



SPECIAL TOPIC

Direction and Focus

SENSE OF DIRECTION

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here, said Alice. That depends a good deal on where you want to get to, said the Cat. I don't much care where, said Alice. Then it doesn't matter which way you go, said the Cat."

-LEWIS CARROLL / Alice in Wonderland

"We can all be in charge of where we are going and how we plan to get there. The main purpose of setting long-range goals is to help you be more consciously aware of where you are going, why you are going there, and how you imagine it will be when you arrive. Taking charge of your life means more than just thoughts, feelings and intentions. It requires that you set goals and carry them out. Through setting and achieving goals you learn skills for getting where you want to be and feeling good about yourself. Goal setting is the ultimate purpose of career and life planning. With proper goal setting in mind, you are assured a sense of direction."

-RANDY POWELL

"To get somewhere, you must know where you're going. Sounds logical, doesn't it? Yet, for countless unhappy, unsatisfied people, getting through the day is their only ambition. They float along in their daily lives like driftwood in the ocean. They take whatever job falls their way and exert the least amount of energy possible to get the job done."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"As we pass through the various stages of life and as situational changes occur, we set goals, choose from options and alternatives, and make decisions. For many the process of change is difficult and threatening, particularly for those who haphazardly chart their course only to find frustration and dissatisfaction. Through career life planning, we learn to center our attention on carefully laid plans and on those variables over which we have some control. Our lives can be charted more effectively through the maze of changes that we experience, both individually and situationally, by planning programs that place these variables in perspective."

-VERNON ZUNKER

CAREER & LIFE PLANNING

--Adults are fully capable of making career and life decisions for themselves.

--When adults become actively involved in establishing career and life plans, they are happier, more satisfied, and feel more in control of the direction of their lives.

--Throughout their lives, adults search for personal and career satisfaction and need to carefully analyze each transition along the way.

--Adults have the power to change, to grow, and to achieve their own definition of success.

--Life satisfaction comes from successfully integrating career and lifestyle so that they complement each other.

--Adults can learn to manage their careers and to maintain fulfilling lifestyles.

--Adults can progress most effectively by building on their strengths and by seeking to expand the positive options in their lives.

--The career and life planning process never ends. It is important in order to maintain a rewarding and fulfilling lifestyle.

"An individual's work cannot be considered in isolation; rather, work is conceptualized as a major commitment in life planning that must be integrated into an individual's style of life. Because career life planning can affect individual lifestyle tremendously, it should be considered as an ongoing process that must allow for change of individual needs and situational circumstances."

-VERNON ZUNKER

"One of the primary purposes of career life planning is to develop skills through which individuals learn to control their futures. We learn how to develop options and alternatives and effectively decide which to follow. We learn to identify our personal needs and the needs of our closest associates and how to integrate those needs into our life plans. We learn to make plans that we can change and revise as we ourselves change or as circumstances necessitate change. Thus, our planning must be flexible and include realistic options from which effective decisions can be made to promote a fuller and more satisfying life."

-VERNON ZUNKER

LIFE & LIVELIHOOD

Laurence Boldt, career development specialist and author of *How To Find The Work You Love* and *Zen And The Art Of Making A Living*, takes an integrated approach to work. His perspective on career development and broader conception of work integrates the spiritual and material life.

"I first got into the career field because I recognized how central work is to the happiness of the individual and the character of any society. Work offers the individual the opportunity to share acts of love and beauty, to see goodness reflected in the image of his or her work. Since work is what we do with most of our waking lives, we must, if we count life valuable, consider what we are working for. For all too many, work is drudgery, the thing to do to pay the bills, or a mad chase for material wealth and social status. I saw how bored, alienated, under-challenged, or over-stressed so many are in their work, and how their unhappiness at work affects families, friends, and communities. It seemed to me that the popular conception of work as principally a matter of economics and social status was at the heart of the matter. Many individual tragedies of alienation, emptiness, and despair, as well as community, national, and global problems seemed to be aggravated, if not caused, by this conception of work."

"A growing number of people are expecting to find a place for their heart and soul in their work, a place to express their unique talents and abilities. They want a greater sense of joy and meaning in their work. Your life's work is the work you were born to do -- the most appropriate vehicle through which to express your unique talents and abilities. More than a job or a career, it is your special gift to humanity. Traditionally, your life's work was called a *vocation*, a word which literally means *calling*. The work you love -- your calling or life's work -- is your unique and living answer to the question, *what am I here to do on this earth?*"



GOAL SETTING

"Begin with the end in mind. Start with a clear understanding of your destination. Know where you are going so that you better understand where you are now, and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction."

-STEPHEN COVEY

"First, you have to have a goal. For, if you don't know where you are going, then any road will take you there and it won't really matter what you do with your life. In fact, if you don't clearly know where you are going in your life, you probably won't recognize it when you get there. Once a goal is set, the mind constantly monitors self-talk and environmental feedback, both positive and negative, making adjustments along the way in order to score the target. But, when the mind is programmed with vague expectations, or the goal is too far out of sight, the individual will wander aimlessly until he gives up in fatigue and frustration."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"First, have a definite, clear and practical idea; a goal, an objective. Second, attain it by whatever means available, whether wisdom, money, materials or methods. Third, adjust all your means to that end."

-ARISTOTLE

"Most people resist the idea of goal-setting. It's easier just to assume everything will work out in the end. Hang loose. Whatever will be will be. So, most people never set goals. They fill their calendars with excursions and diversions. Rather than concentrate on activities and projects that can help them reach their goal, they just hope for the best and go with the flow."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"It is the individual who must chart his or her life course and decide on the direction that course will take in this ever-changing society. A positive outlook on life and the realization that factors important to career and life success can be controlled are good attitudes to cultivate. Our challenge is to help others and ourselves by remaining optimistic throughout various changes we experience individually and situationally. We must recognize that there are options to pursue if we learn to plan effectively and keep our alternatives in proper perspective. Ideally, through career life planning we become better prepared to meet life's challenges."

-VERNON ZUNKER

"There can be little joy in aimless activity. It is debilitating. Negative attitudes and poor self-esteem fester in the frustration of purposeless labor. Aimless labor is like traveling in a rudderless ship. You are powerless to propel your vessel toward your port of call. On the other hand, virtually nothing on earth can stop a person with a positive attitude who has his goal clearly in sight."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"Setting and reaching goals helps you focus on the best place for you to be in life. Without goals, it's easy to become distracted in your journey toward success. Knowing the difference between striving for goals and drifting along often separates winners from near misses."

