

# ProfilPASS

in Preparation  
for Retirement



Using your freedom

# Imprint

## ***Concept/ ProfilPASS in Preparation for Retirement***

Goran Jordanoski

German Institute for Adult Education

Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE)

## ***Editing***

Dr. Marion Steinbach | Steinbach PR

## ***Typesetting/Layout***

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# Retirement as a turning point

Dear reader,

The end of working life usually marks a turning point in life. Since you started school, actually since kindergarten, there was a clearly defined framework and specifications that you had to fulfil: timetables, working hours and deadlines – from classwork to deadlines for submission and work meetings. You had to learn the prescribed subject matter, qualify for your profession and continually undergo advanced training. Even in times without work commitments, you probably had to meet targets and behave according to the expectations of those around you.

Free time in the form of holidays was also fixed and predetermined. All that is over now. You are free. You can decide when you get up, what you do during the day, what topics you deal with, where you go. Retirement means freedom from outside control, guidelines, pressure to perform and expectations.

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For the first two or three months of retirement, I just wanted to enjoy my freedom, read in the evenings for as long as I wanted without looking anxiously at the clock, sleep when I felt like it, etc.

It was clear to me that after this extensive 'slumber phase' I would feel the desire to bring structure back into my life and to pursue a task that I find meaningful. However, I wanted to approach everything calmly and without stress; that was important to me.

Ursula Lenz

## ○ Pride in your own life's work

**It's true:** The continually new tasks were also challenges that you had to master. School, studies, training and work have provided impulses for your professional and personal development. As a result, you have experienced successes, received recognition and have always had reasons to be happy or proud of your achievements and your skills. You have also grown in the face of hurdles, obstacles and upheavals or crises such as failed exams or unemployment. You have learned to deal with these situations, have found new paths for yourself and have grown from the challenges.



Don't bury your head in the sand and think 'It'll all work out, especially since I have a lot of things to do and catch up on: Thousands of digital photos have to be sorted, the garden house should be finished soon, there is more than enough to do.' Mentally approach this new phase of life, which often spans 20 years or more.

Ursula Lenz

### Some statistics

In 2021, more than one fifth (20.8 %) of the EU population was aged 65 and over (Eurostat).

In 2020, the life expectancy at birth in the EU was 80.4 years. This figure was 5.7 years higher for women (83.2 years) than men (77.5 years) (Eurostat).

## Retirement = caesura and challenge

**Retirement** also means loss – of recognition by superiors and of appreciation by colleagues and staff. Social contacts are lost – with colleagues and customers. Some people also lack the feeling of being needed or the rewarding feeling of doing something meaningful.

Perhaps you have joy and fear, hope and melancholy, a sense of departure and a painful farewell all mixed together. This is hardly surprising, after all, you are in a transitional phase in which many things are changing. Therefore, it is obvious that most people, before or at the beginning of retirement, deal with the question of what to do next. It is all the more astonishing that there are hardly any preparatory courses for this phase of life, indeed, usually not even routine counselling before the big day arrives. At the same time, this change offers the chance to shape life once again according to your own needs, wishes and ideas. Make use of the enormous potential that the new phase of life offers you!



” Get out of your comfort zone. Dare to do something new. Do what you couldn't do while working because there was no time. Free time is something precious, something great. Don't say it's difficult. Try it out. The world is open to you.

Ingrid Steegmüller

# “Freedom from” is “freedom for”

**With freedom** from obligations comes freedom for all the things that are important to you. Now you are free and have time – for travelling, for your hobbies, for house and garden, for friends and family, for voluntary work or to learn something new... Are you one of those people who say or have said, “When I retire, I will finally...”? - and then follows with a list of things you have always wanted to do? Would you

perhaps like to use your retirement to pass on your (life) experience and knowledge? Would you like to try something completely new again? Or are you one of those who can't even imagine living without a job and are now wondering what to do in retirement? Perhaps you are already an “experienced retiree”, have enjoyed freedom from all obligations for a while and now realise: There's more?



Stop for a moment and think about which of the following “retirement types” you would classify yourself as. Or are you rather a mixture of different types?

Gerhard Berger and Gabriele Gerngroß have distinguished **four different types** of retirees.

## the movers and shakers

They shape their retirement like their previous life. They continue to work – either in their previous job, freelance or in a voluntary capacity.

### Type 1

## the tie-ups

They are looking for ways to share their knowledge and contribute to society.

### Type 2

## the liberated

They see retirement as a release from the burden of work and want to enjoy it.

### Type 3

## the catch-ups

They want to use the new freedom to finally do what they have always wanted to do, for example, further their education, do voluntary work.

### Type 4



”

Many people are ‘mixed types’, including me. Primarily I would describe myself as a ‘tie-up’. In the course of my 42 years of work with older people in various fields, I have accumulated a wealth of experiential knowledge and it has always been a great desire of mine to pass this on – in lectures and seminars, but also in individual contacts. At the same time, I am also the ‘liberated’ type, relieved of professional burdens and constraints. I very much enjoy having autonomy over my time, being able to determine the change between tension and relaxation myself and only accepting offers that suit me one hundred percent.

**Ursula Lenz** ■ ■



”

I am most likely a combination of type 1 and type 4: I wanted to travel a lot, but then Corona came along and I haven’t done a single trip yet. I wanted to acquire knowledge (adult education centre), but many courses were cancelled. I have worked full time for 47 years and have always had hobbies alongside my job. Besides literature and music, I also danced for years. I also always had theatre and concert subscriptions. And for almost 30 years I have been an (active) member of PRO RETINA ([www.pro-retina.de](http://www.pro-retina.de)), although I am not affected by any visual impairment myself.

**Jutta Fürst** ■ ■



”

There is a little of all 4 types in me. I became 100% self-employed at the age of 59. Before that, I was a full-time employee and freelance writer/copywriter. Now I pass on my knowledge and experience to other, younger people. At the same time, I travel a lot within Europe. I commute between Austria and France. Now I take the time to read books I always wanted to read, for relaxation and my hobby of doing cycle tours. I’ve built my self-employment 100% remotely, so I can work from anywhere.

**Birgit Wichmann** ■ ■ ■ ■



”

I am the tie-up type. I left my working world and went on a cycling tour that lasted several months. After that, I wanted to use my expertise to create opportunities to work abroad.

**Johannes Wiedemann** ■



**Think about**

what you are looking forward to in retirement  
and what worries you:



” I was concerned losing social contacts in my working world when I retire.  
**Johannes Wiedemann**

I look forward to this	I am worried about this



” Through my commitment to Mentor – Die Leselernhelfer (<https://mentor-bundesverband.de/>), I got through the pandemic times without any boredom. I can help others (children and mentors) to improve their own skills. I am active and learn something new every day, have many new contacts and receive a lot of positive feedback.  
**Petra Neveling**

” I was worried about falling into the trap of being virtually inactive, no longer able to do anything meaningful. A year and a half before I retired, I started to think about what activities would be suitable for me and looked for information that could help me in terms of future volunteering.

**Norbert Block**



” Retirement is a phase of life that, although not always, is unfortunately often associated with health changes and restrictions. And since my health was already failing in the last years of my career, my concern was that it would deteriorate further over the years. The question of finances also preoccupied me a lot and led me to subject my expenses to close scrutiny two years before I quit my job and in this way make provisions for a significantly reduced income.

