

CAREER ORIENTATION QUEST

You can print this document and do the exercises in your own time

Introduction

The world of work is part of our lives from the day that we are born. When one grows up you gradually becomes aware of this phenomenon. The first introduction is usually through parents and close family members or friends of the family. Later when you enter school, your knowledge in this regard expands. What you realise from the outset is that most people have to work at least three-quarters of their lifespan. It will be unsatisfactory and frustrating if you have to engage in activities that you do not like or find hard to do.

But how do people make career or work-life choices? What are the factors you have to take into consideration? According to research and experience some of the most important indicators of success and happiness in respect of career choices seem to relate to finding work-related activities that you would like to do and can do easily.

The following process will try and help you to explore what you think you would find interesting and what you think you will be able to do easily, or easily learn to do.

What do I find interesting?

The world of work can be divided into different areas. These areas can be more formally according to the specific sectors of the economy, or it can be according to areas or groups of work activities that people find interesting and like to engage in.

Below you will find descriptions of 21 such Work Areas. Read the description of the Work Area and activities listed under each in order to identify the ones that interests you. *Circle the Yes next to the work areas you would like to work in or the No if you would dislike working in that specific environment.*

A: Language & Communication

In this work area the use of language and communication (either written or orally) is the major focus. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Writing for a newspaper
- Doing translations
- Reading news reports on the radio or TV
- Writing stories or poetry
- Writing advertisements and scripts for TV, film and radio commercials

B: Applied/Visual Arts

In the work area relating to the visual or applied arts, activities where you have to create, design and express yourself (e.g. sculpture, graphic design, and photography), are the major focus. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Taking photos for a magazine or newspaper
- Drawing and designing buildings
- Decorating the interior of houses
- Creating works of art

- Designing clothes

C: Performing Arts

In this work area the activities entail mostly performing, producing, directing, dancing, playing music instruments etc. that relate to entertainment . If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Learning to play a musical instrument
- Acting in a play or film
- Dancing and singing in a musical
- Directing a TV series or film
- Selecting and playing popular CD's at a radio station

D: Marketing & Direct Sales

This work area entails activities of a sales, marketing and promotional nature If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Selling goods from door to door
- Purchasing and selling anything
- Making purchases on behalf of a shop or business
- Studying the needs of consumers
- Introducing consumers to new products

E: Management & Planning

This work area entails activities where you have to lead and influence others and engage in strategic planning If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Supervising the activities of people
- Influencing others to accept your point of view
- Planning other people's work
- Managing a big project or task
- Acting as the leader of a group of people

F: Clerical & Secretarial

The clerical and secretarial work areas entail organized and clearly defined activities primarily in an office setting If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Doing routine tasks
- Typing business letters and reports
- Filing documents
- Receiving and sending off documents and parcels
- Arranging appointments

G: Numerical & Financial Transactions

This work area requires a preference for accuracy and attention to detail that relate to numerical and financial material If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Working with figures most of the time
- Keeping careful record of financial transactions
- Checking the financial statements of a company
- Drawing up the budget of a business
- Keeping record of the costs of a shop

H: Nature (Plants & Animals)

The activities in this work area involve working with plants and animals, usually in an outdoor setting and it primarily relates to physical work. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Working on a farm with crops or cattle
- Preparing a vegetable garden
- Looking after animals
- Working in a nursery
- Trying to conserve the environment

I: Building & Construction

The building and construction work area entail activities relating to the planning and direct construction or development of buildings (e.g. manual labour, surveying). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Planning and overseeing building projects
- Preparing estimates of the costs involved in constructing a building
- Tiling floors of buildings and houses
- Building and repairing houses
- Construction of big buildings and roads

J: Manufacturing, Repairing and Servicing Machines

This work area entails activities where you use your hands to apply mechanical principles to practical situations (e.g. to manufacture, repair and service machines). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Fixing the engine of a motor car
- Installing and repairing things that work with electricity
- Mending broken things
- Doing woodwork or other handwork
- Using technical tools

