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Selector CareerStep Report

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1. Introduction

This report presents your assessment results and makes suggestions to assist you in your job search or career planning process.

1.1 Section summary

There are five sections in this report.

1. Introduction

Summary of each report section along with a brief discussion of vocational interest groups, preferences and how your list of representative jobs is determined.

2. Vocational Orientation

Graphical presentation of your preferences and competencies including an interpretation of each preference and a comparison with your perceived competency in that area. A discussion of your overall response pattern and a work role evaluation checklist for use when considering potential jobs.

3. Work Environment

Graphical presentation and interpretation of work environment factors such as, suitable organisation size and type, vocational attitude and desired work complexity.

4. Representative Jobs

Sample of jobs that have characteristics that best match your preferences.

Appendix: Job Search Ideas and Strategies

Includes exercises to further explore your vocational interests and plan the job of job search. Discusses mental attitudes and provides tips for getting the job you want.

1.2 Understanding the basis of this report

The primary purpose of vocational guidance testing is to provide an organized way of thinking about personal work motivators. An understanding of these motivators can then be used to identify ways to obtain more fulfillment from existing roles, think about alternative jobs or provide input to planning for study programs.

Vocational interest groups and preferences

The most important part of the testing process is to build up a profile of your vocational likes and dislikes. We each have things we enjoy doing and things we don't. Some people enjoy working with numbers while others definitely do not. This profile is determined by obtaining your level of endorsement of specific activities that are known from prior research to represent broader classes of vocational interest.

These classes of vocational interest are based on a model developed by Dr John Holland, a pioneering researcher in vocational assessment. This model groups vocational interests into six areas - realistic, investigative, social, conventional, enterprising and artistic. In this report these are referred to as:

Working Physically	working with the hands and body
Working Investigatively	problem solving and learning
Working Socially	working with and assisting others
Working Methodically	paying attention to detail and administration
Working Commercially	engaging in business activities
Working Expressively	being artistic and creative

Your 'preference' is the level of interest you have in each of these vocational interest groups. Your preferences are presented in section 2, 'Vocational Orientation'.

Matching jobs to preferences

Approximately 1400 jobs have been evaluated in terms of the proportions of each of the vocational interest groups they involve. For example, working as a commercial pilot could involve problem solving (Working Investigatively), hand skills (Working Physically) and following set procedures (Working Methodically). These three main characteristics can then be used to classify the occupation of pilot.

A representative sample of jobs that have characteristics that match your highest preferences is presented in section 4, 'Representative Jobs'.

2. Vocational Orientation

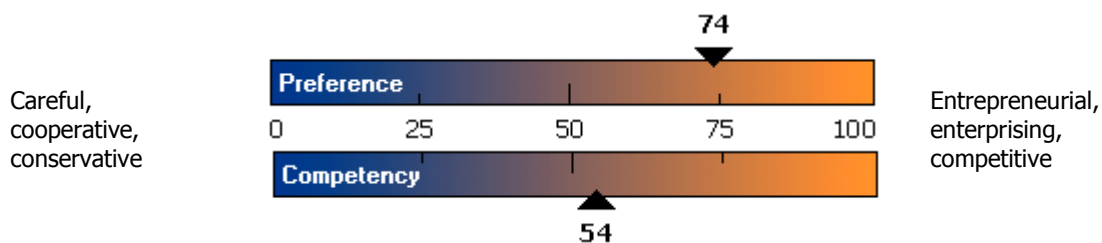
This section presents your preference and competency results followed by a review of your overall response pattern and a work role evaluation checklist.

2.1 Your preferences and competencies

The preference graphs below are based on your responses to the questions concerning how much you would like or dislike certain activities combined with the level of importance you assigned to different job characteristics. The competency graphs are based on your assessment of your levels of skill and experience in the activities listed in the questionnaire.

Working Commercially

'Working Commercially' encompasses the entrepreneurial world of dealing, selling and managing. This is a dynamic world characterised by competitiveness, risk-taking, profit, variety, persuasion and influence.



Preference

These activities appear to hold a reasonable degree of attraction as far as you are concerned. It may, therefore, be to your advantage to look for roles that provide the opportunity to use persuasive skills, which provide leadership opportunities and which are varied and dynamic. It would also be helpful if your remuneration was related to the effort you put in, for example working on commission or having performance incentives, rather than being on a fixed pay rate. Being entrepreneurial, you are likely to be able to tolerate a work setting that is relatively fluid with disruptions and last minute changes. It may also be the case that an element of competition within the job may add extra attraction.

