Wandering Map Instructions


1ST STEP
Take a big sheet of blank (unlined) paper and write your name in the middle. 11”x17” and colored pens or markers are ideal, but use whatever works for you!

2ND STEP
Think about all the interesting and significant things you’ve done or have happened to you. Go back as far as you’d like. (Note: This part is just thinking. Don’t write anything down quite yet!) Have any unique or unusual jobs? Memorable summer experiences? Most proud or accomplished activities? Hobbies? Learned valuable lessons? Did a certain experience or person have a significant impact on you?

3RD STEP
Start writing. Quickly write whatever comes to mind. Don’t worry about spelling. Don’t waste time erasing. Use short words or phrases. Don’t try to organize your thoughts, write them down anywhere.

Examples:
Favorite Memories Classes you enjoy Awards/Honors
Heroes or Mentors Hobbies Places you’ve lived/traveled
Past Jobs Volunteer Activities Interests, Favorite Books

4TH STEP
Take a step back and look at your map. Do you any of the experiences on your map seem to fit into certain categories? Can you find any connections between the categories, even ones that may not be as obvious at first? Is there a thread that follows you? Is there a pattern to the jobs you have held? What did you learn or what strengths/skills did you acquire?

Spend some time identifying common themes (patterns or categories) and competencies (combination of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes) that are a common link between different experiences and write them down. Then, draw lines connecting the different experiences between common themes and competencies.

Example Themes:
Achievements/awards Internally or externally Reading
Tools/equipment rewarding Research
Family Knowledge Risky/Sake
Fun Learning Roles
Indoors/outdoors Locations Problem Solving
Music Types of People

Example Competencies:
Analytical Creative thinking Teamwork
Artistic Detail oriented Negotiating
Communication Interpersonal Mathematical/financial
Computer Research/investigation Organizational
Counseling/Serving Leadership/management Presentation/performing
EXAMPLE:

Reflection:

1. How do these themes or categories align with your values, interests, and personality? How might they align with your major or career interests?
2. Which themes or categories energize you the most?
3. What 2 or 3 items are you most proud of? What skills or behaviors were needed to accomplish them? Can you think of ways to connect those skills to work?
4. If you can’t see any themes, what would happen if a miracle occurred and the themes suddenly appeared? What would you think they would be?

Next Steps:

1. Identify how these themes or skills may connect to a career. What do you still need to learn?
2. How can you continue developing or gaining experiences related to themes or competencies?
3. If you knew you couldn’t fail, which themes or competencies would you continue to work towards?
4. How can you use this new insight in your career decision making process?
5. How can you use this reflection to communicate about yourself in a cover letter, personal statement, or interview?