**Ursula Lenz**

## Orientation and impulses for a fulfilled life

**No matter** with what feelings you are approaching retirement or have already started it: You have realised that it is a stage of life full of potential that you can consciously shape. And very freely according to your wishes and needs.

You have taken the first important step by picking up the ProfilPASS. Because the ProfilPASS supports you in (re)discovering your interests, wishes and skills. Skills are the strengths you possess in addition to your expertise and abilities. Perhaps you take your skills that much for granted that you are not even aware of them. So why not go on an exploratory tour with the ProfilPASS.

You will find out where your strengths lie and what you are good at, where and how you can use your skills in the best and most fulfilling way. You will receive orientation and impulses on how to optimally shape your new phase of life thanks to your skills, how to receive appreciation and recognition, how to maintain social contacts and how to participate in society. This knowledge will help you if you are looking for a voluntary job to do or a paid job but no longer want to work in your previous or learned profession. Because with the help of the ProfilPASS you can see what alternatives there are for you to your previous profession thanks to your skills.

# Knowing potential, using opportunities, shaping the future

**So far**, your life has mostly been about abilities and expertise. At school, this was rewarded with grades, at work with recognition, promotions or bonuses. This means: What you know and can do in these areas is familiar to you, because it has always been in focus so far.

With the ProfilPASS, on the other hand, you explore your strengths, even beyond school and work. In addition, as you explore your life, you will realise what is important to you,

what you really care about – and what you may have forgotten for decades. Take up dreams. Maybe now you have exactly the skills you need to make your dreams come true.

You become aware of how you want to spend your time, whether you want to do something new, if so what and with which people: children, young people, adults, senior citizens, with the socially disadvantaged or people from or in other countries.

“ I invest many hours in voluntary work, use the skills I have acquired in my job for the association and pass on what I have learned in seminars and video conferences. However, I also enjoy my time flexibility and take time for my hobbies, friends and holidays, and help children in reading sessions, which



I didn't do enough of in the past.  
**Petra Neveling**

“ I wanted to finally do something for myself in retirement. My commitment as a granny au pair gives and brings me a lot: I am challenged – also mentally – and have gained much more power and self-confidence through the challenges. For example, I never used to travel alone. Now I fly alone to Australia or America to



families I do not know and get to know the country and its people. It's a real fountain of youth for me.  
**Ingrid Steegmüller**

**Use the ProfilPASS** to harmonise your skills, your knowledge and abilities and your wishes in order to seize the opportunities that present themselves now and thus shape your future.

*Have fun with it!*

Would you like to talk to someone about identifying your strengths or the new insights you have gained? There are trained ProfilPASS counsellors all over Germany, Spain, Sweden, Greece, Slovenia and Austria. They will consider with you how you can ideally shape your retirement and will be happy to advise you. You will find ProfilPASS counsellors in Germany here:

<https://www.profilpass.de/fuer-nutzer-innen/beratungsangebote/>

For the counsellors in Spain, Sweden, Greece, Slovenia and Austria, please contact the responsible partner organisation. You will find the contact dates here:

[https://www.convolut-profilpass-international.eu/index.php?article\\_id=129&clang=1/](https://www.convolut-profilpass-international.eu/index.php?article_id=129&clang=1/)



There are a variety of positive effects of working in retirement: you don't fall into the famous 'hole' after the end of the working phase". You still have goals. I feel that I am still needed, that I don't belong on the scrap heap, as they say. I enjoy being able to contribute my knowledge, skills and experience. Through my volunteer work I am satisfied with myself because I feel I am doing something meaningful.

**Norbert Block**





” For me, the plans for retirement emerged gradually: The long bicycle ride served to gain a perspective on my life. This was followed by registration with a deployment organisation for volunteers, the Senior Experts Service (SES) ([www.ses-bonn.de](http://www.ses-bonn.de)), then the foreign assignment and finally the permanent assignment in the SES office.  
**Johannes Wiedemann**



” A conversation with a former colleague opened up the prospect of getting involved with Seniorpartner in School (SiS) (<https://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>). I was immediately enthusiastic about the concept, especially as I had been working with communication and mediation as a teacher since the 1990s and had trained pupils as conflict mediators. Also during my 7 years as a seconded women's representative, communication and mediation in conflicts played a large role.  
**Ute Matschull-Mesfin**



” I had a clear plan for my retirement: enjoy the new freedoms together with my husband through holidays, sports, activities with friends and family, etc., practice existing hobbies more often and start a new hobby as well as do voluntary work. I thought months in advance about what new hobby I might enjoy and ended up playing the steel drum. Since the beginning of retirement, I have been a member of an orchestra. I also found out where and how I can volunteer. First I joined the Caritas soup kitchen ([www.caritas.de](http://www.caritas.de)) and got involved in the school breakfast at my old primary school. I had already discovered MENTOR – Die Leselernhelfer (<https://mentor-bundesverband.de/>) a few years ago. At that time, however, there was no opportunity to become a mentor in the city where I live. Since I definitely didn't want long travelling times, this was out of the question at first. When MENTOR Dortmund also offered activities in Castrop-Rauxel in 2019, it was the right time to join.  
**Petra Neveling**

# “My life – an overview”

## INTERESTS AND LEISURE

**Before** things really get going, pause for a moment and look back at your life so far. Be aware of everything you have already done and achieved; also and especially in the personal and private sphere.

## VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT

To make it easier for you to look back, we have listed different areas of life. Go through all the areas and write down all the activities on the next double page,

- that you liked to do,
- that you found easy and
- that you did well.

## FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

## WORK AND FURTHER EDUCATION

These activities range from organising company outings and parties, to working as a trainer in a sports club, to being a parents’ representative at your children’s school, or training as a first aider.

## FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOUR- HOOD

## SCHOOL, CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

## TRAINING AND STUDIES

INTERESTS  
AND LEISURE

FAMILY AND  
HOUSEHOLD

FRIENDS AND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD

**Write down** your activities in the different areas of life,

- that you enjoyed doing,
- the things that were easy for you to do, and
- that you have done well.



**SCHOOL,  
CHILDHOOD  
AND YOUTH**

**TRAINING  
AND STUDIES**

**WORK AND  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION**

**VOLUNTEERING  
AND VOLUNTARY  
COMMITMENT**

Now you have gained an initial overview. You can see at a glance the activities you have already done in your life that you have particularly enjoyed and done particularly well. In the following chapters you can deepen your engagement with individual areas of life. The order does not matter. You alone also decide which areas of life you explore.

**Enjoy the discovery tour.**



# On a discovery tour of your skills

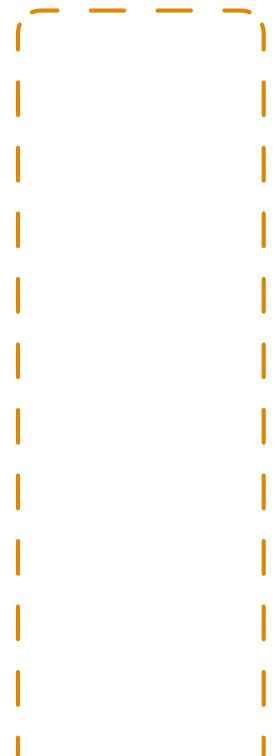
**In order to really gain** insights into your hidden skills, interests and wishes, it is best to proceed systematically, step by step. This way you discover more about yourself than you can imagine. This systematic approach is very simple. Always follow these four steps:



## **STEP 1: NAME.**

In this first step, you note down the activity you have done. Try to find a term that is as concise as possible:

- Child-rearing
- Nursing care
- Football coach
- ...

