

PART I

**PLANNING
YOUR
CAREER**

HIRE ME!

**THANK
YOU!**

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Career planning or job hunting? Perhaps you need to make some career changes. Many individuals plunge right into the job search. That “Just Do It” approach often creates unfortunate career issues.

Job hunting is part of a broader career planning process. You may need to step back, take time, and review your personal situation before just assuming that the solution is a new job. Like most things in life, you need a well thought out plan.

Part I is essential reading. Your goal is to maximize your chances for a successful career decision. Sound career decisions demand advance planning. If you jump from job to job without regard for long-term strategic planning, you may be paying some significant costs for your long-term career success.

Part I, “Planning Your Career,” lays the foundation for this book and is what makes this book different from the hundreds of job hunting books on the market. It asks you to take charge of your working life by stepping back so you can get a glimpse of the future possibilities before you must embrace them.

With the big picture in mind, you can begin to make more intelligent decisions that may affect your working life for many years. The focus of Part I is career goal setting.

Part II, “Exploring Your Management Career Options,” helps you implement the decisions you made in Part I. This section permits you to monitor the plans and decisions you made by establishing feedback monitoring information so earlier decisions can be fine tuned. The end results are some realistic job targets, albeit preliminary.

Part III, “Developing Your Job Search Tools,” is designed to help you prepare the tools for your job search and implement a planned strategy for achieving your goals. Part III covers resume preparation, cover letter design, networking, web researching, search strategies, prospecting, interview preparation, presentations, and employment communications.

When integrated together, all parts of this book put you in **control** of your working life. Planning, organizing, and controlling your career provides the basic input for the guiding principle in this book. The **goal-directed behavior** that emerges from this career plan approach is the basic lesson.

Planning, organizing, and controlling your career works extremely well if you follow the strategies and techniques offered. Once the overall plan is well grounded, this book can then become a quick reference handbook that you may return to many times in your career reviewing and job search phases of career planning.

Throughout the text, many websites are identified with a URL. Like all websites, URL addresses often change. You may have to locate the site, if it still exists, by using a search engine like Yahoo.com or google.com.





CHAPTER

1

CAREER PLANNING:

Assessment – Exploration – Search

What is career planning?

Is “career planning” just another name for “job hunting”? The past has taught us a lot about careers. The following words are part of our vocabulary and need no definitions: Overeducated . . . Underemployed . . . Pink Slip . . . RIF . . . Displaced Worker . . . Affirmative Action . . . Protected Class . . . Out-placement . . . Baby Boom . . . Enrollment Decline . . . Job Competition . . . Foreign Competition . . . Glut of Job Seekers . . . Outplaced . . . Downsized . . . Terminated . . . Early Retired.

The wealth of a nation is not just its natural resources; it is also its people. The world is not only changing; it is moving at extreme speeds.

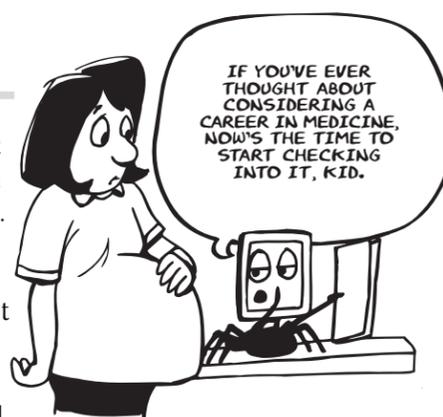
You simply cannot shuffle into and out of jobs indiscriminately. The situation calls for much forethought and the need to look at the future. **Hire Me!** offers an action plan and creates a strategic plan! Do you have a strategic career plan?

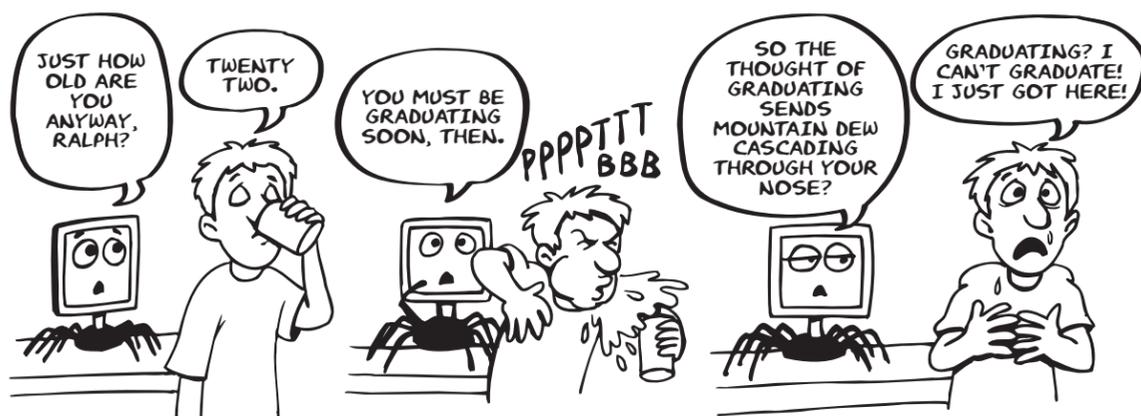
Career Planning

The job search is only one part of your career plan.

Every organization creates strategic plans that influence their long-term direction for their products and services. You also need a strategic plan.

Career planning is an individual activity. In a free society, no giant bureaucratic organization dares chart courses for you to follow. You cannot survive happily for very long unless you take responsibility for the course of your life.





The declining lifespan of many jobs (and even entire career fields) demands a personal planning posture. The short job lifecycles may force you to make “rolling decisions” annually in order to regenerate new career options.

Career planning is not just another name for job hunting. Career planning is conceptually and practically different. Job searching is only one component of career planning.

The future is not limited to your “formal” education. Lifelong education continually renews your capabilities and energies.

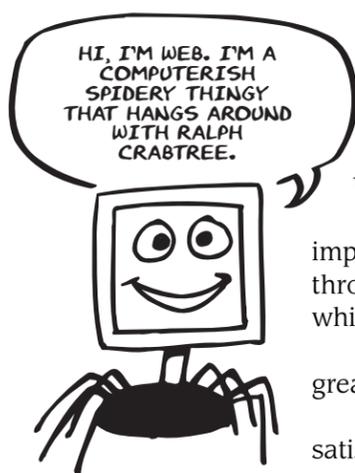
Planning Ahead

Exciting productivity advancements imply that more work will be done with the human mind than with physical skills. Enhanced efficiency is common in manufacturing, marketing, and finance. Technology is spreading to all career fields.