K: Engineering & Related Technologies

This work area entails activities relating to designing, planning, manufacturing and managing systems, equipment and components used in the engineering and related areas. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Designing mechanical equipment
- Manufacturing and maintaining electrical/electronic equipment
- Designing and manufacturing systems and components in the telecommunication area
- Monitoring and operating instruments (e.g. electronic, mechanical etc.) and systems
- Manufacturing and installing technical instruments

L: Information Technology/Computer Science

Entail activities in the computer and information technology work environment (e.g. programming, system development, databases, and networks). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Writing computer programs
- Developing data bases
- Developing systems to solve problems with the help of computers
- Designing and installing computer equipment

- Design and implement computer systems

M: Natural Science & Mathematics

This work area relates to activities where it is necessary to discover, collect and analyze information about the natural and life sciences (e.g. biology, physiology, chemistry, geology, physics, and mathematics). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Conducting experiments in a science laboratory
- Studying plants or animals
- Using knowledge of maths and statistics in your work
- Studying physical or chemistry science matters
- Using a microscope

N: Health Science & Technology

This work area entails activities relating to medical science and technology that mostly refers to medical matters. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Studying the human body
- Treating people with ailments or injuries
- Mixing and preparing medicine
- Studying the causes of diseases
- Treating animals with ailments

O: Social & Economic Sciences

This area mainly consists of activities in the social and economic sciences where you have to understand people and investigate and describe economic matters. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Studying the behavior of humans
- Analysing and describing economic issues
- Reading history books
- Studying the culture and life style of human societies
- Conducting public opinion surveys and interpreting the results

P: Law

The law work area entails activities relating to legal issues in order to advise and represent others in this connection. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Giving advice to people regarding their rights and obligations
- Presenting cases in court
- Speaking in public
- Studying legislation documents
- Identifying facts from irrelevant detail

Q: Education & Social Services

This work area entails activities where you have to teach and help others with their problems (e.g. mental, social, vocational). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Teaching children or adults
- Helping people with their problems
- Looking after children
- Doing voluntary work in poverty stricken communities
- Attending to the spiritual needs of people

R: Nursing & Caring

The nursing and caring work area consists of activities relating to the physical needs and welfare of others. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Caring for the sick
- Giving first aid to people
- Working as a nurse in a hospital
- Assisting physically disabled people to function independently
- Attending to the needs of babies or small children

S: Sport

This work area entails activities of a physical nature through sport. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Training people to play sport
- Demonstrating exercises to help people keep fit
- Organizing and coordinating sports events
- Officiating at a sport event (rugby, soccer, tennis, etc.)
- Taking part in competitive sports events to become a professional

T: Law Enforcement & Protection Services

In this work area you have to engage in activities where you have to enforce laws and regulations in order to protect people and property. If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Protecting the country
- Maintaining law and order
- Ensuring that people obey the traffic rules
- Working as a guard at a prison
- Protecting buildings against fire

U: Personal Services

This work area primarily relates to activities where you have to provide services for the convenience of others (e.g. hospitality services in hotels, restaurants, and airplanes). If you are interested in this area, you would probably enjoy

- Looking after the needs and comfort of passengers in an airplane
- Rendering catering services
- Offering and maintaining cleaning services for big companies
- Transporting people by bus or car
- Running a guest house

Go to www.careers.co.za and look up the careers linked to these work areas. You will find them under the heading: **Occupations**

If you still uncertain, do the Online Career Assessment on www.careers.co.za which will assist you through a questionnaire to explore the World of Work.

It is important to remember that you need more than just interest in a work area to be successful!

What activities can I do easily or easily learn to do?

A skill is usually described as something you can do well. But how does one gain skills?

Experience in performing certain activities in a specific area or environment as well as education and training usually provides one with a set of procedures for working with that knowledge. These procedures are usually referred to when people apply the term skills.

Skills may be perceived and described in different ways. Usually we define basic skills or occupation specific skills and cross-functional or transferable skills.

- Basic skills refer to skills and knowledge that are required to work in specific areas or environments
- Cross-functional or transferable ("portable") skills are those that are common to more than one area or environment and that enable individuals to move successfully from one occupation to another.

Below you will find descriptions of eight broad skill areas. Read the activities listed under each area and decide which ones you think you are good at or can easily learn to do. Circle the **Yes** next to the skill areas you think you are good at or can easily learn to do or the **No** next to the skill areas you think you are not good at or cannot easily learn to do.

