

## Finding a Job That Fits

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Stop for a moment and consider the following questions:

- *What do you enjoy doing?*
- *How do you spend your time?*
- *What do you do best?*
- *What do your friends and family say about you?*
- *What is important to you?*
- *In what circumstances do you feel most energized? ...drained?*

This journey requires hard work. You must be willing to look at both the past and present and try to see threads and patterns to your life story. You will need to engage in some serious reflection. You will need to move out of your comfort zone and explore new areas. You will need (and want) the help of family, friends, and mentors to help you understand the direction of your future. Ready?

We'll start with some easy stuff. If you have spent any time at all surfing the Internet, you know that there are literally hundreds of formal assessments that can be taken to help you determine your work style, your career interests, your job readiness, your personality type, etc. Listed below are just a few hyperlinks to instruments, which can help you engage in some helpful personal exploration. If you are the type that loves to take quizzes in magazines to see how you rate as a date, you're going to love these sample "tests".

### Interest Inventories

Interest Inventories are designed to help individuals identify their preferences for a particular activity. Suggestions are then made regarding the occupations or occupational clusters that most closely match one's interests. Most high school students in the States take an interest inventory during their sophomore year. Does the Strong Interest Inventory or the Self-Directed Search (SDS) ring a bell? Most interest inventories are based on John Holland's theory that states that people work best in work environments that match their personality type. People and work environments can be matched for a "best fit" and are classified as a combination of two or three of the following six groups: Realistic, Enterprising, Investigative, Conventional, Artistic, and Social. Try the following instruments based on this theory...

\* The Career Key <http://www.careerkey.org/> (Cost: \$7.95)

\* Discovering Careers that Fit You

[http://www.myfuturestuff.org/@students/students\\_hs/careers/career\\_profiles/](http://www.myfuturestuff.org/@students/students_hs/careers/career_profiles/)

\* The Career Interest Game <http://career.missouri.edu/students/explore/thecareerinterestsgame.php>

\* The Self-Directed Search <http://www.self-directed-search.com/> (Results return in minutes but the cost for the SDS is \$9.95.)

### Value Inventories

Another piece to the self-assessment puzzle involves your values. Value Inventories can help relate values to career choices. Try either of these: <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/CDC/graphics/pdfs/values.pdf>  
<http://motivationalinterview.org/library/valuescardsort.pdf>

### Aptitude and Ability Tests

Finally, you might want to consider Aptitude and Ability Tests. These instruments attempt to measure your overall ability, including general intelligence, achievement, aptitude, and reading ability. Some are administered individually and can only be given by a certified psychologist. Others are given to groups. The military has one such test known as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Other examples of aptitude tests include The Highlands Program (<http://www.highlandsprogram.com/>) and IDAK (<http://www.idakgroup.com/>). Taking these last two requires a hefty outlay of cash. Contact the career

services office at your college/university if you would like to explore this type of testing. Realize, however, that your college transcript provides some good clues regarding your aptitude in various fields of endeavor. Looking at your transcript is an example of an informal assessment.

#### SUGGESTED READING

\* Handy, Charles. *The Hungry Spirit: Beyond Capitalism: A Quest for Purpose in the Modern World*. NY: Broadway Books, 1998.

\* Leider, Richard J. *The Power of Purpose: Creating Meaning in Your Life and Work*. SF: Bennett-Koehler Publishers, 1997.

\* Levoy, Gregg. *Callings: Finding and Following the Authentic Life*. NY: Harmony Books, 1997.

\* Mattson, Ralph and Arthur Miller. *Finding a Job You Can Love*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1999.

\* Novak, Michael. *Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life*. NY: Free Press, 1996.

\* Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. SF: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

\* Patterson, Tom. *Living the Life You Were Meant to Live*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998.

\* Bolles, Richard N. *What Color is Your Parachute: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career Changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2006 (Take note of the Epilogue—"How to Find Your Mission in Life".)