The starting point for tomorrow’s careers are the specific jobs of today. Tomorrow’s skills will likely build upon those required in today’s jobs. Career planning is a process that changes over time. It is not static. You need to adjust to rapid change.

Career planning is a bold, exciting approach. It will enrich your life. Planning implies more work now, but the returns throughout your life will pay excellent dividends.

The jobs of today may not be the jobs of tomorrow.



The Work Setting

The future . . . what will it hold? The world of work holds open a massive array of work possibilities. Work is a significant part of your life.

Success is often defined in terms of significant work achievements.

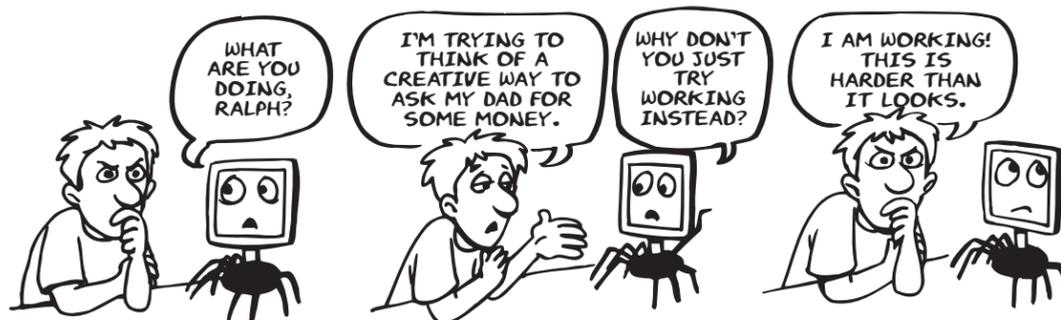
Watch the newspaper obituaries cite these past work achievements daily.

From about age 20 until age 60, the American value system places great importance upon work activities. Work is frequently defined as the process through which you earn the resources that allow you to live in a manner to which you desire.

The great philosopher Voltaire once said that work “spares us from three great evils: boredom, vice, and need.”

The proper work *activity* and work *environment* can be sources of much satisfaction in life.





Life Decisions

Career planning is an ever-changing, individually controlled activity.

Three of the most important decisions people make in life relate to buying an automobile, investing in a home, and choosing a marriage partner. Hours, days, weeks, and months are spent making these decisions. Every aspect is usually analyzed very thoroughly. Those decisions usually have long-term impacts on happiness.

Deciding what to do tonight and where to go next Saturday night are important to most people. Many hours go into making "Saturday night" types of decisions.

Work is too important to leave to chance. Nonetheless, thousands of people let their lives haphazardly fall into work activities and allow important decisions to be made for them by others and by happenstance.

Why not spend some time planning for a lifetime of work activity? Is that not just as important as the decision about which car, stereo, or house to purchase?

Why do most people spend so much time on the minor decisions in life and so little time on decisions that can mean so much? Your quality of life is greatly enhanced by a job that makes sense to you.

Significance of Planning

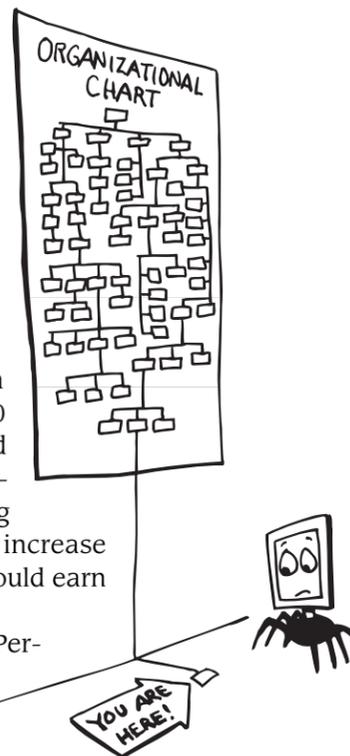
Career planning is directed toward those individuals who are seeking careers in managerial, technical, or professional fields. Although applicable to a very wide age range, the most directly affected age category is the 20 to 40 age range.

Most positions in the fields we will deal with in this book currently pay salaries in the \$30,000 to \$90,000 range, depending upon the required education level and experience, the type of position, and supply/ demand. Assuming a starting salary of \$40,000 annually at age 22 and a 5% increase per year until retirement at age 65, a person could earn several *million* dollars in a lifetime.

Career decisions are *significant* decisions! Perhaps no other decision that you make has such a major impact on your economic well-being.

Your career is a series of work activities that you enjoy.

How much time should you spend in analyzing your life's work endeavors?





Satisfaction comes from knowing that you recognized the challenge and then took a deliberate course of action to achieve your career, life, and personal goals.

Career decisions influence your life for many years.

Life Planning

You are not restricted to one career for your whole life! A person may carry out several unrelated work roles over time. Why can't you be a business executive, a doctor, and an architect in your lifetime?

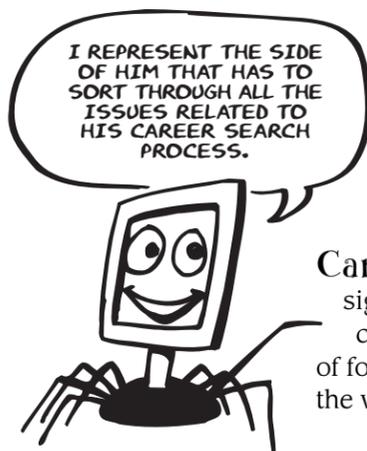
Planning involves setting goals that can be realistically achieved. Goals motivate us.

The basis of life planning is setting achievable personal objectives. Career planning is a major element of life planning. For some work-oriented people, life planning is career planning. The two are often interrelated, especially for workaholics. Career and economic ambitions often drive people to great career and personal heights.

You need a plan to achieve your goals.

Career Jargon

Some career planning professionals often throw a fair share of jargon at people they counsel. There are several words that when taken out of context have multiple meanings. Let's explore the basics.



Job. A job is a work situation taken for the purpose of earning wages for completing a task, a series of tasks, or a definitive piece of work. A job frequently is temporary in nature and the word seldom implies a long-term commitment to a given type of work. A job rarely requires a long training period for mastery of the work assigned. However, a job can be the starting point or intermediate step in your career.

Career. A career is a work experience that you elect to pursue during a significant period of time in life. A career involves a relatively long-term commitment to a given work activity. A career requires a significant level of formal education, training, and background for satisfactorily performing in the work area. It may involve a series of related job experiences.



Planning. Planning means devising a scheme for doing, making, or arranging a project, program, or schedule. Planning is a *process* that occurs over time and one that adjusts itself when new information becomes available.

Planning involves charting a course of action and then adjusting the course as the situation changes from the originally hypothesized projection.