-JOYCE LAIN KENNEDY

DREAMS

"Setting a goal starts with a dream, a desire for something you want. Planning is the road map that leads you to your destination. Motivation is the fuel that gets you there."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"We grow by dreams. All great individuals are dreamers. Some of us let these great dreams die, but others nourish and protect them, nurse them through bad days until they bring them to the light which come always to those who sincerely hope that their dreams will come true."

-WOODROW WILSON

"In order for a daydream to become a reality, it must be linked to action. You must gravitate to the environment of your dreams."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"Dreams are powerful reflections of your actual growth potential. As children, we all have fantasies or goals of what we'd like to be when we grow up. Each of us has the potential to make our dreams a reality."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"First comes thought, then organization of that thought into ideas and plans; then transformation of those plans into reality. The beginning, as you will observe, is in your imagination."

-NAPOLEON HILL



ASKING QUESTIONS

Effective career planning should result in a goal that provides the individual the motivation and empowerment that accompanies a purposeful and meaningful direction.

Perhaps, in pursuit of activity that makes life meaningful, people are asking themselves the wrong questions...

What do my parents want me to do?

What will be most in demand?

What kind of career will allow me to achieve fame, celebrity, status or prestige?

What kind of career will bring me the greatest income?

What kind of work will be easy and have the fewest hassles?

What kind of work will cause me to take the fewest risks?

What will allow me to pay the bills?

What positions are currently available?

What positions are currently posted on the internet?

What positions can I get quickly with the least amount of effort?

On the other hand, consider a new set of questions people might ask themselves in pursuit of activity that makes life meaningful. People must have the courage to ask themselves the right questions...

TRANSITIONS

A transition is "any event or non-event which results in change." An *event* is something which happened, such as a promotion, the death of a spouse, entering a first job, or getting fired. A *non-event* is something which was expected to happen, but did not, such as getting promoted, not being able to get the house you expected to buy, or not graduating when you expected to.

Transitions can be viewed as negative or positive. And the same transition may be viewed by one individual as positive and by another as negative. For example, a husband's promotion and required relocation to another state may be viewed by the wife as negative. Transitions are a very normal and ongoing part of life; everyone experiences them. It is desirable, however, to be able to control the impact of transitions in order to keep our lives in equilibrium.

The magnitude of the impact of a transition relates directly to three factors: The nature of the transition itself (the perceived desirability, anticipation, timeliness, effect), the nature (coping skills) of the person experiencing the transition, and the nature of the environment which surrounds the person experiencing the transition (the availability and degree of support systems).

COPING WITH TRANSITIONS

The following items (or questions) are used in assessing the *temperature* of a transition...

Is or was this transition... anticipated? desirable? maintaining your usual routine or role? unrelated to change in your view of yourself? occurring at the best possible time?

Do you have... the needed physical and psychological energy to give to this transition? the absence of stress in other life roles? the needed coping skills? previous experience making successful transitions? an optimistic outlook on this transition? psychological support from family and friends? acceptance of this situation by peers? a long period of time to absorb or process this event? absence of disruption in close personal relationships? sufficient material resources?

The following factors (or questions) are used in reducing the *temperature* of a transition...

Can you... do something to plan for it? find any desirable qualities in it? find ways to control it? reduce its effects on your routine or roles? lessen the negative impact on your view of yourself? make the timing of this event more favorable? reduce the physical and psychological energy needed in other life roles in order to have more for dealing with this transition? find a way to reduce stress in other life roles? find concrete ways to increase relaxation, assertiveness, and ability to gather more information? identify past successful ways of coping with transitions that you can now use? develop a more optimistic outlook on this situation? increase the number of options available to you? find additional close support persons, or be more open with those you now have about your needs? increase the degree to which your peers accept this transition? give yourself more time to process this transition? minimize the disruption of your present close personal relationships? increase the amount of material resources you can devote to this transition?

LIFE STAGES

In general, people pass through various stages in their lives. These stages, passages, or transitions occur at different age intervals throughout our adult years, and represent significant changes. Consider each decade and the related issues:

20s - Testing of skills, learning, establishment of independence and identity, peer groups are important, seek intimacy in relationships, lots of opportunity, end of fulltime education, beginning of fulltime work, variety of jobs, bottom of organizational ladder, impatience with tangible goals.

30s - Reevaluation of life's purpose, question earlier decisions, progress in career, greater self confidence, higher status and pay, spend a lot of time on the job, juggle work and family, less leisure time, signs of aging begin, tendency to compare success with others.

40s - Reevaluate dreams and goals, integrate successes and failures, upheaval, midlife crisis, rich career growth, relax more, help others, fewer opportunities.

50s - Settling down, mellowing, realistic reassessment of dreams and goals, less driven, increased self-acceptance, leisure more important, fewer family responsibilities, more family involvement (Sometimes resignation, withdrawal, discouragement, negativity, fear).

60s - Concerns with aging, leaving career, new types of lifestyle and activities, time to help others, financial security, health factors.

LIFE ACTIVITIES

As a general consideration of the most appropriate activities that define each developmental stage of your life, consider this casual observation...

When you're in your 20s, you should LEARN as much as you can.

When you're in your 30s, you should WORK as much as you can.

When you're in your 40s, you should LEAD as much as you can.

When you're in your 50s, you should TEACH as much as you can.

LIFE EVENTS

Major events in our lives bring about major change. These events may be anticipated or unanticipated, and may or may not be related to any particular life stage. Graduation, marriage, having children, buying a home, getting a job, changing jobs, getting a promotion, or retirement represent significant points in our lives. On the other hand, divorce, legal problems, major illness, getting fired, getting arrested, or the death of a family member may also represent significant points in our lives. Since change is oftentimes accompanied by stress, some major life events are really crises. Crises, and the subsequent loss and negative effects, often times present challenges that can be a positive stimulus for change and growth.

CHANGING WORLD

Managing change means, not only understanding internal changes in yourself, but also being aware of external changes in society, the economy, and the market. The world around us is in a constant state of flux. The employment environment is ever-changing. Preparing for change means recognizing changes in the world of work.



