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I. Welcome

We are happy that you have chosen the Self-Directed Career Exploration Handbook to help you in the process of selecting your future career. We have tried to design a resource that will help you to think about yourself and about the world of work as you narrow down the work options open to you. When you finish with this Handbook, you may be at a point to select your future career. Great! Those who complete the Handbook without having made a choice but feel that they know how to continue exploring themselves and their career options will also find this process useful. Career choice is a process that takes time.

Many people have problems with the choice of work. Students of every age and in every year of college, undergraduate and graduate, have sought help with career choice or selection of an academic major. We have tried to make our Handbook broad in scope to address the major relevant issues that you all have.

Since so many University of Iowa students have requested help with career issues, we designed the Handbook to help meet this need. The “Career Development Services at The University of Iowa” chart, located on page 41 of the Handbook will acquaint you with other UI resources.

What are the advantages of using the Handbook as compared to other UI career program resources? We think these advantages are important to note:

1. You can work with the Handbook during your free time. Perhaps you currently have school, work, or family responsibilities that keep you from participating in other scheduled UI career programs.

2. You can work at your own pace with the Handbook. You can work as quickly or as slowly as your needs and motivation demand.

3. If you feel a need to work alone on your career issues, the Handbook provides the opportunity for privacy. If you feel the need to work with other career exploration specialists or other people in the world of work, the Handbook provides information on how to locate these people; or you can locate and select the resource people that you feel would best suit your needs.

4. You can tailor the Handbook to meet your individual needs. We recommend that you read all sections of the Handbook. You can, however, concentrate on the portions that address the areas of most interest or need for you.

Welcome to the Handbook! We wish you the best in your career exploration endeavor. The Handbook has been a challenge and a joy to create for you. We would very much appreciate your evaluatory comments. A brief form for that purpose is provided at the end of the Handbook. Through your feedback, we hope to continue to improve our service to students.

Sincere appreciation is given to Dr. David Seeman and to Steve Deters, Kevin Kelly, Emil Rodolfa, and Patrick Sherry for their help in creating the Handbook.

Kathleen H. Staley, Ph.D.
Assistant Director for Program and Consultation Service
University Counseling Service
The University of Iowa                    Revised 01-15-07
II. Philosophy of Career Choice: Decision-Making

The philosophy underlying the Handbook that you are about to examine has been developed as a result of the many experiences that the University Counseling Service (UCS) staff have had in working with students in various stages of the Career Decision-Making process. As we have learned more about this process, a number of assumptions and beliefs about the process have emerged. The Handbook is based on many of these assumptions and we would like to introduce it to you by explaining our assumptions.

We believe that finding a career or life’s work is a developmental, or growth process which continues throughout one’s life. Thus, making a career decision now (e.g., deciding on a major, or job) is not the only or final career decision that you will make. Each decision merely moves you further along in your career development and opens up new and different opportunities for exploration. Therefore, deciding on a major or job right now in no way means that you are done deciding career issues forever: there are plenty more to come.

Although no single career decision is final, it is important that each decision you make be the best one for you at that time. We believe that you can learn the components of effective decision-making which can later be applied to any career decision. For example, where to work, how much money to be satisfied with, whether to take a new job or promotion, etc. are all examples of career decisions. However, the decision process itself consists of examining your interests, values, abilities, and the pros and cons of possible alternatives, regardless of the particular decision involved.

Most people tend to make career decisions based on characteristics of the job market. They ask, “How can I become a doctor (lawyer, architect, etc.)?” This is what we call making decisions from the “Outside-In” because they are trying to fit themselves into the occupational pigeonhole they have identified regardless of who they are or what they are capable of doing. An alternative approach is to look Inside yourself, at what you like to do, what is important to you, and what you are good at doing. Then, ask about the outside world and “what job/occupation/major gives me the opportunity to do the things I want to do?” Or another way of asking this question is “How can I get paid for doing the things that are important to me?” This is what we call career decision-making from the “Inside-Out.” Academic Career Clustering at the U of I is an outgrowth of this process. See page 26 for more information on Career Clusters.

Since we assume that the best career decision-making occurs from the “Inside-Out”, you can probably see why we also believe that career counseling can’t “tell you what you should be.” This has to be discovered and evolved by you.

Finally, from an “Inside-Out” perspective, we have ordered the steps in the decision-making process in what we think is the most helpful way.
The Process of Career Decision-Making

Look at Figure 1 on page 3, as you read the steps involved in the decision-making process. Try to find where you are in the process of deciding on a career.

**Step I.** Decide what the goal or decision is about (e.g., find a major, change jobs, try for a promotion). Congratulations, by reading this manual, you have taken this first step.

**Step II.** Know yourself. Examine your likes and dislikes, talents and abilities, and values. This is information about your **self** which helps you make decisions from the inside view, before moving out.

**Step III.** Once you have gained some information about your interests, abilities, and values (Step II), you can begin to generate ideas and alternatives about possible majors which might “fit” with your interests, values and abilities.

**Step IV.** Gather further information about possible alternative majors or careers. This information will help you evaluate the fit between them and what you know about yourself.

**Step V.** Evaluate the costs and benefits of one alternative (career or major) in comparison with another in terms of fit with your interests, abilities and values.

**Step VI.** Implement or put into action, the alternative which best satisfies your interests, values and abilities.

During the implementation phase, you may go through the process again to clarify your direction or goals. If so, start through another cycle of the career decision-making process and complete the various steps.

This **Handbook** will guide you, step by step, through the career decision-making process. Since some people may be further along in the decision-making process than others, we have made it possible for you to enter at the step which best meets your needs. If, for example you feel you already know your interests, abilities, and values, you might want to skip to the next step, generating possible alternatives. The page number beside each step in Figure I indicates the page in the **Handbook** where we begin to go through that particular step.

A few words of caution. If you skip steps and find yourself bogged down or stuck later on in the process, it may indicate that you need to go back and work through the skipped steps. Sometimes for example, we think that we know more about our interests, abilities and/or values than we really do. Closer examination may be helpful to gain the information necessary to proceed.
Figure 1

Step 1

Goal: Choosing a Career or Major

Recycle

Step VI

Implementation Plan For Chosen Alternative
Page 36

Step II

Self Information: Interests, Values, Abilities
Page 7

Step III

Possible Alternatives: Careers or Majors
Page 23

Step IV

World of Work Information about Careers
Page 24

Step V

Cost/Benefit Analysis of Alternatives
Page 30
III. What This Handbook Can and Cannot Do For You

The Self-Directed Career Exploration Handbook can serve you in many ways, but there are limitations in any career guidance system. It is important for you to know how the Handbook can help you and how it cannot be of assistance. In this way you can make maximum use of the resources the Handbook offers.

What the Handbook Can Do


2. The Handbook can teach you how to systematically explore your career interests, abilities, and values.

3. The Handbook can teach you how to seek out and find career/job information in the world of work.

4. The Handbook can direct you toward career options that are an outgrowth of your unique interest-ability-value pattern.

5. The Handbook can refer you to appropriate sources of help in career decision-making.

What the Handbook Cannot Do

The Handbook cannot take you through the Decision-Making Process. You have to be the participant who actively proceeds from step-to-step.