What Is Career Planning?

Career planning is an activity that occurs throughout your working lifetime. It is futuristic. Career planning is distinct from life planning. Life planning is more likely to integrate a broader array of planning variables such as early childhood, family, religion, values, leisure, retirement, and other personal goals.

Career planning is a subcomponent of life planning that draws upon many of the same background variables, but it focuses attention on the *work activity* and *work environment*. Clearly, there are many instances in which career and life planning cannot be completely separated.

Career planning reverts to solely job hunting unless three activities are addressed individually and in concert.



Career planning is a process that draws upon three major planning activities: self-assessment, career exploration, and job search.

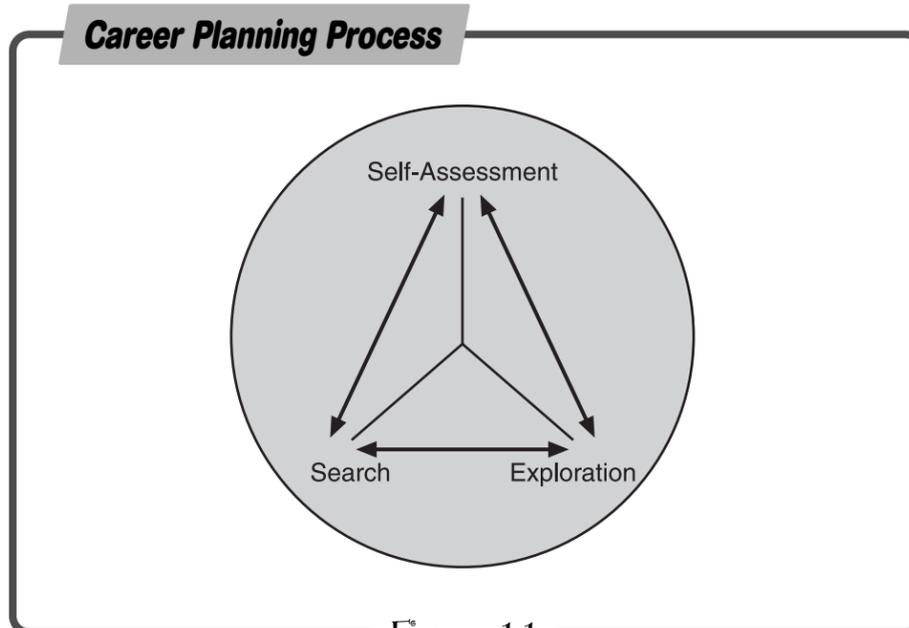


Figure 1.1



Assessment, exploration, and search form the framework of sound career planning. The concept builds a method of appraising career potential, exploring various alternatives, and implementing an action plan designed to achieve a predetermined set of career goals.

Self-Assessment

The purpose of career decision making is to aid you in obtaining a career position consistent with your academic training, past work experiences, personality, abilities, aptitudes, values, and interests.

Know thyself.

Your self-assessment is a sound understanding of all your personal characteristics.

Socrates referred to this understanding with the term “know thyself.” This is a process through which you come to know yourself better.

The self-assessment is an activity that you should do on an annual basis. It is a structured event that guides you in creating a wealth of information about yourself from a variety of sources.

Career exploration is a process of elimination

Only after assembling all of the pieces of information together can you begin to step back and develop a big picture. These elements can then be used to identify broader trends useful in plotting future directions.

The collecting, analyzing, and evaluating of information about **you** creates a much higher level of awareness about *all* of your personal qualities, especially about your life goals.

A framework organizes thoughts in a meaningful way and permits a much more detailed specification of background characteristics.

Although this process is a very personal decision, you may wish to enlist the aid of advisors, friends, and numerous publications. Exercises, projects, tests, and other instruments aid in revealing your attributes. Next, your attributes can be organized and meaningfully related to your career options.

Career exploration means . . . Investigating your career options in a systematic manner.

Career Exploration

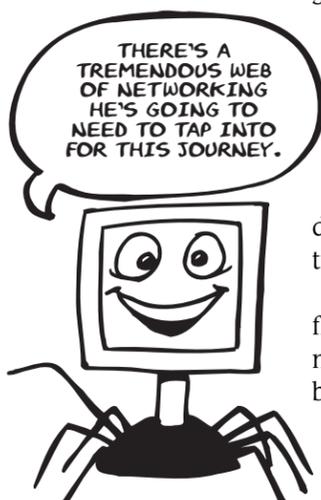
What types of career options are available to someone with your background and interests? The number of options is often staggering. Although the self-assessment helps narrow the list by discarding conflicting and nonrelevant options, the list is usually still long.

Exploration starts with a massive list of potential alternatives. You then develop an array of information on each alternative, and based upon the results of your self-assessment, you begin to sort out those of only marginal interest.

Even after the sorting process, many of us discover that there are many different activities that we enjoy doing. That is where the real in-depth investigation begins.

For every option, you will discover a wealth of information. Information flows to you from a variety of sources. Unfortunately, there is no single information source available to reference. The internet and library will be your best sources.

Career exploration involves digging into a mass of information with the objective of narrowing the scope of career alternatives. Thousands of alternatives may be discarded on the basis of job title alone.



Job Search

The search process begins with a preliminary decision to seek employment in a given career option. Your “**tentative**” decision may be revised several times as you test your decisions.

The job search process also adds information to your self-awareness and career exploration as you progress farther and deeper into this third phase of career planning.

The self-assessment and career exploration steps are never complete.

In this exciting age of technological change, human growth, and personal enrichment opportunities, career planning is a dynamic process.

Job searching is convincing another person to hire you. The individuals in the work setting with whom you will interview must be convinced that your goals are compatible with their goals. Work gets accomplished best when there are common interests and compatible goals.

Even if you decide to become self-employed (such as in a profession or business owner), the goals that you establish for your life endeavor must still show compatibilities between your self-assessment and activities in your future work setting.

Many people view the search phase as simply “job hunting.” They consider it to be resume preparation, cover letter creation, contact sourcing, interviewing, and offer negotiating. Yes, it does include these basic activities, however, those are short-run techniques. They are not the necessary sound “strategic planning” that contributes to real job satisfaction.

Search is a sales activity. Successful selling begins with finding a need (or desire) and closes with satisfying the customers’ desires.

Search success depends upon matching your goals with an employer’s job requirements. Perfect matches rarely occur. Your odds for personal success increase substantially if you can bring your goals as close as possible with those of a potential employer, your customer.

Finally, the employment process is decision oriented. Success depends upon career goals matching job requirements. Without compromise, the match may never occur. Employment calls for a firm decision at a given point in time.