CHOICE

"What most people want out of life, more than anything else, is the opportunity to make choices."

-DAVID CAMPBELL

Life is made up of choices. Where will I go to college? What will I major in? With whom will I associate? What clubs will I join? Whom will I date? How will I spend my time? What will I do after graduation? Where will I work? Who will I marry? What are my career goals?

"The world of work is a huge universe consisting of thousands of occupations. Statistically, picking up a suitable occupation by chance or luck is inconceivable. You will need effective decision-making skills. What is your current approach to decision-making? Do you immediately want to know the right answer? There is, however, seldom a single best course of action. Instead, one should contemplate a full range of options, each leading to different consequences. Ask yourself: What strategy do I choose to pursue? What are my alternatives right now? How might they change depending upon the next move? Only after surveying the whole range of alternatives and their consequences do successful people decide what move to make. People faced with career-life decisions are unlikely to make winning decisions unless they can see the full range of alternatives and evaluate their consequences."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER / *Your Career: Choices & Changes*

MAKING DECISIONS

"It is only in our decisions that we are important."

-JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

"Successful men and women are very careful in reaching decisions and very persistent and determined in action thereafter."

-L.G. ELLIOTT

Decisions are choices made from among alternatives. Decisions are deliberate actions taken. Decisions are commitments of resources that cannot be retrieved, returned or recalled. Decisions are controlled by the decision-maker. Decisions are not measured in terms of a good decision or a bad decision by how well the process was used, not by the outcome.

To make a decision is to pass judgment on an issue under consideration. To make a decision is to reach a conclusion, to make up one's mind, to settle or resolve a dilemma. To make a decision is to make a sound determination with firmness and resolution, beyond doubt, unmistakable, free from hesitation and vacillation. How do you approach decision-making? Do you analyze carefully all alternatives? Do you discuss it with friends? Or do you prefer to go with what simply feels right? What strategies do you use in your decision-making process?

Impulse - Going with your first reaction

Escape - Avoiding or deflecting

Procrastination - Delaying or deciding by default

Compliance - Handing over control or letting someone else decide

Agony - Overthinking and considering every detail

Play it Safe - Picking the alternative with the lowest level of risk

DECISION-MAKING GUIDELINES

Define the problem.

Consider options and alternatives.

Identify the obstacles

Anticipate probable outcomes.

Obtain adequate information.

Know your values.

Review your goals.

Write an action plan



RESPONSIBILITY & CONFIDENCE

"To come to a satisfactory decision about your career, you look for a match between self insights and your identified choices."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER

Decision-making is the task of a responsible person. Decision-making involves taking charge of your life. Your decision is yours to make. It is not someone else's responsibility. Your decision is not the option you fell into or had to choose because there was nothing else to choose from. Instead, your decision is made from among alternatives that you clearly identified and investigated. Your decision is your best alternative given your self-knowledge and your available options.

A responsible person knows that a decision is not necessarily a perfect choice that will make life wonderful forever. When your career goals are under consideration, it is important to realize that your decision now is not likely to be the last decision you will ever have to make about your career. In fact, your decision is likely to create new decision situations that will enable you to continue freely making choices and taking charge of your career.

On setting a goal... Ask yourself... Is what you're pursuing consistent with who you are? Are your goals aligned with your vision of what is important to you in your life? Does your career path allow you to spend your time involved in activities that reflect your interests, skills, talents, abilities, beliefs and values? Does your chosen career give you opportunities to do things you enjoy, to do things you are good at, and to do things that you believe in?

On achieving your goal... Ask yourself... Are you involved in activities that will take you closer to your goal? How do your present decisions impact your future goals? How do your current activities relate to the accomplishment of your goals? Are you sure that the things you are now doing will get you to where you want to go? What investment in yourself are you making now that will yield positive returns regarding your short-term and long-term goals?

It is vital to one's long-term success to evaluate one's direction and to examine the merits of one's goals. And, while gut feelings are valid and can oftentimes be trusted, the process should combine the best use of your head and heart. Making good decisions is also a rational act that is greatly aided by obtaining good information, doing detailed research, and asking serious questions of oneself. You'll know you made the right decision because the process you used to arrive at it was well thought out.

If you have the confidence of your goal, nothing will be able to halt your momentum. Gaining that confidence is the first step.

GOAL SETTING

Goals provide you with a purpose, perspective and direction for your career and life. People without goals experience more conflict and uncertainty because they just react to whatever happens instead of trying to infuse their lives with meaning. These people are likely to have far more days when they have no compelling reason for even getting out of bed. In contrast, people with carefully chosen, clearly defined goals know what they want out of their lives and careers.

EXPRESSING GOALS

Goals may be stated in a variety of ways corresponding to the strength of your commitment to complete them. How determined are you in the achievement of your goals and objectives?

Statements of Possibility	I probably will...	I might be able to...
Statements of Desire	I want to...	I'd really like to...
Statements of Intent	I'll try to...	I'll do the best I can to...
Statements of Promise	I will...	I'm committed to...



DEFINING GOALS

Goals and objectives are statements of purpose and direction accomplishable within a definite time frame. They may be long-range or short-range. To be effective in setting and achieving goals, one must be effective in defining goals.

Goals must be... Specific... Measurable... Attainable... Realistic... Future Oriented... Time Constrained... Resource Conscious... and... Linked to Action

TAKING RISKS

It is important to continually evaluate your options and to explore alternatives. When it comes time to make a choice, it may involve some degree of risk. In all growth, there is usually some risk involved. In order to experience growth and development, we often put ourselves in stressful positions by taking risks. At times it may well be necessary to lose something in order to grow. How much risk are you able or willing to take? While some research concerning the decision at hand may decrease unknown factors and reduce the amount of risk, it is usually impossible to eliminate all risk.

"Change and growth take place when a person has risked himself and dares to become involved with experimenting with his or her own life."

-HERBERT OTTO

"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing."

