



Professional Ikigai

Find your professional Ikigai

Introduction

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that means "reason for being" and represents the intersection of what you love, what you're good at, what the world needs, and what you can be paid for. When applied to careers, it suggests that optimal professional fulfilment comes from finding work that aligns all four of these elements - combining your passions and talents with market demands and societal needs.

This workbook guides you through discovering your professional ikigai - the intersection of what you love, what you're good at, what the world needs, and what you can be paid for.

Each section builds upon the last, helping you identify gaps and create alignment across all four dimensions.

How to Use This Workbook

1. Set aside uninterrupted time (recommended: 2-3 hours initial session)

2. Complete sections in order - each builds on previous insights
 3. Be honest in your responses - there are no "right" answers
 4. Revisit and refine your answers over time
 5. Use the reflection questions to deepen your understanding
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Section 1: What You LOVE

Instructions

1. First, free-write for 5 minutes about activities that make you lose track of time
2. Review your writing and identify common themes
3. Complete the following exercises

AI Support Use AI to deepen your reflection with prompts like:

- "Here are my free-write results. What patterns or themes do you notice?"
- "Help me articulate why [activity] energises me"
- "What clarifying questions should I consider about these activities?"

Remember:

Use AI to enhance, not replace, your personal reflection.

Question and validate AI suggestions against your own experience.

A. Energy Mapping Exercise Track your energy levels throughout a typical week:

- List 10-15 work activities: _____
- Rate each (1-5):
 - Energy Gain (+) or Drain (-): ____

- Time Spent (hours/week): ____

AI prompt: "Analyse my energy patterns and suggest potential insights about my work preferences."

B. Joy Analysis When were you most excited about your work?

- Situation 1: _____
 - What specifically brought you joy? _____
 - Key elements present: _____
- Situation 2: _____ [Repeat structure]
- Situation 3: _____ [Repeat structure]

AI prompt: "Help me identify common elements across these peak experiences."

C. Synthesis Your core motivators appear to be:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

AI prompt: "Review my analysis and suggest any motivators I might have overlooked."

Section 2: What You're GOOD AT

Instructions

1. Gather feedback from past performance reviews
2. Ask 3-5 colleagues about your strengths
3. Complete the following exercises

AI Enhancement Use AI to analyse your collected feedback:

- "Review these performance reviews and identify recurring strengths"
- "What skills commonly appear across these different roles?"

- "Help me translate my experiences into transferable skills"

A. Skills Inventory Rate your proficiency (1-5) and enjoyment (1-5):

Natural Talents:

- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___
- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___
- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___

Developed Expertise:

- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___
- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___
- Skill: _____ Proficiency ___ / Enjoyment ___

AI prompt: "Based on my ratings, what skill combinations might create unique value?"

B. Achievement Analysis List your three proudest professional achievements:

Achievement 1: _____

- Skills utilised: _____
- Why it matters to you: _____
- External recognition received: _____

[Repeat structure for Achievements 2 & 3]

AI prompt: "Analyse these achievements for hidden strengths or meta-skills."

C. Synthesis Your core strengths appear to be:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Section 3: What the World NEEDS

Instructions

1. Research industry trends and challenges
2. Analyse job postings in your field
3. Complete the following exercises

AI Enhancement Leverage AI for market research:

- "What are the biggest challenges facing [industry] right now?"
- "Analyse these job postings and summarise key trends"
- "What emerging opportunities exist in [field] over the next 3-5 years?"

A. Problem Identification List problems you're passionate about solving:

1. Problem: _____
 - Scale of impact: _____
 - Why it matters: _____
 - Current solutions: _____

[Repeat structure for 2 more problems]

AI prompt: "Help me identify adjacent problems or ripple effects I might have overlooked."

B. Market Research Template For each problem identified:

- Industry trends affecting this need: _____
- Organisations working on this: _____
- Gaps in current solutions: _____
- Potential for future growth: _____

AI prompt: "What unconventional opportunities might exist in addressing these needs?"

C. Synthesis The key needs you're well-positioned to address:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Section 4: What You Can Be PAID FOR

Instructions

1. Research salary data for relevant roles
2. Analyse job market demand
3. Complete the following exercises

AI Enhancement Use AI to enhance your market analysis:

- "Compare typical career trajectories for [role 1] vs [role 2]"
- "What skills command the highest premium in [industry]?"
- "Analyse these job descriptions and identify the most valuable skills"

A. Market Value Analysis For each core strength identified earlier:

Strength 1: _____

- Roles utilising this strength: _____
- Typical compensation range: _____
- Market demand (high/medium/low): _____
- Future outlook: _____

[Repeat structure for other strengths]

AI prompt: "What emerging roles might leverage these strengths in new ways?"

B. Opportunity Mapping Identify 3 promising career directions:

Direction 1: _____

- Required skills you have: _____

- Skills to develop: _____
- Expected compensation: _____
- Growth potential: _____

[Repeat structure for Directions 2 & 3]

AI prompt: "Help me identify potential pivot opportunities based on my skill set."

C. Synthesis Your most viable professional paths:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Section 5: Finding Your Ikigai - Integration

Instructions

1. Review your synthesis from each section
2. Complete the intersection analysis
3. Identify gaps and opportunities

AI Enhancement Use AI to help integrate your findings:

- "Review my responses across all sections. What patterns or contradictions do you notice?"
- "Help me identify potential synergies between [passion] and [market need]"
- "What might be some creative ways to combine my interests in [X] with my skills in [Y]?"

A. Intersection Analysis

Dimension Pairs	Common Elements	Gaps to Address
Love x Good At		
Good At x Paid For		

Paid For x World Needs		
World Needs x Love		

AI prompt: "Looking at these intersections, what unique opportunities might emerge?"

B. Ikigai Statement Creation Fill in the blanks: "I can create value by applying my _____ (strengths) to help _____ (who) achieve _____ (what) through _____ (how)."

AI prompt: "Review my ikigai statement for clarity and completeness. What might make it stronger?"

C. Gap Closure Planning For each identified gap:

Gap 1: _____

- Action steps to close: 1. 2. 3.
- Resources needed: _____
- Timeline: _____

[Repeat structure for other gaps]

AI prompt: "Help me identify potential obstacles and strategies for each gap closure plan."

Section 6: Implementation Planning

Instructions

1. Create 30-60-90 day plan
2. Set up accountability system
3. Schedule regular reviews

AI Enhancement Use AI to refine your implementation plan:

- "Help me break down this goal into specific weekly actions"
- "What potential obstacles should I plan for in pursuing [goal]?"
- "Review my action plan and suggest specific success metrics"

Key Takeaways

- Professional ikigai represents the intersection of passion, skill, market demand, and societal needs.
- The workbook provides structured exercises to identify strengths, passions, and market opportunities.
- AI-enhanced prompts support deeper analysis at each stage of discovery.
- Integration exercises help align personal capabilities with market needs.
- Implementation planning ensures practical steps toward professional fulfilment.

Connect for a session

See you soon



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