Time pressures force career choices. Time places pressure on the need for compromise. A preplanned time and decision framework permits a rational decision process based upon a realistic evaluation of the current work environment.

Search must be viewed in the total framework of the career planning process. A search strategy, without self-assessment and career exploration, is tantamount to taking whatever is available. This is an unwise strategic plan!

Career planning is a dynamic strategic planning process that will occur throughout your working life.

The Job Search employs tools, techniques, and strategies designed to locate a career position that best matches your self-assessment with the career options you have chosen to explore.





Integrated Concepts

Initially, you may complete each of the three major career planning components as an independent project. But the career planning process cannot be optimally successful without viewing each activity as part of an integrated system.

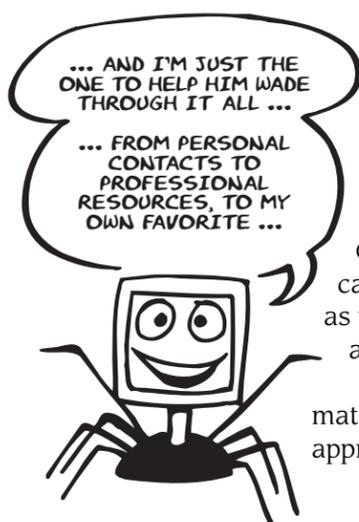
Important feedback loops in each component tend to reinforce or modify earlier preliminary decisions. There is a continuous recycling of information and thus adjustment and modification of earlier decisions.

The variances between your "I want to" and "I am qualified to" force compromises

Compromise

As the process continues, compromises occur. Your self-assessment leads to a much more accurate view of yourself, and the picture becomes more and more clearly defined as new information is added from your career exploration activity.

The job search activity feeds real-world career information into the model. As a result, specification and clarification, adjusted by necessary compromises, begin to firm up an overall career plan. These compromises and adjustments require time and thought to refine.

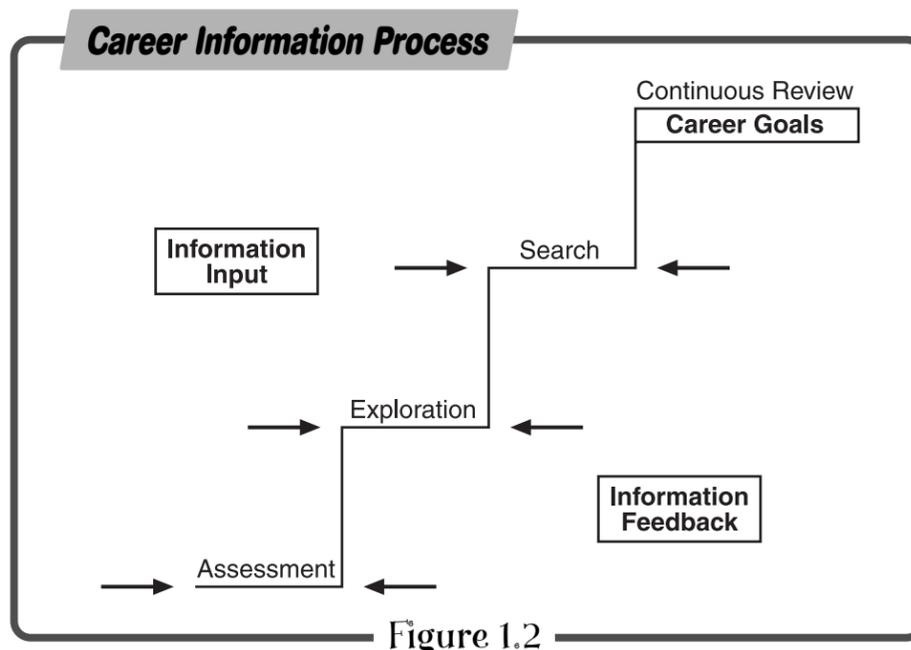


Feedback Loops

Career planning is thought to be "completed" upon acceptance of a career-related assignment with a specific employer. Another phase sets in as work-related experiences add new information to the process. However, a sound strategy continually evolves.

Strategic reevaluation phases continue throughout life. The new information continually is fed back into the career planning model and you make appropriate adjustments over your working life.





Process

Career planning can be viewed as a logical, patterned sequential approach to the task of assessing, analyzing, and deciding how you want to perform in a work setting.

Career planning is a series of events that recur over and over through a planned pattern controlled by you. Sound career planning is designed to renew itself continually over time. This is a life journey, not an event in life.

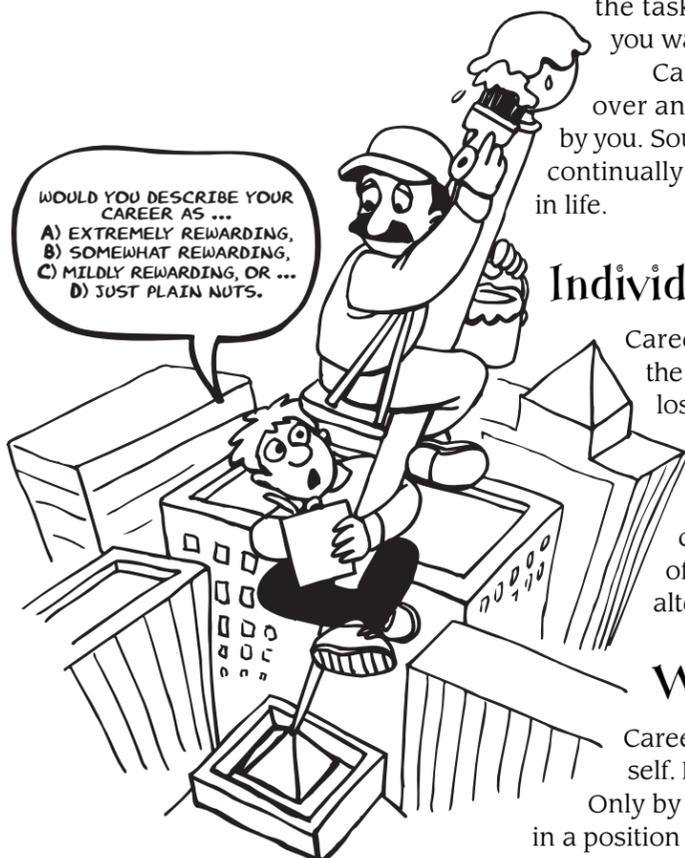
Individual Activity

Career planning is an individual exercise. You are the center. You possess a unique set of values, philosophy, personality, interests, intelligence level, education, and work experience background.