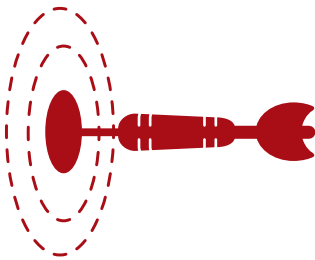
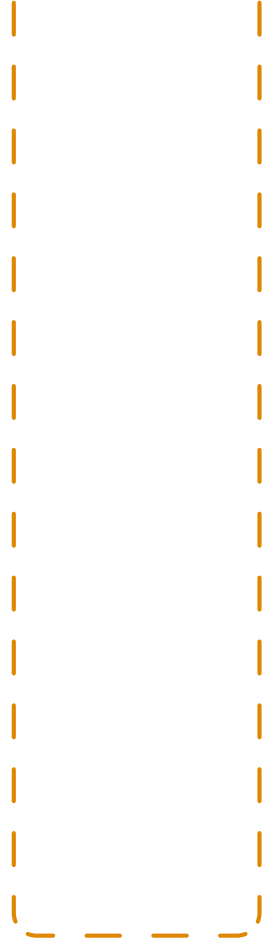




### STEP 2: DESCRIBE.

Now you describe in more detail: In this 2nd step, you describe exactly what you did in this activity:

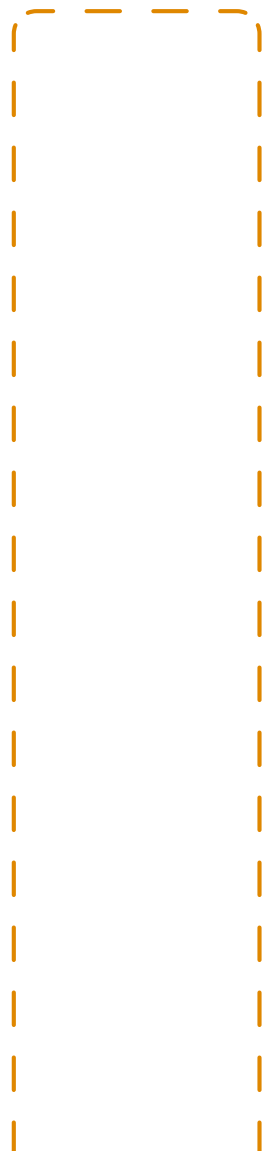
- I took care of our two children, did their homework with them, supported them in their hobbies.
- I cared for my demented father, helped him with basic care, looked after him, spent leisure time with him.
- I coached the youth team of our football club.
- ...



### STEP 3: FIND THE ESSENCE.

Now you really get to the heart of things. This means: After the detailed description in step 2, now list which skills you have developed through these activities:

- I know how to get children to learn and how to disseminate learning material. I can explain well and motivate the children. I can also instruct several children in a small group.
- I learned how to wash and dress people, and how to talk and deal with people with dementia.
- I know what to look for in training to avoid injuries and I have learned how to guide and motivate children and young people.
- ...





#### **STEP 4: EVALUATE.**

Now you may give yourself a certificate. In this 4th step, you evaluate the skills you have acquired through these activities. You have three categories to choose from:

**Level A:**

I can do that if someone helps me.



**Level B:**

I can do it alone if the situation is the same.



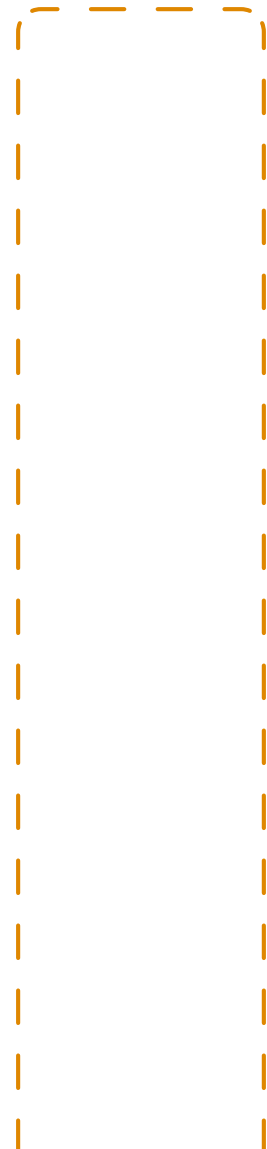
**Level C:**

I can do it alone, even in other situations.



This evaluation is important, especially with regard to how you want to design your retirement. Because with this evaluation, you know immediately what you can already do very well and in which area you perhaps still need to acquire knowledge or skills.

**So, here we go!**



# Interests and leisure

**Gardening**, singing in a choir, reading, doing sports...or something completely different? What is your favourite way to spend your free time? What activity are you looking forward to? Which books or newspaper articles do you read particularly carefully? Which topics do you listen to because they are of particular interest to you? When do you get into a flow and forget everything around you?

Focus on the recent past. But feel free to extend this right back to your childhood and youth: Are there any hobbies that you used to enjoy but then gave up due to time constraints?

List all these favourite activities and answer these questions for yourself too:

- How did you get into this hobby?
- What do you particularly like about it?
- How did you acquire the necessary skills? Have you attended courses or done online tutorials?
- Have you received any awards for this leisure activity?

Now find out what skills you have developed through your leisure activities. Use the four steps for this.

(Name) I do this:	(Describe) I do exactly this:	(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:	(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***



Culture in a Suitcase' offers me the opportunity to use my hobbies of music and literature to bring joy to other people. For this voluntary job, I need to know a lot about my subject. I have to adapt to each group and try to address and include all participants.

Jutta Fürst

## Interests you have always wanted to cultivate

**Retirement** is also a phase of life in which you can fulfil your wishes. What are your wishes? Have you been dreaming of a certain leisure activity for a long time? Or did you already want to pursue a certain hobby as a teenager or young person, but were unable to do so? Or perhaps it is a task that is very close to your heart and that you can now pursue. If animal welfare or environmental protection are very important to you, now could be the time to pursue this concern in a specific way. Try to look at retirement as a phase of life in which you can fulfil your wishes.



Even before I joined PRO RETINA ([www.pro-retina.de](http://www.pro-retina.de)), I had contact with blind and visually impaired people. For this self-help organisation I set up, organised and led the macula week, the macula counsellor seminars and the communication training for counsellors, and for a long time I led the macula working group. Now I am still active as a counsellor, have a discussion group and give small-scale lectures. I've always enjoyed doing that, also for visually impaired and blind people.

**Jutta Fürst**



The following six steps will help you to find out whether you have the necessary skills for this hobby or commitment, and how you can realise your dream:

That's what I'd like to do in my free time/I've always dreamed of doing:					
This concern is very important to me	I would specifically do this	I already have these skills to be able to do this	This is how I evaluate my skills	I lack these skills	I can compensate for the missing skills
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***		
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***		
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***		



In some ways, these skills are certainly innate (empathy, openness, interest in people); I needed to acquire specialist knowledge – by attending seminars and further training or by visiting trade fairs, for example.