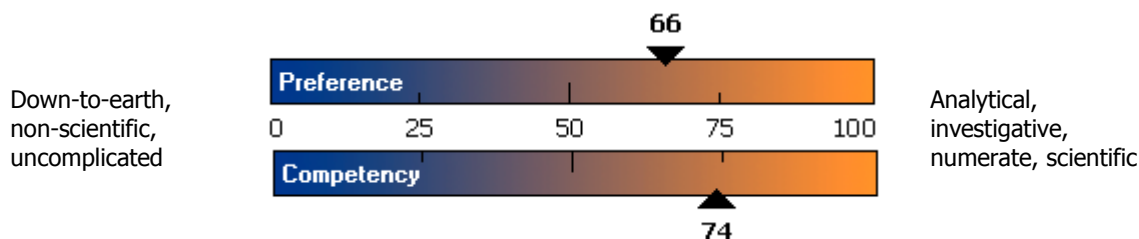
Comparison with competency

Your interest in business activities appears to be higher than your self-assessed skills and experience in this area. This pattern is frequently observed in those who know where they want to go but have not yet had the opportunity or time to achieve their goals. It has also been observed in those who are drawn to the idea of being at the centre of the action and being successful in life but, as yet, lack the confidence to take the necessary interpersonal or financial risks. If you are keen to resolve the difference between these scales, take a little time to itemise the competency areas in which you have yet to gain skills or experience. Broadly, these fall into dealing (negotiating, financing, investing), selling and managing. Next, look for possibilities within your

current job, if you are employed, or voluntary or community opportunities if you are not employed. Formal training through commerce or business studies may also be valuable.

Working Investigatively

'Working Investigatively' is essentially about using logical thought processes to solve problems. In practice, this encompasses collecting and analysing data, working with numbers, studying, researching, observing, thinking and learning.



Preference

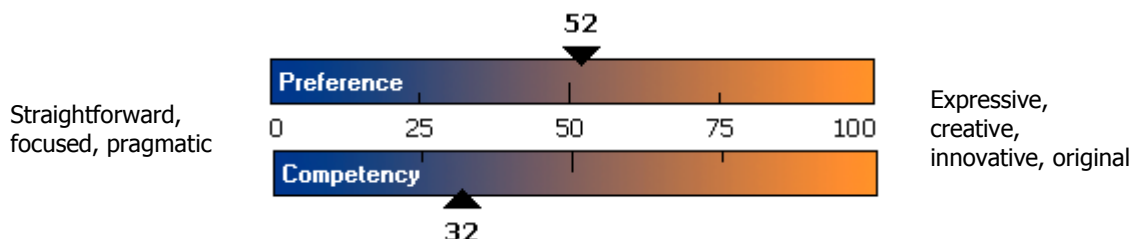
This appears to be an area in which you have a reasonably strong interest. You are likely to feel a genuine affinity for roles that extend you intellectually, which involve problem solving and which provide the opportunity to understand why and how things happen. It is also important that the job provides an opportunity to be involved in research activity of some description. For the most part investigative roles tend to require a reasonable amount of study and training, however, given your interest in this area, study and training is likely to prove rewarding in itself. People with this preference tend to be naturally curious and place a high value on knowledge. In the 'left brain - right brain' model, investigative thinkers are generally described as 'left brain' in the way they operate and tend to approach problems from a logical rather than intuitive perspective.

Comparison with competency

When your level of interest in investigative activities and your competency self-assessment are compared the two scores are reasonably close. Theoretically, this should leave you free to focus on the types of roles you should be looking for without having to worry too much about whether you have the necessary skills or experience.

Working Expressively

The key to 'Working Expressively' is self-expression. Self-expression can occur directly when, for example, we perform before an audience or indirectly when what we create appears before an audience. Self-expression is underpinned by innovation, creativity and novelty.