A major role of a career counselor is to assist an individual in drawing out all basic characteristics and understanding the nature of these characteristics in relationship to career alternatives.

Work-Centered Options

Career planning is more than an understanding of self. It is also an understanding of the *world of work*. Only by understanding occupational options are you in a position to objectively correlate your personal characteristics with employment realities.





You move forward, process data, and feed results back.

Career planning is a way of thinking about the future. It is not a sterile academic exercise of matching personal characteristics and job possibilities in order to ascertain your ideal niche in life.

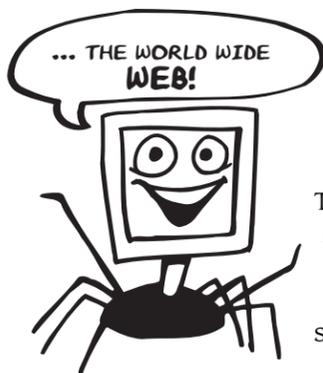
The implementation of a career plan involves actual employment in a work setting. There are continual evaluation and feedback loops that clarify the adequacy of the employment decision or suggest a reassessment of the entire career planning process. This dynamic process continues throughout life. You need to be an active participant in real-world options creation.

Decision-Oriented

What am I going to do with the rest of my life? This is a heavy but relevant question. Some people tend to postpone the most critical decisions they must face. Procrastination can become a way of life for many people, hopefully not you.

Career planning is decision-oriented. Decision making is a skill that can be mastered. Like all decisions, "career" decisions require information. Information is available, but it must be researched and then processed in proper fashions.

People procrastinate because they do not see a way to get a handle on a problem. You want to make career decisions, but the magnitude of the decision is often overwhelming.



- What if you make the wrong decision?
- Is no decision better than a bad decision?
- Why do you even have to make any decision?

There are no perfectly bad or perfectly good decisions in choosing a career. The situation is never black or white. There are thousands of shades of grey. Most people convince themselves that the decisions they made were good ones; and they usually are.

After making a decision you tend to mobilize your resources and make subsequent decisions that assure the first decision was right.



Decision making takes career planning to an action-oriented level. Decision-makers take career planning out of an academic exercise and into a practical, necessary activity. In its most elementary form, decision making is a six-step process:

Decisions are modified as new information is collected and evaluated.

1. Define the problem
2. Develop alternative solutions
3. Establish evaluative criteria
4. Evaluate alternatives
5. Make a decision
6. Evaluate decision

A closed loop connects the evaluation, the decision, and the review of the original problem. This “rolling” process can be used on the smallest subcomponent of the problem area as well as on the largest element of the total decision.

Compromises

A decision must be made at designated points in time. Even procrastination becomes a decision after a certain amount of time.

Career decision making involves compromises. The compromise solution impacts upon other people, personal preferences, and hypothetical concepts.

There rarely is a perfect solution. This systematic, analytical process of decision making molds a realistic and acceptable match between the world of work and personal goals.

Career Planning Defined

Career planning seeks answers to four questions:

1. What do I want to do?
2. What can I do?
3. What needs to be done?
4. How can I get the job I want?

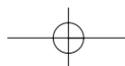
If you could always provide definitive answers to these basic questions, career planning would always be optimally achieved.

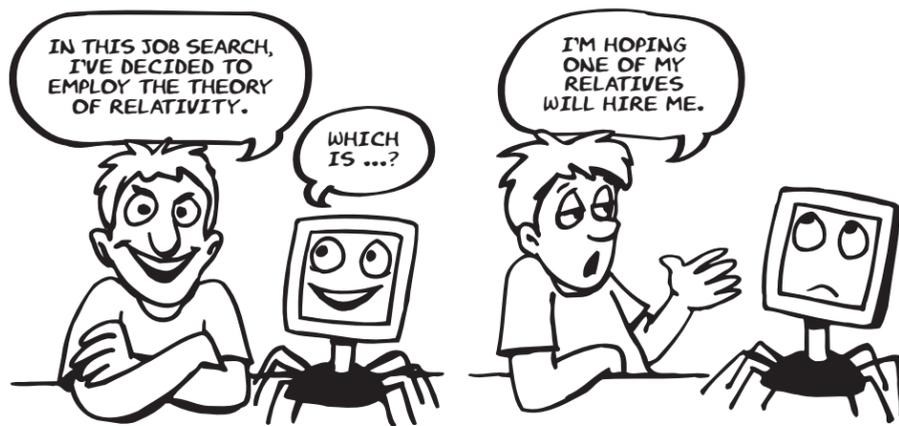
Marketing Fundamentals

If a marketing expert were dealing with a specific product, some basic marketing fundamentals would be quickly applied by answering these questions:

1. What do you have to offer?
2. Who needs it?
3. How do you make them want it?

Career decisions require a much more complex approach. Yet every approach must begin with a first step. The first step is often the hardest. Career planning must be approached one step at a time.





Your laboratory is the job market.

Career planning offers a logical, structured, and sequential method in career decision making. This method builds upon a theory-based framework proposed by leading career theorists.

The largest laboratory in the world is the job market. This is not some “pie in the sky” academic theory, but an approach that has stood the test of time in a real-world setting. It works!

This career planning model offers a fresh look at career decisions. There is much interrelatedness within a complex set of variables. Conceptually, the model focuses attention on the three concepts of self-assessment, career exploration, and job search. Information is fed into one or all of these components.

Based upon a process of integration, compromise, work settings, and goal specification, career decisions are reached, assessed, and reassessed over a lifetime of work.

Career Planning Theory Sets the Foundation

Career planning is built upon a strong theory base. Considerable research in career guidance and vocational theory supports the dynamics of the relationships among the many interacting variables of career decision making.

Theory is more of a subject for guidance counselors, but you may eventually come into contact with a career counseling professional. Consequently, it is important to recognize and appreciate the foundation upon which their advice is built.

The professional counselor can be extremely valuable in helping assess and evaluate your capabilities and in providing referrals to related career resources. The counselor’s work is tied to research that relates to several decades of analysis.

Many people start to think about what they want as a vocation early in life, often before their teens. A great many personal factors, in addition to external forces, appear to influence the various career choices that are made. Theories range from astrological happenings to paternal handling of young children. The widest accepted theories are known as developmental theories of vocational choices.





A theory helps you understand why you make certain career decisions.

Framework

A vocational theory is important because it helps us to understand the how and why of certain life sequences that assist in the selection of appropriate occupational endeavors. A theory shows a systematic relationship between certain variables and helps to define relevancy.

A theory develops a system of classification and structuring of concepts that can be used to predict outcomes. A good theory is most often based on extensive empirical referents, which means that the propositions in a theory are logically supported by prior research and/or experience.