-HELEN KELLER

Change will occur whether we like it or not. At times it may be worth taking a risk to maintain control over the direction of one's life. To avoid taking unnecessary risks, determine the value of the risk and establish guidelines for taking the risk. Consider the following factors:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Get information | Be deliberate |
| Determine the worst that could happen | Make a plan |
| Estimate possible loss | Be committed |
| Consider your motivation | Make adjustments if necessary |
| Evaluate pros and cons | Take responsibility |
| Consider consequences | Be realistic |
| Don't procrastinate | |

POWER OF GOALS

"Goal setting is obviously a powerful process. It is based on the same principle of focus that allows us to concentrate rays of diffused sunlight into a force powerful enough to start a fire. It is the manifestation of creative imagination and independent will. It is the practicality of *eating our elephants one bite at a time*, of translating vision into achievable, actionable doing. It is a common denominator of successful individuals."

-STEPHEN COVEY / *First Things First*

"Despite their obvious value, our experience with and feelings about goals are mixed. Some of us can set heroic goals, exercise tremendous discipline, and pay the price for incredible achievement. Others can't keep a New Year's resolution to pass up dessert two days in a row. Some see goals as the primary factor shaping the destiny of individuals and nations. Others see them as superficial, pie-in-the-sky idealism that has no staying power in the real world. Some of us stick to a goal, no matter what. And some goals stick to us, no matter what. Some experts tell us that if we think positively, we can do anything; others tell us to stop beating ourselves up when we find out we can't."

-STEPHEN COVEY / *First Things First*

"Begin with the end in mind . . . Make certain that whatever you do on any particular day does not violate the criteria you have defined as supremely important, and that each day of your life contributes in a meaningful way to the vision you have of your life as a whole."

-STEPHEN COVEY / *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Your goals and objectives are guided by your personal mission. Your mission is the vision you have of your life, your statement of purpose that establishes your general direction in life. When planning your career and life goals, it may be necessary to consider the time frame within which the goal is likely to be accomplished. Consider the following terminology.

MISSION	Long Range...	Lifetime Plan...	Very General
GOALS	Medium Range...	Five Year Plan...	General to Specific
OBJECTIVES	Short Range...	One Year Plan...	Very Specific

Goals that are connected to our inner life have the power of passion and principle. They are fueled by the fire within and based on principles that create quality-of-life results. One of the best ways to access this power is to ask three vital questions: What? Why? How?

WHAT? What do I desire to accomplish? What is the contribution I want to make? What is the end I have in mind?

WHY? Why do I want to do it? Does my goal grow out of mission, needs, and principles? Does it empower me to contribute through my roles?

HOW? How am I going to do it? What are the key principles that will empower me to achieve my purpose? What strategies can I use to implement these principles?

PERSONAL MISSION

"One of the most powerful processes we've found to cultivate the passion of vision is creating and integrating an empowering personal mission statement. We're talking about accessing and creating an open connection with the deep energy that comes from a well-defined, thoroughly integrated sense of purpose and meaning in life. We're talking about creating a powerful vision based on principles that ensure its achievability. We're talking about a sense of excitement and adventure that grows out of connecting with your unique purpose and the profound satisfaction that comes in fulfilling it. The mission statement becomes the primary factor that influences every moment of choice. Creating and living an empowering mission statement has a significant impact on the way we spend our time. Vision is the fundamental force that drives everything else in our lives. It impassions us with a sense of the unique contribution that's ours to make."

-STEPHEN COVEY / *First Things First*

BE SPECIFIC

In setting your goals and writing your personal mission statement, you may want to begin by listing your dreams and desires. Ultimately, however, you must tie your dreams to action by stating specific steps and strategies that will help you reach your goals.

I WANT...

To be happy
To make a lot of money
To be famous
To be the president of the company
To be respected by my peers
To gain financial security
To own my own business
To have more time for my family
To excel in my field
To become active in my community

BE SPECIFIC...

What will make me happy?
By offering what service?
By excelling in what?
By taking what career steps?
By what action?
What dollar amount?
In what field?
How will I gain the hours?
By taking what steps?
How?

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statements people have found to be most empowering seem to have several characteristics in common. An empowering mission statement...

- Represents the deepest and best within you.
- Is the fulfillment of your own unique gifts and an expression of your unique capacity to contribute.
- Is based on a purpose higher than self.
- Addresses and integrates all dimensions of fundamental human needs and capacities (balance among physical, social, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects).
- Is based on principles that produce quality-of-life results.
- Deals with vision and principle-based values.
- Deals with significant roles in your life (balance among personal, family, work, community).
- Is written to inspire you (not to impress others).

SELF KNOWLEDGE

"Know thyself."

-ORACLE OF DELPHI

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

-OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

"Make it your business to know yourself, which is the most difficult lesson in the world."

-MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

"I think somehow we learn who we really are and then live with that decision."

-ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

"Your life is a process of maturing, developing and growing. You have unique characteristics, needs and goals. The lifestyle or career that is best for a friend, parent or relative may not be the best for you. It is important that YOU make decisions based on YOUR OWN evaluation of the direction that you want to take in life."

-HECKLINGER & BLACK

"To know oneself, one should assert oneself."

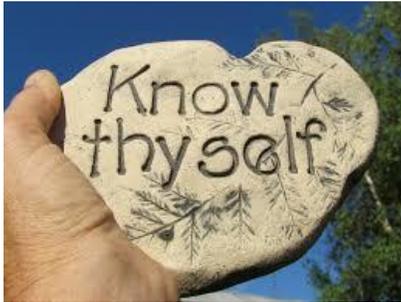
-ALBERT CAMUS

"Until you truly know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, what you want to do and why you want to do it, I promise you, you can't succeed in any but the most superficial sense of that word. You are your own raw material. When you know yourself, you are ready to invent yourself."

-WARREN BENNIS

SELF-UNDERSTANDING

Effective career and life planning begins with a firm determination of who you are. A strong sense of self-awareness will give you the confidence you need to plan your future. The first step is a true understanding of yourself. Of all the people in the world worth knowing, you should know yourself best. When we gain better insight into ourselves, we can see more clearly the world around us. Self-understanding is also the first step toward better understanding of others. When we have a sense of who we are, we are better able to make decisions about things that affect our lives. We are able to make important choices concerning such things as academic major, marriage, lifestyle and career direction. Knowing yourself prepares you to be more effective in making decisions and setting goals.



