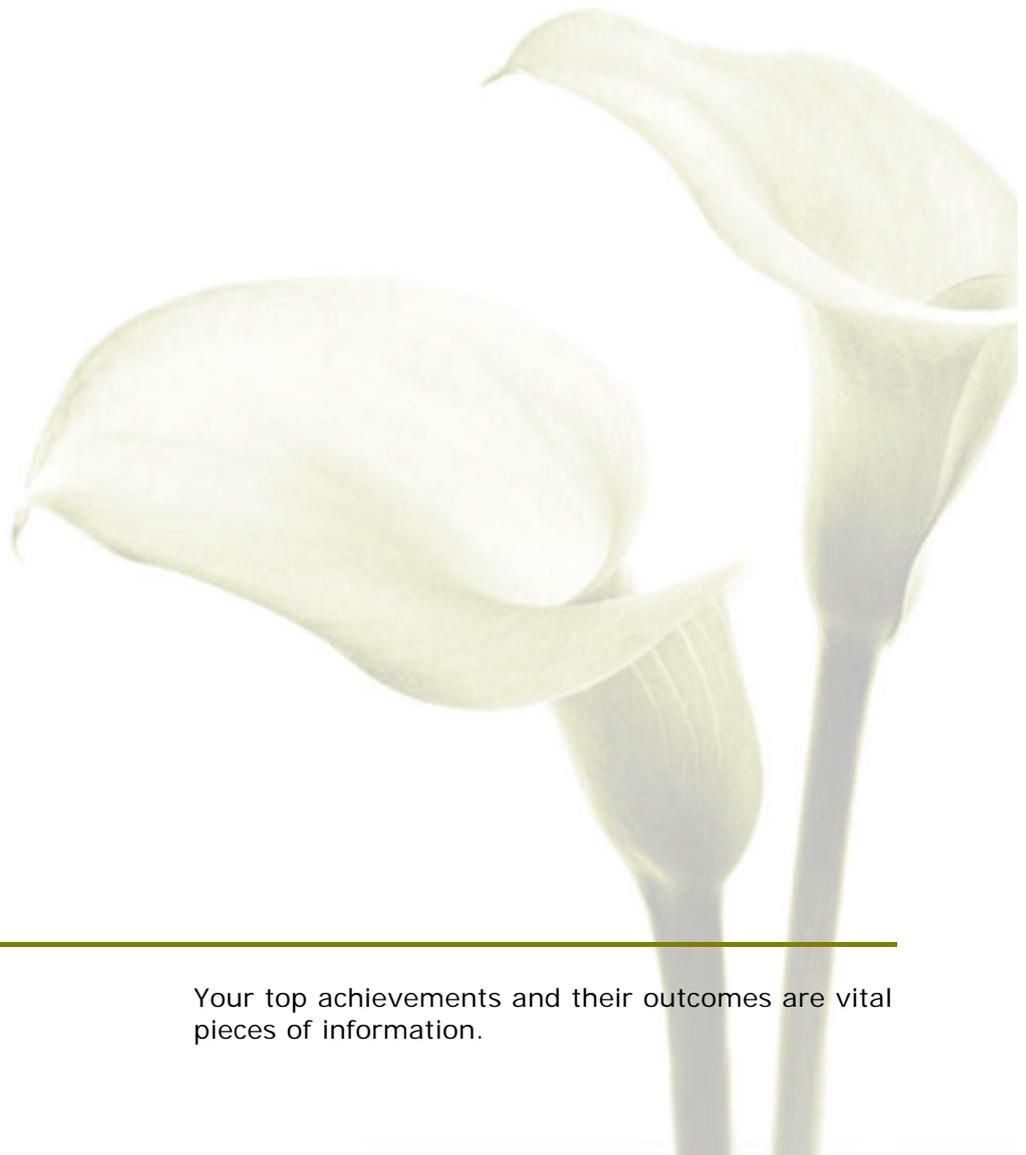
- **Nature of achievements**  
Devised and established a year-on-year planning system for the school, which was later adopted by other schools in the authority

**Outcome**

Highlighted opportunities to reallocate funds to classroom resources and refurbishment.

---

My most important achievements and their outcomes



---

Your top achievements and their outcomes are vital pieces of information.



## Learning log

Assess what you have achieved by answering the following questions.

---

What have I learned from this module?

---

What have I found out about myself?

---

What will I continue to do, or do more of?

---

What will I do differently?

---

What are the implications for my career?

---

