



Career Transition Report

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Report prepared for

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The purpose of this report is to help you make an informed decision about your career transition by identifying the kinds of tasks that you would be most interested in performing in a new job or career field. This information, combined with information about opportunities in the job market, may enable you to find a position, project, or organization that will provide a good fit with your interests.

People undergoing a forced career change are likely to experience high levels of frustration and anxiety. Economic pressures often lead people to look for the quickest path to a job that is similar to the one they are leaving. However, a career transition can also be a very real opportunity to find work that is more congruent with your values and interests. There are three general kinds of career transitions or paths you can choose to take at this point. You can seek:

- A similar job in another organization
- Self-employment
- A new career field

Unlike other reports, this one is not based on occupational titles. Jobs are changing so fast that some such titles are out-of-date almost before you learn about them. This report, instead, is based on actual day-to-day tasks that you might find interesting. These tasks are organized into functions that are found in most organizations today.

As a result of using this report to help you make your career transition, you will gain a better sense of your interests and how those interests may lead you to work that is more fulfilling and satisfying.



ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS

This report is organized around ten functions that are typically found in organizations today. These functions are:

- Administration
- Customer Service
- Finance & Accounting
- General Management
- Human Resources
- Information Systems
- Manufacturing & Production
- Marketing
- Research & Development
- Sales

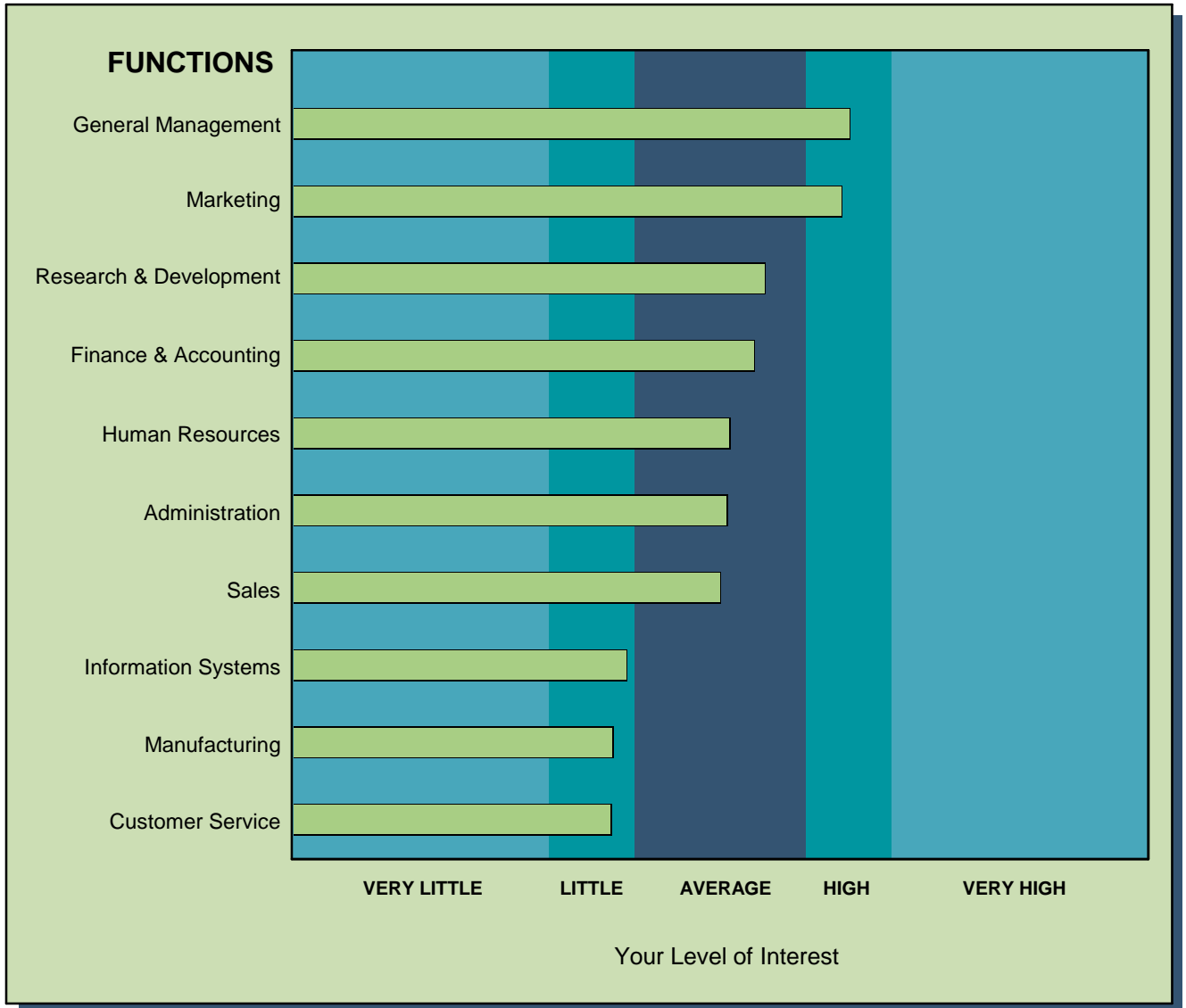
This list of functions is based on a survey of human resource professionals in a variety of organizations. No such list, however, can contain all of the functions found in all organizations. In some companies, certain functions are combined (e.g., sales and marketing). In other organizations, certain functions may not exist at all (e.g., a service company may have no manufacturing function). The goal of this report is to help you identify the functions that are most likely to fit your interests so that you can begin to focus your job search on organizations with opportunities in these same areas.

