

Exercise 2: Characteristics Inventory

Employers want employees with certain positive characteristics. This exercise assesses to what degree you have those qualities. It then becomes a blueprint to help you make yourself more employable.

For each quality, honestly select the degree that the characteristic is representative of you. When you interview for jobs, stress the qualities you marked “often.” Before you interview, improve on those characteristics you marked “rarely!”

Rarely Sometimes Often	Characteristic
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Follow Do you take direction cheerfully and accurately? Do you support your supervisor or team leader?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Lead Do people follow your suggestions? Have you held positions of responsibility?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Learn Do you turn mistakes into learning opportunities? Can you understand, remember, and synthesize information?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Listen Do you listen closely to others? Do you strive to understand them without rushing to state your opinion or defense?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Remember Do you recall names, places, figures, and ideas accurately?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Able to Work Alone Do you plan your own work? Can you work without supervision or reminders?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Ambitious Do you take on extra assignments? Do you try to reach new levels of achievement?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Articulate Can you express ideas easily, both verbally and in writing?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Cheerful Are you friendly to customers and coworkers?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Competent Do you meet deadlines? Is your work thorough?

Rarely Sometimes Often	Characteristic
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Conscientious Do you do a full day's work? Do you double-check your work?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Cooperative Do you volunteer to help? Do you do your part on teams?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Courageous Do you take on challenges and stand up for your beliefs?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Creative Do you come up with new ideas? Do you look for possibilities?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Decisive Can you make decisions under pressure?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Dependable Do people trust you? Is your attendance good?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Diplomatic Can you handle difficult situations with grace and tact?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Discreet Can you keep secrets? Do you guard confidentiality? Do you avoid gossip or interfering in others' business?
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Efficient Do you plan your time well? Do you try to work faster and better?

(more)

Exercise 2: Characteristics Inventory (continued)

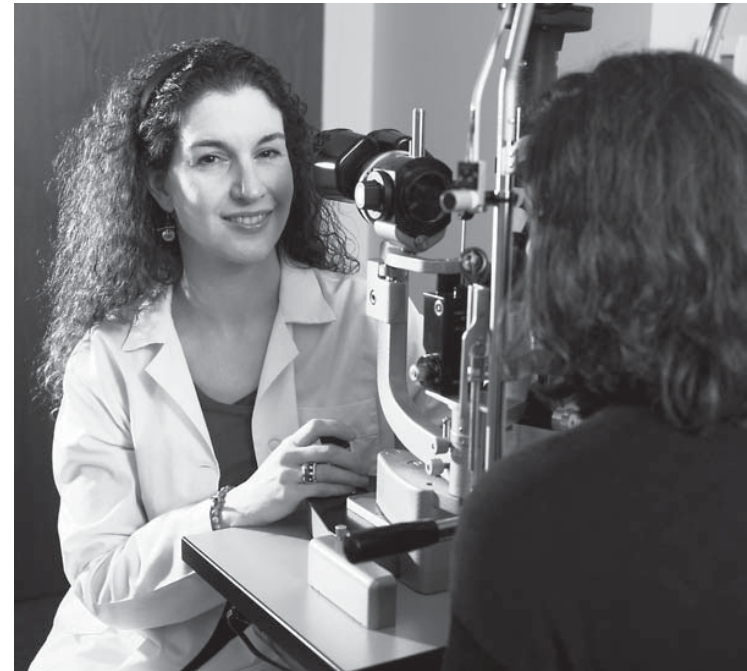
- | Rarely
Sometimes
Often | Characteristic |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Emotionally Stable
Do you maintain self-control, staying even-tempered and cool? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Empathetic
Do you understand others' problems? Are you sensitive to others' feelings and circumstances? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Enthusiastic
Are you interested in and excited by your work? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Flexible
Do you embrace change? Can you adapt well to new situations or challenges? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Focused
Do you focus on work despite personal challenges? Do you avoid distractions? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Generous
Do you share ideas and credit with others? Do you help those who need it? Do you focus on the common good? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Honest
Do you tell the truth? Do you avoid using company materials for personal use? Do you give credit and accept blame honestly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Industrious
Do you work hard and to the best of your ability? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Loyal
Do you strive to be a good representative of the company? Do you avoid doing or saying things that makes it look bad? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Observant
Do you look for what needs to be done or could be improved? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Organized
Are you neat? Do you plan and arrange things logically? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Patient
Can you hold your temper and stay calm under pressure? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Persistent
Can you stick with difficult and time-consuming tasks? (more) |



Exercise 2: Characteristics Inventory (continued)

Rarely Sometimes Often	Characteristic
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Persuasive Can you sell ideas and products?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Proactive Do you address issues before they become full-blown conflicts or problems? Do you make plans that avoid potential pitfalls?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Resourceful Can you work your way out of difficult situations?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Responsible Do you admit mistakes, correct them, and accept the consequences with good grace? Do you treat your job as you would your own business?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Sober Do drugs and alcohol affect your work?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thrifty Do you avoid wasting supplies and equipment?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Tolerant Are you open-minded? Do you associate with different types of people?</p>

Adapted from *Opening Doors: A Practical Guide for Job Hunting* by Jane Goodman, Judith Hoppin and Ronald Kent;
<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/tjhg/s1/exercise1.html>



Exercise 2: Characteristics Inventory Wrap-up/Interpretation

Being aware of your most positive characteristics — the ones you marked “often” — will be a major emphasis throughout your entire career journey. These characteristics will be called upon from the beginning of your self-exploration phase, to getting the correct job, to handling many complex areas of your daily life.

In addition to knowing and highlighting the characteristics you marked “often”, completing this exercise sheds light on other characteristics you may want to strengthen as you continue through your career journey.