

Assessment Tools

When researching your career options, it is sometimes difficult to pinpoint your skills and interests and see how they match with various occupations. There are so many career choices and so little time to research them all -- let alone to figure out if you might like them! However, some people find it very helpful to use one of several assessment tools.

Assessment is defined as “the act of evaluating” and one definition for tool is “a means.” So, you could say that an assessment tool is a means of evaluating or taking a look at yourself. Keep in mind that these assessments are not designed to give you **the** answer to your career exploration questions.

There are several assessment tools available through the CALS Career Development Office. Simply schedule an appointment with one of our trained career counselors for assistance in determining which one might be most helpful to you. Below are brief descriptions of each one:

SkillScan Professional Pack: This is a tool that increases your awareness of your specific, marketable skills and personal career preferences. The 60-card deck provides detailed descriptions of various communication, leadership, and creative skills as well as many others. The cards are sorted first according to competence and next according to preference for use in a career. The results are then recorded on the Personal Skill Profile to create an immediate picture of skill strengths, likes, and dislikes. These choices become part of the foundation for selecting a career. SkillScan can also be helpful in preparing for interviews or writing a resume.

(One hour to complete with a counselor)

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Strong Interest Inventory: The Strong Interest Inventory is designed to measure your interests among a broad range of occupations, work and leisure activities, and educational subjects. The Strong can be a valuable tool in helping you identify your interests, enabling you to discover and explore career options consistent with your interests.

The results of the Strong are organized and presented on a variety of themes and scales:

- **General Occupational Themes** – Describe your interests, work activities, potential skills, and personal values in six broad areas: Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), and Conventional (C).
- **Basic Interest Scales** – Provide specific information about your areas of interest, indicating areas likely to be most motivating and rewarding for you.
- **Occupational Scales** – Relate your interest patterns to those of satisfied workers within various occupations.
- **Personal Style Scales** – Describe your preferences related to work style, learning, leadership, risk taking, and teamwork, providing insight into work and education environments most likely to fit you best.

A personalized report identifies your optimum career choices based on your interests and includes additional related occupations with concise job descriptions.

(30 minutes to complete on-line and one hour to review with a counselor)

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Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: The aim of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is to identify the basic preferences of how you become aware of things, people, happenings, or ideas and how you come to conclusions about these things, people, happenings, or ideas. There are four separate indices which each reflect one of four basic preferences. *Extraversion/Introversion* reflects whether you prefer to focus on the outer world of people and things or on the inner world of ideas and impressions. *Sensing/Intuition* shows whether you tend to focus on the present and on concrete information gained from your senses or on the future with a view toward patterns and possibilities. From the *Thinking/Feeling* index you see whether you tend to base your decisions on logic and objective analysis of cause and effect or on values and subjective evaluation of person-centered concerns. The last index, *Judging/Perceiving*, reveals whether you like a planned and organized approach to life and prefer to have things settled or if you like a flexible and spontaneous approach to life and prefer to keep your options open.

By understanding your preferences, you can better evaluate which type of work will be most interesting and satisfying.

(30-45 minutes to complete on-line and one hour to review with a counselor)

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Self-Directed Search: This assessment is based on a theory developed by John Holland that people will be most satisfied in work environments that reinforce their individual personalities. Designed as a simple-to-use test, the Self-Directed Search helps you find possible occupations that match your interests and abilities. By answering questions about aspirations, activities, competencies, occupations, and self-estimates, you determine your 3-letter Holland code and use the Occupations Finder to discover occupations that match your personality type.

(30-45 minutes to complete on your own time and 30 minutes to review with a counselor)

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Values-Driven Work: Values are the core principles which give meaning to your life. There is an important and dynamic relationship between your individual values and those of the groups and organizations in which you work and spend most of your time. You have a greater chance of being satisfied and effective in your work when you can identify your own unique pattern of values and how they may (or may not!) match those of your intended workplace. This card sort, with 70 values cards and four ranking cards, is designed to help individuals identify their values and therefore create values-driven work.

(30 minutes to complete with a counselor)

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While none of these assessment tools are guaranteed to provide **the** answer, they can be helpful in evaluating your skills and interests and how they relate to the world of work. Make an appointment today to begin “taking a look at yourself.”