



CAREER 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.

Once you have defined the internal realm of your personality, you then must explore the external world of your career options. Through serious assessment of your personal traits and thorough investigation of various job-related factors, you can effectively make a good match and find a good fit.

DECISIONS

Sound decision-making and goal setting is greatly enhanced when you are able to define the setting and circumstances in which you are the most satisfied and productive. When you have a strong sense of self-awareness and a broad knowledge of your options, 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.

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.

ACTIVITIES

Think about the activities that you perform on a daily basis. Which ones are your favorite? 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 key 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? (values)...



"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*

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.



CAREER EXPLORATION

As you begin the process of choosing a career, and avoiding any blunders, it is extremely important to learn as much as possible about various career options. Your decision making process will be greatly enhanced by your ability to gather good information about the world of work. Based on your analysis of your interests, skills and values... Based on your experience and education... Based on what you know of your personality and lifestyle... What career options might you want to explore? In what ways does your personality mesh with the world of work?

“What you can become is the miracle you were born to be through the work that you do.”

-KURT VONNEGUT

SKILL AREA

What gives you the most satisfaction when applying your talents? Which skills do you wish to use in your job? What skills do you primarily want to work with? Would you rather work with data? people? ideas? or things?

DATA. Working with data involves tasks that are numerical, statistical, precise, or mathematical.

PEOPLE. Working with people involves tasks that are social, service-oriented, interpersonal, managerial, or educational.

IDEAS. Working with ideas involves tasks that are creative, conceptual, innovative, artistic, or expressive.

THINGS. Working with things (or animals) involves tasks that are scientific, physical, manual, athletic, mechanical, or technical.

JOB VALUES

What work environments and employment situations are most conducive to you? What kind of people do you like to work with? Are your personal and emotional needs being addressed? Which job-related values relate to you? In a particular career, occupation, or work setting, what features are desirable, most important, or essential?

Contribution to Society - Helping and improving humanity
High Income - Making a lot of money
Independence - Being your own boss, making decisions
Leadership - Directing, motivating and managing others
Leisure - Having a lot of time off
Prestige - Respect, esteem, status, people look up to you
Security - Steady employment and regular income
Variety - Different challenges, activities, people, places
Advancement - Promotions, upward mobility
Challenge - Work keeps you motivated and interested
Easy Commute - Getting to and from work easily
Flexible Hours - Schedule is flexible
Training - Learning new skills on the job
Pleasant Co-Workers - Working with nice people
Staying Put - Finding work without relocating

WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Have you ever thought about the kind of work you enjoy or the type of activities you most like to do? People who like their jobs generally get to do things they enjoy while they're at work. Their careers fit their personalities. Their job descriptions are consistent with their personal interests. Effective decision-making and career planning seek to match your unique personality with specific job characteristics. To facilitate your self understanding, consider the six different personality types, and their descriptions, and try to determine which combination of descriptions are the most like you... Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional.

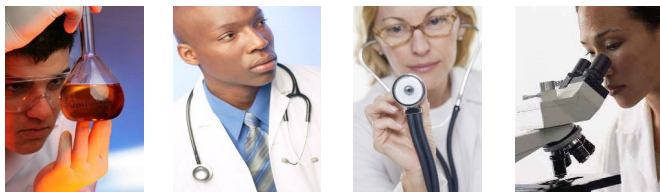


REALISTIC

Realistic people are independent, stable, persistent, genuine, practical, and thrifty. They prefer to deal with things rather than ideas or people. They are doers. They are no-nonsense, down-to-earth individuals. They excel at tasks that are tactile, physical, athletic, or mechanical. They value things that are natural, concrete, and tangible. They like being outdoors, using tools, operating machines, interacting with animals, and working with their hands. They like to build or repair things. They might also tend toward protective, life-saving, and military professions.

INVESTIGATIVE

Investigative people are intellectual, introspective, and inquisitive. They are curious, methodical, rational, analytical, and logical. They excel at tasks that are scholarly, scientific, technical, or medical. They enjoy activities that involve thought, observation, investigation, exploration, and discovery. They are avid readers. They like to solve problems, perform experiments, and conduct research. They enjoy engaging their mental capacities. Their personality is generally expressed in philosophy, religion, history, social sciences, behavioral sciences, and physical sciences.



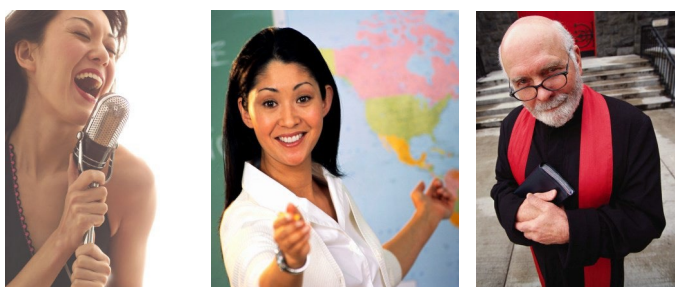
ARTISTIC

Artistic people are creative, intuitive, sensitive, articulate, and expressive. They are unstructured, original, non-conforming, and innovative. They rely on feelings, imagination, and inspiration. They like to work with ideas, abstractions, and concepts. They are spontaneous and open-minded. They are flexible thinkers. They excel at tasks that are literary, verbal, visual, and aesthetic. They like art, music, dance, drawing, painting, sculpting, drafting, writing, drama, language, communicating, design, and fashion.