Preference

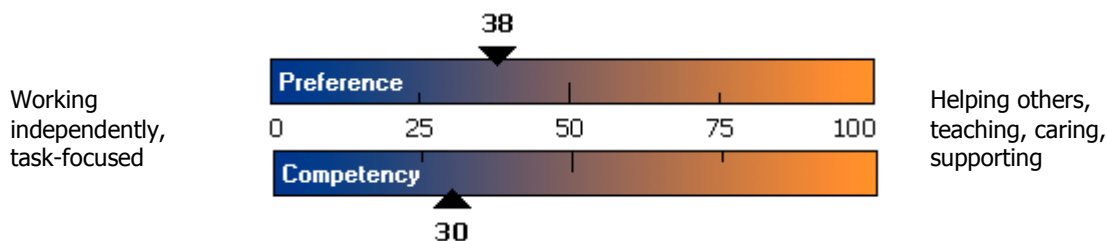
The opportunity for self-expression appears to be a moderately strong motivator. From a vocational perspective, it may be helpful to look for jobs that offer a mix of developmental and maintenance roles. There should be sufficient opportunity for you to come up with your own ideas and methods but this should not be the prime focus of the role. Preferably, there would be a measure of stability and consistency with change occurring mainly for reasons of practical efficiency.

Comparison with competency

Your expressive preference score is higher than your expressive competency score. In part, this may be a reflection of the fact that the list of activities which make up the expressive competency scale has been restricted to those activities which are seen as 'expressive' in the traditional sense - painting, writing, playing music etc. In reviewing these results, therefore, it is important to think beyond the narrower definition of being artistic and think about creativity or expressiveness in the wider sense. Within most occupations there are opportunities to use initiative and leave your own mark on what you do. In administration roles, for example, it is often possible to be innovative in developing new ways of doing things or in a sales role opportunities will frequently exist to display flair in developing and delivering presentations. Given the observation that the difference in your scores is not extreme, if you are currently working, it may be possible to create opportunities to be expressive within your current role. As an aside, if you have not already done so it may be useful to look at actively following your expressive preference by becoming involved in creative non-work activities such as learning to paint, draw, sculpt or act.

Working Socially

'Working Socially' involves working with and assisting others. This may involve direct, one-on-one support or indirect involvement through social or community organizations. The key elements are social interaction coupled with an active concern for the welfare of others.



Preference

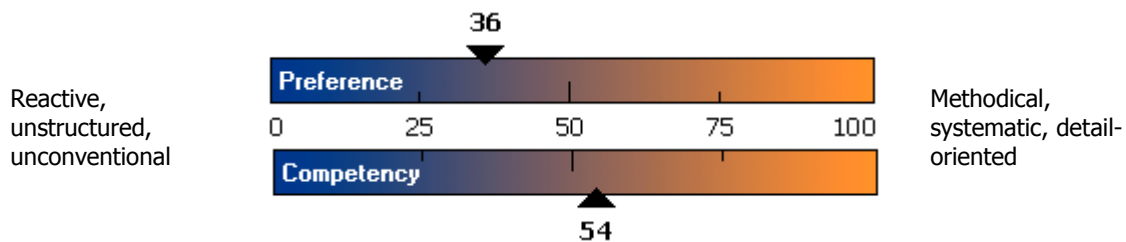
This type of work appears to hold limited appeal for you. Given this observation it may be prudent to think about jobs that are more 'task' focused than 'people' focused. In practice, this means looking for jobs that have clear outputs, where you can work independently and where you do not have to concern yourself too much about the emotional needs of others. In keeping with this, you may be suited to jobs where you are working alone for extended periods.

Comparison with competency

There is a reasonable match between your preferences and your perceived competencies in helping others. Review the types of occupations that incorporate social skills and consider these in relation to any other preferences that may be evident in your profile.

Working Methodically

'Working Methodically' reflects the world of order, structure and detail. It embodies planning ahead, being organised and making sure everything is being done according to the rules and procedures.



Preference

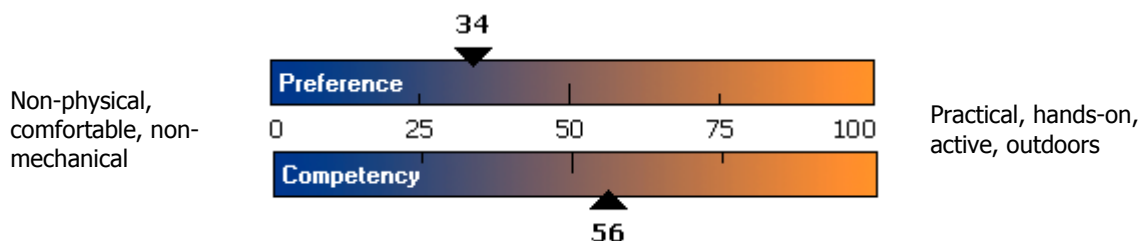
You appear to have relatively little enthusiasm for these types of activities. With this in mind it may be helpful to avoid roles that are routine and repetitive, which impose rigid processes and schedules or where the work is highly structured or bureaucratic. This is not to say that you cannot operate in such a setting, simply that it is unlikely to afford you a great deal of job satisfaction. A better option may be to seek out roles that allow you to operate without having to plan too far ahead and in which you can have a number of tasks 'on the go' at the same time with the freedom to switch tasks when the one you are working on becomes routine or monotonous.