FINDING YOUR NICHE

Knowing yourself means identifying your unique characteristics, traits, and qualities. Understanding yourself means defining yourself. Self knowledge and self understanding are the keys to finding your niche. Finding your niche means discovering how your personality relates to the outside world. Finding your niche means discovering your purpose or meaning in the world. When you are able to draw parallels between your personality and your environment you begin to understand how you fit into the grand scheme of things.

"Self-knowledge means being conscious of your personality characteristics in general and your interests, abilities, and values in particular. Personality is the sum total of all your unique qualities and traits or all the physical, mental, and behavioral characteristics you possess."

-ROBERT LOCKE

"Once you begin to identify what energizes you about life you can then begin to incorporate those insights into a career. Self-awareness is the first stage of the career planning process. The best approach to the process of career planning is first to examine who you are and what you know about yourself and what you need and want, and then mesh that information with the world of work."

-SUKIENNIK, BENDAT & RAUFMAN

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The process of getting to know who you are involves acknowledging your unique self. It is not uncommon for many individuals to possess the same educational background and similar work experiences. What makes an individual unique are personal characteristics. These personal characteristics are another dimension of a person's qualifications and potential for success in a given career field. Education, work experience, family and environment are the major factors influencing an individual's personal characteristics. All experiences help shape people's view of themselves which are projected in career and life choices. They are revealed through interests, skills and values. They are expressed as personality.

MATCH GAME

"Where your talents and the needs of the world cross, there lies your vocation."
-ARISTOTLE

Effective goal setting and decision making begin with a serious consideration of one's interests, skills and values. These personal characteristics, when integrated with real world options, become the starting point for career and life planning. Effective career and life planning seeks to match your unique personality with specific job requirements.

TAKING STOCK

Self-assessment is the starting block. It is analysis of one's interests, skills and values. Conducting a self-assessment is like taking a personal inventory of one's self. The reason you prepare a self-assessment is to determine the most important criteria to use in analyzing your potential career options. The goal is arrive at an optimal match between your personal desires and your career alternatives. Inventories are checklists. They are useful in helping you identify the words that best describe your interests, skills and values.

"The career and life planning process involves gathering information so that you can make realistic decisions based on facts and self-knowledge rather than on your own feelings or the suggestions of others."
-HECKLINGER & BLACK

"Career life planning focuses on a significant number of factors that influence career choice. Setting priorities and goals for career life planning, developing ultimate life designs, and setting long-range and short-term goals are major choice objectives. In career life planning, values, interests, abilities, achievement, and work-life experiences are viable factors to discuss, evaluate, and clarify in order to make career life planning determinations."
-VERNON ZUNKER

"What the world needs is more people who know what they really want to do, and who do it at their place of work as their chosen work. The world needs more people who feel true enthusiasm for their work -- People who have taken the time to think out what they uniquely can do, and what they uniquely have to offer the world."
-RICHARD BOLLES / *What Color Is Your Parachute?*



ACTIVITIES

Every endeavor (job, work, project) is made up of activities. Activities can be understood in terms of their relationship to one's *interests, skills, and values*. Activities that you like to do are called *interests*. Activities that you are good at doing are called *skills*. And activities that are important to you are said to align with your *values*.

Think about the activities that you perform on a daily basis. Which ones are your favorite? Which ones are you particularly good at? Which ones do you particularly enjoy? Which ones are consistent with your beliefs? Think about individual activities you have performed in the past. Perhaps you performed these activities in a job, on a volunteer project, as part of a hobby or in everyday life. Ask yourself some important questions: How did it turn out? Was it fun? Did I do it better than most people? Have I been asked to do it again? Have I shown other people how to do it? Did it provide me with a sense of purpose?

It is helpful to examine in detail these three important distinct concepts...
Interests... Skills... Values...

INTERESTS

"Why can't a person do for a living what he would otherwise do for a summer vacation?"

-MARK TWAIN

"Do something you'd do for nothing. Do something you think will bring you satisfaction and the kind of pride in achievement that keeps you vitally absorbed in what you're doing. Do something that makes you glad to be alive. Do something you love to be doing. Do something you'd do for nothing and you will have found a gateway to real and lifelong happiness."

-JOYCE LAIN KENNEDY

Interests are represented by activities that you like to do. Interests are things you find desirable, enjoyable, fun or pleasant. Interests are oftentimes reflected in your hobbies, recreation and other leisure pursuits. Interests can be expressed through amusement, sport, diversion or entertainment. Interests may be defined in terms of pleasure, pastime, relaxation and avocation.

Developing interests adds variety, energy and enrichment to your lifestyle. What things interest you most? You can identify your interests by considering how you like to spend your time. Think of those things you enjoy doing, things that you would choose to do if you did not have other demands on your time. What activities have you made time for? In what ways do you pursue your interests? What activities fulfill your interests? How are your interests expressed?

"Because your personality reflects your interests, you feel energetic and enthusiastic when doing your favorite activities. Success is unlikely unless you are using skills you naturally enjoy in a compatible working environment. Have you ever noticed how hard it is just to get out of bed in the morning when you have nothing interesting to look forward to? People who enjoy their work tend to be healthier, both physically and emotionally, than those who view work as a rat race."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER / *Your Career: Choices & Changes*



FOLLOW YOUR BLISS

"If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track, which has been there all the while waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living."

-JOSEPH CAMPBELL

"If you do what you like, you never really work. Your work is your play."

-HANS SAYLE

"Everyone has been made for some particular work, and the desire for that work has been put in every heart."

-RUMI

"As soon as possible, begin doing work that you love and enjoy."

-LAURENCE BOLDT

OCCUPATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

For the purpose of developing a universal set of definitions related to the variety of activities individuals enjoy doing, interests can be grouped into six different categories or occupational environments.

Realistic - Activities that are hands-on, manual, motoric, physical, tactile, athletic, or mechanical. Working outdoors or with machines, tools, or animals.

Investigative - Activities that are scientific, scholarly, analytical, technical, or intellectual. Thinking, researching, reading, experimenting, exploring, or solving problems.

Artistic - Activities that are creative, innovative, aesthetic, expressive, and spontaneous. Working with ideas, concepts, feelings, and imagination.

Social - Activities that are oriented to relationships, interaction, teamwork, service, or education. Helping, supporting, teaching, or developing people. Improving society.

Enterprising - Activities that involve selling, public speaking, or business. Working to lead, manage, control, persuade, influence, motivate, promote, guide, or direct.