The Handbook will not do this work for you. It will not simply tell you what your career interests, abilities, and values are. You will need to carefully complete the exercises, spend time thinking about who you are, and perhaps talk to roommates, friends, or family to help you find your unique interest, ability, and value patterns.

The Handbook does not contain all of the world of work and job information that you need. You will need to seek out additional job information from other sources which are discussed in the section entitled World of Work.

The Handbook will not tell you what you should be. It will not tell you what career to enter. Instead, the Handbook is designed to provide a framework within which you can explore yourself and the possibilities or areas best suited to you.

The Handbook cannot identify and address all of the issues you might face in your career decision-making process. A referral guide* to other UI agencies and resources is included if you need additional help with your career choice.

*See the chart entitled “Career Development Services at The University of Iowa,” p. 41.
IV. Irrational Beliefs

Sometimes people are influenced by irrational beliefs or myths as they proceed through the career decision-making process. These myths can hinder or slow down the career choice process. In an effort to avoid irrational belief pitfalls, we encourage you to think through your own thoughts and assumptions about career choice. Which of the following myths have influenced you? Now challenge your irrational beliefs with the presented facts. You can expand your career directions and options as you rid yourself of limiting career myths.

1. Somewhere there is an expert or a book or a test that can tell me what to do.

   The facts: There are approximately 40,000 occupations from which to choose in the United States today. Most interest inventories or tests sample 100 to 200 of these 40,000 occupations. These tests can assess only selected aspects of you and your interests—thus giving you good, but limited information. Tests and books can provide important self or career information, but they are only one part of the complex system of career exploration. The “expert” or career counselor is another important “one-part” of the process. He or she can help to guide you through the choice process, providing valuable information or helping you to focus on important pieces. But it is you and your involvement in the career exploration process that will tell you what career to enter.

2. Only weak and indecisive students are undecided about their college major or future career.

   The facts: Approximately one-half of all college students will change their major at least once. At The University of Iowa, the average undergraduate student changes academic major approximately three times. The college years are a time for exploration and for the broadening of career options and possibilities. You have forty to fifty years ahead of you to enjoy your career. It’s okay to explore, try various classes, and wait before selecting your college major.

3. There is only one right job for me.

   The facts: There are two important responses to this myth. You are a multi-faceted person with varying interests and abilities that can be creatively mixed and combined to accomplish different jobs. Turning to the career world, the same job can be performed in different ways by people with different skills or different work styles. No two people do the same job in the same way.

4. Once I choose my academic major, I cannot or should not change it.

   The facts: This myth is disproven by the approximately 50% of all college students who do change their majors. One may lose time, have to make up credits, or postpone graduation, but the cost of remaining in an unsatisfying major or entering an uncomfortable job is far greater. And furthermore, the average college student graduates in 4½ years.
5. Once I enter my chosen career or profession, I will have to work in that career forever—or at least until I retire.

The facts: The average person will change jobs 7-10 times in his/her lifetime. And people change jobs for many reasons:

- change of interest
- advancement
- better opportunities
- discontinuation of a specific job
- boredom
- challenge
- to use new skills gained in an old job
- to do new things in new ways in new places
- to expand skills
- to meet new people
- increased education

6. I must choose between really having a career and having a family.

The facts: Sixty percent of women in the U.S. held jobs in 1998. The majority of occupations and careers can encompass flexible work schedules and patterns to suit an individual’s needs and preferred style of work-family interaction. Creative options might include:

- part-time work
- two employees sharing one full-time job
- taking a year off from work or college
- conducting one’s work responsibilities within the home

Before rejecting any occupation as unsuitable, check out your own or others’ biases that may provide incomplete or inaccurate information to influence your decision.
V. Self-Assessment

Research has shown that people are usually happier and more satisfied if there is a fit between who they are (their personality) and their chosen work environment. The exercises in the self-assessment section will help you to determine which combination of building blocks best describes your “work personality.” Remember, “work personality” refers to your unique combination of interests, abilities and values, as they relate to the world of work.

You are now ready to begin collecting information about yourself. This will include exploring your interests (what you like to do), abilities (what you are able to do), personality traits (how you usually act), and values (what is important to you).
Interests

“What are your interests?” can be a difficult question to answer, until you take some time to think about them. Even though many of our choices are based on our interests, we may not hold our interests clearly in mind.

The activities that you enjoy are good indicators of what your interests are. It is not unusual to find that several preferred activities grow out of similar underlying interests. The two exercises in this section are designed to help you search for these underlying interests, and then to begin to apply them to work activities.

**Exercise I: Activities You Enjoy**

Think of ten activities that you most enjoy. Include leisure time and social as well as job and school related activities. Also include any activities that you definitely want to pursue in the near future. Now, list these activities below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th></th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Next, put a “W” by each activity that you want as part of your work life. Be aware of your interests and how you would like to implement them in your work life.
Exercise II: Your First Day at Work

Keeping the above information in mind, imagine that you are on your first day at a new job. It is a day to acquaint you with your total new work environment. For your orientation, you are taken to a large room that has six corners:

(Realistic) R
(Conventional) C
(Enterprising) E
(I) (Investigative)
(A) (Artistic)
(S) (Social)

Each corner contains people who are performing specific types of work. Here are some examples of the specific kinds of activities one might perform in each corner of the room:

Realistic: Working with things or objects; machines; outdoor work; technical activities; engineering; etc.

Investigative: Working with ideas rather than people; abstract concepts; scientific work; analyzing; reading especially non-fiction.

Artistic: Work involving artistic activities such as advertising; drawing or painting; writing or performing music; writing; interior decoration.

Social: Helping or serving others; teaching; counseling; working with people.

Enterprising: Influencing others for productive purposes; business management; sales; travel agent; lawyer.

Conventional: Work activities involving data; management; office work; accounting; bookkeeping; filing.

Now go to the corner that seems most interesting to you—the corner whose people and their work you are most drawn to, would feel most comfortable in, and would most enjoy doing that type of work. Put the letter of that corner in box one.

Continue your orientation. Select your second most interesting corner to explore. Record the letter of that corner in box two.

Select your third favorite corner for box three.

1. 
2. 
3. 
In order to help make sense out of all this information, we will use a system developed by John Holland. According to Holland, each person’s “work personality” is made up of some combination of six building blocks of personal and vocational characteristics. He has identified these six blocks as: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional.

Each of these categories represents a set of interests, abilities, and personality traits—these are shown in Figure 2. Holland also says that all work activities can be classified into these same six categories—some possible activities are listed in Figure 2 for each of the categories.

Now take a few moments to look over Figure 2, and to become familiar with Holland’s system.

Figure 2

(Realistic) R  I (Investigative)

(Conventional) C  A (Artistic)

(Enterprising) E  S (Social)

Types located more closely together on the hexagon have more similarities than types located opposite of each other. For example, the Enterprising and Social types both value people contact while the Realistic and Investigative types prefer more non-people oriented work. Another example would be the more verbal orientation of the E, S, and A types, and the more non-verbal orientation of the C, R, and I types.