Comparison with competency

You feel you are experienced and skilled in administrative, clerical or organisational areas but this is not where your heart lies. Often, people with this pattern have entered administrative type jobs at an early stage and have remained in such roles almost out of habit. With time, however, the lack of challenge can become a real issue and any enthusiasm that once existed begins to fade. There is also a potential for real tension within this difference between preference and competency. You are likely to be well organised and good at working in a planned, methodical way, but this can sometimes go against the grain of being more spontaneous and adventurous, which is what your preferences would suggest. From a career planning perspective, however, the starting point is to check your other preferences. If the expressive or investigative preference scales are elevated it may be time to look for a role that allows more freedom or challenge. On the positive side, good administrative skills never go amiss regardless of which area you finally choose.

Working Physically

'Working Physically' involves creating or repairing things, operating equipment or working outdoors. In essence, it is about doing things that are 'real' and being able to see a tangible result for the effort. Hand-eye coordination, working in unpleasant conditions, working with plants or animals, getting out and about are all potential elements of 'Working Physically'.



Preference

You indicated little enthusiasm for this type of work. In practice, this suggests thinking in terms of a job which does not involve too much physical exertion or discomfort and which allows you to work from a fixed location, such as an office. This doesn't necessarily indicate a lack of interest in sport or outdoor activities but it does suggest that these have less appeal as a permanent job. It would also be an advantage if someone else were available to fix equipment or fittings when they malfunction.

Comparison with competency

A comparison between your preference and competency for 'Working Physically' suggests more ability than enthusiasm. This difference is not unusual and is quite often a reflection of the fact that people may have worked in manual or practical jobs early in their careers - students, for example, will often work in such roles to earn money to support their studies. It can also reflect the extent to which people acquire practical skills through activities such as home maintenance or renovation projects. Being competent but not particularly interested in an area is not really a problem unless, of course, you are currently working in a physical role and are beginning to feel frustrated by the nature of the work. If this situation applies to you, it may be useful to investigate your highest preference scales and consider the types of roles they indicate.

2.2 Looking at your response pattern

When reviewing vocational results it is important to consider not just the scores but also the overall pattern of the profile. This can have a marked effect on the way the scores are interpreted.

Your obtained mid-range scores across the six preference scales and, in completing the questionnaire, you made effective use of the positive and negative response options. This is reflected in the range of scores in your profile. This pattern gives reasonable confidence that you have some clear likes and dislikes which can be helpful in the job search process.

2.3 Work role evaluation checklist

This section groups common job aspects according to your preferences and can be used as a checklist when evaluating work roles.

Roles should contain most of these aspects

- making money by negotiating, investing, dealing or selling
- speculating or taking calculated business risks
- organising and managing others
- influencing, persuading or encouraging others

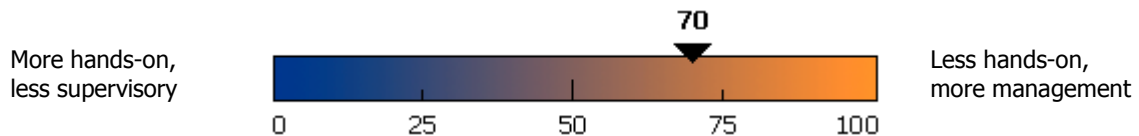
Roles could contain any of these aspects

- collecting, collating and analysing data
- carrying out in-depth research and study
- diagnosing and solving complex problems
- observing and investigating natural phenomena
- using personal intuition and being innovative
- initiating and carrying out change
- developing new ideas and methods
- opportunity for self-expression
- working with, or around, others
- helping others to achieve their potential or overcome problems
- developing people through teaching, coaching, training or mentoring
- providing for the needs of others by caring, nursing, treating or counselling
- well-defined procedures and routines
- organisation and efficiency
- opportunity to keep things running smoothly
- processing and administration
- working with machines, plants or animals
- working physically outdoors or in a workshop
- being active and on the move
- building, repairing or maintaining