**Jutta Fürst**



Some of my professional experiences and knowledge were helpful in taking on certain voluntary activities. And then there is also the life experience that everyone brings with them. I have offered a three-part qualification at EFI ([www.efi-bielefeld.de](http://www.efi-bielefeld.de)) that provides orientation to people regarding voluntary work in retirement. The basis for my work as a lecturer was my professional activity. Before I started, however, I gained certain additional qualifications. I also attend special training events every year.


**Norbert Block**



I took part in an introductory seminar and then went straight into mentoring. Afterwards, there was the possibility to participate in further training offered by MENTOR – Die Leselernhelfer (<https://mentor-bundesverband.de>)

**Petra Neveling**

**What topic would you like to deal with now?**

Family and household 

Friends and neighbourhood

Volunteering and voluntary commitment

Work and further education

Training and studies

School, childhood and youth

# Family and household

**In the family** and household, there are many duties that you probably perform without giving them much thought. Why don't you make yourself aware of all the things you do in this area? Think about routine tasks, but also special tasks: from helping the children with their schoolwork to planning and organising the menu for family celebrations. Also think about difficult experiences. Because it is often in such situations and phases that our strengths become particularly apparent. Have you cared for a sick family member and supported them until their death? Were there any accidents in which you became involved and actively helped?

Regardless of whether it was a matter of activities in everyday life or in exceptional situations

– your strengths have always been evident in your actions: When helping with schoolwork: your patience and ability to motivate people. For family celebration menus: your ability to plan and organise with precision. People who are carers must be patient and empathetic, those who help in crisis situations must keep a cool head and an overview even when there is chaos around them. And they must be able to make quick decisions.

You see: An intensive study of the individual activities brings to light many skills that might not have been apparent at first glance. Perhaps there is potential lying dormant here that you can actively and specifically use to shape your retirement. Therefore, take your time for the four steps:

(Name) I do this:	(Describe) I do exactly this:	(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:	(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***



“ I have a lot of experience as a mother and grandmother;  
I now have 14 grandchildren, and I have always loved cooking.  
As a granny au pair, I can use my experience and relieve the  
families I'm with by helping them.  
**Ingrid Steegmüller**

**Be aware** that your skills show in your activities. At the same time, you have also acquired skills through your actions. You should also be aware of this. Because this is something you can be proud of. Consider using these skills in retirement. Provided, of course, that you enjoy these tasks and activities.

**What topic would you like to deal with now?**

Interests and leisure

Friends and neighbourhood 

Volunteering und voluntary commitment

Work and further education

Training and studies

School, childhood and youth

# Friends and neighbourhood

**In the course of life,** a solid social network of friends, acquaintances and neighbours develops. In the process, everyone makes a contribution to togetherness. What is your part in the circle of friends and acquaintances? Are you the doer? Do you organise the street party and the summer party? Or are you more likely to be the one who takes care of the elderly neighbour, goes shopping for him, helps out as a dog sitter and babysitter, or comforts the friend whose husband has just died?

Go through your circle of friends in your mind and the neighbourhood with whom you maintain contacts. Collect all the things you do. Which activities do you like to offer of your own accord? What do you always get recognition for? For which work and tasks do you like to be approached? Is it reliably caring for the garden during the absence of your neighbours? Do friends like to call you for help because they appreciate your calm and focused way of solving problems?



(Name) I do this:	(Describe) I do exactly this:	(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:	(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:
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# My character traits

**If you** were to list your character traits – how many would you immediately think of? There are probably not a lot. You are not alone in this. Because most people find it difficult to name their characteristics. In addition, the qualities we list do not always match those others ascribe to us. Because our self-image differs from the image others have of us. How are you supposed to know what you are good at if you don't have a realistic picture of your character traits?

Take the test. Use our list of characteristics to find out if your self-image differs from the image that friends or acquaintances have of you.

Here's how: On a scale of one to ten, rate how strongly you possess the qualities listed below. Give the list on page 35 to a friend. Ask her/him to tick how strongly you possess the qualities listed. Then compare the two results, thus your self-perception and the perception of others. In this way, you are sure to uncover even more hidden skills.

Choose your characteristics as in our example:

not pronounced

very pronounced





# Self-image

analytical

1 2 3 4 5

adaptable

1 2 3 4 5

persevering

1 2 3 4 5

enthusiastic

1 2 3 4 5

persistent

1 2 3 4 5

prudent

1 2 3 4 5

diplomatic

1 2 3 4 5

discreet

1 2 3 4 5

assertive

1 2 3 4 5

emotional

1 2 3 4 5

dedicated

1 2 3 4 5

ambitious

1 2 3 4 5

hard-working

1 2 3 4 5

flexible

1 2 3 4 5

patient

1 2 3 4 5

precise

1 2 3 4 5

skilled in handicrafts

1 2 3 4 5

helpful

1 2 3 4 5

polite

1 2 3 4 5

willing to compromise

1 2 3 4 5

sociable

1 2 3 4 5

creative

1 2 3 4 5

open to criticism

1 2 3 4 5

solution-oriented

1 2 3 4 5

able to think in a logical-abstract way

1 2 3 4 5

loyal

1 2 3 4 5

compassionate

1 2 3 4 5

curious

1 2 3 4 5

fond of tidiness

1 2 3 4 5

practical

1 2 3 4 5

willing to take risks

1 2 3 4 5

fast

1 2 3 4 5

shy

1 2 3 4 5

independent

1 2 3 4 5

careful

1 2 3 4 5

linguistically gifted

1 2 3 4 5

technically gifted

1 2 3 4 5

tolerant

1 2 3 4 5

convincing

1 2 3 4 5

responsible

1 2 3 4 5

full of ideas

1 2 3 4 5

goal-oriented

1 2 3 4 5

reserved

1 2 3 4 5

reliable

1 2 3 4 5



For the work as a counsellor for PRO RETINA ([www.pro-retina.de](http://www.pro-retina.de)), professional knowledge is extremely important, as well as an ability to listen, empathy and patience. You must not be afraid of contact, e.g. with people who are blind and walk with a stick. For the discussion group I also always need new ideas and always have to be up-to-date.

**Jutta Fürst**



When working as a granny au pair, I have to be able to adapt to the routines of the host family and be tolerant. In other countries and families, things often work quite differently. You just have to accept that. For example, Australian mothers are much more relaxed with their children. Also, at work you need a sense of when to withdraw, to respect the privacy of the host family. And you also have to protect your own privacy, so you also have to be able to set boundaries.