Conventional - Activities that are orderly, structured, efficient, organized, logical, precise, or detail-oriented. Working with mathematics, numbers, statistics, data, regulations, or rules.

SKILLS

"We were meant to work in ways that suit us, drawing on our natural talents and abilities as a way to express ourselves and contribute to others. This work is a key to our true happiness and self-expression."

-MARSHA SINETAR / *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow*

Skills are represented by activities that you are good at doing. Skills are expressed as abilities, strengths, talents and aptitudes. Skills determine expertise, competency, proficiency and dexterity. Skills may be defined in terms of mastery, power, knowledge and intelligence. Skills are oftentimes reflected in your accomplishments and achievements.

Possessing skills builds your self-confidence and self-esteem. What activities are you particularly good at doing? You can identify your skills by considering your successes. Think of those things you perform well, things you have a special capacity for doing with excellence. Think of abilities you have developed through study and practice. What special talents do you possess? What activities represent your skills? In what ways do you seek to develop your skills? What things are you able to do better than others?



SUCCESS

Your personal successes are a direct reflection of your skills. In seeking to identify activities that may represent your skills, it may be helpful to begin by analyzing your accomplishments and achievements. In what ways have you been successful? Consider some recent successes from any area of your life. What motivated you? What skills and abilities were used? Who helped? What were the external circumstances? What were the rewards? How did you feel about it?

"Every man has his own vocation. Talent is the call."

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"The secret of joy in work is contained in one word -- excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it."

-PEARL BUCK

"To the extent that your work takes into account the needs of the world, it will be meaningful; to the extent that through it you express your unique talents, it will be joyful."

-LAURENCE BOLDT / *How To Find The Work You Love*

"Although almost everyone is uniquely talented, most of us have only a vague awareness of what our skills really are. It's unlikely that we will realize our unique potentials unless we are clear about what skills we possess. Understanding our unique skills can help us choose a career or see how our skills might transfer from one field, occupation or job to another."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER

SKILL GROUPS

Functional skills can be categorized or grouped in a variety of ways. Consider the following groupings.

Manual / Technical / Mechanical / Physical
Analytical / Problem Solving / Intellectual
Innovative / Original / Expressive / Creative
Social / Interpersonal / Service / Helping
Managing / Influencing / Leading / Persuading
Detail / Data / Numerical / Organizing

SKILL AREAS

Consider the following general skills categories. In this grouping, one is asked to consider whether he/she prefers to work with data, people, ideas or things.

Data - Numerical, statistical, precision, mathematics
People - Social, service, interpersonal, initiating, managing
Ideas - Creative, conceptual, innovative, artistic, expressive
Things - Scientific, physical, manual, technical, mechanical

SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Self-management skills are personal traits or characteristics. These skills are specific to your personality and do not depend on any particular job or occupation.

inventive, efficient, flexible, careful, tenacious, logical, spontaneous, conscientious, teachable, versatile, responsible, cautious, kind, alert, honest, confident, thorough, daring, sociable, clear-thinking, precise, loyal, forceful, competitive, tactful, trustworthy, intuitive, clever, dominant, imaginative, helpful, analytical, quick, ambitious, outgoing, adventurous, accurate, cooperative, conservative, determined, adaptable, active, tolerant, industrious, rational, tough, strong, energetic, mature, patient, reliable, firm, resourceful, friendly, sensible, organized, supportive, assertive, empathetic, creative

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Functional skills are work-related skills that are transferable from one occupation to another. These skills can be applied in a number of different work settings.

designing, helping others, creating, data processing, fundraising, organizing, record keeping, filing, interviewing, recruiting, developing budgets, dancing, public speaking, generating ideas, selling, motivating others, cooking, debating, lecturing, financial planning, team building, singing, providing care, landscaping, leading, manipulating numbers, proofreading, making decisions, managing conflict, analyzing data, running, investigating, writing, teaching, solving problems, researching, supervising, negotiating, decorating, drawing, modeling, group facilitating, accounting, managing people, advising, using tools, explaining concepts, observing

VALUES

"There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do."

-ALBERT CAMUS

Values are represented by activities that are important to you. Values are reflected in your beliefs, priorities, attitudes, feelings and principles. Values relate to your dispositions, orientations and preferences. Values address what really matters most to you in your life and what is essential.

Clarifying values provides the criteria by which you determine meaning in your life. What is important? What is essential? What do I believe? What makes me happy? What do I need? What really matters to me? What are my guiding principles? Are your activities consistent with your system of values? Are you able to derive meaning and purpose from the activities in which you are engaged?

VALUES CLARIFICATION

Values are feelings. Feelings relate to facts, things, thoughts, people and concepts. What is important in life? Some people might say: family, friends, love, security, comfort, community and leisure. Others might say: career, money, time, education and marriage. Values represent important aspects of your life. Values inevitably and quite properly call forth deep personal convictions.

Values help people make choices. Values help us prioritize the factors in our lives. Values help us determine the relative importance of things which impact upon our daily lives. People will generally make decisions based on a value system. It is important, therefore, to determine for yourself what principles guide major decisions in your life. To make better decisions you need to start clarifying the basis upon which your decisions will be made.

"Few people really know what they want in life because they have never really taken the time and effort to determine what matters in their lives. To determine what you want, you must first know what is important in your life... the values that give your life meaning and relevance."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER

"We cannot separate our philosophy of life from the practical choices we make about career."

-LAURENCE BOLDT

"A crucial component to your personal joy is establishing well-defined life goals that reflect what is important to you."

-WAITLEY & WITT

"If you can bring your actions and life choices into harmony with your values, you will feel more in control of your life and more satisfied with the decisions you make."