3. Work Environment

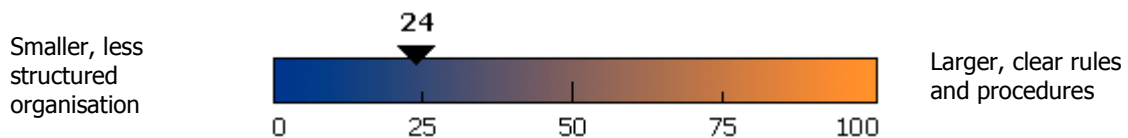
This section looks at wider work-related issues. The level of management to which you may be suited and the type and size of organisation that you may feel most comfortable working with are discussed. The amount of work complexity, vocational optimism and level of pressure you may cope with are also considered. These are intended as broad indicators only and should not be seen as absolute recommendations.

Organisational Level



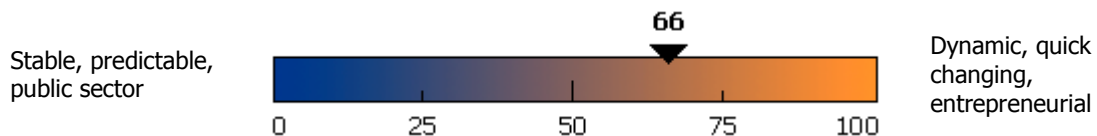
In terms of the organisational level you may wish to reach, your profile suggests that you may find greatest satisfaction at the middle management level. This level would give you a good opportunity to have input into both staff management and the more strategic aspects of the business.

Organisational Size



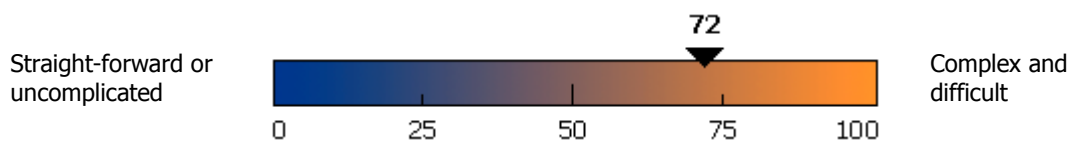
When considering the size of organisation to which you may be most suited, the results of the assessment suggest that you may find a smaller organisation more appealing. Smaller organisations tend to be less focused on rules and procedures and have the flexibility to change quickly.

Organisational Type



In terms of organisational type, your results suggests that you may find job satisfaction in both private or public sector organisations and that you may be comfortable with a mix of commercial and non-commercial activities.

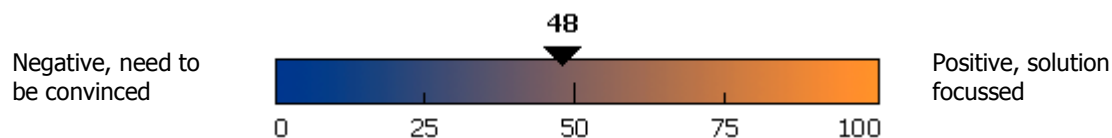
Work Complexity



Another aspect of work that sometimes needs to be considered is the complexity of the work and amount of additional training and learning required. Your results suggest that

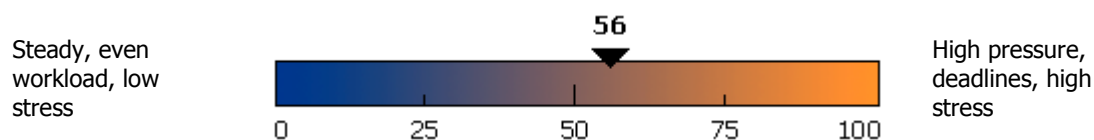
you are capable of learning quickly and handling relatively complex tasks. It may be important to ensure that the job will, in fact, continue to provide such stimulation as you may find yourself losing interest if the intellectual challenge is not sustained.

Vocational Outlook



You endorsed a roughly equal number of positive and negative responses in the job preferences checklist. You can generally be expected to respond in an even-handed way to new ideas and suggestions and to attempt to strike a balance between focusing on solutions versus problems.

Work Pressure Level



Different jobs involve different levels of pressure and risk-taking. Ending up in a job that is highly stressful can have undesirable health and lifestyle outcomes. Your results suggest that you can cope with jobs that have a reasonable amount of pressure or stress. It is, nevertheless, important that the job should also allow quieter periods when you can catch your breath and get back on top of things.