Several theorists have attempted to systematize the results of their investigations into the career development process. Certain theorists have significantly influenced the direction of research and have stimulated innovative practices.

Popular Career Theories

Many of the personality instruments used today are based on the work of Swiss psychologist Carl Jung and two American women, Kathrine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, who were the creators of the popular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator instrument, commonly referred to as the MBTI and is now a registered trademark.

Two of the most commonly used instruments are “personality type” and “interest inventory assessments.” Personality type almost always goes back to the original work done by the MBTI research. To avoid copyright issues, others often referred to this as “personality type.”

The “interest” instruments almost always refer back to the original work of a researcher, Dr. John Holland. This is most commonly called “Holland’s theory.”

A brief description of both theories follows. In the next chapter the ideas are explored in more depth.

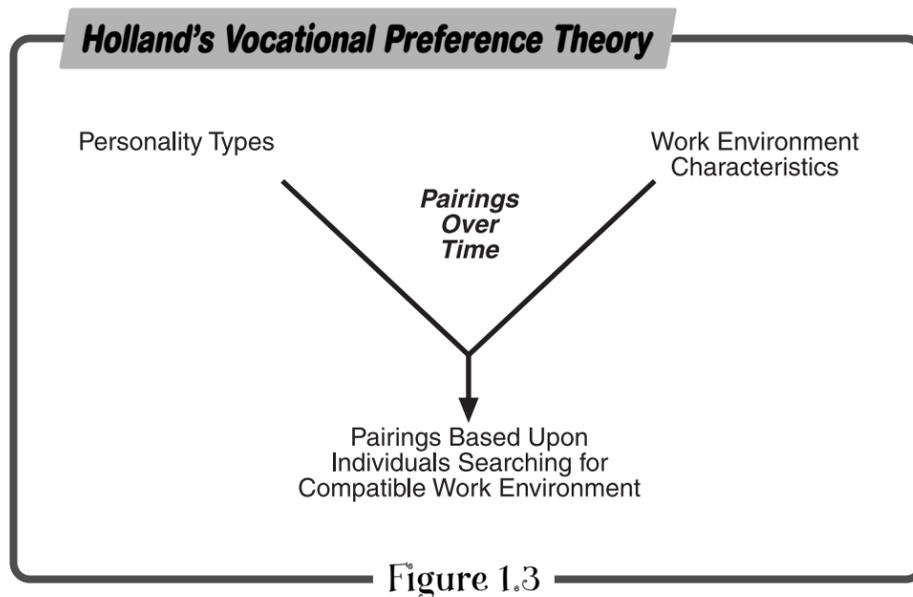
Holland's Theory

According to Holland’s theory, your interests and vocational preferences are expressions of personality. The choice of occupation expresses your motivations, knowledge of a particular occupation, and personal abilities. Stereotypes are used throughout this theory although much research has been done to support the generalized stereotypes.

The basic idea is that individuals within a given occupation have personalities and developmental work histories that are similar. Due to the many personal similarities among those who succeed in a given occupation, it follows that the patterns of communication and personal interaction established will form a unique work environment.

To the extent that the work environment and your personality are congruent, the prediction is for increased job satisfaction, stability, and achievement on the job.



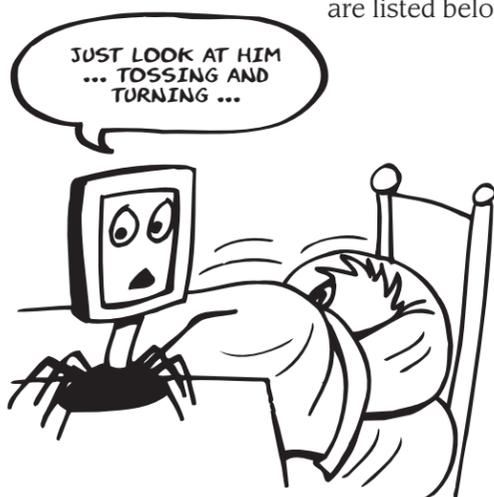


The theory makes three assumptions:

1. People can be characterized by particular types of personalities and interests
2. Workplaces resemble similar interest environments
3. Pairing people with compatible environments allows for the prediction of vocational choice, stability, and achievement

Your personality type and interests are described as your cluster of personal characteristics that define how you typically cope with life's tasks.

Dr. Holland's theory purports that people in work environments can be loosely classified into six different groups. Different people's personalities and interests may find certain work environments more to their liking. Most of us are not slotted into only one of the six carefully defined groups because all of us have multiple interests, personalities, and skills. But the theory is that we can be defined into one to three of these six groups. These six groups are listed below and they are defined in the next chapter.



Realistic
Investigative
Artistic
Social
Enterprising
Conventional

The first letter of each word spells out the acronym RIASEC. This RIASEC model of occupations is copyrighted by Dr. John L. Holland and his publisher, Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. (PAR).

Holland's Personality Types

- Realistic
- Investigative
- Artistic
- Social
- Enterprising
- Conventional

Figure 1.4

This six type model assumes that your pattern of behavior can be compared for relative similarity to individuals working within work environments that have also been classified into these same six categories. A significant amount of research has been done on occupations where successful and satisfied workers have been classified into three of these six work environments. Hundreds of occupations have been studied and, based upon a massive amount of research of individuals working within those occupations, a three-letter code has been established for several hundred occupations.

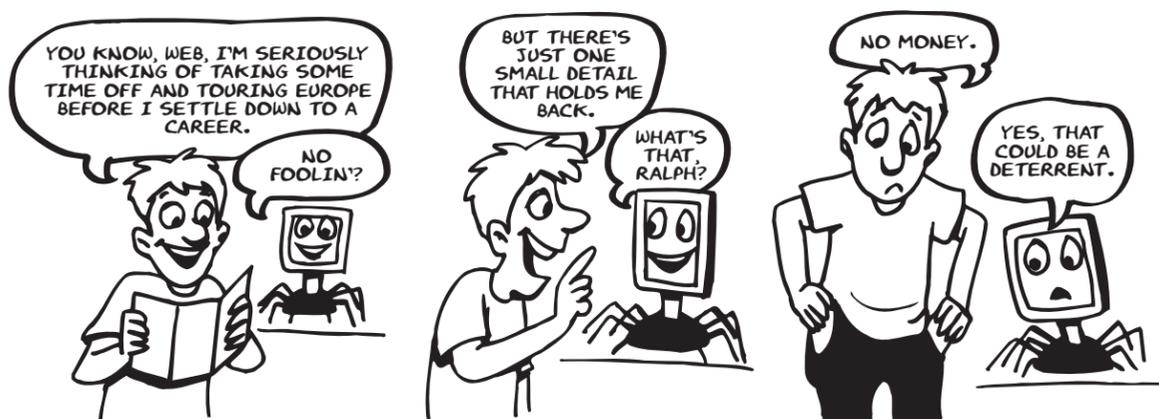
Once you take the Holland Self-Directed Search (SDS) test, the results will give you a three-letter code. This three-letter code is then matched with similar three-letter codes that correlate to specific occupations. You

are then asked to study and research this array of correlated occupations to further refine your choice to three to five occupations.

