



Worksheet

# Attitude Test

*“Now I become myself.  
It's taken time, many years and places;  
I have been dissolved and shaken,  
Worn other people's faces...”*

- May Sarton “[Now I Become Myself](#)”  
From Collected Poems 1930-1993  
W.W. Norton & Co.

When I was in high school and college, and major decisions of what to DO with my life lay ahead, it was common to take an **aptitude** test. As I recall, these things listed numerous possible careers, from astronaut to zookeeper, and asked you to fill in a bubble indicating how you felt about each one. At the end of the process, so the theory went, your perfect career would be magically revealed. Later in my life, when I became miserable working as a professional environmentalist, I longed for a similar test where someone or something outside myself would tell me what to do next.

Any number of things influenced how we as young people filled in those bubbles - some we were aware of and others simmered below the surface. The careers of parents, what our best friend was going to do, the recommendation of a guidance counselor or other adult, status and potential earnings, work environment, hours and stress, you name it – it all went into the mix.

I believe there is value in a similar kind of “test”, but I’m going to call it an **attitude** test. After all, just because I am good at something doesn’t necessarily mean I enjoy doing it. Issues like regulatory compliance, that weren’t even on my seventeen-year-old radar screen, now make me run screaming from potential work or volunteer opportunities.

With that background in mind, please take some time to ponder the following ranges of activity characteristics. Think of them as you might have in your late teens, at your professional peak, and now. For each attitude, I have listed two polar opposites, along with a few blank lines for you to jot down notes. Use extra paper if you need more space.



There is absolutely no intention to imply that one extreme is better than the other – the goal is to capture your gut-reaction. Words can mean different things to you than they do to me, so sometimes I’ve listed more than one phrase to try to get an idea across. By all means, substitute your own words wherever you wish.

My hope is that while doing this exercise, your mind will wander off into your own “aha” moments of what you like and dislike, or what you prefer to do or try (or not do or try) going forward.

Solo

Group

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Passive/Sitting

Active/Moving around

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Public acknowledgement of contribution

Private/Personal satisfaction

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Variety/Always something new

No surprises/Know what to expect

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Travel/ Commute

Do it from home

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Lead

Follow

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Change/Far-reaching impact

Maintenance/Localized effects

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Learn new skills

Use what I already know

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