Each of the types Holland describes has environmental, personality, and occupational characteristics frequently associated with it. In other words, research has shown that particular Holland types prefer certain environments, have certain personality traits, and are frequently found in certain types of occupations. The following list summarizes the characteristics most frequently associated with each type. Familiarize yourself with the types that you listed in the boxes at the end of the “First Day at Work” exercise.

**Realistic**

**Environment Characteristics:** Foster technical competencies, mechanical abilities, and the use of one’s body and/or hands on work. Encourages people to view the world in simple, tangible, and traditional ways. Rewards people for conventional values and goods; money, power and possessions. These people usually have good physical skills and like to work outdoors or with machines.

**Personality Traits:** Agreeable, frank, persistent, practical, stable, thrifty.
Realistic Occupations: Skilled trades, such as electrician, radio operator, tool-and-die maker, cook. Technical, such as nuclear reactor technician, aeronautical engineer. Some service occupations, such as truck driver, mail carrier, and police officer. Mechanical or physical work, such as construction or athletics.

Investigative
Environment Characteristics: Encourages scientific competencies and achievements. Likes to solve complex problems. Views the world in complex, abstract, independent, and original ways. See themselves as scholarly and lacking in leadership skills.

Personality Traits: Analytical, cautious, critical, quiet, logical, and reserved.

Investigative Occupations: Scientific, such as physician, mathematician, oceanographer, and weather observer. Some technical, such as repairperson (TV). X-Ray technician, and tool designer and maker.

Artistic
Environment Characteristics: Encourages people to see themselves as expressive, original, intuitive, and as having artistic abilities (acting, writing, speaking). Views the world in complex, independent, unconventional and flexible ways.

Personality Traits: Complicated, emotional, idealistic, imaginative, thoughtful, intuitive, nonconforming, original, and self-expressive.

Artistic Occupations: Artistic, such as advertising person, fashion model, decorator, artist. Musical, such as music teacher, orchestra leader, and entertainer. Literary, such as writer, editor, critic, and radio program writer.

Social
Environment Characteristics: Encourages people to see themselves as liking to help others, understanding of others, cooperative and sociable. Views the world in flexible ways. Good verbal skills.

Personality Traits: Cooperative, friendly, generous, tactful, responsible, outgoing, helpful.

Social Occupations: Educational, such as teacher, counselor, psychologist, librarian and recreation director. Social welfare, such as social worker, house parent. Others, such as housekeeper, ticket agent, hair stylist and the clergy.

Enterprising
Environment Characteristics: Encourages people to see themselves as aggressive, popular, self-confident, with leadership and speaking skills. Views the world in terms of power, status, responsibility and in traditional, uncomplicated terms. Likes to manage, direct, lead and influence people.

Personality Traits: Adventurous, energetic, independent, persuasive, pleasure-seeking, sociable and dominant.

Enterprising Occupations: Managerial, such as banker, florist, postmaster, apartment manager, and restaurant owner. Sales, such as sales clerk, sporting goods salesperson, travel guide and
route salesperson. Others, such as lawyer, airline cabin attendant, labor arbitrator, administrator, business executive, manager, or politician.

**Conventional**

Environment Characteristics: Encourages people to see themselves as orderly, nonartistic, and as having clerical competencies. Views the world in conventional, stereotyped, uncomplicated ways. Values money, dependability, conformity, and routine. Appreciates direction and leadership from authority figures.

Personality Traits: Agreeable, quiet, persistent, practical, self-controlled, conscientious, and valuing orderliness and routine.

Conventional Occupations: Office and clerical positions, such as file clerk, typist, personnel clerk, secretary, cashier, reservations agent, and accountant.

Let’s get back to those three boxes at the end of the “First Day at Work” exercise. In Holland’s terms, the sequence of letters you generated is your HOLLAND CODE. For example, if your three boxes were:

1. \( I \)
2. \( S \)
3. \( E \)

then your Holland code is I S E.

Write your Holland Code here:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Notice that your code combines three Holland types— not just one type as described on the previous page. Although each of us has a particular order of types, e.g., 1) \( I \), 2) \( S \), 3) \( E \), it is important to remember that our TRUE personality consists of a combination of the characteristics represented by different types. Consequently, a person whose Holland Code is I S E has interests in investigative, social and enterprising (people influencing) activities, environments, or occupations.

Now, using your Holland Code, construct a description of yourself by filling in the blanks in the following sentence. Pick descriptors from Holland’s categories or make up your own corresponding to the letters in your Holland Code:

“I have interests in \( \underline{1} \) \underline{2} \underline{3} \) type activities (or environments).”

When you come to the section of the Handbook dealing with exploration of the World of Work, you will need to consider whether your personality, environmental, and occupational preferences FIT with the opportunities offered by a particular career option.
Take a moment now to think about the “Holland Code Type” that you have generated from the “First Day at Work” exercise, and see how well these three building blocks fit with what you know about yourself. If you have some questions about how well they describe you, you may want to go back to one, or both of the preceding exercises and rework them.

Hopefully these exercises have provided you with two things: 1) a list of specific activities you enjoy, and 2) a way of grouping these activities into a pattern of your underlying interests. This information will be very useful later on in exploring how well your interests fit with your abilities, values, and various work environments (which you will be exploring in later sections).

Once you are satisfied with the information you have generated in the two “Interests” exercises, you are ready to move on to explore your work abilities.
## Abilities

Often we are not aware of the skills or abilities we are using when we are involved in an activity, especially those abilities which “come naturally” to us. The following exercises will help you to identify specific skills from your experiences.

First, think of five activities which have given you a sense of accomplishment. (For example, “I ran a summer swimming camp,” or “I learned to play the trumpet,” or “I climbed a mountain.”) They don’t have to be connected with school or work, but can be anything you feel proud of accomplishing. List these in the left-hand column below. Next, go over the list of abilities in the Personal Abilities Chart located on the next page. Pick out at least three specific abilities that were involved in each of your five achievements and write them in the spaces on the right-hand side below. Beside each ability write the Holland code letter which goes with the group from which the ability came. Refer to the explanation of Holland’s Codes on pages 10-12 if you wish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
<th>Holland Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you discover some skills that you hadn’t realized before? Are there some skills which were involved in several of your achievements? As you complete the next exercise, keep in mind the abilities you’ve identified through your accomplishments.
## Personal Abilities Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Realistic abilities</th>
<th>IV. Social abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manual skill and dexterity</td>
<td>serving or helping others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical abilities (working with machines, instruments, blueprints)</td>
<td>listening to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working with animals</td>
<td>talking with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>putting things together</td>
<td>demonstrating ideas, techniques, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(assembling/constructing)</td>
<td>explaining or teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working outdoors</td>
<td>cooperating and working as a team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical strength and stamina</td>
<td>settling disputes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athletic ability</td>
<td>relating to a wide variety of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repairing things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Investigative abilities</th>
<th>V. Enterprising abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>analyzing facts or ideas</td>
<td>managing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synthesizing (putting ideas together)</td>
<td>coordinating events or other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solving problems (looking for solutions)</td>
<td>coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking logically</td>
<td>negotiating or mediating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classifying things or ideas</td>
<td>selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluating data or ideas</td>
<td>persuading or motivating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questioning or probing into ideas, arguments, problems</td>
<td>delegating responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding complex concepts or ideas</td>
<td>supervising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Artistic abilities</th>
<th>VI. Conventional abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finding new solutions to old problems</td>
<td>being neat and orderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inventing</td>
<td>arranging data, files, supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>designing</td>
<td>working within structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertaining</td>
<td>following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expressing ideas or feelings in a written or verbal form (e.g., writing, speaking, acting)</td>
<td>record keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expressing ideas or feelings nonverbally (e.g., painting, decorating, sculpting, ceramics, singing)</td>
<td>budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensitivity to artistic and aesthetic endeavors</td>
<td>arranging events or meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perceptual and motor skills</td>
<td>keeping to a schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Abilities Checklist