**Ingrid Steegmüller**

**Give this list to a friend,** a close acquaintance or a family member. Ask him or her to tick how he or she sees you.

Have someone select your characteristics as in our example:

not pronounced

very pronounced



# How others see you

analytical	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	open to criticism	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
adaptable	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	solution-oriented	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
persevering	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	able to think in a logical-abstract way	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	loyal	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
persistent	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
prudent	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	curious	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
diplomatic	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	fond of tidiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
discreet	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	practical	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
assertive	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	willing to take risks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
emotional	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	fast	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
dedicated	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	shy	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
ambitious	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	independent	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
hard-working	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	careful	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
flexible	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	linguistically gifted	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
patient	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	technically gifted	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
precise	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	tolerant	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
skilled in handicrafts	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	convincing	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	responsible	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
polite	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	full of ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
willing to compromise	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	goal-oriented	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
sociable	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	reserved	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
creative	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5



I have been given feedback again and again that I am able to get people interested in a topic, that my lectures and seminars are lively and practical, and that I provide helpful information – also in written form. After four years of retirement, I can also still talk about my own experiences with the transition into this new phase of life.

**Ursula Lenz**



Prerequisites for successful volunteering with Seniorpartner in School (<https://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>) are: Enjoy working with children, willingness to learn (in addition to basic training, further training on specific topics will continue to be offered), ability to empathise, tolerance, patience, flexibility, ability to listen and a sense of humour.

**Ute Matschull-Mesfin**



For the job as a learning-to-read helper (<https://mentor-bundesverband>) you absolutely need empathy, to enjoy working with children, reading as well as have reliability and patience. Optional are humour, imagination and creativity. Experience with children is not absolutely necessary, I didn't have any either and still it works out fine. For the activities on the executive board and the charitable association I also need knowledge of management, project management and IT as well as in the creation of concepts and instructions.

**Petra Neveling**

## A Tip

The character traits are also important for the reality check of your desire for retirement. If you have previously worked as an executive board member and are a very resolute, decisive person, you should check whether you can fit into a team of volunteers. And if you are more the withdrawn, introverted type, you may not be happy with a task where you are expected to lead a team.

### What topic would you like to deal with now?

Interests and leisure

Family and household

Volunteering and voluntary commitment ▶

Work and further education

Training and studies

School, childhood and youth

# Volunteering and voluntary commitment

**Volunteering** is widespread in Europe. Perhaps you will also (soon) belong to this group. All work that you do voluntarily and unpaid for the common good is considered voluntary work. This includes, for example, the work of the treasurer in your professional association or sports club, painting the classroom in your children's school, hosting the farewell party for your colleague, the toad rescue operation of the local animal welfare association or supporting the aid organisation when refugees arrive. Your voluntary commitment is therefore not tied to membership of an association.

## Would you have thought so?

A Eurobarometer survey published in April 2015, revealed that the most common areas for volunteering are charity, humanitarian and development aid (44 %); education,

training or sport (40 %), and culture or art (15 %). Their activities are usually aimed at a local community (66 %) or the volunteer's country as a whole (27 %).



My commitment offers me: social networking, intensive participation in social and community life, communication opportunities and is a social training against aging.

**Johannes Wiedemann**



My work as a school mediator for Seniorpartner in School (<https://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>) enables me to actively participate in our society, to maintain mental agility, to enjoy life more, to build up new friendships, to gain social recognition and appreciation, to find better solutions also for my own conflicts, to have more understanding and tolerance towards the younger generation.

**Ute Matschull-Mesfin**



Even during my professional career, I was involved on a voluntary basis in an association that works to improve public transport services in my hometown. That's where I increased my time commitment after finishing my occupational work. In the EFI qualification ([www.efi-bielefeld.de/](http://www.efi-bielefeld.de/)) I first realised what multiple opportunities there are to get involved in volunteering.

**Norbert Block**

**Collect all the activities** you have done in a voluntary capacity because they were important to you or gave you pleasure. Consider: What skills did you need and use for this? What (new) skills have you acquired through your voluntary work?

Also consider:

- What is fundamentally important to you?
- Which areas of life and activity are close to your heart or which people? Are they rather socially disadvantaged children, adolescents, homeless people or old people?
- What did you or do you still really like to do?
- Where were/are you wholeheartedly involved?
- What positive effect did (or does) this engagement have on your life?



Positive effects are possible when it is a self-determined and meaningful activity. The feeling of being needed, of helping others through one's own actions, of supporting them with well-founded information in a difficult life situation – this has been scientifically proven – promotes one's own well-being. Often, giving up one's job also reduces social contacts, which can be compensated for by voluntary or even paid work. Getting to know new people, 'having to' adjust to new situations again and again: this promotes communicative skills and flexibility, which is often endangered in old age.

**Ursula Lenz**

**Combine your skills** with topics that are close to your heart. Perhaps you will discover in this way worthwhile tasks for your retirement...

**(Name) This is what I do/have done:**

**(Describe) This is what I do exactly/have done exactly:**

**(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:**

**(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:**

**I like to do that very much/have done that very much:**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular bars for writing.

**That is important to me:**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular bars for writing.

**I lack these skills:**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular bars for writing.

**This way I can compensate for the missing skills:**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular bars for writing.



Like all the volunteers at Seniorpartner in School (<https://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>), I went through the demanding 88-hour school mediation training – despite having previous experience. Seniorpartner in School emphasises – regardless of previous professional training – enthusiasm in dealing with children, empathy, fun in doing, joy in learning even in old age. I totally feel at home here.

**Ute Matschull-Mesfin**





In retirement, I got in touch with the Behindertengemeinschaft Bonn (<https://bgbonn.org/>). I had to coordinate with this organisation for disabled people when I was still working. In retirement, I changed sides and now work for the disability community, checking building projects for accessibility in cooperation with municipal services. My involvement here and with the Senior Expert Service (SES) (<https://www.ses-bonn.de/startseite>) is good for me, good for inclusion and good for development cooperation.

**Johannes Wiedemann**

### **Volunteering offers a very wide variety of opportunities**

**Places:** in your local region from sports clubs to animal welfare associations, at the food bank, in old people's homes, hospices or hospitals, in cultural institutions, in churches or in political parties, in disaster control or rescue services. For example, you can pass on your knowledge and experience worldwide as a senior expert in foreign countries, help in crisis areas or look after children as a granny au pair.

**Topics:** You can support children from socially disadvantaged families as a tutor or young people in training as a job sponsor, you can get involved with old or sick people, the homeless, people with disabilities or refugees, with animals, nature conservation or the preservation of historical monuments.

**Activities:** You can pass on your knowledge by tutoring children in mathematics or supporting a well project in Africa, you can bring joy to others by cooking meals for the socially disadvantaged, becoming a fairy-tale aunt or uncle, a reading mentor or by playing music in the church orchestra, you can give joy as a hospital clown, be there for others as a companion for the dying, act as a lay judge, get involved in rescue work or disaster control, actively collect donations or work pro bono for charitable organisations. As a language mentor, you can help people from other nations to find their way around Germany. If you are passionate about pottery or beekeeping, you can also sell your products – to supplement your pension or to financially support a project close to your heart.




**What topic would you like to deal with now?**

Interests and leisure

Family and household

Friends and neighbourhood

Work and further education 

Training and studies

School, childhood and youth

# Work and further education

**Sometimes** you hear someone being congratulated on their retirement. So it seems to be an enjoyable event when you reach the end of your working life. How is it with you? Are you happy when you no longer have to go to work? Or is it hard for you to say goodbye? Regardless of whether you want to draw a line under it or prefer to move on – work is and remains an important phase in your life. It has determined the rhythm of your life, your emotional world and many of your thoughts over the past decades. Even in times when you might have been looking for work. You were annoyed by some things, pleased about others, some jobs were unloved chores, others you enjoyed doing.

