



Identify your talents and nurture them.

Relevant to: Depression: Anxiety: Irritability/Anger: General emotional control:

There is no need to panic, you have definitely got talents. They may be invisible to you at the moment, but you have definitely got them. The problem with talents is that they do tend to be invisible, because talents are in fact "what you do naturally" and what we do naturally is so easy for us that we tend not to regard it as a talent.

Some examples of talents:

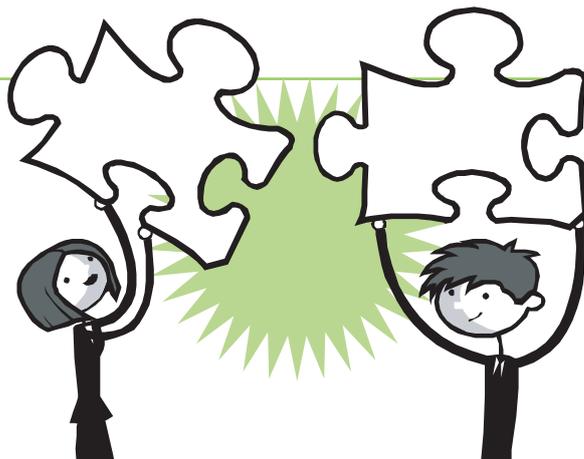
1. To be able to switch your attention swiftly from one thing to another. (People with this talent are sometimes criticised for "not being able to concentrate" whereas in fact they can concentrate on a number of things one after another.)
2. To be able to talk on the telephone. (People with this talent are often criticised for "wasting time on the phone" whereas in fact people who are good on the phone are a scarce resource.)
3. Having persistence and the courage of your convictions. (People with this talent are often criticised accused of being "stubborn".)
4. Being able to do a repetitive task reliably, day after day, year after year. (This is a fantastic talent to have, much prized by many employers, but people with it are sometimes accused of lacking imagination and ambition.)

So you get the idea, we may not be able to play the violin nor set a new world record for the 100m hurdles, but we've all got valuable talents. The problem is that sometimes these talents are not appreciated in the situation we are in, and we may even be criticised for having the particular talent, as above.



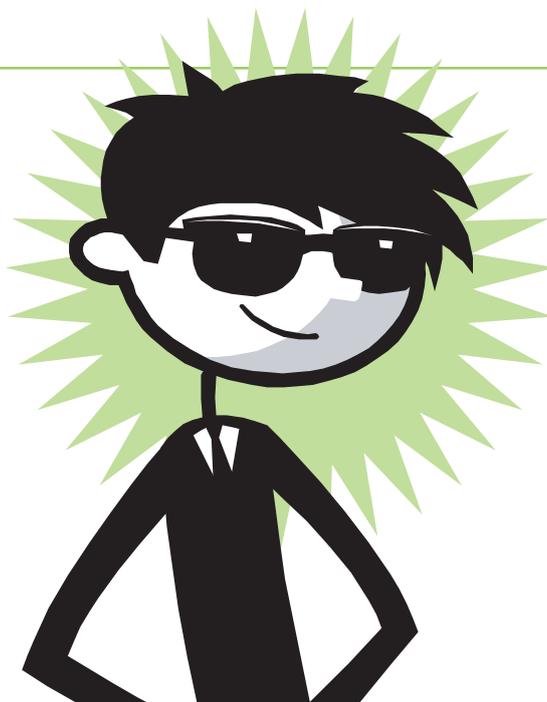
Square pegs in square holes. Round pegs in round ones.

Just as it is important to find a partner who fits with your personality, it is just as important – or nearly so – to find a job that fits with your talents. So, step one is to identify your talents and step two is to find a job that fits them. This contrasts with what many people do, which is to try to mould themselves to the job they find themselves in. This isn't very rewarding.



Case study.

Gary had just two talents: he liked checking things, and he liked talking on the phone. Fortunately he was employed by an organisation which tried to find jobs that suited each and every individual. Gary proved to be a challenge because “keeping on checking things” didn't seem useful, and neither did wishing to talk to people on the phone. However, one day, his manager was in a meeting where the marketing director described the impossibility of keeping the marketing database up to date because everybody was always moving or changing their jobs. “What we really need is someone to get on the phone and spend all their time checking we've got the right details” he said. Gary's manager couldn't believe it: he nominated Gary for the job and Gary proved to be outstanding in it.



Discussion points.

1. What talents have you got?
2. Do you think you may have talents that you haven't recognised?
3. If you have a job, could that job be tuned at all to better suit your talents?
4. If you don't have a job, are you utilising your talents in whatever you do to occupy yourself: could that be tuned to suit your talents better?

Out of session project.

To address the questions under the discussion points, as they apply to you. And to act on your observations, to utilise your talents as fully as possible. Work towards being a square peg in a square hole, it's a good position to be in.

Myth Buster.

Myth: “It doesn't matter if your job doesn't suit you – that's why they pay you money to do it.”

In fact, employers always want people who are naturally suited to the job in hand. It suits them and it suits you.