To help you focus on the most important results, this report presents in detail the three functions in which you show the most interest. For each of these three functions, a list of tasks is presented that your responses to the *Strong Interest Inventory*® instrument suggest that you will like. In addition to the lists of tasks that you will probably like, other information may also appear on this report:

- In some cases, there will be a list of tasks that you would probably dislike.
- In some cases, the list of tasks that you like in a given function may be short or, at least shorter than the list of tasks that you dislike. This is not unusual and just means that your interests in that function are very focused.
- Some of the tasks listed for a function may be activities that you would choose to do outside of your job, such as community service or leisure activities. If so, you should still explore ways to get involved in these activities since they may help to relieve the stress of your transition and may also help you to expand your network.

OVERVIEW

This chart provides an overview of your level of interest in each of the ten organizational functions. The functions are ranked according to how similar your interests are to the interests of people who work in these functions.



The following pages describe those functions in which you are most interested. Each function begins with an overview of the tasks associated with that function. Your overall results for that function are then presented. Following are the specific tasks associated with this function that you indicated that you like. In many cases, but not all, there will also be a list of tasks that you dislike.



GENERAL MANAGEMENT

People in general management perform tasks such as managing, supervising, preparing business plans, developing subordinates, preparing project plans, motivating teams, preparing and monitoring budgets, approving expenditures, and coordinating the activities of others.

Overall, your responses suggest that you may enjoy at least some of the tasks performed by people who work in general management. Your interests are similar to those of others who are successful managers.

Specifically, your results suggest that you may like to:

- direct and coordinate the activities, programs, or services for a department or organization
- develop and administer budgets
- conduct staff meetings
- represent the organization at meetings
- review operating or financial statements
- oversee purchases of merchandise or supplies
- take responsibility for completing goals
- proactively promote the vision of the organization
- make speeches to industry or community groups about your organization, product, or service
- become involved with contract or other legal issues
- organize people and tasks to accomplish organizational goals
- set overall sales strategy and goals
- work with teams to accomplish organizational goals
- provide developmental feedback to employees
- supervise volunteers or intern programs
- entertain clients
- negotiate or approve contracts with suppliers or customers
- supervise employees and conduct performance appraisals
- develop and implement policies and procedures
- evaluate programs
- hire employees
- manage distribution of products
- provide leadership and set direction for the organization
- motivate employees
- persuade potential backers or donors to invest in the organization
- argue or debate to win others over to your point of view
- challenge or confront others when necessary
- set task priorities
- manage a sales program
- travel for business
- volunteer to serve on committees
- help the business make a contribution to society
- arrange or act as a host at business functions or company events



MARKETING

Those in marketing often identify markets, competitors, and potential customers; develop marketing plans; prepare advertising copy and promotional material; set prices; perform market research; and work with other departments to insure that products or services meet customer needs.

Overall, your responses suggest that you may enjoy at least some of the tasks performed by people who work in marketing. Your interests are similar to those of others who are successful marketing professionals.

Specifically, your results suggest that you may like to:

- develop and write marketing plans
- prepare and manage advertising campaigns
- identify new markets or customer groups
- handle public relations
- design market surveys
- conduct and interpret market research
- set up displays
- write sales scripts
- write advertising copy
- conduct translations
- track cultural changes or global events and determine implications for marketing
- design or conduct product presentations
- use artistic talent or vision to design marketing campaigns
- direct, persuade, and lead others
- verbally influence customers' need for a service or product
- do layout work
- use photography in marketing materials
- prepare dramatic presentations
- work with large accounts to determine their marketing needs
- profile markets and competitors
- promote the positive image of the organization
- prepare press releases
- purchase advertising time and space
- review and proof layout and copy
- work with ideas rather than data or things
- attract attention to your product or service through original use of language
- take additional classes or get an advanced degree in marketing
- design promotional pieces
- develop new product ideas
- be in charge of a creative team
- make announcements about new products or services
- illustrate catalogs, reports, or marketing pieces
- design Web pages
- use music, art, or drama to enhance marketing presentations



RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

People in research and development may be engaged in analysis of statistical or scientific data or in the conceptualization and design of new products or of product improvements. They may conduct scientific experiments, perform mathematical or statistical calculations, or provide engineering expertise in product development.