4. Representative Jobs

This section presents a sample jobs that have characteristics that match your highest preferences. Each job is displayed with an education and training level. While the actual qualifications and training required for a given job will vary, the levels shown give an indication of typical entry requirements. The education and training levels are as follows.

- 1 No formal education required
- 2 Two to three years secondary education required
- 3 High school graduation / Technical training required
- 4 Undergraduate degree required
- 5 Post graduate degree / Advanced training required

Some of the jobs displayed may have a lower education and training level than you've already achieved. Conversely, you may find management positions shown yet you are just starting out in your career. In this case, it is possible that you have the vocational interest to help you to achieve such positions in the longer term.

4.1 Sample of best matching jobs

These types of jobs have characteristics that best match your highest preferences.

Occupation	Education and training level
• Assignment Editor	3
• Communications Consultant	4
• Information Technology Strategist	4
• Funds Manager	4
• Medical Technologist	4
• District Attorney	5
• Quality Control Manager	4
• Land Surveyor	4

4.2 Broader sample of matching jobs

These types of jobs have characteristics that match your highest preferences although not as closely as those in the section above. They are grouped by industry type.

Occupation	Education and training level
------------	------------------------------

Advertising/Media/Entertainment

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Assignment Editor | 3 |
| • Publisher | 3 |

Construction

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • Business Planner | 3 |
|---------------------------|---|

Consulting

- **Communications Consultant** 4
- Environmental Research Project Manager 4
- **Information Technology Strategist** 4
- Social Policy Planner 4

Education and Science

- Educational Psychologist 5
- Education and Training Manager 4
- Educational Specialist 4
- Programme Services Planner 3

Engineering and Mining

- Pollution Control Engineer 4
- Production Engineer 4
- Urban or Regional Planner 4
- Circuit Board Design Supervisor 3
- Project Manager 3

Financial Services

- Actuary 5
- Contract Negotiator 4
- Finance Broker 4
- **Funds Manager** 4
- Insurance Underwriter 4
- Investment Banker 4
- Share Broker 4
- Tax Advisor 4
- Treasurer 4
- Bank Examiner 3
- Foreign Exchange Dealer 3

Healthcare and Medical

- Physiologist 5
- Industrial Health Engineer 4
- **Medical Technologist** 4
- Pharmaceutical Worker 4
- Public Health Officer 4
- Dental Laboratory Manager 3
- Pharmaceutical Assistant 3

Hospitality/Tourism

- Food Services Manager 2

IT/Communications

- Business Analyst 5
- Computer Industry Sales Rep 3
- e-Commerce Administrator 3
- Systems Analyst 3

Legal

- **District Attorney** 5

Management/HR

- Organisational Psychologist 5
- Occupational Analyst 4
- Job Analyst 3
- Safety Manager 3

Manufacturing

- Aeronautical Project Engineer 4
- Electronics Test Engineer 4
- **Quality Control Manager** 4
- Production Planner 3
- Quality Assurance Coordinator 3
- Purchaser 2

Retail/Consumer Products

- Coin Dealer 3
- Loss Prevention Analyst 3

Sales and Marketing

- Account Manager 4
- Market Researcher 3
- Sales Engineer 2

Primary Industries

- **Land Surveyor** 4
- Grain Buyer 2

Appendix: Job Search Ideas and Strategies

This section contains a number of job search ideas and strategies. They are based on experience gained during twenty years of assisting people of all ages who were involved in trying to find or change employment.

Digging a little deeper

To gain further insights into your vocational interests try the following activity.

Take a number of pieces of paper and on the top of each write the name of a full time job, part-time job, unpaid job, social activity or hobby you have undertaken. The more you can think of the better.

On each sheet of paper draw a line down middle of the page and at the top of the left column write: "What did I enjoy most about this activity?" and on the top of the right column "What did I enjoy least?" Think of a typical day in the job or your typical involvement and think about the highs and the lows, the good feelings and the frustrations. Work through this for each of the jobs or activities you have listed.

Once you have listed all of your 'likes' and 'dislikes' for everything you have done, go back through the lists very carefully to see what the natural groupings are. You could, for example, write 'P' against everything that relates to people, or 'L' next to everything that relates to learning. From these groupings you will be able to gain some insights into the sorts of things you should be moving towards and the sorts of things you should be keeping away from. If on the 'negative' side, for example, if you have listed a number of things relating to authority figures then you may need to think carefully about your attitudes towards authority and whether your underlying feelings may put you at a disadvantage when dealing with managers.