Practical Skills

When you have practical skills you will be able to get things done in a practical way and be able to work with your hands, using tools machinery and equipment to build construct and repair things.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Work with your hands
- Use tools
- Fix things
- Do woodwork or needlework
- Work outside

Artistic/Creative Skills

When you have artistic skill you will be able to express your ideas and feelings creatively in order to produce works of art.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Perform in front of an audience
- Draw, paint or sketch
- Design and draw buildings
- Play a musical instrument
- Take photos

Social or People Skills

When you have social or people skills you will be able to help individuals with their mental, spiritual, social, physical, or vocational concerns.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Understand and help people with their problems
- Teach or coach people
- Look after children
- Care for sick people

- See to the comfort of people on a plane

Entrepreneurial and Marketing Skills

When you have entrepreneurial and marketing skills you will be able to innovate business and promote certain products and persuade people to buy it.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Sell goods
- Promote certain products
- Run a business
- Think of ways to make money
- To persuade people of a point of view

Managerial Skills

When you have managerial skills you will be able to lead and influence people and manage processes and people and their activities.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Supervise the work of others
- Lead a team
- Manage a big project
- Plan the activities of a group of people
- Do strategic planning
-

Administrative Skills

When you have administrative skills you will be able to apply yourself to organized, clearly defined activities requiring accuracy and attention to detail, primarily in an office setting.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Keep things orderly
- Work accurately on routine tasks
- File documents
- Type letters and reports
- Keep careful record of employees leave

Scientific Skills

When you have scientific skills you will be able to use logical and scientific thinking to solve many different problems in medicine, the life sciences, the natural sciences, and the social and economic sciences and to develop new ideas and theories and to understand and express complex technical and scientific information.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Solve difficult problems
- Find information and facts
- Apply knowledge of maths or statistics
- Do experiments
- Analyse data

Language and Communication Skills

When you have language and communication skills you will be able to communicate fluently in writing or speech.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Write stories
- Translate written material
- Write the script for a play
- Interpret foreign languages
- Read the news or present a programme on TV/radio

Numerical Skills

When you have numerical skills you will be able to work with precision and accuracy on numerical (computational) tasks.

You are probably good at or can easily learn to

- Do the financial planning of an organisation
- Calculate the income and expenses of a business
- Work as a cashier in the bank
- Pay out the salaries of personnel
- Keep careful record of sales

Remember the combination of your interest and skills may help you to identify occupations, which you can successfully pursue. Summary of the Work Areas you preferred

Mark the Work Areas in the table below which you indicated in the questionnaire that you liked/preferred

A: Language & Communication
L: Information Technology / Computer Science
B: Applied/Visual Arts
M: Natural Science & Mathematics
C: Performing Arts
N: Health Science & Technology
D: Marketing & Direct Sales
O: Social & Economic Sciences
E: Management & Planning
P: Law
F: Clerical & Secretarial
Q: Education & Social Services
G: Numerical & Financial Transactions
R: Nursing & Caring
H: Nature (Plants & Animals)
S: Sport
I: Building & Construction
T: Law Enforcement & Protection Services
J: Manufacturing, Repairing and Servicing Machines
U: Personal Services
K: Engineering & Related Technologies

Go to www.careers.co.za and look up the careers linked to these work areas. You will find

them under the heading: **Occupations**

Prioritize your chosen Work Areas in the following table:

Name of Work Area

Name of Work Area

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Go to www.careers.co.za and look up the careers linked to these work areas. You will find them under the heading: **Occupations**

Summary of the Skills Areas you indicated you are good at or can easily learn to do

Mark the Skills Areas in the table below which you indicated in the Questionnaire that you

are good at or can easily learn to do.

Practical Skills
Artistic/Creative Skills
Social or People Skills
Entrepreneurial and Marketing Skills
Managerial Skills
Administrative Skills
Scientific Skills
Language and Communication Skills
Numerical Skills

Prioritize your chosen Skills Areas in the following table:

Name of Skills Area

1

2

3

4

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Go to www.careers.co.za and look up the careers linked to these work areas. You will find them under the heading: **Occupations**

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