Evaluate your own abilities in the following areas by rating your degree or competency according to the following:

1 = not very much ability in this area
2 = some ability in this area
3 = average ability in this area
4 = above average ability in this area
5 = exceptional ability in this area

I. Realistic abilities
   _____ manual skill and dexterity
   _____ technical abilities (working with machines, instruments, blueprints)
   _____ working with animals
   _____ putting things together (assembling/constructing)
   _____ working outdoors
   _____ physical strength and stamina
   _____ athletic ability
   _____ repairing things
   _____ Sum of Realistic Abilities

II. Investigative Abilities
   _____ analyzing facts or ideas
   _____ synthesizing (putting ideas together)
   _____ solving problems (looking for solutions)
   _____ thinking logically
   _____ classifying things or ideas
   _____ evaluating data or ideas
   _____ questioning or probing into ideas, arguments, problems
   _____ understanding complex concepts or ideas
   _____ Sum of Investigative Abilities

III. Artistic Abilities
   _____ finding new solutions to old problems
   _____ inventing
   _____ designing
   _____ entertaining
   _____ expressing ideas or feelings in a written or verbal form (e.g., writing, speaking, acting)
   _____ expressing ideas or feelings nonverbally (e.g., painting, decorating, sculpting, ceramics, singing)
   _____ sensitivity to artistic and aesthetic endeavors
   _____ perceptual and motor skills
   _____ Sum of Artistic Abilities
IV. Social Abilities
   _____ serving or helping others
   _____ listening to others
   _____ talking with others
   _____ demonstrating ideas, techniques, etc.
   _____ explaining or teaching
   _____ cooperating and working as a team member
   _____ settling disputes
   _____ relating to a wide variety of people
   _____ Sum of Social Abilities

V. Enterprising Abilities
   _____ managing others
   _____ coordinating events or other people
   _____ coaching
   _____ negotiating or mediating
   _____ selling
   _____ supervising
   _____ persuading or motivating
   _____ delegating responsibility
   _____ Sum of Enterprising Abilities

VI. Conventional Abilities
   _____ being neat and orderly
   _____ arranging data, files, supplies
   _____ working within structure
   _____ following instructions
   _____ record keeping
   _____ budgeting
   _____ arranging events or meetings
   _____ keeping to a schedule
   _____ Sum of Conventional Abilities

Now that you have evaluated your abilities, go back through the entire list and rank order, from highest to lowest, your five strongest specific abilities (e.g., talking with others) or competencies. What Holland Codes do your abilities represent?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abilities</th>
<th>Holland Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(strongest)</td>
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</table>
Now find those specific abilities which you feel you would most like to improve or develop. List the five specific abilities and ways you might improve your skills in each area (for example, take a course, get summer work in that area). Include the Holland Code for each ability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abilities</th>
<th>Holland Code</th>
<th>Ways to Improve</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

Finally, for each of the six abilities sections, sum the values listed for each individual item and place the sum on the line found at the bottom of that section. Next, list the top three areas (e.g., Realistic, Investigative) in order according to which has the highest sum.

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</table>

As in the “Interests” section of the Handbook, this three-letter code gives you a “Holland Code Type” for your abilities. It describes a second aspect of your “work personality,” the ability aspect.

In this section you have been able to identify (1) your strongest abilities, and (2) a “Holland Code Type” which summarizes the basic types of abilities which are the strongest for you. Before moving on to the next section on values, give some thought to the last two sections. Are your interests and abilities consistent with each other? Were the code types for these two sections similar or different? If there are clear differences, this may suggest that there may be some skills which you’d like to develop further. Or, you may want to go back and re-evaluate your interest ratings. Throughout this process we encourage you to compare your self-assessments from different sections of the Handbook, and to reconsider your options based on the new information that you gather.

Compare interests and abilities in terms of Holland Coding. Lists codes in rank order (highest to lowest):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests (page 12)</th>
<th>Abilities (page 18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Values

In a general sense, “value” refers to that which is important to you. Your value system is both a reflection of your personal philosophy, and the basis for many of your important decisions.

Since values play such a central role in the selection of, and satisfaction with a style of living, it is important to know clearly what values are most important to you. This is particularly true in selecting a career. Since much of your time and energy will go into your work, a good fit between work activities and personal values can increase satisfaction.

Below is a list of seventeen values, followed by three blank lines labeled “other”. If some of your values are not included in the list, write them on the blank lines. Also, if your definition of any of the values differs from that listed, feel free to use your own definition.

Now, go through the entire list and rate each value in terms of its importance to you. If it is very important, write a 3 next to it. If it is moderately important, write a 2 next to it. If it is not very important, write a 1 next to it.

\[
\begin{align*}
3 & = \text{very important} \\
2 & = \text{moderately important} \\
1 & = \text{not very important}
\end{align*}
\]

[Blank lines]

_____ Adventure—experiencing new and exciting events and opportunities; sometimes involving some element of risk.
_____ Spontaneity—being able to do things without extensive planning; on the spur-of-the-moment.
_____ Variety—experiencing a wide range of ideas, activities, opportunities and environments.
_____ Intellectual Challenge—experiencing frequent situations that require thinking abstractly, problem solving, and/or calling on prior learning to perform tasks.
_____ Security—predictability, orderliness, being free from future concerns, either financial or situational.
_____ Achievement—producing services and/or projects that give tangible and enduring evidence of accomplishment.
_____ Work Associates—importance attached to relationships, contacts, and interactions with co-workers.
_____ Autonomy—having a decision-making role regarding work activities and/or schedule.
_____ Aesthetics—appreciation of and attention to beautiful and/or appealing products.
_____ Recognition—receiving attention, praise and/or other social rewards for accomplishments.
_____ Leisure Pursuits—having time and resources for non-work activities.
_____ Altruism—working for the benefit of others without regard for personal benefit.
_____ Managerial Responsibility—directing the work activities of others and/or having organizational duties.
_____ Financial Security—importance attached to amount of monetary income.
Creativity—developing new ideas, services and/or products; combining existing aspects in new ways.

Collaboration—working on projects with others; compromising and blending ideas, sharing effort.

Ecological Concerns—importance attached to how components of work activities impact the larger world.

Other—

Other—

Other—

Now, in the space below, write the name of each value to which you assigned a rating of 3.

______

______

______

The next part of this exercise might be somewhat difficult. If you have listed more than five values in the space above (more than five values rated 3), look over the list and cross some values out until you have a list of five. This can be difficult because crossing out personal values can be as hard as saying goodbye to old friends. However, keep in mind that you are not really saying goodbye to those values, you are only selecting the five most important for the purpose of this exercise.