As well as doing this exercise it is also useful to talk to people you know and ask them what they think you like and dislike doing. Often people observe things about us that we are unaware of ourselves. This means asking people: "What do you think I would be best at? What do you think I would enjoy most?"

More exercises like this can be found in the book 'What Color is Your Parachute?' This book, written by Richard Nelson Bolles and published by Ten Speed Press of Berkeley, California, is full of ideas and tips on job search and career planning.

Consider the combination of your preferences

The world of jobs is varied and complex. Different combinations of preferences lead to different vocational slants, even within the same field of work. Consider this illustrative example.

*Andrew, Beryl, Claire, David and Elizabeth, who all have **Working Expressively** as their highest preference, are all potters by profession. When we look at their second highest preference however, we find reason for their different styles of working.*

*Andrew's second highest preference is **Working Physically**. He built the studio he works in and enjoys carrying out maintenance on his kilns and equipment.*

*Beryl's second highest preference is **Working Investigatively**. Beryl is fascinated by the chemistry of glazes and carries out her own experiments to further her knowledge.*

*Claire's second highest preference is **Working Socially**. Her studio is usually full of people as she runs pottery classes and work groups.*

*David's second highest preference is **Working Methodically**. He keeps careful notes of all the pots he has made and has a clear plan of the work he will be doing over the next month.*

*Elizabeth's second highest preference is **Working Commercially**. Elizabeth has her own brand name and uses her web site to sell her pots internationally to top galleries in Europe and North America.*

All five individuals are working within the same field but the influence of their second highest preference is evident their day-to-day work. A decreasing level of influence is provided by their lower preferences.

Looking back at your own profile, what does the combination of your top two preferences reveal? If you are currently working, how does the pattern apply to your current job? If you are starting out in the workforce, how do the effects apply to any jobs you have already thought about?

Thinking about these issues can help to build a clearer picture of your underlying vocational motivators.

Watch out for Viruses!

(or how to use sports psychology to help find a job)

One of the most important aspects in job search is mental attitude. Very often people enter the job search process worried that they don't have the necessary experience, or that there are no jobs available in the areas in which they are interested, or that they don't know what they want to do. These subconscious 'messages' are the same as computer viruses and if they are not detected and removed they can destroy any hope of finding a good job.

It is important to think very clearly about the 'self-talk' you are engaging in. In particular watch out for messages such as: "I don't know what I want to do", "I can't seem to make up my mind", "It is hard to find jobs", "I don't have the experience I need", or "I am no good at interviews". Because of the way the brain works, there is a good chance that your subconscious mind will do everything in its power to make sure that these messages come true.

If you find you are running viruses like these it is very important to replace them with success messages as: "I know exactly what I want to do", "I am thrilled with the brilliant job I found", or "I am excellent at interviews".

You do not need to believe these messages in order for them to work. The brain operates very much like a computer, which will simply try to run any software it gets. If it is fed harmful software, such as a virus, a computer will try to run it just as readily as

it will try to run useful software. A computer does not have to 'believe' the software it runs, and our subconscious mind is exactly the same.

Also, you don't have to worry about how to make the things happen. When you send an e-mail you don't have to worry about how the e-mail get to its destination - all you have to do is make sure you have got the correct address. Running an 'affirmation' such as: "I am thrilled with the brilliant job I found", is equivalent to putting the correct address in place. The subconscious, which is much more powerful than the conscious mind, will immediately begin working on how that is delivered.

Successful sports people use these techniques to help them to win. You can take this process one stage further by moving a year into the future. Picture yourself coming home from work feeling elated after a really satisfying day in the great job you have found. Then fill in your diary for that day a year in the future. Just make it all up, but remember the more detailed it is, the easier it is for your sub-conscious to start working on the solution.

(NB: For the technically minded, the 'subconscious re-programming' model is based on a respondent conditioning theoretical framework. Research by Nancy Kanwisher at MIT has revealed that it is impossible to distinguish from brain imaging whether person is imagining or looking at an object. The same part of the brain is activated. By repeatedly stating and imagining a specific outcome, new associations or pathways form within the amygdala which reduce the probability of activation of the adrenalin response when job search related activities such as job interviews are contemplated.)