When looking back at your working life, think about those tasks and activities that you particularly enjoyed. Also think about further training courses you have taken part in. Was there any content that particularly interested you and that you would like to explore further?

Why this is important for planning your retirement? Quite simple: In your work you have gained skills that you can now use in other contexts. You just need to (get to) know these skills. This can be achieved with the four steps.



I always wanted to turn my hobby – writing – into a profession. At a young age, I was forced to choose a different profession. Now, with the guesthouse in the background, there was no reason not to do it. I had the necessary skills.

**Birgit Wichmann**



I was already able to write excellently at school, I acquired my rhetoric during my professional life, I have always been inquisitive and curious, and I have learned to assert myself in my profession.

The self-confidence came with my professional success. I have always been open and empathic too.

**Birgit Wichmann**

### **Would you have thought so?**

**Did you realise that many people continue to work in retirement? They often quote these reasons:**

- the joy of work,
- the need to earn money,
- contact with other people,
- the feeling of being needed,
- new challenges,
- the desire to stay fit, develop and train further, and
- the desire to pass on knowledge and experience.



Acquiring all that I have in my head today – at the age of 70 and after 42 professional years – has cost me a lot of time, a lot of effort, a lot of nerves and also money. It does me good to be able to use it and pass it on to people who are interested in it and, at best, also benefit from it. When people tell me or write to me after a lecture or seminar: 'I'm glad I came to your event, you gave me important information and impetus', then I'm happy.

**Ursula Lenz**

**It is important** to distinguish your skills from your (professional) knowledge. To do this, we suggest that follow this procedure. Consider:

- When have your colleagues or superiors said that you do something particularly well?
- What tasks have you always been entrusted with?
- Why were you given these tasks?



“ After some time in retirement, I decided to pass on the knowledge and experience I gained in my professional life in the field of adult education. So I have been working as a lecturer in the context of trade union education work for a few years. However, I only do this job in the winter months, as I use the summer months for travelling.  
**Norbert Block**

Also think about skills that you have perhaps used less often in recent years, because of increasing digitalisation. Which of these skills could you use, for example in the context of voluntary work? Because if you have skills that are less needed due to digitalisation, you can save them from oblivion. Pass them on to future generations before these skills disappear altogether.



“ When I went part-time, I started learning English. I need to use English as a granny au pair on my assignments around the world. In Los Angeles, I attended English classes in the evenings after working with my family. With this knowledge, I can now get along well anywhere.  
**Ingrid Steegmüller**

(Name) I do this:	(Describe) I do exactly this:	(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:	(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:
----------------------	----------------------------------	---	--

			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
--	--	--	---

			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
--	--	--	---

			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
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## A tip

**Have a look** at the list of character traits on page 33. Perhaps the list will help you to identify the skills you have acquired and demonstrated in your job. This can also be interesting if you decide to look for a job again. Because: Older workers are held in high esteem in many sectors. They may not always work as fast as their younger colleagues, but they know a shortcut or two.

Employers particularly value in older employees their experience, calmness, level-headedness, self-assurance and ability to work in a solution-oriented manner. In addition, older people usually have a more holistic perspective. Take a look at whether you possess these desired character traits of an ideal employee. It doesn't have to be a full-time or 50% job. Why not offer support as a holiday or sickness replacement or help with the induction of new trainees?

Now you have thought intensively about your work and certainly discovered some activities that you enjoyed and will miss. You can also use the associated skills in numerous other areas of life and activities. Together with the ProfIPASS counsellor, think about whether these skills are helpful in any of the areas you enjoy.

### What topic would you like to deal with now?

Interests and leisure

Family and household

Friends and neighbourhood

Volunteering and voluntary commitment

Training and studies

School, childhood and youth

# Training and studies

**In the past**, children learned their parents' profession or did an apprenticeship that promised a secure income. They belong to a generation in which inclinations and interests also played a role in the choice of education and studies. Think back to this time in your own life: What particularly interested you in your training or studies? What were you particularly good at? What did you particularly enjoy doing?

This is what I do/ have done:	(Describe) This is what I do exactly/ have done exactly:	(Find the essence) Therefore, I can/I know:	(Evaluate) This is how I evaluate my skills:
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***



**Sometimes interests change.** Sometimes you only realise in the course of your life what really interests you, what knowledge you would like to acquire or deepen. Retirement is the ideal time for this. Because now you can deepen your knowledge or learn something completely new again without the pressure to perform and succeed. This is especially an opportunity for you, if your choice of education or study was not a subject close to your heart. Take this realisation as an opportunity to find out what you really want to learn, know and be able to do.

**I would be interested in this:**

**I would like to learn this:**

**I would like to be able to do this:**

**I need these skills for this:**

**I already have these skills for this:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing skills already possessed.

**I lack these skills:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing skills currently lacking.

**This way I can compensate for the missing skills:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing strategies to compensate for missing skills.



At the beginning of my professional career, I certainly did not have important skills. The required knowledge hardly played a role in my studies and methods of imparting knowledge were only addressed in theory. The decisive factor was actually always my enthusiasm for certain topics. I was able to convey this to the audience and their positive feedback encouraged me to keep working in my way of lecturing.

**Ursula Lenz**

**What topic would you like to deal with now?**

Interests and leisure

Family and household

Friends and neighbourhood

Volunteering and voluntary commitment

Work and further education

School, childhood and youth



# School, childhood and youth

**Playing with marbles,** going to the swimming pool, playing shop with your friends, enamelling or competing with your classmates in dodgeball – what do you like to remember when you think back to your school days, your childhood and youth? Did you have any favourite subjects at school? What was your favourite thing to do? At school, in your free time? What and with what did you play?



I already had my retirement plan when I was seven years old. I've been working towards this my whole life and I've never given up on the dream.

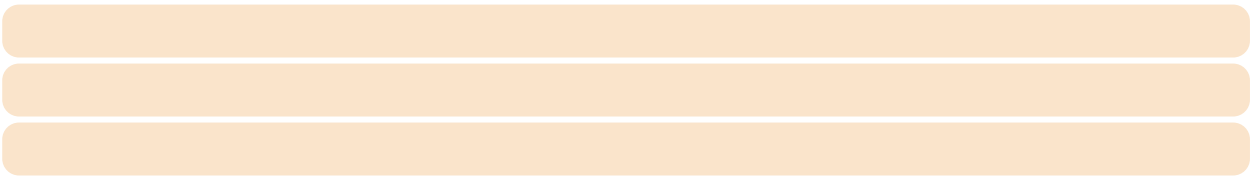
**Birgit Wichmann**

These were my favourite subjects at school:	I particularly enjoyed doing this as a child/teenager:	Therefore, I can/I know:	This is how I evaluate my skills:
---	--	--------------------------	-----------------------------------

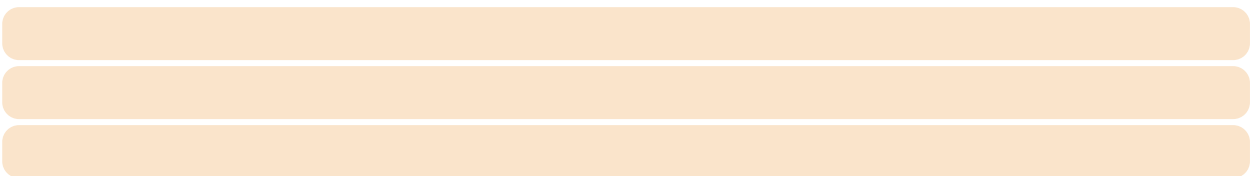
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***
			<input type="checkbox"/> * <input type="checkbox"/> ** <input type="checkbox"/> ***

**As a child, we imagine our future** – completely free from any pressure of reality and without censoring ourselves in our own mind. In this time, we can still do or become anything in our dreams and visions of the future. What did you dream of as a child or teenager when you thought about your future? What did you always want to do or become?

