Knowing Your D.A.T.A.

*There are a zillion ways to know yourself better. In addition to assessments and inventories, try thinking through these four categories. Before anything else, the role of any assessment is for your client to better understand his or her own story, hopes and resources. Of course assessments also help us as coaches to shape our curiosity and questions. Think of this as much as an intuitive and emotional exercise as an analytical one.*

***Desires.*** What do you feel passionately about? If $$ were no object, what would you do? What do other people love about what you do—and would (or do) gladly compensate you for? Other than money, how do you like to be compensated? What did you love as a kid that you still love?

***Abilities.*** This is the stuff that tends to show up on your résumé. What goes on your list of unique skills, training, professional capabilities, experience, etc.? For example: managing projects, info tech, writing, speaking, solving problems, ability to learn from experience, working as a part of a team, working with your hands, leadership and influence, managing teams, making agreements, etc.

As you think about your Abilities (skills, training, experience), you’ll notice some make you feel energized, others make you feel bored.

***Temperament.*** This is the Core of who you are. I expand “temperament” to mean a few other things, like:

* knowing how to understand and use your values (time and $$),
* knowing how you like to solve problems,
* how you’re likely to behave in conflict, or when you’re stressed or exhausted
* what happens when you’re physically, emotionally, socially at the “top of your game”
* what happens when you’re mobilizing for action
* what makes you tiresome and irritating to be around
* what makes you wonderful to be around
* knowing how you recharge your batteries
* knowing and understanding assessments like Strengths Finder, Enneagram, MBTI, Insights

And you can check out [my resources page](http://www.seattlecoach.com/resources.html) for some of my favorite inventories and assessments.

***Assets.*** These are the life advantages that can deepen the work you do and the conversations and situations you get into. For example:

* + You grew up with or have become fluent in a second language
  + You have a faith tradition that informs your approach to life and relationships
  + You’re good with computers and find them to be fairly straightforward
  + You have a family member with a disability
  + You’re in solid recovery from an addition
  + You were an eagle scout
  + You are a parent

Thanks to [William Bridges](http://astore.amazon.com/seattl03-20/detail/0738213802), who wrote early and often about transitions, for first suggesting the DATA acronym.

Your DATA Worksheet

| Desires | Abilities | Temperament | Assets |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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