

32 Career & Life Planning

"What the world needs is more people who know what they really want to do, and who do it at their place of work as their chosen work. The world needs more people who feel true enthusiasm for their work. People who have taken the time to think out what they uniquely can do, and what they uniquely have to offer the world."

-RICHARD BOLLES

(Author of *What Color Is Your Parachute?*)

MATCH GAME

Effective goal setting and decision making begin with a serious consideration of one's interests, skills, and values. These personal characteristics, when integrated with real world options, become the starting point for career and life planning. Effective career and life planning seeks to match your unique personality with specific job requirements.

WHO ARE YOU?

Knowing yourself prepares you to be more effective in making decisions and setting goals. In attempting to determine where you want to go and what you want to do, it is particularly important to determine who you are. It is vital in career and life planning to gain a clear understanding of yourself and firm determination of who you are.

DECISIONS

When you have a strong sense of self-awareness you are better able to make decisions about things that affect your life. You are able to make important choices concerning such things as academic major, activities, marriage, lifestyle, leisure, and career direction.

"We were meant to work in ways that suit us, drawing on our natural talents & abilities as a way to express ourselves & contribute to others. This work is a key to our true happiness & self-expression."

-MARSHA SINETAR

(Author of *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow*)

ACTIVITIES

Think about the activities that you perform on a daily basis. Which ones are your favorites? Which ones are you particularly good at? Which ones do you particularly enjoy? Which ones are the most important to you? Which ones are the most meaningful? These questions are the keys to considering how you feel about the activities you're engaged in. Consider three aspects of all activities... Is this activity something I like to do? (Interest)... Is this activity something I am good at doing? (skill)... Is this activity consistent with what I believe is important? (value)...

INTERESTS

Interests are represented by activities that you like to do. Interests are things you find desirable, enjoyable, fun, or pleasant. Interests are oftentimes reflected in hobbies, recreation, and other leisure pursuits. Interests can be expressed through amusement, sport, diversion, or entertainment. Interests may be defined in terms of pleasure, pastime, relaxation, and avocation.

SKILLS

Skills are represented by activities that you are good at doing. Skills are expressed by ability, strength, talent, and aptitude. Skills determine expertise, competency, proficiency, and dexterity. Skills may be defined in terms of mastery, power, knowledge, and intelligence. Skills are oftentimes reflected in your accomplishments, achievements, and successes.

VALUES

Values are represented by activities that are important to you. Values are reflected in beliefs, priorities, attitudes, feelings, and principles. Values relate to your dispositions, orientations, opinions, and preferences. Values address what really matters most to you in your life and what is essential. Clarifying values provides the criteria by which you determine meaning in your life.