Once you have chosen five values, list them in order from most important to least important. (Put the most important one on line 1, the second most important on line 2, and so on.)

Revised value list:
1. ________________ 4. ________________
2. ________________ 5. ________________
3. ________________

When thinking about values in terms of career exploration, it is important to keep in mind that it is unlikely that any one career will satisfy all your important values. Often, people find activities outside of work to satisfy certain values. These activities include such things as leisure time and recreational activities, volunteer work, hobbies, and so on. Look at each value on your list and try to decide if it is a value you expect to satisfy in work, outside of work, or both. If it is a value you expect to satisfy in work, place a “W” next to it. If you expect to satisfy the value outside of work, place an “O” next to it. If you expect to satisfy the value both in and outside of work, place a “B” next to it.

In a sense, it can be said that a job that meets all of your important values is the most you can expect out of a career (although, in reality, this may never happen). It is also important to know what is the least you will settle for in a career, in terms of values satisfaction. So, from your list
of most important values, select those that you think must be satisfied in your career. List these “musts” in the space below.


At this point you have probably completed a fairly thorough exploration of your personal values system, as it applies to your career exploration and decisions. You have a list of those values that are most important to you, a list of the values you expect to find satisfied through your choice of career, and the values you may need to satisfy via other resources, and a list of your minimal requirements for a career, in terms of value satisfaction. This information, along with previous information about your interests and your abilities, will be very important to you in later sections of this manual.
Self-Assessment Summary

Now that you have tentatively identified your interests, abilities, and values, we will help you put all of these elements together. First, list below in the appropriate spaces your top interests, abilities, and values from the previous parts of this section of the Handbook.

Interests (page 12)
1. 
2. 
3. 

Abilities (page 18)
1. 
2. 
3. 

Values (page 20)
1. 
2. 
3. 

Are your interests and abilities compatible? Put another way, are the same activities on both interests and abilities lists? If they are consistent, your likes and skills are similar and it’s likely that you would be satisfied with majors and jobs which involve those interests and skills. If they are not consistent, you may want to consider making an effort to develop your skills in areas that correspond to your interests (for example, by taking courses or getting a summer job in that area). On the other hand, there may be things in which you have skills but which no longer excite you (perhaps, for example, office work which you previously did during the summer). In this situation you may want to use the skills you have to work in a new setting which fits your interests, and which will assist you in gaining new skills at the same time (for example, using your office skills to work in a computer firm).
Generating Alternatives

Now, we’d like you to sit back and relax with you summary list of characteristics. In order to get some ideas about what you want your life-style and your career to be like, imagine yourself ten years from now. Keep in mind that these are not the same things. Everyone needs to work to earn a living. It’s also important to be engaged in activities that give you a sense of fulfillment and self-worth, and in activities that are relaxing and enjoyable. Not all of these activities need to be related to your career. By “life-style,” then, we mean the whole range of things you will be involved in which provide you with the means to make a living, a feeling of fulfillment, and just plain fun.

How old will you be in ten years? As you picture your life-style ten years from now, keep in mind the interests, abilities, and values you have identified, and imagine yourself going through a typical day in your future life. Ask yourself these questions if you need help in forming your image.

Are you alone or with other people?
Will you have a partner? a family? how big?
What kind of residence will you be living in?
Have you been in that location for long, or have you moved often?
What does your work setting look like? It is a home, in a private office, a high-rise building, outdoors?
Are there co-workers at your job? What do they do?
What kinds of things do you do as part of your work?
What do you do when your workday is over? What kinds of “fun activities” will you be involved in?
Will most of your energy be spent in your work, your family, home, leisure activities, or what?
On what will you spend your money?
What in your life-style makes you feel satisfied?

Hopefully, with this fantasy you have been able to identify either some specific career possibilities, or some basic features of a career (for example, you see yourself working in a large office of a business firm with numerous co-workers and with several subordinates). List below three career possibilities that would fit with your fantasy and with your list of interest, ability, and value characteristics.

You might now go back to your summary interest, ability and value lists again and try to generate some alternative possibilities which combine your top characteristics in a different way. Go through the fantasy again if that is helpful in setting the scene. If you discover some other career possibilities or basic features of a career, list them below. In the next section you will gather information about these career options.
VI. World of Work

Research into the factors determining job satisfaction has shown that persons who are most satisfied with their vocational choices have found work environments which match with their own interests, abilities, and values. The quality of your choice of occupational goals depends on the quality of your knowledge about yourself and the world of work. Up until this point, the Handbook has led you through an exploration of your personality. It is now time to start to search for an occupation which will provide you with tasks, opportunities, and rewards that are in line with your personal interests, abilities and values. We don’t mean to say that there exists one perfect vocation for you, or that you’ll find the “right one” this week, this month, or even this year. Your choice of an occupation will probably become a lot more clear as your own needs and preferences become more clear to you. But now is a good time to start exploring the incredible diversity of jobs that are available to you.

Organization of the world of work

There are 40,000 jobs in the United States for you to consider. Perhaps this number seems overwhelming to you. If you try to investigate all 40,000 jobs your task will be impossible. In this section of the Handbook, we hope to accomplish two objectives:

1. To open your eyes to the hundreds of job options that might suit your interests, ability, and value pattern.
2. To provide a framework for you in which to narrow down career areas. Sorting 40,000 jobs into several work areas will provide a basis of organization to simplify your task of exploration.

So as we expand your knowledge of career options, we also hope to provide an organizational framework to make job exploration possible and fun.

One way in which to get a handle on the diversity of job or career options is to reconsider John Holland’s Personality and Work Environment Types. (See the Handbook section on “Interests” for more information on Holland’s theory.) Holland breaks all jobs down into six work environments, but remember, jobs like people cross over into a number of work environments. Holland’s six work environments are:

1. Realistic: technical and skilled trades—working with things or objects.
2. Investigative: scientific jobs—working with ideas and abstract concepts.
3. Artistic: creative and artistic work.
4. Social: helping or serving others.
5. Enterprising: leading or persuading others.
6. Conventional: working with data—office work, bookkeeping.
From your exploration of your interests, abilities, and values, you probably have some idea of the work environment or environments that you find most appealing.

Another organizational scheme that provides an overview of the world of work and a way to classify work environment is Anne Roe’s Classification of Occupations:

1. Service: serving and attending to the needs of others.
2. Business Contact: face to face sales and business service.
4. Technology: production and maintenance of commodities and utilities.
5. Outdoor: work in agriculture, forestry or other environmental jobs.
7. General Cultural: work in the humanities; teaching, journalism, the ministry, etc.
8. Arts and Entertainment: work in the creative arts.

When you consider your specific interest-ability-value pattern, explore various work environments to find one or two that would best allow you to implement your unique self. The two worlds of work organizational frameworks presented hopefully will provide some direction for you as you explore work environments suited to meet your needs. You can find out more about these work environments from literature located in The Pomerantz Career Center discussed on pages 28 and 29.

Below list three areas from both Roe’s and Holland’s work environments that you feel would be important to have in your own work environment and the reason(s) why you think that area is important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holland</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roe</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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Career Clusters

Another way to explore the world of work is through clusters of careers that share similar interest, ability, or value patterns. As you read through these ways to organize the world of work, see which areas spark your interest.

