

## **Career Interest Self-Assessments**

### **Getting to know your “Career Self”**

Career interests and aptitudes are usually classified using Holland’s RIASEC Occupational Themes or “Holland codes”. This theory, popular amongst Guidance Counsellors, suggests that there are six major occupational personality types. These are Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional. According to this theory, each individual presents a particular combination of three codes. Below is a very simplistic breakdown of the six Holland “types”.

#### **Realistic (Doers)**

People of this type prefer doing things in a concrete way. They enjoy building, assembling, using tools and working in technical environments. To name but a few, their interests often revolve around physical activity, sports, following instructions, being outdoors and working with machines.

#### **Investigative (Thinkers)**

Those of the investigative type enjoy studying and understanding a variety of facts, concepts and phenomena. They have a knack for solving problems and explaining the solutions. Their interests include, but are not limited to, research, observation, science, mathematics, ideas, and data.

#### **Artistic (Creators)**

With their clear preference for self-expression, people of the artistic type are sensitive, intuitive and original. Their interests revolve around artistic creation, whether through word, sound or image. For example, artistic individuals appreciate creative writing, decorating, cooking, sculpting, painting, playing a musical instrument, acting, singing, and media creation.

#### **Social (Helpers)**

Social types enjoy working with other people, with the goal of helping them some way or another. They strongly value interpersonal human relationships, and are very empathetic. Some of their interests include teaching, encouraging, supporting, understanding, healing, and counselling others.

#### **Enterprising (Persuaders)**

People that are of this type have an inclination toward leading, managing and influencing others. They also enjoy supervising, planning, and taking important decisions. Some of their favorite activities include sales, business, entrepreneurship, politics, economics and event planning.

#### **Conventional (Organizers)**

Those of the conventional type prefer working with clearly defined procedures. They are methodical, structured and well-organized individuals. Some of their favorite interests are file management, organizing and synthesizing information, using office software, writing reports, compiling statistics, and maintaining order.

Want to find out your type? Here's a link to an unofficial RIASEC test:

<http://personality-testing.info/tests/RIASEC/>

### **Suggested Exercise: Your Personal Profile**

Think about yourself for a minute. If you were to describe “you” to a complete stranger, what would you focus on? Here are some pointers to get you started. Don’t hesitate to add more categories to the list. Let your pen (or keyboard) flow and try to stick to your spontaneous ideas. This exercise is a great way to place yourself in a self-evaluating mindset, which is a necessary step to every personal exploration process.

Studies:

Favorite topics in school:

Best topics in school:

Three greatest passions:

Leisure activities:

Greatest strengths:

Areas to improve on:

Dream jobs:

### **Suggested Exercise: Explore Your Passions**

Often, we are told that in order to have a successful career, we must find a career we are passionate about. This point is very difficult to argue against, but connecting our passions with a specific career is easier said than done. This is harder still if you have trouble clarifying those passions that inhabit you. Therefore, it is crucial to concretely identify your passions. Here are a few suggested methods you can use to brainstorm your passions and put them down on paper.

#### **Method A: The Calling**

Picture yourself without any work-related limitations. What mission would you give yourself? What would be the central purpose of your job? Try to summarize this in a one sentence statement. For example: “help those who suffer”, “make the world a cleaner place”, “live a healthy and active life”, “seek novelty and

excitement”, “care for animals”, “educate others”, “promote political change”, “protect the vulnerable”. Once you have found your statement and feel strongly about it, you have found your Calling.

### **Method B: The Sudden and Unexpected Fortune**

Imagine that you have suddenly acquired a ridiculous sum of money. Add as many “zeroes” to the amount as you want. Now that you have nearly unlimited financial resources, what will you do next? Will you pursue your studies regardless of your prize? Will you drop everything and travel the world? With more time on your hands than ever before, you will have to find ways to occupy that time. Try to describe three projects that are important to you. Be as precise as possible. Define as best you can what tasks these projects would imply, and how you would go about doing them. These projects illustrate what is most important for you beyond the need to acquire currency.

### **Method C: The Perfect Work Day Scenario**

You have all the academic credentials you needed, and have found the job you always hoped for. Describe that a typical work day would look like. What makes your work day rewarding and satisfying? What tasks fill that work day? Where do you work? Who do you work with? If you aren’t sure what that perfect job implies, do some research and learn more. This method sees its potential maximized if you can describe a full week’s schedule.

### **Method D: The Reunion**

Let’s pretend that today, you will walk into your favorite high school teacher. You have not seen this teacher in 10 years, and they invite you to lunch in order to catch up. Now your old teacher asks you the big question: “So, what have you become?” What will you tell him/her? What have you accomplished in your career? What is your personal and social life like? What is it that you plan to do next? This method can help you imagine what you want to see yourself accomplish in the future. The next step is finding the means to make those accomplishments a reality!

### **Suggested Exercise: Decision-making Influences**

We are all faced with a stream of different influences, both positive and negative. This is especially true when discussing the future; school, career, relationships and more. This exercise helps you identify the key influences you are subjected to in regards to your academic and professional plans. First, you identify negative influences that are interfering with your plan. Then, you identify the positive influences that support you with carrying your plan through. Influences, both positive and negative, can come from your entourage (family, friends, partner, etc.), the social environment you live in (media, politics, geography, etc.) or your own self. Try to list these influences in order of importance.