-HECKLINGER & BLACK



PERSONAL VALUES

Consider this list of personal values. They represent various aspects of life that are generally important to most people.

justice, independence, honesty, family, health, financial security, leisure, personal appearance, power, accomplishment, love, spirituality, friendship, recognition, intimacy, social consciousness, creativity, adventure, morality, truth, prestige, excitement, inner harmony, comfort, success, fame, religion, education, career, integrity, service, beauty, personal authority, variety, marriage, stability, freedom, pleasure, time, nature, affiliation, loyalty, intellect, responsibility, autonomy, public contact, clean work setting, political involvement

LIFE VALUES

Achievement - Accomplishing something important
Adventure - Seeking challenging new experiences
Aesthetics - Appreciating beauty in all its forms
Affection - Giving and receiving love
Authenticity - Genuinely being yourself
Career - Having meaningful and challenging work
Creativity - Freedom to express new ideas and develop new things
Cultural Heritage - Appreciating your ethnic background
Economic Reward - Earning a high rate of compensation
Emotional Strength - Managing your feelings in positive ways
Ethical Living - Living morally and justly
Expertise - Being good at something worthwhile
Family - Having a strong bond through shared heredity and experience
Friendship - Affiliating and associating with others
Future Orientation - Seeking to learn what the future holds
Health & Fitness - Actively maintaining vitality
Inner Serenity - Seeking peace within
Integrity - Maintaining congruence of your words with deeds
Intellect - Possessing knowledge and a keen and lively mind
Leadership - Having influence or authority over others

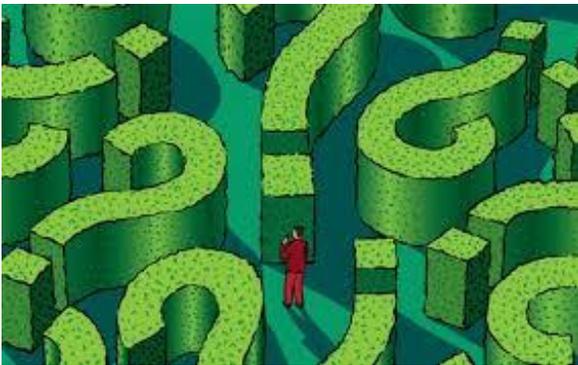
Orderliness - Living an organized life
Personal Freedom - Making choices independently
Personal Growth - Continuing self exploration and development
Personal Safety - Being safe from bodily or physical harm
Pleasure - Enjoying leisure activities
Recognition - Being known by others
Risk Taking - Seeking excitement by living on the edge
Security - Having a stable future
Self Confidence - Feeling positive about oneself
Service - Contributing to the welfare of others
Spirituality - Seeking the ultimate meaning in life
Variety - Seeking change in activities and surroundings
Wisdom - Seeking mature understanding

RANKING YOUR VALUES

Any serious self assessment must include a process by which you not only consider your interests and skills, but also address your values. Assessing your values is usually a process by which you identify, clarify and define important factors in your life. This assessment process involves ranking or prioritizing your values. Whenever you make an important or difficult decision, it usually involves choosing between conflicting values. In order to help you make decisions, it is necessary that you have some idea not only of your most important personal values, but also of the priority that you give them.

VALUES IN ACTION

What constitutes a value? What components make up a particular value? For a value to be truly important in your life it must be reflected in your feelings, thoughts and behavior on a regular basis. Our values are formed by a combination of our feelings, thoughts and behavior. Values are grounded in action. Values are developed through action. Values are truly expressed and fulfilled as they are linked to specific activities beyond inner feelings and verbal statements. It is one thing to say you value something, but it does not become a real value until it becomes translated into action. In what ways do you put your values into action? How firm are you in your beliefs? To what extent have you experienced or expressed your feelings about your particular set of values? As you develop your system of values, you discover the process by which your values become stronger and clearer.



IDEAL SITUATION

"Everything has its own place and function. That applies to people. Although many don't seem to realize it, stuck as they are in the wrong job, the wrong marriage, or the wrong house. When you know and respect your own inner nature, you know where you belong. You also know where you don't belong."

-BENJAMIN HOFF / *Tao of Pooh*

"Doing the work you love means living your philosophy. It means putting your values to work by determining to make what you do reflect who you really are."

-LAURENCE BOLDT

"If there is such a thing as true happiness, it is in knowing you're in the right place."

-FANNIE FLAGG

THE RIGHT PLACE

Getting in touch with your work values can be as simple as imagining the factors that make up the ideal job. Consider your typical workday and imagine the ideal conditions, activities, setting, people and supervisor.

What kind of place would I like to work in? What type of work would I like to do? What type of people would I like to work with? What skills would I like to use? What type of organization would I like to work for? What purposes would I like my organization to serve? What management style would I like my supervisor to have?

It is not only helpful to imagine the ideal situation regarding your workday, but it may also be helpful to consider factors you want to avoid. In other words, it might be useful to imagine the characteristics of the "not-so-ideal" job. What activities, people and situations would you absolutely not want? What type of work would you want to avoid? What type of organization would you want to avoid?

JOB VALUES

In choosing a career path, it is important to consider what you value most about your work. What must your work have to make it rewarding for you? Some types of careers are incompatible with some people's values. Knowledge of your values helps you determine the relative satisfaction you derive from a career. Knowing what really matters to you is an important part of your career decision. Job and occupation values are related to the kind of work you might do and where you might work. The factors to consider are:

Contribution to Society	High Income	Independence
Leadership	Leisure	Prestige
Security	Variety	Advancement
Challenge	Easy Commute	Flexible Hours
Training	Staying Put	Pleasant Co-Workers

WORK VALUES

Investigative vs Accepting

Investigative workers value intellectual curiosity and the challenge of solving complex tasks. They have a need for information. Accepting workers value clear-cut activities and seeing concrete results.

Practical vs Carefree

Practical workers value showing proper appreciation for one's personal belongings and appreciation of practical and efficient ways of doing things. Carefree workers value activities in which others take care of equipment and keep things in good working order.

Independence vs Conformity

Independent workers value freedom from rules, regulations and social conventions, and the freedom to work on their own. Conforming workers value working under careful supervision where clear directions and regulations can be followed.

Leadership vs Supportive

Leadership workers value making decisions, directing others and speaking for the group. They have a need to be seen as important. Supportive workers value activities in which they can be good followers and do not need to tell others what to do.

Orderliness vs Flexibility

Orderly workers value keeping things neat and in their proper place. They are tidy and do what they are expected to do. Flexible workers value activities in which they can take things as they come and do not need to keep things orderly and neat. They are non-compulsive.

Recognition vs Privacy

Recognition workers value becoming well known and famous. They seek the admiration of others. Privacy workers value keeping their activities private.

