

# LIFE MAP INSTRUCTIONS

Adapted from: Brooks, K. (2009). *You Majored in What? Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career*. New York: Penguin Group



## STEP ONE:

Get a big sheet of blank paper (unlined, 11" x 17" is ideal; or use a whiteboard if available) and colored pens or markers.

## STEP TWO:

Think about all the interesting and significant things that you have done, or that have happened to you, as well as meaningful relationships with people you have had. Go back as far in time as you would like. Examples could include, but are not limited to: unique or unusual jobs, memorable experiences, things you are most proud of or have accomplished, failures, hobbies, lessons learned, organizations you were a part of, people who have had an impact on your life, classes you enjoy, interests, heroes.

## STEP THREE:

Start writing. Quickly write whatever comes to mind, and avoid filtering what you write down. Don't worry about spelling or erasing. Use short words or phrases. Don't try to organize your thoughts; write them anywhere.

## STEP FOUR:

Step back and look at your map. Imagine you can take a 30,000 foot view of your page. Are there obvious connections you can make? Do some items fall into particular categories? You can draw lines to connect ideas and categories together.

## STEP FIVE:

Dig deeper into your map. Can you find any connections which are not as obvious? Is there a thread that follows you? What did you learn or what strengths skills did you acquire? Do you see some of your values show up?

<b>Examples of Themes:</b>	
Tools/equipment	Achievements/awards
Fun	Family
Internally or externally rewarding	Indoors/Outdoors
Learning	Knowledge gained/used
Music	Locations
Research	Reading
Roles	Risky/Safe
Types of people	Problem-solving

<b>Examples of Skills:</b>	
Artistic	Analytical
Computer	Communication
Critical Thinking	Counseling
Detail-oriented	Creative thinking
Research/investigation	Interpersonal
Manual/Physical	Leadership
Mathematical/financial	Negotiating
Presentation	Organizational
Teaching/Instructing	Performing
	Teamwork

**SEE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR NEXT STEPS**

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## NEXT STEPS:

1. If you can't see any themes, what would happen if a miracle occurred and the themes suddenly appeared? What do you think they would be?
2. What two or three items are you most proud of? What skills or behaviors were needed to accomplish them? Can you think of ways to connect those skills or behaviors to career options?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10, which themes are most important to you? Why? (one being least important and ten being most important).
4. If you knew you could not fail, which themes would you continue to work toward?
5. What themes or skills would you try to continue to work on in the next 24 hours?
6. If you had 10 minutes to write about or describe your Life Map to someone, what would you say?

\*Most students find it very useful to meet with the Career Exploration Coach in Career Services to talk through their Life Map and discuss next steps in exploring Career options.

To schedule an appointment, go to [ut.edu/career/appointment](https://ut.edu/career/appointment)