Looking for a job? You've already got a job!

Many job seekers think of themselves as unemployed. They check the job vacancies and send off the occasional application and in the interim don't do much else. But, in reality, job search is an '8 till 5' job in its own right. If you are looking for a job, you can think of yourself as the Managing Director of your own Sales and Marketing Company. You will get paid as soon as you make your first 'sale'. With this in mind, you need to think about what you are selling and the market in which you want to sell it. What you are selling is your ability to add value to somebody else's business.

Successful sales and marketing has a lot to do with planning. It may help to build your own job search plan that could run something like this:

Activity	Allocated time
Identify vocational direction	1 week
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review this report• Complete additional exercises• Identify primary areas of interest	
Identify personal skills	1 week
<p>Prepare a library of competencies, skills, attributes and experiences</p>	

Identify potential markets 2 weeks

Review job vacancies, trade magazines, Yellow Pages to identify industry types and employment options

Carry out Informational Interviews 4 weeks

Interview personnel offices and managers in the target occupations to find out more about job content and employment options (see 'How do I find the job I want?' below.)

Prepare curriculum vitae or résumé 1 week

Use 'The Damn Good Résumé Guide' (Yana Parker, published by Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California) to design your résumé around the specific job or occupation

Begin applying for jobs 4 weeks

The important thing about a plan such as this is that it begins to feel like actual work and helps you to keep focussed on the goal of obtaining the job you want.

But I don't have the qualifications or experience

A great deal is made of experience and qualifications, yet employers will often put these to one side if they think the candidate has the ability to learn quickly and will fit in well. Most employers prefer candidates who get on well with others and can be trained rather than those who have the skills but get offside with people.

Never be put off by the fact that you may lack the qualifications or experience specified in a job advertisement. Instead, look very closely at the role and how you can 'package' the skills and abilities you do have in such a way that the organisation can see clearly that you would add value to their business. This is not to suggest that you make claims that you cannot support but that you focus on the actual day-to-day work you have done and how it relates to the job for which you are applying.

How do I find the job I want?

"I've now got a pretty good idea of what I want to do but I never see those jobs advertised. How do I find them?"

There are a number of strategies you can try. Here are two of them.

First, note that approximately 70% of jobs are never advertised. They are filled by word of mouth, insider contacts, direct approach, headhunting and so forth. To get yourself into that market there are a couple of things you can try. Many people are surprised at how many contacts they have when they sit down and make a list of all their relatives, friends, acquaintances, business associates, neighbours, school mates, fellow worshippers, sports colleagues, service club contacts, hairdressers, grocers, taxi drivers

and so on. It is very easy to let these contacts know that you are interested in a job in a particular field and could they let you know if they hear of anything.

The second strategy is 'Informational Interviewing.' To do this you identify the area in which you would like to work, say public relations and then make a list of the organisations in your area that employ public relations staff. Obviously, you could just send off a résumé and hope for the best but this is risky. A better option is to ring each organisation and ask to speak to someone who could give you information on the public relations role. You make it clear that you are carrying out background research before you begin applying for jobs and would be grateful if you could come and talk to them for 20 minutes to gain greater insight into the day-to-day work of a PR person. When you get the interview, it is important to have a prepared set of questions about the role: what are the qualifications required, how are these obtained, what is the normal entry route into the work, what sort of advancement prospects exist in the industry, etc. You need to ask the questions professionally and above all else stick strictly to the agreed time. As you leave, thank the person and ask if they would like a copy of your résumé for their files. If they say 'No', leave it at that. The next day send a thank you card.

The purpose of doing this is to allow you to gain confidence in presenting yourself and to become known in the marketplace. If you make the right impression, you may be just the person the company needs to replace the employee who is going overseas next month. A good place to look for more help on how to increase your chances of obtaining job interviews is the previously mentioned book 'The Damn Good Résumé Guide.'

And finally, pick a number

If you are looking for a job, take a moment to write down the number of job applications you anticipate making. Make the number big - 50 or 100. This little trick is based on the fact that job search, like any sales and marketing activity, is a numbers game. The more calls you make the more you are likely to sell. People who expect to get a 'sale' or job straight away often become despondent after they miss out on a couple or don't hear back from organisations. Quite quickly they can become withdrawn and lose interest in trying for jobs. By accepting that a large number of applications may be required it is much easier to stay positive and focused on getting that one job that is just right for you.

Good luck with your career planning and job search.