1. **Arts and Entertainment**: artistic performance and production or talent management in traditional media, community arts associations, media consulting firms, government, business, or industry.

2. **Arts and Recreation Therapy**: therapeutic recreation and physical education, art, dance, drama, or music therapy for special groups (e.g., physically challenged, aged, or exceptional children.)

3. **Community and Family Services**: play and recreation counselor for children and aged, early child care worker, nutritionist, mental health worker, nursing home administrator, child abuse counselor.

4. **Corporate Communications**: public information, internal information services, advertising, audio-visual production for personnel training, media management.

5. **Environmental Professions**: environmental science and ecology, environmental planning, policy analysis, systems analysis, land use planning, zoning administration, resource management, recreation management, soil conservation.

6. **Health Services**: medical fields, clinical psychology, industrial hygiene, gerontology, health social work, genetics counseling.

7. **Human Resource Management-Personnel**: employment and manpower planning, personnel development and communication, wage and salary administration, personnel research, employee services, labor relations, affirmative action.

8. **International Affairs**: foreign relations, governmental operations, travel agency, social service agencies, foreign language specialist.

9. **Political Professions**: elected office holder, political adviser, consultant to business or industry, government officer, political organizer, commentator, pollster, consumer advocate, speech writer, media expert.

10. **Publishing**: research, writing, editing, design, illustration, production, advertising, sales, and management.

11. **Small Business Ownership**: ownership and management of various types of business (e.g., hardware, music, clothing, art supplies, or books).

12. **Training and Organizational Consulting**: consultation with business or industry, management, planning, development of both programs and personnel.
OK, now that you have read over the 12 career clusters, pick out three of the clusters that you might want to investigate further because they may be helpful to you in meeting your career goals, or because the cluster just looks appealing to you. Write the three clusters below:

Clusters


How to Collect Job Information

After you have narrowed down several career areas or specific jobs to explore, how do you find out about them? Here is a list of ways to collect career information:

1. **Past work experience.** You know about some jobs because you have worked at them. Consider your summer employment, part-time jobs, volunteer work, or extracurricular activities. Do you want to find out more about that company you worked for last summer? Or would you rather avoid that kind of work.

2. **Interview people in jobs that interest you.** You can learn a great deal about a specific job from a person in that job. Most people are flattered to talk about their careers. Make out a list of questions, call for an appointment, and get your question answered.

3. **Write for information.** Write to the company or work setting of your choice. Professional schools, training programs, or societies associated with specific career areas all have literature to acquaint you with specific careers. Addresses can be obtained from literature located in the Pomerantz Career Center located at 100 PC Suite C310.

4. **Read about jobs.** The Pomerantz Career Center has a library for career resources. Some of the many books that might be of interest to you and are located in the PCC are:
   - Dictionary of Occupational Titles
   - Occupational Outlook Handbook

Some of these books and other career resource books can be found at college or public libraries.

5. **Future work experience.** Summer employment, part-time work, volunteer work, internships or extracurricular work in school can provide excellent work information for you. Select your summer job with care. Experiment with work that interests you.
More about Pomerantz Career Center (PCC):

The Pomerantz Career Center is located at C310 PC. PCC contains a wealth of information on careers. When you are ready to explore the world of work, go to PCC where you can find the following resources:

1. Literature on broad career areas.
2. Literature on specific occupations.
3. Job Search guides.
4. Information on government jobs.
5. Internship Directories.
6. Web-based career resources.

There are always trained career advisors on duty at PCC to give you information, answer your questions, or just talk to you. Or you may prefer to do your investigating of occupations and thinking on your own, which is also an option. However, if you are feeling stuck and don’t know where to get started, take your interest code which you determined in the “Interest” portion of the previous section, go to the PCC and ask one of the staff persons for some leads. Most people find it fun to have information about almost every conceivable occupation at their fingertips and get involved in exploration of the world of work very easily.

What Questions to Ask

When you explore a career area or specific job that seems to fit your interest-ability-value pattern, certain questions will come to your mind. Here is a list of questions to consider as you explore a potential career:

1. What is the job like? What are the working conditions—office, outdoors, crowded conditions, etc.?
2. What are the occupational duties required? How much responsibility would you have?
3. What skills or abilities are needed?
4. What training or education is required?
5. What is the salary range?
6. How secure is the job once you enter it?
7. What advancement opportunities are there?
8. What are the rewards of the job?
9. What are the consequences of the job? What would you give up if you entered this job?
10. Are there relocation or geographical limitations for this job?
11. What kind of people would you work with, or would you work alone? Are patients or customers involved in the job?
12. What kind of organization would you be working for: large or small? What is its image?
13. What questions do you have about careers that are of interest to you? Write three of your questions below:

This has been a brief overview of the world of work. You now know how to find out about it. We encourage you to dig and explore.
VII. Making A Tentative Choice
Cost-Benefit Analysis

Introduction: To complete this section of the Handbook, it is necessary that you work with the interests, abilities, values, and the tentative major/career options you identified in the previous sections. See pages 22 and 23. List them here for easy reference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Major/Career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ____________</td>
<td>1. _______</td>
<td>1. _______</td>
<td>1. ________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ____________</td>
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<td>2. ________</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. ____________</td>
<td>3. _______</td>
<td>3. _______</td>
<td>3. ________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now we will go through the core of the decision-making process. This will consist of analyzing the pros and cons of each alternative in terms of fit with your interests, abilities, and values. Also, we will examine practical pros and cons which also affect your decisions.

A. Making a Decision

To help you evaluate the pros and cons of your Academic Major/Career alternatives we have designed “Decision Tables.” In these tables your Major/Career alternatives are related in terms of how well they enable you to satisfy or use the interests, abilities, and values important to you. For example, suppose a student was thinking about majors in either engineering, English, or psychology. In our table these choices would be listed in the Choice/Alternatives column on the left. Next, the student would write in his or her top three interests (e.g., working with people, working as one’s own boss, etc.) on the slanted lines above column 2. The student would write in his/her top three abilities and values in column 3 and column 4 in a similar fashion. (Values = prestige, money, security; Abilities = numerical, verbal, originality.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives</th>
<th>Column 2 Interests</th>
<th>Column 3 Abilities</th>
<th>Column 4 Values</th>
<th>Col. 5 Aver.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 1 Engineering</td>
<td>work with people</td>
<td>be own boss</td>
<td>work with ideas</td>
<td>numerical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2 English</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># 3 Psychology</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Next, the student would rate the alternatives according to the following rating scale:
1 = very low probability of realizing interests, values, abilities
2 = moderate probability of realizing interests, values, abilities.
3 = very high probability of realizing interests, values, abilities.

In our example the table has been filled in with rating as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives</th>
<th>Column 2</th>
<th>Column 3</th>
<th>Column 4</th>
<th>Col. 5 Aver.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interests</td>
<td>Abilities</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 1 Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2 English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3 Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the rating, the student averages the ratings across the row. For our example, the average rating in row # 1, engineering, is 2.1. The average ratings are placed in column # 5 in the corresponding row.