Aesthetic vs Realistic

Aesthetic workers value showing artistic appreciation, emotional sensitivity and the enjoyment of beauty, music and the arts. Realistic workers value activities in which they do not rely on artistic senses and intuition.

Social vs Reserved

Social workers value helping others and working with many other people. They are service oriented and enjoy working in a friendly environment. Reserved workers value activities in which they spend time on their own projects rather than working directly with others. They are self-concerned.

CAREER & LIFE

"When what we are is what we want to be, that's happiness."

-MALCOLM FORBES

"Life is an integrated whole. It cannot be divided into discrete segments or compartments. Each area of our lives affects all the others. The unhappiness that results from a frustrating experience of work cannot be contained; it spills across the entire spectrum of our lives. On the other hand, doing work you love promotes happiness in other seemingly unrelated areas of your life. Once you have identified the work you love and have begun taking positive steps to realize it, you can set about balancing it with other important aspects of your life."

-LAURENCE BOLDT

In seeking satisfaction and happiness in your life's work, it is important to consider such factors as personality, self-esteem and lifestyle. Your career and your life are not separate entities, but, instead should be inter-related and integrated. What we are and what we do must be consistent if we expect to find happiness.

PERSONALITY

Personality is what makes you who you are. Your personality is determined by a variety of influences. A combination of many factors affect your personality. Your individuality and uniqueness are defined by your personality. Your personality helps establish who you are. Who you are depends a great deal on such things as family, culture, environment, education, genetics and experience. Your personality type is reflected in your disposition, temperament, preferences, orientation and attitude. It determines how you live, love and work.

Vocational preferences are expressions of personality. The choice of a particular occupation expresses an individual's motivation, knowledge of a particular subject and personal abilities. Work environments vary as much as individual personality traits. The goal, then, is to move people toward work environments that permit them to develop their abilities, project their personal values and become involved in activities of interest. Job satisfaction comes from working in a compatible work environment. People invest a lot of their time and energy in their work. People tend to project views of themselves and the world onto their occupational titles. Through proper self-assessment, individuals can be classified into a particular personality type category, and thus be matched with a compatible occupational environment.



PERSONALITY TYPES

REALISTIC

Realistic people are doers. They are independent, stable, persistent, genuine, practical and thrifty. They prefer to deal with things rather than ideas or people. They are no-nonsense, matter-of-fact, down to earth individuals. They excel at tasks that are tactile, motoric, physical, athletic or mechanical. They value things that are natural, concrete and tangible. They like the outdoors, tools, machines, animals and working with their hands. (Farmer, Carpenter, Naturalist, Athlete, Police Officer, Military Personnel, Forester, Landscaper, Mechanic, Sculptor, Veterinarian, Chef, Surgeon, Plumber, Electrician, Pilot, Fire Fighter, Repairer, Animal Breeder, Animal Trainer, Steelworker, Miner)

INVESTIGATIVE

Investigative people are thinkers. They are intellectual, introspective, introverted and inquisitive. They are curious, methodical, rational, analytical and precise. They excel at tasks that are scholarly, abstract, scientific, medical or technical. They enjoy activities that involve thought, observation, investigation, exploration, discovery and exploration. They are avid readers. They like to solve puzzles, perform experiments and engage in research. (Biologist, Chemist, Anthropologist, Sociologist, Historian, Scientist, Medical Doctor, Botanist, Meteorologist, Astronomer, Environmental Analyst, Pharmacist, Optometrist, Dentist, Engineer, Economist, Dietitian, Psychiatrist, Nurse, Coroner, Lab Technician)

ARTISTIC

Artistic people are creators. They are intuitive, sensitive, articulate, expressive and creative. They are unstructured, original and nonconforming. They rely on feelings and imagination. They like to work with abstractions, ideas, concepts and ambiguities. They are emotional, spontaneous and open-minded. They are drawn to projects that require communication and language. They excel at tasks that are literary, verbal, visual and aesthetic. They like art, music, dance, drawing, painting, sculpting, drafting, drama, writing, communications, design and fashion. (Singer, Writer, Dancer, Interior Designer, Painter, Actor, Copy Writer, Playwright, Musician, Composer, Poet, Clothing Designer, Architect, Sketch Artist, Illustrator, Graphic Designer, Printmaker, Cartoonist, Comedian, Choreographer, Photographer)

SOCIAL

Social people are helpers. They are kind, generous, cooperative, patient, caring, helpful, empathetic, tactful and friendly. They excel at socializing, helping others and teaching. They like tasks that involve teamwork, social interaction, building relationships, and the improvement of society. They enjoy activities that are public, humanitarian, developmental, educational, philanthropic, altruistic, interpersonal and service oriented. (Teacher, Counselor, Social Worker, Therapist, Nurse, Care Giver, Psychologist, Minister, Priest, Rabbi, Recruiter, Interviewer, Child Care Worker, Home Economist, Arbitrator, Facilitator, Sociologist, Bartender, Homemaker)

ENTERPRISING

Enterprising people are leaders. They are adventurous, ambitious, assertive, extroverted, energetic, enthusiastic, confident and optimistic. They are dominant, persuasive and motivational. They are promoters. They generally have a contagious or charismatic personality. They excel at business, management, economics, politics, public speaking and salesmanship. Being adventurous and willing to take risks, they possess an entrepreneurial spirit. They like influencing others by guiding, encouraging, directing, preaching, competing or debating. (Politician, Lawyer, Preacher, Coach, Salesperson, Manager, Public Relations Specialist, Promoter, Event Planner, Trainer, Instructor, Consultant, Supervisor, Entertainer, Newscaster, Director, Lobbyist, Buyer, Administrator)

CONVENTIONAL

Conventional people are organizers. They are conscientious and conservative. They are logical, efficient, orderly and organized. They are thorough and detail oriented. They are reliable. They enjoy practical tasks, quantitative measurements, conventional environments and structured situations. They like to work with data and numbers. They like process, procedures, regulations, standards, and rules. They excel at accounting, computer abilities, and clerical skills. They like mathematics, office settings and statistical tasks. (Accountant, Secretary, Banker, Teller, Collector, Bookkeeper, Computer Programmer, Inspector, Auditor, Mathematician, Statistician, Financial Analyst, Data Processor, Scheduler, Filer, Typist, Tax Preparer, Account Analyst, Budget Clerk)