



*Your career choice made easy*



# Career Exploration

How to use your  
Career Keys Assessment

## Message from Your PCK Team

Your Profiles Career Keys (PCK) assessment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional career assessment tool. Other assessments typically measure only one or two dimensions.

For example an interest assessment measures only what you think you might be interested in doing and does not take into account abilities or personality associated with a career, whilst an ability assessment only looks at your ability as it applies to the career and does not account for your interests or personality.

**There are seven section in this document summarized as:**

### Section 1. Career Interest Profiler (CIP – 6 dimensions)

Measures your interest in potential careers and gives a percentage job match based on successful people in careers that have a similar interest to you.

### Section 2. Work Importance Profiler (WIP – 6 dimensions)

Measures the work importance factors, required in the career and gives a percentage match to successful people in careers that have a similar importance or behavioral patterns.

### Section 3. Career Ability Profiler (CAP – 6 dimensions)

Measures your ability in the areas of calculation, math reasoning, verbal ability, spatial reasoning and your "eye for detail", both clerical and

diagrammatical and matches those abilities to successful people in careers with similar abilities.

### Section 4. Job Matching or Job Fit:

This represents a paradigm shift in the career planning industry. Instead of the standard method of hiring someone and trying to wrap the job around them, job matching looks at various characteristic of the individual to see how well they fit the job. We do that by selecting top performing professionals in a career and establishing a benchmark using these successful people. You will notice that each of the above profilers (assessments) has a job match component. The overall job match combines all three profilers into one weighted score, the overall job match percentage. This part of the PCK is of great importance because it tells you that you may be interested in a career (CIP) but do not have the ability or value factors needed for the career, conversely you may have the ability (CAP) but not the necessary interest.

### Section 5. THE O\*NET System:

This serves as the primary source of occupational information. It enables one to explore the world of work, and provides comprehensive information on key attributes and characteristics of workers and occupations. This is then built into the PCK assessment. The O\*NET database houses this data and O\*NET OnLine provides easy access to it. (You may research this further at ([www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org))).

### Section 6. Job Zones:

A Job Zone is a group of occupations that are similar in that they define:

- how most people get into the job,

- how much overall experience people need to do the job,
- how much education people need to do the job, and
- how much on-the-job training people need to do the job.

### **Section 7. Gathering Additional Career Information:**

This final section contains additional ideas and suggestions for your career exploration.

**Each section is discussed more fully in the pages which follow.**

### **Section 1. CAREER INTEREST PROFILER (CIP)**

The Career Interests section reflects how you answered questions related to various work related tasks. From this, you should see a clear preference for your areas of interests.

You can think of career interests as your liking or preference for certain work activities. The CIP measures interests in each of the six interest areas described below. Read over the definitions of your Primary and Secondary Interest Areas (see your personal report to find these) to get a better understanding of your occupational interests.

#### ***Realistic – R (sometimes referred to as Mechanical career cluster).***

This reflects an interest in working with tools, instruments, and mechanical or electrical equipment. Activities include designing, building, repairing machinery, and raising crops/animals. They enjoy outside work. Often people with Realistic interests do not like occupations that mainly involve doing paperwork or working closely with others.

#### ***Investigative – I (sometimes referred to as Technical, or Science and Technology career cluster).***

This reflects an interest in investigating and attempting to understand phenomena in the natural sciences through reading, research, and discussion. People with Investigative interests like work activities that have to do with ideas and thinking more than with physical activity. They like to search for facts and figure out problems mentally rather than to persuade or lead people.

**Artistic – A (sometimes referred to as Creative or Arts career cluster).**

This reflects an interest in activities such as painting, designing, singing, dancing, and writing; artistic appreciation of such activities. They like self-expression in their work. They prefer settings where work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

**Social – S (sometimes referred to as People Service or Social Service career cluster).**

This reflects an interest in helping, enlightening, or serving others through activities such as teaching, counseling, working in service-oriented organizations, engaging in social/political studies. They prefer to communicate more than to work with objects, machines, or data. They like to teach, to give advice, to help, or otherwise be of service to people.

**Enterprising – E (sometimes referred to as Sales career cluster).**

This reflects an interest in persuading, influencing, directing, or motivating others through activities such as sales, supervision, and aspects of business management.

**Conventional – C (sometimes referred to as Business, Administrative or Financial career cluster).**

This reflects an interest in developing and/or maintaining accurate and orderly files, records, accounts, etc.; designing and/or following systematic procedures for performing business activities. They prefer work in which there are precise standards rather than work in which you have to judge things by yourself. These people like working where the lines of authority

are clear.

