ASU Career Services
Arizona State University

Creating Purpose with IKIGAI

Overview



IKIGAI (ee-key-guy) is a Japanese concept that represents your "reason for being." It helps you explore the intersection of four important things:

What you love → What you're good at → What the world needs → What you can be paid for

When something falls into all four areas, that's your IKIGAI and it can be a powerful guide for choosing a meaningful career path.

Instructions

Step 1: Reflect on the Four Spheres

Think about each category below and fill in your responses:

1. What You Love
   - What brings you joy or makes you feel alive?
   - Examples: singing, helping people, solving problems, storytelling

2. What You're Good At
   - What skills come naturally or have you worked hard to develop?
   - Examples: design, empathy, coding, leadership, organization

3. What the World Needs
   - What issues or needs do you care about?
   - Examples: access to education, mental health support, sustainability

4. What You Can Be Paid For
   - What kinds of work or skills do people get paid for?
   - Examples: digital marketing, healthcare, software development, teaching

Step 2: Find the Overlap

Look at your lists. Do you notice any connections between them?

- What shows up in more than one sphere?
- Is there one thing that shows up in all four?

That overlapping point is your **IKIGAI**.

Step 3: Reflect

Answer the following in a few sentences or a short paragraph:

- What overlaps across the four spheres?
- Did anything surprise you?
- How might this inform the kind of work you want to do in the future