# Resource 2.3

**What is the Positive Personal Profile?**

# It is…

✯A way to “take inventory” of all the attributes of a job seeker

✯ Job search tool

✯ Helpful in determining the employability of the job seeker

✯ Great in job matching

✯ Assists in ensuring retention

# Used for:

✯ Long range career development

✯ Developing résumés

✯ Preparing for interviews

✯ Developing goals for an individualized plan

✯ Determining further assessments or work experiences

**Positive Attributes + Supports =**

**Clear Picture**

# Components of the Positive Personal Profile

## Dreams and Career Aspirations

Dreams and long-term goals enable us to think of the “big picture” of our lives. Dream careers of most people fall into six primary categories:

1. Caring for others
2. Being a performer (public speaking, singing, broadcasting)
3. Leading or working for an organization that makes a difference
4. Owning a business
5. Generating ideas (planning, training/teaching, organizing, and/or writing)
6. Any job that you are competent to perform, needs your needs, and has a minimum of negative factors for you.

## Interests

Interests are things that grip and hold your attention; things that energize you physically, mentally, emotionally, and/or spiritually. Interests are frequently expressed through hobbies, leisure-time pursuits, recreation, and avocations—as well as through occupations.

## Talents, Skills, Knowledge

Talents might be in the arena of athletics, music, art, creative writing, and other forms of expression. But they can also be represented by a warm smile and ability to get along with others, an aptitude for taking things apart and putting them back together again, a knack for noticing small details, curiosity, and ability to express empathy.

## Learning Styles

Sometimes called “multiple intelligences,” learning style refers to the manner in which an individual naturally prefers to receive, process, and express information. Learning styles have significant implications for how we acquire and use skills, perform tasks, relate to others, and approach life. Frequently, the learning styles of people with disabilities and other life barriers are overlooked or discounted.

## Positive Personality Traits

Part of getting to know someone is discovering the positive aspects of their personality. These consist of characteristics that are genuinely recognized and appreciated by others such as: a beautiful smile; ability to stay focused on a detailed task; willingness to learn new things; triumph over hardship; frankness; talent for listening to others; sense of humor; etc.

## Environmental Preferences

Environmental Preferences are settings in which on can be most productive. For example: if you are the unflappable type, you maybe well-suited in career areas and jobs that are high-pressure in nature. If you are the type who thrives in being outside most of the time, an indoor job with no windows would probably not be a good setting for you.

Another aspect of personality is called “temperament.” Temperament is more than simple mood; rather it is an outlook or attitude, or even philosophy about life. Consider a person’s temperament in relation the job tasks, the unique rhythms of the work environment and the workers.

## Dislikes

A good question to ask each job seeker is “what is a job, or a job setting, or type of work task that you know you do NOT want to do?” If someone has had previous work experience and tell you they didn’t like the job, as them “What was it about the job you didn’t like?” Too often people are encouraged to take jobs that really go against their core dislikes—again this is usually a recipe for failure, when it comes to job performance and retention.

## Life and Work Experience

People acquire skills through formal education and training, previous volunteer or paid jobs, and community service. Skill acquisition comes from informal training (a neighbor teaching you how to repair a car engine, a senior teaching you the use of the internet); and self-training (the young man with quadriplegia who teaches himself to cook using adaptive equipment).

Some of us are fortunate to have learned many skills through on-the-job experiences (preparing budgets; selling products; detailing cars, bagging groceries; taking blood samples). Often it is through our hobbies and recreational activities that we acquire specific skills. When getting to know job seekers, try to ascertain what they—and/or people who know them well-have accomplished in their lives.

## Specific Challenges and Support System

Sometimes people face challenges because of opportunities they have never had, such as individuals who cannot articulate the kinds of jobs they would like because they have had little exposure to the work world. People with disabilities are often thought of being challenged because of their disability. In fact, each person is affected by his/her disability in different ways. The disability itself is not the challenge; rather it is the specific effects of the disability. A critical part of developing a positive personal profile is to identify those specific challenges that may get in the way of a person’s pursuit of his/her dreams and goals.

This refers to the unique “circle of support” each of us has around us. For some of us this support system might be quite extensive while for others the circle may be very small-or non-existent. Support systems can include: family members, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, co-workers, and class mates. Then there are supporters who may receive payment for being in our support circle, such as teachers, counselors, therapists, medical personnel, personal assistant, social workers, job coaches, human service organizational personnel, and government agency representatives.

## Creative Possibilities and Ideas

As you assist job seekers develop their own Positive Personal Profile, you are likely to find yourself thinking of all kinds of ideas, such as job possibilities, things to explore, actions to take, people to meet, and other “What-ifs”. Rather than waiting, we would encourage you to record all thoughts and ideas, regardless of how random or unrealistic they might seem, at the time you think of them. There will be plenty of opportunity to sift through all the ideas later (and to generate additional ones); however, these initial thoughts are often gems to polish.