**You should focus your career search on occupations satisfying your top areas of interest.**

**Section 2. Work Importance Profiler**

Your WIP results help provide a picture of who you are. Evaluate them in relation to the requirements of your career match and of course jobs in which interest you.

**What Your Work Values / Work Importance Factors Mean**

**Achievement**

If Achievement is your highest work value, look for jobs that let you use your best abilities. Look for work where you can see the results of your efforts. Explore jobs where you can get the feeling of accomplishment.

**Independence**

If Independence is your highest work value, look for jobs which let you do things on your own initiative. Explore work where you can make decisions on your own and to work with little supervision.

**Recognition**

If Recognition is your highest work value, you need to have opportunities for advancement, to give directions and instructions to others, to receive recognition for the work you do and to be looked up to by others in the

company and community, with good possibilities for advancement with prestige and the potential for leadership.

### **Relationships**

If Relationships is your highest work value, you need to have co-workers who are easy to get along with, need to do things that agree with your sense of right and wrong, need to do things for other people. Where your co-workers are friendly, let you be of service to others and do not make you do anything that goes against your sense of right and wrong.

### **Support**

If Support is your highest work value, you need to be treated fairly by the company and supervisors who back up their workers with management and train their workers well. Where the company stands behind its workers and the workers are comfortable with management's style of supervision.

### **Working Conditions**

If Working Conditions is your highest work value, you need to be busy all the time, to be well paid in comparison to other workers, to work alone, to have steady employment, have something different to do every day and to have good working conditions. Suit your work style, require you to be busy all the time, involve working alone and have many different things to do.

Work values are good to use because you probably will find that occupations that meet your work values will be more satisfying and rewarding for you than occupations that do not.. You can think of work values as aspects of work that are important to you.

**It is suggested that you focus your career exploration on occupations incorporating your two highest work values.**

## **Section 3. Your Career Ability Profiler**

The Career Ability Report gives your results gained from the Career Ability Profiler (CAP) assessment.

The CAP measured the following abilities:

### **VA - Verbal Ability:**

This was measured by the Vocabulary exercise. The ability to understand the meaning of words and use them effectively in good communication when you listen, speaks, or writes. This ability is important in such fields as communications, education, law, literary arts, and sales.

### **AR - Arithmetic Reasoning:**

This was measured by the Arithmetic Reasoning exercise. This is the ability to use several math skills and logical thinking to solve problems in everyday situations. It involves gathering and sorting through all information related to a problem, making educated guesses about how best to solve the problem, picking a likely way to solve it, and then explaining your decisions. This ability is important in such fields as engineering, construction, finance, sales, mathematics, science, and technology.

### **CM - Computation:**

This was measured by the Computation exercise. This is the ability to use arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve everyday problems involving numbers. This ability is important in such fields as engineering, finance, mathematics, science, and technology.

### **SA - Spatial Ability:**

This was measured by the Three-Dimensional Space exercise. Is the ability

to form mental pictures of objects? It involves easily understanding how drawings represent real objects and correctly imagining how parts fit together. This ability is important in such fields as: architecture, carpentry, engineering technology, the visual arts, interior design, and clothing design.

#### **FP - Form Perception:**

This was measured by the Object Matching exercise. This is the ability to quickly and accurately see details in objects, pictures, or drawings. It involves noticing little differences in shapes of figures, shading, and lengths and widths of lines. This ability is important in such fields as craft arts, craft technology, jewelry making, production technology, production work, and quality control.

#### **Clerical Perception:**

This was measured by the Name Comparison exercise. Is ability to quickly and accurately see differences in detail in printed material? The material may be text or numbers on a page, in lists, or in tables. It involves noticing if there are mistakes in the text and numbers, or if there are careless errors in working math problems. This ability measures "speed of perception," which is required in many industrial jobs, even when these jobs do not have verbal or numerical content. This ability is important in such fields as administration, claims processing, library services, office machine operation, packaging, and word processing.

Results are presented in terms of your "percentile rank".... In other words, how you rank in terms of the population as a whole. This is not a test of intelligence, but it does suggest how efficiently you assimilate and utilize various forms of information.

## **Section 4. Job Match**

Your Profiles Career Keys report compares your results with the requirements for a variety of career fields described in the O\*NET (Occupational Information Network). These requirements/traits have been found, to be important in people who were successful in these occupations.

