

Reach Out!

Talents, Interests, and Passions Preview

Introduction

We live in a fast-moving global economy. Everyone who wants to enjoy the many jobs and careers they'll have in their lives must realize that change is going to be a constant. You will no doubt have many jobs and careers and keep going back for training or more education to remain marketable and capable of getting into fields that you will enjoy. Career planning should be an exciting lifelong process and adventure!

Your success, happiness, and basic quality of life is really up to you. Too many youth, young adults, and older adults leave jobs, career choices, post-high school job training and higher education choices up to others to pick for them—or worse, play a gambling game and just leave things up to luck and chance.

Choosing career paths and broad areas of work that truly interest you requires you to **know yourself well—your personality, your talents, your gifts, and your passions**. It means doing lots of research. Get out to “network” and talk to people who love what they do. Take advantage of going out to job shadow or go on tours of workplaces. Visit colleges or tech training programs. Utilize on-line surveys and resources.

Bottom line? You need to take charge of knowing yourself well and searching out what jobs and careers will bring you satisfaction and happiness. Then you can set some goals, create a plan, make some choices, and begin a journey to reach your career or job destination.

What are the basic concepts for talents, interests, and passions?

Reach Out believes we all are unique persons with wonderful and incredible abilities, talents, skills, and gifts. The following concepts are vital keys to knowing yourself and then proceeding with researching the wide array of careers that might be a “fit.”

First, what do we mean by talents, interests, and passions?

Talents are those natural abilities we seem to be “born with.” Some call them gifts, natural abilities, or innate aptitudes.

Interests refer to the experiences and activities that we are drawn to — they attract us and seem to hold our attention.

Passions are intense convictions and desires we hold dear. Passions build on our hopes and dreams. Passions are usually life-long pursuits.

Principles and facts about talents, interests, and passions

- Many of our talents and aptitudes are just naturally a part of us—we didn't “learn” them.
- Natural talents and interests can be enhanced and “acted upon” throughout our lives.
- Passions rarely disappear in our lives, but may get pushed aside or sidelined by everyday needs, demands on our times, and the business of our daily activities.

What do I love to do?

A place that is fun for mentors and mentees to start is discovering and sharing what you really love to do! Take a look at this list (and be sure to add your own ideas and examples). Circle and rate in the left column from 1 to 5 what really motivates you!

Things I “love” to do

Rating Scale: 1 (no interest), 2 (low), 3 (medium), 4 (pretty interested), 5 (high)

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|-----|-----------------------|---|
| ___ | <i>Administration</i> | I like organizing and motivating people to accomplish objectives, tasks, functions. |
| ___ | <i>Design/Create</i> | I like getting things stated from scratch. I like being unique, creative, making new things. |
| ___ | <i>Excel</i> | I strive to be the best, to do my best. I have high standards for me and others. |
| ___ | <i>Follow Rules</i> | I like orderliness and having policies, guidelines, and procedures given to me to follow or complete. |
| ___ | <i>Improve</i> | I like to take something and make it better. I help others improve what they are working on. |
| ___ | <i>Help/Serve</i> | I love helping others succeed. I like caring and being of service to others. |
| ___ | <i>Heal</i> | I am drawn to bring physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual healing to others. |
| ___ | <i>Lead</i> | I like to be in charge and lead the way. I like deciding how things will be done. |
| ___ | <i>Maintain/Fix</i> | I like to keep something running smoothly. I like things to be organized and run efficiently. |
| ___ | <i>Organize</i> | I need order and structure. I like to bring organization to most everything I do. |
| ___ | <i>Perform</i> | I love being in front of people — performing, speaking, “being on the stage.” |
| ___ | <i>Persuade</i> | I like to influence people. I like to have an impact on others’ behaviors or attitudes. |
| ___ | <i>Pioneer</i> | I am a risk-taker. I love to try out new things, venture to new places, start brand new projects. |
| ___ | <i>Prevail</i> | I want to overcome injustices. I love to fight for what I see as “right” and oppose what is “wrong.” |
| ___ | <i>Repair/Fix</i> | I have a knack for fixing things that are broken. I love to update something that is out of date. |

Review your list. Circle those that you rated as loving or liking to do as a “4” or “5.”

List them here: _____

Now, stop and think. Why did you choose these things? What are some of your experiences, achievements, and thoughts that led you to rate these so highly?

As you look at careers and jobs, be sure to keep coming back to these things you really love to do. When you meet people in careers or go to talk to people in job training and higher education programs, be sure you share these traits of yours. Ask them how or if they “fit” or make a difference in their work or learning experience.

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Worksheet: *Talents, Interests, and Passions*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Partner: _____

Reflect, Ponder, and Share

1. What are your really special talents?

2. How would you describe your interests?

3. What are you passionate about?

What careers are thinking about pursuing?

Why? What do you know about them?

Fun “Ability” Check List

Check some of these abilities you think you already have. Then look to see if they relate to the career(s) you are considering or already into.

- Artistic ability: drawing, painting, musical arts, crafts, designing
- Classifying ability: organize and systematize books, data, records, files
- Composing ability: write lyrics, songs, musical compositions
- Counseling ability: guide, encourage, listen to others
- Decorating ability: design, arrange, and set-up for special events, spaces, activities
- Editing/Writing ability: proofread documents, articles or stories; write articles, stories
- Electronics ability: create, fix, work with all things electronic
- Entertaining ability: perform, act, dance, speak, amuse
- Evaluating ability: conduct research, analyze data, draw conclusions
- Graphic Ability: design and create visual displays, newsletters, signs, advertisements
- Hospitality/Cooking: host events and parties, cook, bake, create recipes
- Interviewing ability: talk to others and discover things about them
- Landscaping ability: plant flowers, design gardens, create/improve natural sites
- Promoting ability: advertise, market and promote people, events, activities, causes
- Managing ability: coordinate events, supervise people
- Mathematical ability: work with data, money, numbers
- Mechanical ability: operate, repair, create tools, equipment, machinery
- Planning ability: design and organize events, programs
- Promoting ability: design advertising plans, market and promote people, events
- Recall ability: natural knack to remember names, faces, places, data
- Recruiting ability: motivate people to get involved with projects, groups
- Researching ability: make hypothesis, read & gather information, collect data
- Welcoming ability: easily make others feel at ease, convey warmth and acceptance, develop rapport with others easily

We all have so many abilities! Strive to spend time with yourself to ponder what your abilities are. Talk to others who know you and ask them what they think your abilities are. Also remember that we can nurture and develop abilities throughout our lives, too. You can pick some to learn about, practice, or just begin to try owning and exhibiting in your life!