

# OCEAN BRIDGE DIRECT ACTION

## Flower Diagram Exercise

*Taken from "What Color is Your Parachute?" by Richard Nelson Bolles, 2008*

*The key to finding your "dream job" is knowing who you are. Gathering information about yourself will help you make better life decisions.*

### Geography

Where do you want to live? For some, it doesn't matter that much – for others, it's vital. Also, the answer to this question [often changes as your life changes](#).

For me, it's quite important that I *don't* live in a major city: no open spaces and lots of tightly packed people make me uncomfortable. Thanks to the internet, though, one can participate in a lot of professions remotely.

### Interests

I'm glad that this is only one petal in the flower, though it's an important one. I talk a lot about following your passions, but your passions can sometimes take you down a very uncomfortable road.

Having said that, I think this is the most important petal on the flower – it's the leader, but it shouldn't completely trump what the others are telling you. There are a lot of ways to dig out what your interests are, but the best way I've found is to ask yourself what you would do with your time if you had several million in the bank (and after the fun of just vegetating and resting was over).

### People and Environments

Some people thrive in an office. Others dream of working outside. As for me, I like a mix of both. I also like people who can keep socializing in the office to a minimum, especially near others trying to work. These are *very* valuable things for me in a work environment.

How can you find out about this? **Ask around.** Figure out what really bugs you and ask how prevalent it is in certain areas. Investigate any job you're serious about very carefully.

### Values, Purposes, and Goals

Is this job in alignment with what you are trying to do with your life as a whole? For example, if you're a devout atheist, it would be very difficult to work for a Christian organization. Similarly, if

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you're trying to break into management, a cubicle monkey job won't match what your goals are at all.

It's always worthwhile to spend time really understanding the key values of your life and the goals you're trying to accomplish. They don't always indicate where you should be going, but they usually indicate where you *shouldn't* be going.

## Working Conditions

This is another concern that is highly variable depending on the person involved. Do you have any physical requirements, for example? Similarly, if you're a family person, mandatory overtime probably isn't worth any price.

My biggest working condition requirement is time flexibility. Sometimes I need to take off time to care for a sick child or take one to the doctor – if I didn't have the flexibility to do this, I wouldn't be able to work that job.

## Salary and Level of Responsibility

Obviously, this requires some sense of reality. If you lard up the other categories with too many absolute specifics, then you're likely not going to get the salary you want. Similarly, if you don't like responsibility, you're likely reducing what you should expect for a salary. As for me, I enjoy responsibility, but only if it comes with authority – quite often, it does not, and that's the mix that I don't care for – that fact has hurt me salary-wise in the past.

## Skills

In the center of the flower are the skills. In short, what is it that you do that is notably beyond the basic ability of others? That's a tricky question to answer, and it also requires introspection. I think my skills mostly revolve around expressing ideas – and humanizing them.

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My interests

My favourite  
places

My pay and level  
of responsibility

My transferable  
skills

My favourite people  
environments

My favourite  
working conditions

My values and  
goals