You should consider those occupations where you show the highest match because this suggests a good **"job fit"**. Remember, the results in your personal report reflect suitability only in terms of:

1. Abilities, as measured by the Career Ability Profiler (CAP)
2. Occupational interests, as measured by your Career Interest Profiler (CIP)
3. Behavior/Value traits, as measured by the Work Importance Profiler (WIP)

Other important components, such as current and future educational level, specific skills and experience, must also be taken into account in examining career options.

Your results will be grouped into "levels of difficulty" or "job zones" described in more detail in Section 6.

Also provided is the SOC Code (Standard Occupation Code) which may be used to research each occupation. (See section 5).

#### **How can the results help me plan a career wisely?**

The results of the three assessments show what you're strongest and weakest aptitudes, interests and values are, and will thus make it easier for you to aim for jobs that will basically maximize the user of your strengths and allow you to proceed with caution when aiming for jobs which do not suit your natural talents.

You may still aim for jobs not congruent with your strengths by developing further your weaker areas through educations and/or training. But, generally speaking, your successes are in juxtaposition with high career matches.

You must already realize that jobs that are along the lines of your strengths will give you the highest chance of having a rewarding career. Also bear in mind that the assessment of your abilities was made outside of the context of specific occupations.

While the Ability Profiler assessment measures your aptitudes and reflects your strengths and weaknesses, the combination of the three assessments indicates the proper placement and application for your aptitudes where they matter most... in the world of work. This "job match" or "job-fit" is arrived at by measuring all three job-related traits... abilities, interests and personality/values. You will understand more as you read your personal report, the results of matching all three areas.

## **Section 5. O\*NET - What It Is and How You Can Use It**

Your personal report has a list of matching jobs based on your combined abilities, occupational interests, and work importance/behavioral traits that have been demonstrated to be important for success in that job.

The PCK Report helps you narrow your search and identifies careers that suit you best.

The occupational profiles on O\*NET will help you understand various aspects of a particular job.

These descriptions help build your understanding of the job just as your PICK Report helps build your self-understanding. Each O\*NET Occupational Profile provides extensive data, organized in several groupings:

- \* Worker Characteristics - Abilities, Interests, Work Values and Work Styles
- \* Worker Requirements - Skills and Knowledge
- \* Experience Requirements - Training and Experience
- \* Related Occupations
- \* Other Factors

O\*NET is a user-friendly resource, providing an easy to understand frame of reference for its users. As a supplement to career counseling, the database provides complex data in a manner that is convenient to the user. By using it in conjunction with your Profiles Career Keys report, the O\*NET database can be extremely helpful in selecting a career in which you can be a STAR.

The O\*NET internet site is at this web address: [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)

To research a specific occupation:

Select "Find Occupations" and enter the appropriate SOC (Standard Occupation Code) or Job Title from the list suggested in your PCK report.

## Section 6. Job Zones:

A Job Zone is a group of occupations that are similar in these ways:

- \* How most people get into the job?
- \* How much overall experience people need to do the job.
- \* How much education people need to do the job.
- \* How much on-the-job training people need to do the job.

In other words, occupations within a Job Zone require a similar level of "preparation".

### Your Future Job Zone:

You should explore occupations based on your **future** "level of preparation". For example, after you finish schooling/college. Choose the Job Zone that best matches the training, education and experience you expect to have in the future.

### JOB ZONE DEFINITIONS:

#### Job Zone 1: Little or No Preparation Needed

##### Overall Experience:

No previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed. For example, you can become a general office clerk even if you have never worked in an office before.

##### Education:

These occupations may require a high school diploma. Some may require a

### Job Training:

Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few days to a few months of training. Usually, an experienced worker could show you how to do the job.

### Examples:

These occupations involve following instructions and helping others... such as: bus driver, forest/ conservation workers, general office clerks, home health aides, and waiters/ waitresses.

#### Job Zone 2: Some Preparation Needed

##### Overall Experience:

Some previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience may be helpful in these occupations, but usually is not needed.

##### Education:

These occupations usually require a high school diploma or some vocational training or job-related course work. In some cases, an associate's or bachelor's degree may be needed.

### Job Training:

Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees.

### Examples:

These occupations often involve using knowledge and skills to help others, such as drywall installers, fire inspectors, flight attendants, pharmacy technicians, retail salespersons, and tellers.



### Zone 3: Medium Preparation Needed

#### Overall Experience:

Previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is required. For example, an electrician must have completed three or four years of apprenticeship or several years of vocational training, and often must have passed a licensing exam, in order to perform the job.

#### Education:

Most occupations in this zone require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree. Some may require a bachelor's degree.

#### Job Training:

Employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers.

