

Self Assessments

Taking time alone and with others to think and talk about your career plans can help you in pursuing a direction that will be satisfying to you, both in terms of maintaining your interest in a field and finding a wage that will support you. To help you begin thinking of a direction or to get confirmation of a career choice you've already made, students often use self assessments to learn about their specific strengths, values and interests as they relate to a career.

These assessments are like snapshots; they describe you here and now. You are a growing and changing person and as time goes on your career preferences will change with you. Nowadays, most people will change occupations at least seven times. As workers in a very fluid and expanding economy, we must be ready mentally to redesign our careers and possibly pursue additional education. The assessments you take now can point you to a career preference; you may want to do similar self reflection every five or so years to stay aware of changes in the workplace and changes in your own interests and preferences.

We encourage you to talk with an advisor about your results. They can often provide a context for your results so they will make sense to you. You can use the information you gain from the assessments as you write your resume and cover letter and prepare for interviews, whether for jobs or application to graduate school.

Identifying Your Strengths, Interests and Values

You can also access several assessments at the following sites. Some are available online and some have a cost attached to them.

- Strong Interest Inventory http://www.careers-by-design.com/strong_interest_inventory.asp
- Meyers Briggs Type Inventory <http://www.knowyourtype.com/mbti.html>
- The Career Key <http://www.careerkey.org/>
- Campbell Interest and Skill Survey <https://www.profiler.com/>

Exploring Your Options

When you've completed some assessments and have several careers you want to learn more about, go to the following two websites and get detailed information on different occupations. You'll find information on duties, training required, wages, ten-year projection and more. Occupational Outlook Handbook covers occupations nation wide. Another way to get useful information on occupations is to do informational interviews with people who currently work in an occupation that interests you.

If you know the field or occupation you want to enter or you have several career possibilities from assessments you took, go to the website below and get details on them. For each occupation, you'll find information on duties that will be required of you, training you need to get the position, wages at entry and as you advance, ten-year projection for the occupation and more. You'll also find other related occupations that might be of interest that you had not initially considered.

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/> **Occupational Outlook Handbook**. Click the A – Z index to get national information on occupations.

Another way to get some valuable information on occupations is to do informational interviews with people who currently work in a field or job that interests you. Read the handout on Informational Interviewing.

As you become more informed about different occupations and career choices, you'll find you can use that knowledge in your resume, cover letter and interview script. Because you're more knowledgeable about occupational demands and what will best suit you, you'll be better prepared to talk with employers, graduate school representatives, and faculty about your career plans.