As you can see, from this student’s ratings, psychology appears to provide the highest probability of enabling the student to satisfy or use his/her interests, abilities, and values.

Additional Decision Table Worksheets have been provided for your convenience in completing this exercises. The step-by-step instructions are as follows:

Step 1. List your tentative major/career alternatives in column one.
Step 2. List your top three interests on the slanted lines at the top of column two.
Step 3. List your top three abilities on the slanted lines at top of column three and your values on the slanted lines in column four.
Step 4. List your ratings of the probability of each alternative enabling you to realize or actualize your interests, abilities, or values. Use the three-point scale listed on the Decision Table Worksheet. Place your ratings in the corresponding row and column.
Step 5. Average the ratings in each row (sum the ratings in a row and divide by nine). Place the average rating in column five of the corresponding alternative.
Step 6. Compare the average ratings of the alternatives. The highest one gives you one area with probability of finding satisfaction.

Remember: This exercise is designed only to increase your awareness of the components of the major/career you are considering. It is an artificial exercise and extremely rational. The value of
it is to make you think about what you may not get out of a particular major/career and how that compares to different majors/careers. View the results tentatively!

An additional Decision Table Worksheet has been provided for you to use as needed. For example, you might wish to set up tables comparing different sets of majors/careers such as engineering, psychology, education or education, business, psychology.
### Decision Table Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1 Choice</th>
<th>Column 2 Interests</th>
<th>Column 3 Abilities</th>
<th>Column 4 Values</th>
<th>Col. 5 Aver.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># 2</td>
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<td># 3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Rating Scale:**
1 = very low probability of realizing interests, values, abilities
2 = moderate probability of realizing interests, values, abilities.
3 = very high probability of realizing interests, values, abilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1 Choice</th>
<th>Column 2 Interests</th>
<th>Column 3 Abilities</th>
<th>Column 4 Values</th>
<th>Col. 5 Aver.</th>
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<td># 3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
B. Taking Action

The next step to take after you have completed the Decision Tables is to fill in the Action Tables. These tables are very similar to those just completed but have a slightly different focus. Here we focus on practical considerations involved in making a decision. We think that it is important to include such factors as 1) how much time you wish to spend either in getting an education or achieving success in a given field; 2) what significant people (e.g., parents, partner) in your environment will think of your various options or decisions; 3) how much money you want to spend or have to spend in achieving your goal. Thus, we have included Action Tables to help clarify what is practical for you at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major/Career</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Money</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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</table>

The procedures for completing Action Tables are just like those for the Decision Tables. Rate each major/career according to how reasonable it seems for you to try to achieve it in terms of such consideration as:

1) how much **time** you wish to spend
2) how **other people** you know will feel about it (e.g., family, parents, significant others you know, partner)
3) how much **money** you will need
4) other considerations you wish to list (e.g., possibility of getting accepted into medical school.)

Simply rate each major/career alternative on the dimensions as you did with the Decision Tables:

1 = very practical/reasonable
2 = moderately practical or reasonable
3 = very impractical/unreasonable

Go ahead and rate some of the choices you are considering at this time. Again, take the average across the dimensions you have considered, similar to the procedure used in the Decision Tables. Compare the various choices on these dimensions.

Remember, we are simply interested in increasing your awareness of the practical considerations of making major/career choices.
### Action Table Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major/Career</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Money</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rating Scale:
- 1 = very practical/reasonable
- 2 = moderately practical or reasonable
- 3 = very impractical/unreasonable
C. What’s next? Implementation

Do you feel like you know what you want to do? At this point in the process you may be feeling that you know which of your major/career alternatives you wish to choose. If so, all that remains is for you to implement your decision. Implementation can be done by:

- taking courses related to your major
- doing a volunteer placement or internship in the setting you are interested in to see if you really do like it
- looking for jobs in your major/career area

A technique that we have found useful is to actively plan what you need to do in order to achieve your goal. To do this, complete the following exercise:

Place your goal in the box at the right, then, in the preceding spaces list the actual steps or mini-goals you need to achieve in order to reach your final goal.

1) ____________________ 2) ____________________ 3) ____________________

For example, a sophomore student wished to get into law school. To reach this goal the first step would be to

1) Talk with Law Advisor 2) Take relevant courses 3) Take LSAT

1) talk with an admission advisor at the law school; 2) take relevant coursework in preparation for admission; and 3) take the Law School Aptitude Test. The idea, is to plan the steps needed to reach the final goal.

What if I still don’t know what I want to do?

1. Well, don’t panic. You have a number of options. First, you can go back to the “World of Work” section and continue to explore additional options. Then, you can complete the Decision Table exercises with some different choices.

2. A second option would be to go over the Decision Tables again and see if you can try and make differences between alternatives that stand out more. By this we mean re-rate your option MORE CRITICALLY and attempt to exaggerate differences between alternatives. This procedure can often give you a temporary alternative that can be worked with until other more satisfying options develop in time.

3. A third option you have is to continue on to the “Breaking Barriers to Success” section of the Handbook. Perhaps there are some personal barriers which are inhibiting your ability to make decisions.

4. A fourth option is that you simply feel overwhelmed by this self-help approach and it just isn’t helping you. This is not unusual; our Handbook simply tries to give you some suggestions. We do not expect that it will work for everyone. If this is so, you should contact a counselor at the University Counseling Service (UCS) or at the Pomerantz Career Center for professional consultation regarding your career concerns. At the Counseling Service you can engage in individual counseling. Let one of us on the UCS staff hear from you!
VIII. Breaking Barriers To Success

This section on overcoming psychological barriers to career choice is written for those people who’ve gone through the Handbook, and still feel stuck. For example, when you think about career choices, do you come up with a list of things you “can’t” do? Are you reluctant to try new things because of the risk involved? Do you say you can’t do something because you’re afraid of the finality in making a commitment? Consider Ellen’s situation. She is going into her senior year in college as a liberal arts student. Although she knows she can’t go to school indefinitely, she has no idea what to do with her life after she graduates. In addition, she thinks, “It’s too late to think about graduate school now, my GPA is just too low.” Ellen presents a good example of someone who has inadvertently created psychological barriers for herself. Sure, a low GPA is a handicap for anyone trying to get into graduate school. Ellen might have to make up some courses, go to school for an extra semester, show a marked improvement in her GPA, study for the Graduate Record Exam, and talk to her advisor about applying to different graduate programs. That’s a lot of work, which would require a sustained effort and a real commitment of time, but Ellen has OPTIONS. If she continues to see a low GPA as a barrier, then she really limits the options and choices she has. If Ellen is willing to change her perspective and see the extra work as a worthwhile challenge offering her new options and choices, then the pessimistic conclusion that she is stuck and the feelings of discouragement and failure can be alleviated.

Ellen’s story is just one example of the psychological barriers people place on themselves. Examples other than a low GPA might be: “My partner would never agree to having me go back to school; I work too much already…,” or “Medical schools are just prejudiced against white males…,” or “I could never ask my family to put me through law school…,” or “If I wanted to be a mechanic, I’d have to go to a community college, and what would my friends think or “I don’t really think I could be a good parent and student at the same time.” The list is endless.

