

**WHERE  
AM I  
GOING?**



**Career Exploration Can Help!**

Many of us are attending this workshop today for a number of reasons. Some of us may be in the midst of a career change and are not sure which direction to head. Some of us may have never experienced an occupation that seemed to fit. No matter what the reason- the career exploration process can help you get on the road toward your own career success.



## CAREER EXPLORATION IS A PROCESS

During today's workshop you will:

Learn a career exploration process that will uncover factors that influence your career choice(s);

Identify resources to further your career exploration; and

Outline next steps of your career exploration process that will get you moving on the right road.



## What are your dreams?

Facilitator asks the group how they have made career decisions in the past. For example: Have attendees used their “head” to make career decisions? Have they focused on formal decision making, weighing pros and cons, etc? Have attendees used their “heart” to make career decisions? Have they gone with their “gut” or instincts? Did they make choices on what “felt right?” Have attendees used a mix of these two career decision styles? Facilitator can close the brainstorming session or discussion by saying:

“Ultimately, only you can make a career decision. Whatever decision style you use, whether it’s using your head, your heart or a mix of the two, only you know what’s best for your situation. Exploring your dreams and passions is another way to explore potential career fields. Knowing what you are drawn to can help a “head” decision maker weigh their options as well as a “heart” decision maker pinpoint interests.

Instructor encourages participants to take a look at **Handout #1: Exploring Dreams and Passions** and fill out the handout. If time is a concern, facilitator can encourage participants to provide two examples of the Exploring handout.

**Optional Activity:** Facilitator can ask if anyone from the group would like to

offer examples of what they had written down for Career Dreams. Facilitator can continue with Passions, followed by examples of What I Love To Do.



## Inventory Your Experiences.

Facilitator will lead a discussion with participants emphasizing that reflecting on their own existing experiences first, can help them discover new careers. Participants may have done some of this reflection during a skills identification workshop. Facilitator should encourage participants to write down their assessment of their past experiences on **Handout #2: My Experiences Inventory**. Encourage attendees to think back on what activities they performed while at work, play/hobbies & education that they enjoyed or felt that they did well.

Specifically, the facilitator can focus attendee attention on what attendees enjoyed, what they felt competent doing, and what they learned quickly.

If time is an issue, have attendees fill out two examples in the Work, Play and Education portions of the **My Experiences Inventory Worksheet**.

Photo source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Clerk\\_inventory.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Clerk_inventory.JPG)



## Indoor Outdoor

Facilitator distributes (or asks customers to take out) **Handout #3: Work Values Checklist Worksheet**

The Facilitator can begin this section by saying:

There are many values, not just work values, that can influence you're your career choices and job satisfaction. Your work values can change over time. What you valued before may not suit your personality now. Whenever you are in the process of making effective decisions, your values come into play. People who work in a job that is consistent with their values typically have higher job satisfaction rates than people who work in jobs that are not consistent with their values.

Encourage participants to review the **Work Values Checklist Worksheet (Handout #3)**. Direct customers to place a 0 next to statements that are unimportant in their choice of career; a 1 next to the statements that are somewhat important in their choice of career; and place a 2 next to the statements that are very important in their choice of career. We begin with what you value in your work conditions because finding a work environment that reflects your work values will help with exploring potential occupations. Remember, we are always looking to find a good fit and what you value in work conditions is only one factor. If time is short have customers two to three

statements per section.

**\*Optional Activity Work Importance Profiler/Work Values Profiler**

Facilitator can prepare and lead customers in taking the Work Importance Profiler assessment. Facilitator can select between online version or paper based card sort version. If providing the card sort, the facilitator should make sure all assessment instruments and scoring sheets are photocopied in advance.



Facilitator introduces this section of the workshop by pointing out that there is some self-exploration that can help customers further their career exploration. There are a number of assessments a customer can take to uncover their interests, values and skills. These assessments include:

**Interest Profiler**

**Work Importance Profiler**

**Skills Survey**

**Ability Profiler**

**Note:** Some One-Stop Centers offer Myers-Briggs Personality Type Assessments as well as the Harrington-O'Shea CDM. Facilitator should update this section to include other assessment instruments that are applicable and remove any assessment instruments not offered.



# Interest Profiler

The Interest Profiler (or interest inventory) asks you a set of questions around six main interest areas. Questions range from asking if you like to build cabinets to leading an orchestra. The assessment focuses only on your interests and does not want you to focus on your abilities at all. After scoring your selected interests, you are then offered a list of occupations to explore. This assessment is offered online through JobZone, CareerZone and the Occupational Network otherwise known as O\*Net.