SOCIAL

Social people typically are kind, generous, cooperative, patient, caring, helpful, empathetic, tactful, and friendly. They excel at socializing, helping others, and teaching. They like collaborative tasks that involve teamwork, establishing rapport, social interaction, relationship building, and the overall improvement of society. They enjoy activities that are public, humanitarian, educational, philanthropic, interpersonal, and service-oriented. They desire to make a difference in people's lives.



ENTERPRISING

Enterprising people are charismatic, adventurous, ambitious, assertive, extroverted, confident, and optimistic. They tend to be energetic and enthusiastic. They are inspirational, persuasive, and motivational. They are promoters, preachers, and cheerleaders. They excel at leadership, law, business, politics, public speaking, and salesmanship. They possess a strong sense of initiative and an entrepreneurial spirit. They like influencing others, being in charge, controlling situations, taking risks, debating, and competing.



CONVENTIONAL

Conventional people are conscientious. They are logical, efficient, orderly, and organized. They are thorough and detail-oriented. They value precision and accuracy. They are reliable. They enjoy practical tasks, quantitative measurements, and structured environments. They are good planners. They enjoy "crunching numbers" and making calculations. They do well with calendars, schedules, and time management. They are good with rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. They excel at accounting, statistics, computers, and clerical tasks. They like mathematics, numerical activities, and office settings.

UNIQUE PERSONALITY

Can you effectively and accurately describe your personality? Can you define yourself in terms of your interests, skills, and values?

Once you have examined your unique personal style and given serious thought to your interests, it is time to consider your career options. What occupation matches your personality? What vocation aligns with your interests? What career is the best fit for someone with your unique traits and characteristics?

The secret to selecting the right goal, the right career, and the right academic major lies in knowing yourself and knowing your options and bringing the two together. Your ability to match your personality to the right work environment is the key to your success and satisfaction.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Before committing to a career goal, it is helpful for college students to expose themselves to as many different experiences as possible. They need to engage in activities that will allow them to explore a wide variety of career options. Students should take time to learn more about themselves, meet new people, try new things, and study the world around them. They need to find out what types of career paths are possible and be open to new, foreign, and unfamiliar experiences and ideas.

RESEARCH YOUR OPTIONS

It is very important that you thoroughly examine your career options. Effectively investigating or researching a particular career involves gathering relevant data about the realities of the field and the required training and skills. Gaining in-depth knowledge about various occupations is critical to your success as a professional. The best sources of information related to careers are printed materials, on-line data, people in the field, and your own firsthand personal experience.

By using the resources you have available to you to research and explore your career options, you can enter the job market well prepared. Moreover, you will develop a great sense of confidence and focus that will empower you as you venture forward in pursuit of your career.

PRINTED MATERIAL

A wide range of books and other printed material are available addressing such topics as career choice, the job market, and information on specific careers. This kind of published information is generally accessible through school and public libraries and career resource centers. Additional data can be obtained from company reports, corporate literature, industrial directories, chambers of commerce, professional organizations, and government agencies.

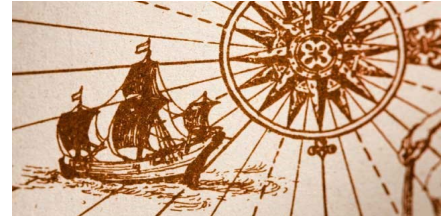
INTERNET RESOURCES

Whether you are researching a company or industry or gathering specific career data, an increasing amount of information is available on-line. Through various search engines, a computer user can access specific information very quickly by entering key words, titles, or topics. There are websites devoted to particular career sectors or industries that offer detailed information. There are on-line directories and databases that organize career information into categories and provide job-specific data.

“Where your talents and the needs of the world cross, there lies your vocation.”

-ARISTOTLE

Occupational Outlook Handbook	www.bls.gov/oooh
My Plan	www.myplan.com
Career Overview	www.careeroverview.com
My Majors	www.mymajors.com
Career One Stop	www.careeronestop.org
The Career Project	www.thecareerproject.org
Career Ship	www.mappingyourfuture.org
Career Profiles	www.careerprofiles.info
How to Become Any Career	www.becomeopedia.com



PEOPLE IN THE FIELD

Identify key players or prominent figures in your particular field of interest. You may meet these people through career fairs, conventions, conferences, professional meetings, or your teachers, counselors and advisors. An effective way to find out about a career is to talk with people who are actually working in that career. This can be accomplished through any number of methods by which you can meet and interact with professionals in your field, including informational interviews (or informational discussions), mentorships, or job shadowing. Personal interaction with people in the field provides you the opportunity to gather real world insight, professional advice, and firsthand observations.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Perhaps the best way to learn what a career is actually like is to experience it personally. You can obtain this firsthand experience, or subjective exposure to a particular career, through a variety of relatively risk-free arrangements. Take a course related to your field of interest. Join a club or organization related to your field of interest. Do volunteer work in your field of interest. Get a part-time job in your field of interest. Get an internship in your field of interest. By “getting your feet wet” or “getting your hands dirty” you can easily determine if you are a good fit for the career path you are considering.



University of Montevallo

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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