The theory is that you move toward work environments that permit you to develop your personal values, interests, qualities, and skills. This movement toward a compatible career work environment or occupation usually occurs over an extended period of time.

The theory isolates and focuses on your interests primarily because your interests, once developed during your formative years, change only moderately during your lifetime. Your other competencies may change more significantly. The theories suggest that there is more than one occupation that fits your interests so you must factor in your other competencies as you explore multiple occupations and continue to narrow your choice to a reasonable number of occupations that you can realistically evaluate.

By interacting with individuals currently in the work environments (career field) that fit your interests, you gain additional information for your decision-making purposes. Reading about careers that match your interests and conducting informational interviews with individuals currently employed in those careers enhances your knowledge about the career field so you can make a logically evaluated decision.





You, like other people, tend to project your view of yourself onto this world of work as defined by these occupational titles.

Dr. Holland's theory has been accepted by thousands of career professionals and similar instruments purport to accomplish the same thing. You will find many of these instruments available to you on the World Wide Web and available from professional career counselors who are employed in high schools, community colleges, universities, and private enterprise.

Dr. Holland also proposed that knowledge about yourself operates to increase the accuracy with which you make a vocational choice. This leads to two major hypotheses he has empirically supported.

1. Persons with inaccurate self-knowledge make inadequate choices more frequently than do persons with more accurate self appraisals.
2. Persons with more information about occupational environments make more adequate occupational choices than do persons with less information.

In conclusion, your career choice can be explained by the interaction of your personal orientation and the career field. The **quality** of this choice relates to the level your self-knowledge and the level of your knowledge about the career field which you are considering.

There are several sources where you can take the Holland Self-Directed Search (SDS) test. Millions of people around the world had taken the SDS. The on-line version takes only about 20 minutes and costs under \$10 for a multi-page report personalized to you. This report provides a list of occupations and fields of study that most closely match your interests.

www.self-directed-search.com

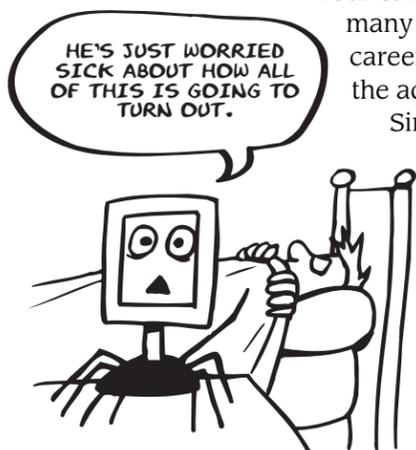
www.icpac.indiana.edu

The Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center (ICPAC) offers a wide variety of services to help assess your career goals and educational needs. The CAREERS section offers interactive career assessment tools. Take the 5–10 minute Career Interest or the Merkle Style Preference Inventory. This site also offers information regarding financial aid and has dozens of links to associations and government agencies.

You should take this test and review the results with your career advisers. More information about interest tests will be covered in the next chapter. Your career coach or college career service office can assist you in obtaining many instruments. Most instrument publishers provide access only through career counseling professionals. Most professionals have been trained on the administration and interpretation that often is very important to you.

Since employers also use similar instruments, there is a strong reason to protect access to these instruments. The costs incurred, if any, are very reasonable. Some college career services offices provide these free to students and alumni.

One of the most important career websites that you will use is www.CareerOneStop.org, which is the United States publicly funded resource for you and employers. This site, plus its affiliates, Careerinfonet, America's job bank, and O*NET, use Holland's research fairly extensively and occasionally reference personality type.





Summary. Dr. Holland's theories are used extensively by the career development professionals, especially in high schools and colleges. His research has weathered well amid a considerable amount of scrutiny over many years.

Before you start your interviewing activity, it would be wise to thoroughly understand the product, your competencies, that you will be marketing to potential employers. Employers may administer other selection tests designed to help them understand your personal interests so they can compare you to others working in the occupation you strive to enter.

Be prepared to communicate your opinions but also understand what they may discover outside of the interview. The interview is only one tool that employers use in matching your competencies against their job description and job qualifications. You may be skill set qualified for the open job, but not a fit on the interest and organizational culture dimensions.

Personality Type Theory

Jung's research on personality similarities and differences were first published in English in 1923. The Briggs team, at about the same time, were developing their own system for "typing" people. Briggs decided to adopt Jung's model and in the next four decades clarified and expanded Jung's model. Her daughter Isabel Myers created the MBTI in the 1940s. Myers believed that different occupations favored different personality orientations and Jung's theory provided a theoretical link between personality and job performance.

In 1975, Consulting Psychologist Press acquired the right to sell the MBTI test that was originally developed by the Myers-Briggs team. Since then, that test has been successfully marketed to wide group of audiences from employers as a **selection tool** to career professionals as a **development tool**.

Jung's theory of psychological type reports your preferences on four scales.

Extraversion—Introversion (E or I)
Sensing—Intuition (S or N)
Thinking—Feeling (T or F)
Judging—Perceiving (J or P)

On each of the four scales, your score can range from leaning slightly, moderately, or strongly toward the extremes. Your actual numeric score might lean toward one side of the continuum or the other and the direction in which it leans would indicate your preference. When you take the MBTI test, you receive a four-letter score.

The primary feature of the theory is that each person's personality fits into only one of the sixteen types. The sixteen categories are based on the four features of personality types, each consisting of two opposite preferences. Your score will lean to one end of each of the four preferences, which then makes up your four letter score. For example, your score might be ENTJ.

The E or I dimension reflects how we **interact** with our environment. From where do we draw our energy? Extroverts react positively to the external world while introverts prefer to deal with their inner world.

The S or N dimension relates to how people **acquire information**. Sensors focus on the realities of an objective set of circumstances. Intuitive types look at the big picture and visualize patterns that can show new possibilities. They





acquire information by intuition rather than relying primarily on real facts, details, and proven procedures like sensors prefer to do.