If you are finding yourself in a similar situation, when all you can seem to think of are the things you “can’t” do, try to take a different view of the circumstances. One theme that runs through all of the quotes above is the speakers’ expression of concern with what others would think of their actions. This is a pattern of thought and behavior that is very easy to acquire. Growing up, we’ve all received constant messages about what we “should” do from parents, teachers, brothers and sisters, relatives, and friends. If you’re not careful, you start thinking a lot more about what you “should” do than what you want to do. At the beginning of the Handbook we talked about the process of looking for vocations from the “inside out.” In this situation, that translates into making choices based on what YOU WANT TO DO rather than on what would look best to other people. Think of the alternative: working your whole life just to maintain the image others hold about you. Sure, people (parents and partners, etc.) have expectations for us, but underlying those expectations is usually an interest in our welfare. Although such persons shape our perceptions, only we know what is ultimately in our best interest.

If you don’t think that your behavior is heavily influenced by “shoulds,” try this simple experiment. For a week, keep track of the number of times you say “I should do this…should go there…should study…should write home…” If you find that a lot of the little things you do each day involve “shoulds”, consider how big a part “shoulds” have played in your choice of major and vocation, or your indecision and inability to decide.
The difficult part of looking at yourself in such a critical manner is that it’s a lot easier to identify your shoulds than it is to identify what you really want to do. How can you have really put enough time into thinking about what your interests are if you’ve been concentrating on what others would like you to do? That’s what this whole Handbook is about, looking at yourself and getting to know what’s inside of you. If you just can’t get started working toward whatever goals you have, ask yourself if you’re making plans and commitments for yourself or to please others.

If you flip back and look at that series of quotes about career limitations, you’ll notice that all those persons were putting up psychological barriers to their individual success. These barriers take the form of expectations from families, partners, medical schools, and so on. If you give control of your options to others, then you feel trapped, discouraged, and unmotivated. Steve says, “Medical schools aren’t looking at the qualifications of applicants, just at your race and sex.” Thus, Steve has created the psychological barrier (i.e., sex and race qualifications will keep me out of med school) which prevents him from seeking alternatives, options, and choices. His barriers produce feelings of failure, low self-esteem, and lethargy because he has concluded (either consciously or subconsciously) that he has no alternatives. However, Steve needs to take a good look at his qualifications and find out if they are or are not adequate. That’s a threatening thing to do. You risk finding out that you have “weaknesses.” But the psychological barrier comes down when he starts examining himself and assessing the situation realistically. It’s unpleasant stuff, but it comes down to identifying the psychological barriers and the real obstacles to one’s success.
As an exercise to help you identify and overcome your own psychological barriers, complete the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List reasons you can’t do what you would like to do:</td>
<td>Now try to list what the psychological barriers might be:</td>
<td>Try to come up with counter arguments to your barriers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. e.g., I can’t get into law school because they only want people with high GPA’s.</td>
<td>e.g., I’m afraid my GPA is too low; or I’m afraid I’m not smart enough</td>
<td>e.g., I can raise my grades if I study hard; or People with good recommendations get in if their grades are adequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there are additional barriers that inhibit your career exploration, come to the University Counseling Service and talk with one of our counselors. Struggling with issues of what one really wants, parental expectations, fears of the unknown, problems with responsibility, etc. are hard problems for any of us. The staff of the UCS is ready to help you sort out your concerns. Call us for an appointment today.
We hope the Self-Directed Career Exploration Handbook has been of help to you. Additional resources to assist you in your career search are included on the following page. We encourage you to take advantage of the many resources available to you on The University of Iowa campus.

And remember, the University Counseling Service staff is available to answer your questions, talk over problems, or help you in identifying appropriate resources for you to use.

In order to help us with revision of the Handbook, we request that you complete the Handbook Evaluation included on the last two pages. Through your feedback, we hope to better serve future students. Please return your evaluation to Dr. Kathleen H. Staley, UCS, 3223 WL. We appreciate your help.
X. **Career Development Services At The University of Iowa**

1. Academic Advising Center, 353-5700, Academic/Career Advising, C210 PC.

2. Academic Departments. See your academic advisor.


4. Center for Credit Programs, 335-2575. Academic advising and individual advising/counseling at 116 IC.

5. Educational Placement, 335-5353. Academic/career advising, N302 LC.

6. Engineering Career Services, 335-6280. Academic/career advising, 3124 SC.

7. CLAS Academic Programs and Services, 335-2633. Academic advising, 120 SH.

8. New Dimensions in Learning, 335-1288. Career advising, 310 CALH.

9. Office of Student Life, 335-3059. Gaining skills useful in careers, 145 IMU.

10. Student Disability Service, 335-1462. Academic/career advising, 3100 B.

11. Carl E. Seashore Psychology Training Clinic, 335-2467. Individual counseling, G8 SLP.

12. Leadership Development Program, 335-3059, 145 IMU.

13. Office of Support Service Programs, 335-1416. Academic/career advising, 310 CALH.

14. University Counseling Service, 335-7294. Career, academic skills, individual, couple, and group counseling. 3223 WL.

15. Women’s Resource and Action Center, 335-1486. Individual counseling. 130 N. Madison St.

For additional information on the services of a particular agency, contact that agency.
XI. Handbook Evaluation

Now that you have completed the Handbook, we would like your feedback so that we can know how useful it has been for you. Your feedback will also help us in putting together future editions of the Handbook so that we may continue to meet the needs of students.

Please rate the sections of the Handbook by circling your choice. Use the following scales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very helpful to me</th>
<th>Somewhat helpful to me</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat not helpful to me</th>
<th>Not helpful to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Welcome
2. Philosophy of Career Choice: Decision-Making
3. What the Handbook Can and Cannot Do For You
4. Irrational Beliefs
5. Self-Assessment—Interests
6. Self-Assessment—Abilities
7. Self-Assessment—Values
8. Self-Assessment—Summary
9. World of Work
10. Making a Tentative Choice
11. Making a Decision
12. Taking Action
13. What’s Next
14. Breaking Barriers to Success
15. Career Development Services at U of I

For sections that were not helpful to you, how would you change them?
16. Did you have difficulty following the directions in any of the sections?
   ______ yes ______ no
   If yes, which ones? ____________________________________________

17. Before you worked with the Handbook, had you made a tentative career decision?
   ______ yes ______ no

18. After having worked with the Handbook, were you able to make a tentative career decision?
   ______ yes ______ no
   If no, what do you need to do next? ________________________________

Please rate the Handbook on the following variables: (Pace a 4 or X on the line between each work pair that best expresses your response.)

19. Personal

20. Interesting

21. Confusing

22. Organized

23. Relevant

24. Would you recommend the Handbook to others?
   ______ yes ______ no To whom? ________________________________

25. How did you learn about the Handbook?
   ______ Academic Advisor. Who? ________________________________
   ______ Campus Agency. Which one? ________________________________
   ______ University Staff Person. Who and from what office? ________________

   ______ Others (Please be specific) ________________________________

Name ________________________________ Age ______ Sex: M F

Class: 1 2 3 4 G Special Non-Student Major __________________

Are you a transfer student? ______ yes ______ no

How many hours are you taking this semester? ______

Thank you! Please return your evaluation to: Kathleen H. Staley, Ph.D.
University Counseling Service, 3223 WL