**This was my childhood dream:**



**I really wanted to do this when I was a child:**



Can you still get excited about the dreams of your childhood and youth, and would like to finally realise them? Use the questionnaire to find out how you can get a little closer to realising your dream:

- Do you have the skills you need to realise the dream?
- What skills do you lack?
- How could you compensate for the missing skills?

- What knowledge and skills do you need to realise the dream? Do you have them? If you do not have this knowledge and these skills: How could you obtain them?
- Do your life circumstances allow you to realise this dream?
- Does your health allow it?
- How would your external life circumstances have to change in order for you to realise the dream?

# Result

**You now know** what skills you have. In addition, you have become aware (again) of what gives you pleasure and is important to you. Use this knowledge for the next stage of life and a happy retirement. With the help of the table, you can see how you can have a fulfilled and fulfilling retirement. This is what you do:

1st column: In the first column, enter the skills you have identified.

2nd column: Mark in the middle column which of these skills you would like to use.

3rd column: In the third column you can note in which area or for which activities you would like to use these skills.

4th column: In the fourth column, note what else you need to be able to use your skills in the desired areas.



**Formulate** your goal on the basis of these findings:

**I would like...**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**Can you reach your goal** alone or do you need support? Make a note of who can support you:

**I need...**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.



To find out what I would like to do in retirement, I researched on the internet. I also became aware of some of the opportunities through the daily newspaper, specifically the Caritas soup kitchen (<https://www.caritas.de/diecaritas/wir-ueber-uns/was-wir-machen/was-wir-machen>), the school breakfast and MENTOR – die Leselernhelfer (<https://mentor-bundesverband.de>). Also through conversations with friends who had already retired before me. And then I tried out activities: I took a taster course in playing the steel drum and worked for a day at the food bank (<https://www.tafel.de/>) in Dortmund.

**Petra Neveling**



# Next steps and outlook

**Now it is a matter** of drawing conclusions from the insights gained and planning the next steps. This is important so that you can make the best use of your skills in your retirement and do what you are really good at and what you enjoy.

Of course, this is only possible if your circumstances allow it. Therefore, it is important that you are aware of the key data of your life situation. This also includes involving your immediate environment, especially your family. Because with your new phase of life, many things also change for the people close to you.

The following questions will help you with the reality check:

**What time commitments do you have in retirement? Per week/month?**

**How much time can you realistically devote to your project per week/month?**

**How much time would you need to realise your project?**

**If there is a time gap: How could this be closed?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**Do you have to be considerate of family members because they need you (children, grandchildren, partner, parents)?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**Do you want, are you able or do you have to involve your family members in shaping your retirement?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**Are there any health restrictions that interfere with your project?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**Are there any obstacles to mobility for your project?  
How could these obstacles be overcome?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**Do you need additional financial resources for your project? If so: Are they available to you or do you have the possibility of obtaining these financial resources?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes stacked vertically.

**What skills and knowledge do you need to realise your project?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**How can you gain these skills and knowledge? Through books, online tutorials, conversations with experts or people who are already doing what you want to do?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**Who can help you gain the necessary skills and knowledge?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**How long does it take you to obtain them?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**What can you do until you have gained the skills and knowledge?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**If you want to start with the new task already:**

**How could you compensate for the skills and knowledge you still lack?**

Three horizontal orange rounded rectangular input boxes for writing the answer.

**Record the next steps**

**Within the next week I do:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**Within the next month I do:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**Within three months I do:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**Within six months I do:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**Within a year I do:**

Three horizontal orange bars for writing.

**GOOD LUCK!**

# Many thanks to:



Name: **Norbert Block**  
Age: 69 years  
Occupation: last job trade union secretary

## Activities in retirement

Various voluntary activities, consultant in trade union education work at EFI- Erfahrungswissen für Initiativen Bielefeld e. V. (<https://www.efi-bielefeld.de/>)

## Message

People who are in transition from work to retirement have, in addition to their professional experience and (what I consider at least as important!) their life experience to contribute. Incidentally, it depends on what you want to do as a volunteer. It was clear to me that I wanted to do something completely different from what had defined my professional life.



Name: **Jutta Fürst**  
Age: 69 years  
Occupation: Clerk for specialist bookshop, music shop, public sector administrator, court library assistant, assistant to a blind judge/clerk in court, retired since 2018.

## Retired activity

Cultural ambassador for "Kultur im Koffer" (<https://www.kultur-im-koffer-hamburg.de/>): "We go to senior citizens' groups and church congregations and give small talks, and we show objects and pictures to make the whole thing more vivid. Supervision of an exchange library. Macular consultant for the self-help organisation PRO RETINA Deutschland e. V. ([www.pro-retina.de](http://www.pro-retina.de))

## Message

Be open to new things. For all those who are still working, I recommend that you already pay attention to a good work-life balance. Interests and hobbies are vital. Just as important as good nutrition.

## Many thanks to:



Name: **Ursula Lenz**  
Age: 70 years  
Occupation: Press officer

### Retired activity

Lectures and seminars on aging topics (healthy aging, mental fitness in old age, preparation for retirement, voluntary work in old age, mental illness in old age)

Ursula Lenz has written a 36-page brochure for BAGSO ([www.bagso.de](http://www.bagso.de)), the Federal Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations), which provides the first mental approach to retirement. In addition to the brochure, which can be ordered free of charge from BAGSO at [www.bagso.de](http://www.bagso.de), there is a wealth of working material available for download.



Name: **Ute Matschull-Mesfin**  
Age: 73 years  
Occupation: Banker, political scientist, primary school teacher, women's representative for pedagogic and non-pedagogic staff in the district of Steglitz-Zehlendorf

### Retired activity

Seniorpartner in School e.V. (SiS) (<https://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>)

### Botschaft

Lifelong learning, being active in old age and contact with young people keeps you fit, joyful and young!

# Many thanks to:



Name: **Petra Neveling**  
Age: 63 years  
Occupation: Computer scientist

## Retired activity

Reading mentor at MENTOR – Die Leselernhelfer Dortmund e.V. (<https://mentor-bundesverband.de>), coordinator of the 30 mentors and eight participating primary schools in Castrop-Rauxel as well as board member

## Message

Before retirement, you should deal at an early stage with how you can use the control over your own time sensibly. You should deal with topics that were rather neglected in the past, i.e. trying new things and discussing within the family how to manage the change.



Name: **Ingrid Steegmüller**  
Age: 69 years  
Occupation: Nurse

## Retired activity

Granny au pair (<https://www.granny-aupair.com/de>)

## Message

Get out of your comfort zone, dare to try something new. Free time is something so precious. Use it. At 65, the world is open to you. For me, it's a fountain of youth to do something new again.

