

Career Direction²™

SAMPLE

PRIORITIES
PERSONALITY STYLES
CAREER INTERESTS
ABILITIES
PERSONAL MOTIVATION
TRAINING & EDUCATION
JOB-FINDING STRATEGIES
DECISION-MAKING SKILLS
SETTING GOALS

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A comprehensive guide to planning your future



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»» step 1 what's important to you?

Everyone has the desire to win – it is the willingness to prepare that makes the difference between failure and success.

Whether running marathons, raising a family, or earning a living, we all want success. But not everyone is willing to pay the price to prepare for success.

Some people work just to pay their bills. Others enjoy their careers.

At this stage you have to decide if you want to:

- Go straight into the work force
- Go to college
- Go to a technical school
- Join the military

Maybe you want to do some combination of these options – your choices are limitless! Believing this statement is a key to preparing for success.

Perhaps your plan is all mapped out. More than likely, though, you are still trying to figure out what your future will look like and what you want to do.

Even when you've selected, prepared for, and started a career, things can change. Actually, the average person changes jobs more than 10 times during his/her working career! When planning your career, you should consider four important areas covered in the first half of

this workbook: your **Priorities**, your **Personality**, your **Interests**, and your **Abilities**.

Success is different for each person. Earning a high income? Serving as a missionary in a third-world country? Being a stay-at-home parent? There is no right or wrong answer – since it is your life, it depends on your priorities.

Success, as you define it, starts with understanding the priorities that are right for you.

Priorities

Knowing your priorities means knowing what is important to you. Your priorities are an integral part of who you are.

Sometimes priorities compete. You may have to decide between a “good” choice and a “bad” choice. But sometimes you have to decide between a “good” and a “best” choice.

Here's an example:

Your boss has offered you a promotion with a huge salary increase. The catch? You'll have to relocate, which means you can't finish your master's degree in the next six months. With a master's, you would be more marketable and qualified for an even higher-paying position. Which priority is more important: a higher salary now or finishing your master's and delaying that pay raise?



Jill Stevens

Former SGT, Utah National Guard, Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan Veteran; National Guard – Medic; Civilian – Registered Nurse; Former Miss Utah

To be successful in life, you must be true to yourself.

»» step 2 understanding personality styles

per·son·al·i·ty noun

The complex of all the attributes – behavioral, temperamental, emotional, and mental – that characterize a unique individual.

Source: Vocabulary.com

Forget a “good” or “bad” personality, just think of personalities as *different*. Everyone has *different* strengths and weaknesses – not just one style of relating to other people. Most people exhibit slightly different behavior depending on the setting – at home, at work, or with friends. Understanding personality styles will help you gain insight into yourself. Understanding why you behave the way you do is a key step to improving relationships!

get a picture of your personality

On each line, choose one statement that applies to you more often than the other statement.

- I usually move somewhat slower than others. - or - I usually move somewhat faster than others.
 I usually pay more attention to processes. - or - I usually pay more attention to relationships.

pace and preference

PROCESS-ORIENTED CHARACTERISTICS:

Focus is more on procedures and results (perhaps details) than relationships. Goal-oriented, consistent, and dependable.

Likely to make decisions based on research and data.

SLOWER-PACED CHARACTERISTICS:

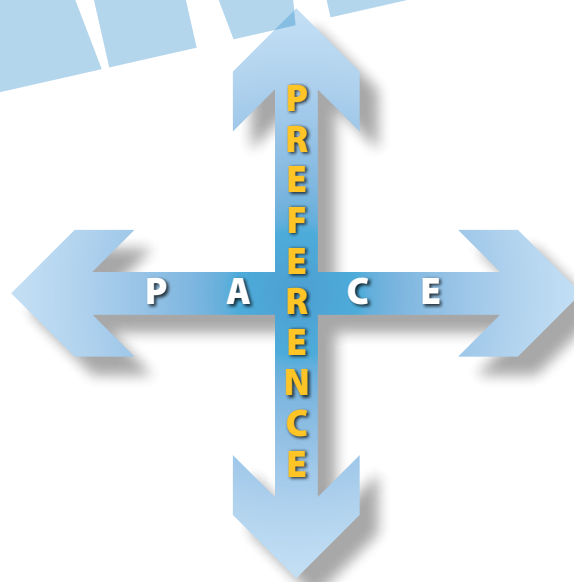
More laid-back -- talks slower, walks slower, takes more time to think before acting. Doesn't get in a hurry.