#### Examples:

These occupations usually involve using communication and organizational skills to coordinate, supervise, manage, or train others to accomplish goals. Examples include dental assistants, electricians, fish and game wardens, legal secretaries, personnel recruiters, and recreation workers.

### Zone 4: Considerable Preparation Needed

#### Overall Experience:

A minimum of two to four years of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations. For example, an accountant

must complete four years of college and work for several years in accounting to be considered qualified.

#### Education:

Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not.

#### Job Training:

Employees in these occupations usually need several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training.

#### Examples:

Many of these occupations involve coordinating, supervising, managing, or training others, such as: accountants, chefs and head cooks, computer programmers, historians, and police detectives.

### Job Zone 5: Extensive Preparation Needed

#### Overall Experience:

Extensive skill, knowledge, and experience are needed for these occupations. Many require more than five years of experience.

#### Education:

A bachelor's degree is the minimum formal education required for these occupations. However, many also require graduate school. For example, they may require a master's degree, and some require a Ph.D., M.D., or J.D. (law degree).

#### Job Training:

Employees may need some on-the-job training, but most of these

occupations assume that the person will already have the required skills, knowledge, work-related experience, and/or training.

### **Examples:**

These occupations often involve coordinating, training, supervising, or managing the activities of others to accomplish goals. Very advanced communication and organizational skills are required. Examples include lawyers, instrumental musicians, physicists, counseling psychologists, and surgeons.

### **Section 7. Suggestions for Gathering Additional Information:**

Preparing for a career requires a commitment of time and expense. You want to make your career choice carefully.

There are many sources of information available through independent research. You might, for example, solicit information about a particular occupation from people you know. They may even put you in touch with someone who has some experience in the field. You may then want to schedule an appointment with these people to ask about what they do.

You may read biographies of people who engaged in the occupations you are considering. You can also read business publications and journals to learn about trends in specific fields. Also, look for signs that opportunities in the job or profession you choose are expanding.

Along with the growing popularity of the Internet, a wide variety of career information has become easily accessible. You may find many online resources which include job listings, resume posting services, and information on job fairs, and training. However, be careful when using

Internet resources, be sure that the organization is credible and has an established source of information on a particular occupation.

Lastly, think about your personal interests. Look carefully at your achievements in school or at work to identify your abilities. What do you like to do for hobbies and other spare time activities? Chances are that whatever it is, someone else is doing the same thing as an occupation.

Talk with friends and family about career possibilities, but don't be overly influenced by them. And, if you have a dream, don't be afraid to pursue it. Expand your thinking and you widen your opportunity. It is your life and you should have the final decision.

Your PICK Report is a great beginning. Use it wisely and put real effort into getting as much information as you can about the businesses, professions, and occupations that interest, stimulate, and excite you. Ralph Waldo Emerson once proclaimed that "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

### **Meeting with a Counselor**

There are professional Career Counselors who would be willing to offer help in your career selection. They may counsel individuals and provide educational and vocational guidance services. They collect, organize and analyze information about individuals through records, assessments and interviews to evaluate their thinking styles, occupational interests, and behavioral traits for vocational and educational planning. Your PICK Report contains much of this information about you. The Counselor will want to review your PICK Report, so take it with you when you go.

Use the space below to note the questions you would like to ask a counselor:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Career Survey**

Gather information and make notes regarding the career you are investigating.

1. What schooling/training is required for this career?
2. How long will it take me to acquire the schooling/training required?
3. How much money will I need to prepare for this career?
4. How will I get it?
5. Am I willing and able to devote the time and expense required preparing for this career?

6. I expect to receive the following benefits from my career:

\_\_\_\_\_

7. I am willing to do the following to achieve success in my career:

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Interviewing Someone with Experience in Your Chosen Career**

An excellent way to learn more about an occupation is to talk to people who have done the work. You might secure interviews with experienced people by calling them, introducing yourself, and explaining that you're seeking first-hand information about their job or profession.

Here are some sample questions you may want to ask:

1. How long have you been a \_\_\_\_\_?
2. How did you decide to become a \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What kinds of schooling/training were required?
4. How did you get your first job in this field?
5. What do you like best about being a \_\_\_\_\_?
6. What do you like least about being a \_\_\_\_\_?
7. How has this job changed since you got into it?
8. What do you do during a typical day?
9. What does a beginning \_\_\_\_\_ earn and how much can a person earn after ten years experience?
10. Apart from formal training, what kinds of experience should I try to get that would help me prepare to be a \_\_\_\_\_?
11. What could I read (or where should I look) that would help me learn more about being a \_\_\_\_\_?

### **Other Questions I would like to ask:**

\_\_\_\_\_