#### **Negative influences**

Entourage	Social Environment	Yourself

#### **Positive influences**

Entourage	Social Environment	Yourself

### Suggested Exercise: Formulating Your Values

Values are a person's principles or standards of behavior. They are rooted in our beliefs and define our actions. Values can also be defined by a person's judgment of what is important in life. It is no surprise that values are deeply entwined with passions and career interests. Values will also have a strong incidence on a person's work style and work ethic. So, what are your values? Here is a little exercise to get you started. This exercise, however, is limited because it is difficult to produce a full list of all existing values. That being said, don't hesitate to add your own to the list!

Circle your 10 most important values, and number them in order of priority.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Travel</i>                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Compete with others</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Travel</i>                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Eat healthy</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Change society</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Friends</i>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Gain status</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be self-employed</i>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Work at your own pace</i>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be original</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live in a quiet area</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be autonomous</i>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Look good</i>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Resolve complex issues</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Take risks</i>                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Earn more than others</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be physically active</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Dress well</i>                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live in a city</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Family</i>                        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live in the suburbs</i>         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Gain advancement</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Entertainment and leisure</i>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be responsible</i>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Do as less as possible</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Have a safe job</i>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be successful</i>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Have a secure job</i>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Having free time</i>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be rich</i>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Work in a clean space</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Make important decisions</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Work in a comfortable space</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Having a specialty</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Security</i>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Being close to nature</i>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be popular or famous</i>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Having diverse tasks</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Having a routine</i>            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Breaking the routine</i>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be refined</i>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Complete advanced studies</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Find inner peace</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live a spiritual life</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Learn everyday</i>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be imaginative</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Create things</i>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Find true love</i>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Work close to home</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live alone</i>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Lead others</i>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Use teamwork</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Communicate effectively</i>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Feel useful</i>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be surrounded by people</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cultivate life</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Have a well-respected job</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be politically savvy</i>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Execute pre-established tasks</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Collaborate with others</i>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Manage multiple tasks</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Advance field of science</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Help people directly</i>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Live in a nice home</i>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be generous</i>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Loyalty</i>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Focus</i>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Honesty</i>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Spontaneity</i>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Seek challenge</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fight for equality</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Community</i>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Practicality</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Curiosity</i>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Open mindedness</i>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Intellectual rigor</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Initiative</i>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Altruism</i>                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationality</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Precision</i>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Knowledge</i>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Power</i>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Prestige</i>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Order</i>                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Devotion</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Challenging myself</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Productivity</i>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Efficiency</i>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Respecting authority</i>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tolerance</i>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Duty</i>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Planning ahead</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Stability</i>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____                          | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____                          | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                              |

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## Suggested Exercise: What Are You Good At?

Simply put, an aptitude is a person's natural ability to perform a task or action. We all have different aptitudes, which we develop through practicing our skills. While having a strong interest in something often leads to developing related aptitudes, it is possible to feel an interest without yet possessing any related aptitude. Equally so, having an aptitude for something does not necessarily mean a strong interest is present. The most efficient combination is when skill follows interest, and interest feeds skill.

The following exercise can help you identify some of your aptitudes. Remember that the list is by no means exhaustive, and you should feel free to add your own items to the list. To facilitate things, we have classified aptitudes according to their Holland codes (RIASEC). When you are done, count every checked box to find what your strongest "code" is in terms of aptitudes.

### Realistic:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical know-how | <input type="checkbox"/> Renovate         | <input type="checkbox"/> Tinkering           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble-shooting    | <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic        | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwork            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working outdoors    | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening        | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical skill     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building            | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual dexterity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical endurance  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking          | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong motor skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manual labor        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____               |

### Investigative:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Logic                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Deduction               | <input type="checkbox"/> Conceive plans           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perform research         | <input type="checkbox"/> Statistics              | <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thought         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intuition                | <input type="checkbox"/> Analytic mind           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding science    | <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehend data         | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading complicated text |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to anticipate    | <input type="checkbox"/> Working in a laboratory | <input type="checkbox"/> Abstract intelligence    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write scientific reports | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                    |

### Artistic:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic expression          | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpting                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Acting                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Designing web pages    | <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Create new             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning new languages | <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Video or sound editing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animate workshops      | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing a musical instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong imagination     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Critical mind          | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                  |

### Social:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> People skills        | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis intervention | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening skills     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate human needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping others      | <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful of others |

- Teaching others
- Motivating people
- Strong empathy
- Conversation skills

- Verbal expression
- Comforting others
- Building relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_

- Animating groups
- Observing human behavior
- Collaborating with others
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Enterprising:**

- Political sense
- Decision-making skills
- Coordinating activities
- Managing others
- Initiative
- Owning a business

- Managing finances
- Making a sales pitch
- Convincing others
- Being persuasive
- Managing priorities
- \_\_\_\_\_

- Delegating workload
- Ability to organize
- Competing with others
- Leadership
- Negotiating
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Conventional:**

- Using office software
- Event-planning
- Being methodical
- Report or essay writing
- Managing multiple tasks
- Respecting authority

- Sticking to the routine
- Self-organizing
- Following a plan
- Organizing an environment
- Being detail-oriented
- \_\_\_\_\_

- Data analysis
- Performing repetitive tasks
- Mathematics
- Synthesizing information
- Working with precision
- \_\_\_\_\_