More inclined to ask questions than tell how to do things.

FASTER-PACED CHARACTERISTICS:

Walks faster, talks faster, reacts faster, makes decisions faster. Always seems to be in a hurry.

Often willing to state opinions and direct how things should be done.



RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED CHARACTERISTICS:

Focus is on nurturing relationships more than accomplishing a specific goal or completing a project.

Likely to make decisions based on gut “instinct” instead of research.

What would you enjoy doing?

In choosing your future career, one very important thing for you to consider is your interests – what you actually enjoy doing.

What you enjoy today is probably a good indicator of what you would enjoy as a career in the future.

In your free time, what do you like to do? Do you have a hobby? Playing sports? Listening to music? Being with your friends? Reading? The things you enjoy about your hobby can be incorporated into your career.

Think about it – if you don't enjoy an activity, you probably won't be motivated to invest time improving your skills and you probably won't be very successful. But you can choose a career you will actually enjoy!

In steps 1 and 2, you considered your priorities and personality style. Now it is time to think about what you enjoy! Some people are more hands-on and love outside activities. Other people love puzzles, math, science, and solving problems. Some want to teach or serve others, and some love art and communications. Where do you fit? There are validated tools available that are designed to help students like you discover their career interests.

Perhaps you have already taken the **ASVAB Find Your Interests** (FYI). If so, then the whole idea of connecting activities to careers probably makes sense to you. If you haven't taken it, it can be a great help. Check with your counselor to find out how to arrange it. It will help you focus on the activities you enjoy now, and also help you understand how those activities relate to possible future occupations.

Those who are the most successful in their careers have a passion for their jobs.

Passion for your job means more than simply enjoying the work you do. It makes your work a "calling" – it is what you feel you are supposed to be doing with your life. One thing is certain – you'll never develop your career passion until you discover your career interests.

If you are going to spend the next 35-45 years in a career, doesn't it make sense to figure out now how you can be most successful and happy in that career?

Some people love their jobs. They feel "called." They are passionate about their work.



»» step 4 BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR SKILLS

Assessing your skills

If you don't develop your career skills, no matter how much you care about your job, you won't perform very well. Poor performers get fired! The good news is skills can be learned. It is important for you to realistically evaluate your aptitudes and skills in choosing a career, because those skills you have a natural ability for can be mastered more easily.

Choices that work for you!

Be realistic when evaluating your abilities and those of your competition. At work, you are expected to perform well. Raises and awards must be earned. It is important to compare your real abilities to your competition.

Future Needs

What kinds of jobs will be needed in the future? The jobs many of you will be doing in 10 years don't even exist today! Only a few years ago, no one had ever heard of a smartphone, much less a smartphone app!

Some things are certain, however:

- As long as people have children, we will need teachers.
- As long as there is illness, we will need health-care providers.
- As long as there is crime, we will need law enforcement officials.
- As long as people need houses, we will need architects and builders.

BUT be realistic –

- Very few people make it to the professional level in sports (even then their careers are short)!
- Very few people actually make it to Hollywood!

Important: As you continue to mature and experience life, your primary interests and priorities may not change very much – BUT you can continually improve your abilities.