The T or F preference relates to how you make **decisions**. In deciding on a course of action, the thinkers rely on logic and rational thinking processes. The feeling types make decisions based upon a subjective process including emotional reactions to events.

The J or P dimension relates to **structure** in our preferences. What type of organizational structure in dealing with the external world do you prefer? Judgers prefer to organize and control their lives with specificity. This does not mean judgmental or opinionated, which confuses the interpretation of this scale by nonprofessionals. Perceivers prefer flexibility in keeping their options open as long as possible. Perceivers tend to avoid closure and regard decision making as stressful. Judgers are much more comfortable at making decisions based upon a review of the facts.

These four dimensions, when put together, produce sixteen personality types, each defined by a four letter code. It is the sum of the four letters that define each dimension. There is a synergism created by each of the four letter types, which career theorists have further defined.

The basic idea is that you take this test and receive your four-letter results. You will discover many very consistent definitions of what your four-letter combination means by reading definitions of the test results that you receive. You and your career counselor can further interpret these results by reviewing many different websites and publications that discuss personality type.

A more detailed explanation of this theory is explained in the next chapter on self-assessment but this book does not purport to explain this theory in any significant level of detail. Personality type theory has been studied by your trained and licensed career coach who has access to a massive amount of research that supports this theory.

You need to have an appreciation for the theory, but in the final analysis, you must use the results in conjunction with your own personal judgment. Personality type theory may be an important tool for you to use in developing your strategic career plan.

Summary. The personality type theory and the interest theory are both important to understand. The basics of have been briefly illustrated here. Later, you will be asked to take these and/or similar tests. Additional details on both will then be provided. Often, the results that you receive when you take any type of test will also provide additional information to be used for interpretation.



Taking tests, reviewing the results, and working with others to help interpret the meaning are a very important exercise. You may someday be an employer yourself. You will likely be interviewed by many employers who will use the results of these tests, plus what you say in an interview, to make employment decisions. You clearly are going to be on both sides of the test interpretation exercise.

A small dose of theory is all you now need to know. Later, as you try to explain and understand the results of various tests, you may want a little additional information. Some of that will be provided when you read the results. You will need some additional information beyond what is described here but too much theory at one time can be confusing.





This material is only for your planning purposes as you prepare for your meeting with career professionals. The more you know about the theory, the better your ability to understand the meaning of your test results and the additional data presented to you by your career coach.

Career Testing Websites

If you wish to review some of this theory and explore websites that provide resources for taking instruments that yield results like the interest and personality type instruments provide, you can access the URL addresses below. In the next chapter, this subject will be explored in additional detail. There may be costs associated with taking these tests.

Holland's SDS www.self-directed-search.com

The SDS takes about 20 minutes and costs under \$10 for a ten-page or more report personalized to you. This report gives a list of career options that most closely match your interests.

Know Your Type www.knowyourtype.com

This firm specializes in personality testing. Knowyourtype.com describes a personality indicator that gives insight into how and why people understand and approach the world in such different ways. This instrument, the "MBTI[®] Instrument," provides a useful way of describing people's personalities by looking at their preferences on four scales (extraversion vs. introversion, sensing vs. intuition, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving). There is a fee for this assessment. The analysis and descriptions can be helpful if you already know your type.

Human Metrics www.humanmetrics.com

An Israeli website firm that specializes in the human typology created by the Jung Theory. You can take the Jung Typology test free, which gives you a version of your type. The results may be compared to your MBTI results.

Consulting Psychologist Press www.cpp.com

This site is essentially a marketplace that provides information on a variety of services and publications for job seekers, career counselors, and human resource professionals. Resources include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, along with materials for interpreting the inventory results; the Strong Interest Inventory; and the California Psychological Inventory.

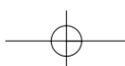
Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center www.icpac.indiana.edu

This state funded website was established to help students choose colleges and majors. It links to massive career databases and one of its testing instruments called the Merler provides Holland code results for further career option exploration.

MAPP www.assessment.com

This site offers an online assessment test identifying a person's motivations and how to use them for success in career and life planning. The site also matches your results to five O*Net job titles for free. Several in-depth appraisals and reports are offered for a fee.

Compromise is
an integral part
of career
development





The Career Interests Game www.missouri.edu/~cppcwww/holland

This clever visual is a shortcut to the RIASEC Holland code. It gives an excellent discussion about interpreting your skills and traits and suggests career options for your study. Free.

The Career Key www.careerkey.org

This free instrument will lead you to Holland's RIASEC codes.

Psychological Testing Tools www.metadevelopment.com

This site offers a variety of testing tools available for a modest fee.

Keirsey Temperment Sorter www.keirsey.com

This web-based instrument is a take-off on the MBTI and provides results similar to the MBTI. There is a small charge for the results. Your results are related back to historical individuals and present some interesting analysis for you to use in your own comparisons.

Educational Testing Service www.ets.org/sigi

This career planning software integrates your self-assessment with career options. It is available on computers located in many career centers, libraries, and career guidance firms.

Conclusion

Career planning is more than a buzz word. It is a way of thinking about the choices that you must make in career decision making.

Career planning impacts on all ages. There is no single age group to which the concepts best apply. Career planning is a circular process that recycles itself over and over again as you face recurring life changes, such as completion of an educational experience or job termination.

Ours is a dynamic world that changes career choices regularly. The planning cycle forces us into a lifetime of adjusting.

Career planning is a process that occurs many different times in everyone's life. No one is immune. It is a systematic way of looking at career decisions, which are no longer singular events that occur only when one graduates from high school or college.

The basic concept revolves around a self-assessment, a career exploration, and a job search plan. Compromise, time constraints, and economic pressures force decisions throughout the process.

Self-assessment is knowing yourself. It is a process that can be learned. The goal is to create the highest possible level of self-awareness.

Career exploration is a searching and investigative activity. Only if you understand the alternatives is there a reasonable chance of a fair analysis for career choice. The process involves a systematic collection of information about career options.

Search is the process of transferring the exploration process to the real market place. It involves implementing a plan designated to meet a specific career goal, which has been transformed into an





entry-level, middle-level, or top-level assignment in the managerial, technical, or professional career arenas.

Search activities consist of resumes, letters, contacts, networking, interviews, negotiating job offers, and strategic career management. The search process is now viewed as a continuous component of the career planning process.

Career planning integrates the results of the self-assessment, career exploration, and search processes. This integration lays the foundation for a continuous flow of information designed to keep your career planning up to date.

If properly conceived and executed, career decision making will be a series of minor adjustments on a rolling basis. Such an adjustment process allows for a maximum level of career satisfaction. Should there be a need for a major career thrust change, the components will be in place at all times to meet the situation.



