

ENGINEER YOUR CAREER

STEP 1: EXPLORE YOUR GOALS & INTERESTS



START WITH YOU

The first step in pursuing any career is to start with yourself. Taking some time to clarify what you like and what's important to you in a career will make it easier to create a path that's right for you.

The resources shared here are **not** meant to tell you what to do or what career to pursue. They are meant to help you begin thinking about your career plans and can be used as a conversation starter with adults you trust to help you achieve your goals.



CAREER SURVEYS

Career assessments (also called surveys) can help you identify what is important to you and make it easier to choose a career that fits you. Different assessments focus on different areas such as values, interests, or skills.

ASSESS & REFLECT

Try one or more of the assessments from each section on the following pages and fill in the charts on pages 6 and 7 with what you learn about yourself.

Refer back to this information as you move through the remaining steps.

Values

Interests

Skills

Goals

VALUES

Personal values are your beliefs about what is important to you.

Values can shape your behaviors and priorities. At work, values give us a sense of purpose and motivation. Finding work that aligns with your values leads to higher satisfaction. Each person has a different set of values that guides them, so it is important to understand your unique set of values.



TAKE A SHORT WORK VALUES SURVEY

Complete at least **one** of the following work value assessments. The resources listed below are free to use and will take about 10-15 minutes each to complete.

WORK VALUES MATCHER

CareerOneStop
English | Spanish

IDENTIFY YOUR WORK VALUES

ALIS
English | French

CAREER VALUES CARD SORT

Individual Career Solutions
English

LIST OF VALUES

Dare to Lead
English



FILL IN THE VALUES COLUMN ON THE CHART

What are your top five work values? Write these down in the spaces provided in the chart on **page 6** and then, for each one, write a brief definition in your own words.



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INTERESTS



With so many types of jobs to choose from, knowing what you like to do can help focus your decision.

Career interest surveys are designed to identify your preferences and interests and link them to potential careers. These surveys are NOT meant to tell you what you should do – no test is that good! Instead, you can use the results to narrow down to a few career areas to keep exploring, or to eliminate some areas that you are not interested in.



TAKE A SHORT CAREER INTEREST SURVEY

Try **one** of the free resources listed below OR check with your local school, library, or career center to see if they offer access to paid career interest surveys for students.

CAREER INTEREST INVENTORY

CareerOneStop
English | Spanish

HOLLAND CODES QUIZ

ALIS
English | French

CAREER APTITUDE TEST

Truity
English

PREFERRED KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

ALIS
English | French



FILL IN THE INTERESTS COLUMN ON THE CHART

What are three career industries or jobs that align the most with your interests?
What is one industry area with the lowest match to your interests? Write these down in the spaces provided in the chart on **page 6**.



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SKILLS



A skill is the ability to do something competently.

You may find you're naturally good at some skills, while other skills you can practice to improve. Every job requires a specific set of skills to be successful, so it is important to know what skills you have (and want to use) and what skills you will need to develop for the career you want. There are many different types of skills that will help you in the workplace.



TAKE A SHORT WORKPLACE SKILLS SURVEY

Use **one** of the free resources below to learn about different workplace skillsets and identify your strongest skills.

SKILLS MATCHER

CareerOneStop
English | Spanish

CORE SKILLS EXERCISE

ALIS
English | French

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

National Careers Service
English

ABILITIES QUIZ

ALIS
English | French



FILL IN THE SKILLS COLUMN ON THE CHART

What are your top five skills right now? Which skills would you like to use regularly in your ideal job? What are three skills that you would like to improve? Write these down in the spaces provided in the chart on **page 7**.



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GOALS

Now that you have learned more about yourself, you can use this information to set some goals for your career journey.

You may already have an idea of the job you want to pursue, or maybe you are still considering multiple pathways – that’s okay!

Your career plans don’t need to be set in stone just yet.



FOUR CATEGORIES¹ OF CAREER GOALS:

EXAMPLES

PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT Goals about improving your performance at work. They’re goals for getting better at what you do and climbing the ladder to success.	Short-term: An accountant wants to become more efficient at processing payments. Long-term: The accountant wants to be promoted to a senior management position.
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT Goals that relate to self-improvement. While these goals are often tied to professional advancement, they go beyond your career.	Short-term: Making more friends at work. Long-term: Establishing a strong network of other professionals.
EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT Goals that revolve around improving your skills through training courses or degree attainment.	Short-term: A computer programmer wants to learn a new coding language. Long-term: The computer programmer wants to go back to school to earn a master’s degree in computer science.
LEADERSHIP ADVANCEMENT These goals are very similar to professional advancement goals, but they focus on attaining positions of leadership and moving up the ranks.	Short-term: A sous-chef at a restaurant wants to be promoted to head chef. Long-term: The chef wants to open their own restaurant one day.

¹Adapted from *Setting Different Types of Career Goals*, Big Future, <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>



FILL IN THE GOALS COLUMN ON THE CHART

In the spaces provided in the chart on **page 7**, write down your career goals, with at least one for each category. Consider short- and long-term goals.



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STEP 1: EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS AND GOALS



After you complete the steps above, fill in the charts on pages 6 and 7 with the information you gathered.

Share your questions and ideas for further exploration with a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, career coach or school counselor.

MY VALUES

Knowing your values will help you decide on which jobs to pursue so that you can feel motivated and satisfied at work.

Write down your top 5 values and describe each one in your own words.

Value 1: _____

For me, this means:

Value 2: _____

For me, this means:

Value 3: _____

For me, this means:

Value 4: _____

For me, this means:

Value 5: _____

For me, this means:

MY INTERESTS

Identifying the topics and industries you are interested in and enjoy learning about can focus your search for potential careers.

Write down the 3 career industries or jobs that align the most with your interests and one that does not.

Industry 1: _____

I find it interesting because:

Industry 2: _____

I find it interesting because:

Industry 3: _____

I find it interesting because:

Area of Least Interest: _____



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STEP 1: EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS AND GOALS

MY SKILLS

Knowing your strengths and developing relevant job skills will make you a strong candidate.

List your strongest skills, how frequently you want to use them, and any skills you want to improve.

Skill 1: _____

In my ideal job, I want to use this skill:

☐ everyday ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely

Skill 2: _____

In my ideal job, I want to use this skill:

☐ everyday ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely

Skill 3: _____

In my ideal job, I want to use this skill:

☐ everyday ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely

Skill 4: _____

In my ideal job, I want to use this skill:

☐ everyday ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely

Skill 5: _____

In my ideal job, I want to use this skill:

☐ everyday ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely

Skills to Improve: _____

MY GOALS

Setting goals will help guide your career exploration and keep you on track as you pursue success.

Write down a short- or long-term goal for each category. If you need help, review these tips for creating SMARTER goals:

SET SMARTER GOALS

Professional Advancement Goal:

Personal Development Goal:

Educational Advancement Goal:

Leadership Development Goal:

As you move forward in life, it is likely that your values, interests, and skills will change. Return to Step 1 and update the information in this chart whenever you need to refine your goals, add new interests or skills, and ensure that your priorities are aligned.



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