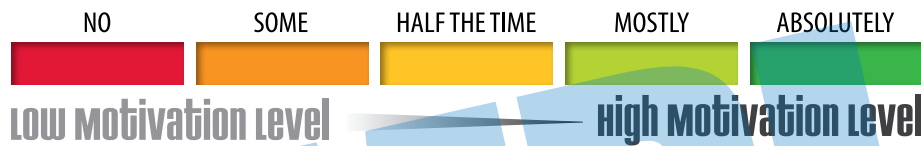


step 5 personal motivation

Motivation is defined as the general desire or willingness of someone to do something. Your motivation level may be high for some actions (video games or your favorite school subject), but low for others (taking out the trash or your least favorite school subject).

In Step 5 consider your personal level of motivation as it relates to preparing for your future.

Personal motivation is quite complex, varies from situation to situation, and can change over time. Think about your general level of motivation as it relates to preparing now for your future. This exercise is intended to guide your thinking. Rate yourself for each of the nine items below, and consider where the majority of your responses fall along the scale.



1. I work hard on tasks even when things are difficult.



2. I make positive changes when I am not doing as well as I would like (examples: study more, ask for help).



3. I complete school assignments on time.



4. I take the steps I need to take to achieve my career goal.



5. My friends are supportive of me as I work toward my goals.



6. I have good study habits.



7. I cope with stress in healthy ways such as exercising.



8. I do not let just having fun interfere with my responsibilities.



9. I expect that my hard work will pay off.



Most jobs require at least some education or training beyond high school. There are five primary sources of education or training. In addition, most technical schools and two- and four-year colleges offer distance learning programs online. It is never too late!

on-the-job training (OJT)

Most employers provide training for new employees that is job-specific and teaches skills necessary to perform specific job functions such as operating tools and equipment. OJT allows you to enter the work force rapidly but it may not be oriented to long-range development. Apprenticeship programs are also available for certain trade professions such as plumber, electrician, mason, etc.

Technical, Trade, & Business colleges

These schools will teach you specific skills or trades, such as welding, auto mechanics, administrative skills, accounting, dental hygiene, cosmetology, electronics, computer programming, etc. The skills prepare you for job entry into specific trades, professions, or career fields. Some fields, such as certified software engineer, can be pursued online.

Military service schools

The military provides skills training in over 100 different jobs. Military service can also help you develop leadership and interpersonal skills. The Army National Guard allows you to get this training while remaining primarily in your community. The Guard also has many programs to help you pay for your education or training.

Two-year junior or community colleges

Junior or community colleges can usually be found close to home and are less expensive than a four-year college or university because the students usually live at home. These colleges offer an associate's degree, certificate of completion, or diploma.

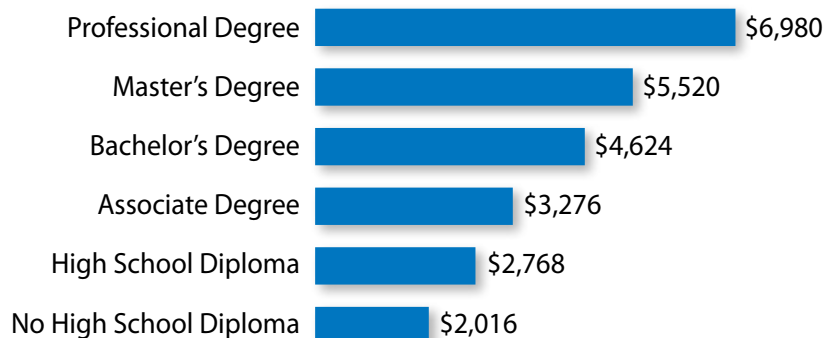
Four-year colleges or universities

A bachelor's degree and higher-level degrees are valuable for the total development of the individual. Studies have shown the average college graduate will earn a much higher income than the non-graduate in a lifetime. This makes the time investment worthwhile.

is education worth it? you decide.