## Many thanks to:



Name: **Birgit Wichmann**  
Age: 61 years  
Occupation: Author/copywriter/trainer

### Retired activity

Author/copywriter/trainer

### Message

For people who are transitioning into retirement, I recommend: focus on your own personality and decide according to your own needs. Don't put things on the back burner and make health a top priority.



Name: **Johannes Wiedemann**  
Age: 72 years  
Occupation: Chartered civil engineer/manager of the Bonn municipal building department

### Retired activity

Works for the Senior Expert Service (SES) (<https://www.ses-bonn.de/startseite>), additionally working as an honorary head of department at the SES head office; auditor of building projects for the Behindertengemeinschaft Bonn (<https://bgbonn.org/>)

### Message

Every volunteer receives his or her intangible reward in a personal currency, otherwise he or she would not carry out this activity.



## Addresses and links

**Volunteering** should suit you and match your individual needs, interests and skills. There is a wide range of organisations and institutions that advise people and guide them on the way to choosing a suitable voluntary work. We have compiled some contact points and organisations where you can volunteer. In many towns and communities, in addition to churches and associations looking for volunteer support, there are often volunteer exchanges that bring volunteers together with regional organisations.

### ▶ **Médecins Sans Frontières**

78 Rue de Lausanne  
Case Postale 1016  
1211 Geneva 1  
Switzerland  
Tel: 00 41 22 849 84 84  
E-mail: [office-gva@geneva.msf.org](mailto:office-gva@geneva.msf.org)  
Website: [www.msf.org/](http://www.msf.org/)

### ▶ **Global Volunteers**

375 East Little Canada Road  
St. Paul, MN 55117-1628 USA  
Tel: 800 487 1074  
E-mail: [email@globalvolunteers.org](mailto:email@globalvolunteers.org)  
Website: [globalvolunteers.org](http://globalvolunteers.org)

### ▶ **International Committee of the Red Cross**

19 Avenue de la paix  
1202 Geneva  
Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 734 60 01  
Website: [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)

▶ **Service Civil International**

Belgiëlei 37, 2018, Antwerp (Belgium)  
Tel: +32 (0) 3 226 57 27  
Website: <https://sci.ngo/>

▶ **International Volunteer HQ**

Unit 17 4 Buller Street New Plymouth New Zealand  
Tel: +64-6-758-7949  
E-mail: [info@volunteerhq.org](mailto:info@volunteerhq.org)  
Website: [www.volunteerhq.org](http://www.volunteerhq.org)

▶ **UN Volunteers**

Platz d. Vereinten Nationen 1, 53113 Bonn, Germany  
Tel: +49 228 8152000  
E-mail: [information@unvolunteers.org](mailto:information@unvolunteers.org)  
Website: [www.unv.org](http://www.unv.org)

▶ **Amnesty International**

1 Easton Street, London, WC1X 0DW, UK  
Tel: +44-20-74135500  
E-mail: [contactus@amnesty.org](mailto:contactus@amnesty.org)  
Website: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

▶ **Caritas Internationalis**

Palazzo San Calisto  
Vatican City State  
V-00120  
Tel: + 39 06 698 797 99  
E-mail: [caritas.internationalis@caritas.va](mailto:caritas.internationalis@caritas.va)  
Website: [www.caritas.org](http://www.caritas.org)

▶ **World Vision International**

Roundwood Avenue Stockley Park Uxbridge, Middlesex UB11 1FG, UK  
Tel: 020 7758 2900  
Website: [www.wvi.org](http://www.wvi.org)

▶ **Light for the World International**

Niederhofstr 26  
1120 Vienna, Austria  
Tel: +43 1 810 13 00  
E-mail: [info@light-for-the-world.org](mailto:info@light-for-the-world.org)  
Website: [www.light-for-the-world.org](http://www.light-for-the-world.org)

▶ **Goethe-Institut**

Oskar-von-Miller-Ring 18  
80333 Munich, Germany  
Tel: +49 89 551903-0  
E-mail: [muenchen@goethe.de](mailto:muenchen@goethe.de)  
Website: <https://www.goethe.de/en/index.html>

▶ **International Rescue Committee**

122 East 42nd Street  
New York, New York 10168-1289  
USA  
Tel: + 1 212 551 3000  
E-mail: [communications@rescue.org](mailto:communications@rescue.org)  
Website: [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org)

▶ **Save the Children International**

St Vincent House  
30 Orange Street  
London  
WC2H 7HH  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0)20 3272 0300  
E-mail: [info@savethechildren.org](mailto:info@savethechildren.org)  
Website: [www.savethechildren.net](http://www.savethechildren.net)

▶ **CARE International**

Chemin de Balexert 7-9  
1219 Chatelaine (Geneva)  
Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 795 10 20  
E-mail: [cisecretariat@careinternational.org](mailto:cisecretariat@careinternational.org)  
Website: [www.care-international.org](http://www.care-international.org)

▶ **UNICEF**

125 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038, US  
Tel: +1 (800) 367-5437  
Website: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

▶ **SOS Children's Villages International**

Hermann-Gmeiner-Strasse 51  
6020 Innsbruck  
AUSTRIA  
Tel: +43-512-3310-0  
E-mail: [info@sos-childrensvillages.org](mailto:info@sos-childrensvillages.org)  
Website: [www.sos-childrensvillages.org](http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org)

# ProfilPASS CONVOLUT

## **CONVOLUT – “CONsider your skills for VOLUnTeering”**

The ProfilPASS to prepare for retirement was developed as part of the EU project CONVOLUT »CONsider your skills for VOLUnTeering«, which started in January 2022. The project is aimed at counsellors in six European countries who work with people at the beginning of retirement. They promote their potential and interest in voluntary activities and accompany them in the transition phase to retirement.

CONVOLUT aims to motivate people at the beginning of retirement to do fulfilling and socially relevant voluntary work by giving them impulses and motivating them to self-reflect on their skills and knowledge for voluntary work. Within the framework of the CONVOLUT project, a toolkit (CONVOLUT Toolkit) was developed that contains a wealth of information on volunteer search engines, guides, tools and handouts on the topic of volunteering, aging and the transition to retirement. The materials can be used by the counsellors in the counselling process. However, they can also be used independently by the target group. The ProfilPASS for preparing for retirement forms the core of this CONVOLUT toolkit. The Toolkit is available to download free-of-charge via this link. In addition to the toolkit, the project will develop a curriculum and a manual for counsellors.

The project is carried out by the German Institute for Adult Education – Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE) as coordinating institution in cooperation with partner organisations from Greece, Austria, Sweden, Slovenia and Spain.

The products developed within the project and further information are freely available on the CONVOLUT website.

*<https://convolut.profilpass-international.eu/>*



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

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# ProfilPASS

The ProfilPASS was developed and academically tested in the scope of the joint project “Further education pass with certification of informal learning” as part of the pilot programme “Lifelong Learning”.



German Institute for  
Adult Education  
Leibniz Centre for  
Lifelong Learning



**die Berater**<sup>®</sup>  
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ΔΑΦΝΗ ΚΕΚ



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**ProfilPASS**  
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Lifelong Learning