Overall, your responses suggest that you may enjoy at least some of the tasks performed by people who work in research and development. Your interests are similar to those of others who are successful in research and development.

Specifically, your results suggest that you may like to:

- develop new knowledge in an area
- develop new concepts and ideas related to products
- direct and coordinate research and development activities
- develop and review research proposals
- do technical writing
- work on engineering problems
- teach scientific concepts to others
- deal with data or things rather than people
- work in the physical sciences
- operate scientific equipment
- work in a laboratory
- perform the tasks of a medical technician
- build prototypes or models of new products
- work in the outdoors or where you can enjoy nature
- balance work with time in nature
- pursue an advanced degree or take classes to keep up with scientific advancements
- develop new applications of products or knowledge
- devise new equipment, methods, or processes
- collect and analyze data on performance or use of products or services
- assume technical rather than supervisory responsibilities
- prepare scientific illustrations or mechanical drawings
- work with electronics equipment
- work alone to solve scientific problems
- perform scientific experiments
- work in the biological sciences
- conduct research in medical science or pharmaceuticals
- work with small precision tools in a research setting
- use mechanical ingenuity to improve or develop products
- work at tasks related to the natural sciences
- read journals reporting the latest research in your field

Although overall you tend to be interested in tasks associated with this function, your results show that there are also some tasks that you may not like.

You may not like to:

- perform statistical calculations
- use mathematics to analyze research data

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS

You did not show as much interest in the remaining functions as you did in the three listed previously. However, the seven remaining functions are listed below in order of your interest, along with a brief description of the associated tasks. If any of these appeal to you, you should explore in more depth the tasks that are related to these functions.

Finance & Accounting



Average Interest

Prepare balance sheets, cash flow statements, and other financial documents; develop accounts payable and receivable procedures; conduct financial planning; handle investments

Human Resources



Average Interest

Identify staffing needs; interview potential employees; maintain benefits; oversee training and development; create employment practices in accord with federal laws

Administration



Average Interest

Provide support services for all departments; organize and schedule meetings; handle logistics for everyday operations; prepare and file business documents

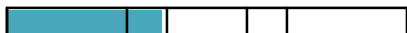
Sales



Average Interest

Make sales calls; provide product or service information; close sales; develop relationships with customers; identify potential customers; process sales orders

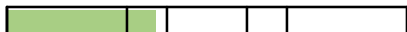
Information Systems



Little Interest

Develop, manage, and analyze computerized information systems and databases; program computers; use technology to further organizational goals

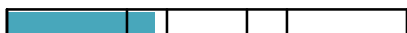
Manufacturing & Production



Little Interest

Develop procedures to manufacture products; analyze production systems to increase efficiency; purchase raw materials or equipment; develop and monitor production schedules

Customer Service



Little Interest

Continually interact with customers, usually on the phone; take orders; provide information on products and services; handle customer complaints



NEXT STEPS

Step 1: Learn more about careers and positions in the functional areas that interest you the most. To accomplish this, consider the following suggestions:

- Talk to a career counselor or job coach about the types of jobs that fit your interests. (Career counselors have a number of standard sources of information like the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* and *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*.)
- Conduct informational interviews with people in different functional areas to determine the day-to-day tasks that they perform.
- Find individuals you can shadow to learn how they do their jobs.

Step 2: Once you have learned more about the different functional areas and the tasks associated with each area, you may want to perform a personal skills analysis. One way to do this is to prepare a functional resume and review it with a career counselor or job coach. The purpose is to help you identify skills that you already have or may need to develop in order to work in your area of interest. If, as a result, you determine that you need to develop additional skills, you may want to consider the following recommendations:

- Sign up for any relevant training workshops or certification programs that focus on the area in which you are interested.
- Take courses at a local college or over the Internet.
- Work with a mentor or coach to develop needed skills.

Step 3: When you are ready to begin your job search, consider these resources:

- **Internet:** There are many Web sites that can help you in your job search - far too many to list here. Use a meta search engine to point you to these sites. Through these Web sites, you can gather information on your functional areas of interest and on targeted industries or professions. You will also find current job listings. Many sites allow you to post your resume, and some will allow you to sign up for a personal job scout. Most organizations now have their own Web sites with job postings.
- **Job Fairs:** Check the Internet or the employment section of your local newspaper for job fairs. Job fairs provide a valuable opportunity to meet company representatives face-to-face and to learn more about current job openings.
- **Print Media:** Respond to job postings targeted to your functional areas of interest in newspapers and trade publications.

MANAGING YOUR TRANSITION

Your responses to the *Strong Interest Inventory*® instrument suggest that you like a variety of activities balanced between working alone and being with others. You probably enjoy moving between tasks and people. You are likely to find value in first consulting career resources and reading about career opportunities and then confirming your findings through talking with others. You may prefer to start with only a carefully selected network of contacts and collect just enough facts to make a decision.



RESOURCES

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