The further you take your education, the more money you will likely earn in the long run. Estimated monthly earnings for people who have:



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Functional resume outline

Personal data:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- E-mail address

Career skills and accomplishments:

Organize by categories such as Administration, Research, Communication, Management, Marketing, Sales, etc. For each, list:

- Special skills learned: Computer skills, ability to operate special equipment, etc.
- Accomplishments (backed by facts and figures)

Education:

Your high school, college, plus other courses/training (list highest degree first)

- Name of school
- Date of graduation or completion
- Degree or certificate received (list major and minor courses of study)
- Scholarships, honors, and awards

Work History, by Job or Position (optional):

List each job separately (even if the jobs were in the same company). Start with your most recent job and work backwards. For each job list:

- Dates of employment
- Name and location of employer (you may want to describe the type of business)
- Your position or title
- Specific job duties and scope of responsibility (how many people you supervised, etc.)

For example - Military Experience:

If you are a member of the National Guard, list the information here. Include the following:

- Unit, length of service, and rank
- Major duties, including details of assignments related to the job you seek
- Any pertinent military training (may be shown here or under Education)

Miscellaneous:

If appropriate to your field of work, give information such as: knowledge of world languages, volunteer work, clubs, leisure activities or hobbies, awards, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, etc.

References (optional):

Provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three people who have knowledge of your work competence. If still in school, you may list teachers who are familiar with your school work. Always obtain permission from the people you list as references. Some career counselors suggest you provide references only when requested.



Selling Yourself during the interview

- Be early for your interview – no excuses!
- Go in by yourself – even if a friend is also applying for the job.
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and look him or her in the eye.
- Stand until you are asked to sit. Don't slouch – look alert.
- Silence your phone and no chewing gum.
- Answer interview questions honestly and briefly – in a clear voice (no mumbling!).
- Be pleasant and friendly but avoid long stories.
- Don't discuss personal problems and don't criticize former employers or coworkers.
- You can ask about the salary range (not specifics at first) but don't bring it up right away.
- Ask when you may call to find out the decision.
- Thank the employer for the interview (offer a handshake when saying thank you).

Following up after the interview

- Send a thank-you letter immediately after the interview (see page 28).
- Call the day the hiring decision is to be made and express your desire for the job.
- If you are not hired, ask how you can improve your interview skills and if they know of other possible employers.

Evaluate and make your interview a learning experience

- Was your appearance similar to the employees you met at the company?
- What kind of impression did you make?
- How can you improve your next interview?

Interview Exercise Videos

J-BALL	Strengths	J@Y TEK	Strengths
			
	Weaknesses		Weaknesses
JAY COOL	Strengths	JASON WRIGHT	Strengths
			
	Weaknesses		Weaknesses

The Internet and the workplace:

Once material is online, it can be there forever.

- Avoid sending non-business messages to coworkers or customers.
- Never use your work computer for personal use such as browsing, checking blogs, personal e-mail, posting on social media, or instant messaging.

Workplace neatness:

Keep your private workspace neat. Areas like the break room and the bathroom are even more crucial for neatness.

- Don't overload your workspace with personal items.
- Look around at coworkers' spaces for an example of what is acceptable.



Outside of the office:

Your actions away from work can have a negative impact.

- Dating someone who works with you can create uncomfortable situations.
- Your online reputation through anything you post is public knowledge.
- Don't post anything you wouldn't want your boss to see!
- Remember that cell phone pictures and videos taken at parties, ball games – away from work – can be easily downloaded and posted online. Just because it is not on the job doesn't mean it won't hurt your reputation at work.
- Credit problems, your driving record, and law violations can hurt your career.

Lifestyle ... the choices you make tonight can hurt your job performance tomorrow!

Office talk:

Friendliness is important. Too much friendliness can hurt.

- Avoid gossip and rumors.
- Never use foul language in the workplace.
- Sexually inappropriate or culturally offensive comments or behavior will get you fired.

Name:

The National Guard can help you reach your goals.

I think I'd like to...

- Serve my country
- Gain career-building and leadership skills
- Get money for my college or training
- Earn good pay with excellent benefits
- Excel in a military *and* a civilian career

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