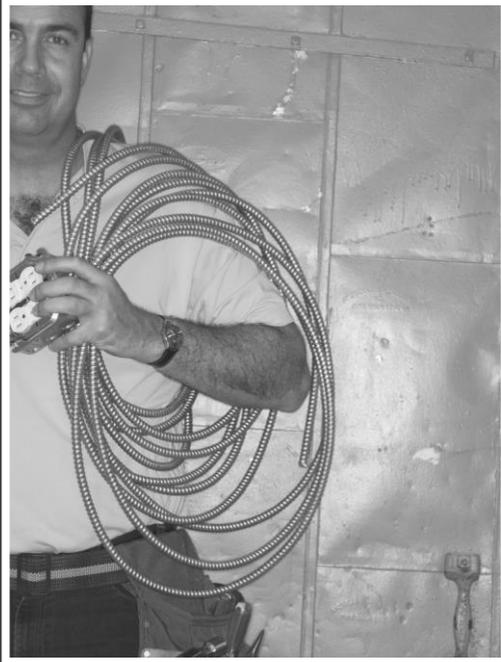


## Work Importance Assessment

The next assessment we offer is the Work Importance Profiler or Work Importance Locator. The Work Importance assessment looks at what you value in the workplace setting and has you rank those values in order of most importance to least importance. The assessment then provides you a list of occupations where people who had workplace values similar to you were content.



The Skills Survey is an informal transferable skills tool that compares job specific duties and general work skills. The Skills Survey allows you to compare your skills to what the labor market is requiring. It also suggests occupations to explore and training offerings to help you prepare.



# Ability Profiler

**NOTE:** If you do not have the ability to administer an ability profiler at your One-Stop Center, you can omit this section.

The Ability Profiler measures skill ability in six distinct areas:

**Arithmetic Reasoning**

**Computation**

**Verbal Ability**

**Clerical Perception**

**Spatial Ability**

**Form Perception**

Facilitator can say, “The Ability Profiler is often used by apprenticeship programs or trade related occupations to measure the potential ability of an individual to perform specific job related tasks.”

Facilitator can mention that all of these career exploration tools can be found on JobZone. Facilitator should encourage customers to work with their Career Advisor and should outline the process the One-Stop Center has for staff

assisted assessments.

### **\*Advanced Optional Activity**

#### **Introduction to JobZone**

If time is not an issue and if computers are available, the Facilitator can use this opportunity to assist customers with setting up JobZone accounts and reviewing the location/process for taking the career exploration assessments mentioned.



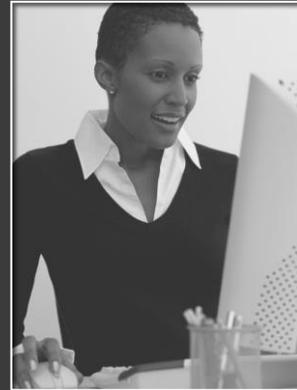
**TYING IT ALL TOGETHER**  
...seeing if any of our positive experiences are connected to related occupations.

Now that customers have reviewed their experiences, dreams, and personality traits, it is now time in the career exploration process to link these aspects with potential careers.

Facilitator can say: Your experiences, skills, interests, passions, and values all impact your likelihood of finding an occupation that's a good choice for you. And ultimately, that is what career exploration is about.

Facilitator should encourage customers to pull out **Handout # 2: My Experiences Inventory Worksheet**. The facilitator should ask customers to review their positive experiences. In the final column of the page, have customers write down occupations that might be similar or related to the occupation they enjoyed in the past. The facilitator should give customers three minutes to complete this activity. The facilitator can then ask the group if anyone struggled with identifying related occupations and if anyone in the group would like to volunteer to see if the group can help.

The occupations listed by the customer are now occupations that can be further explored using JobZone, CareerZone and O\*Net.



## Let's Explore the Details.....

Now that you have a list of potential careers to explore, the next step is to get more detailed information. What are the skills needed to perform the job? Do you have the ability to perform the tasks? Is this occupation interesting to you? What does the labor market information say regarding the occupation?

Take out **Handout #4: Exploring My Option.**

Pick your top five occupations listed on the Left and place them in the chart found in the middle of the worksheet. Start with one of your occupations. List what skills are required for that occupation in the first column. Continue across answering each of the following questions: Do I have the ability and education level needed to perform tasks? Is the occupation interesting? Is this consistent with what I value? What's the reality? Where can I go get more information? Complete the sections you know – what sections do you need to get more information on? Do you know where to go?

If time is an issue, go over the **Exploring My Options worksheet (Handout #4)** with the customer and have them complete the worksheet at home as a take home exercise.



At this point you have a good start at exploring potential careers. Where can you get information to see if these occupations might be suitable options for you?

Informational interviews – short interviews of people in your network or in your friends network in an occupation of interest can always help. You can also use JobZone or CareerZone to get more detailed information. Don't forget about social networking sites like YouTube to view videos and interviews of people in occupations you might be interested in. And of course, the NYS DOL website (<http://www.labor.ny.gov/home>) has labor market information that you can view at anytime.



Now that we have started you on your career exploration journey – what steps should you take next to further explore your options? You can capture these steps on your **Exploring My Options worksheet (Handout #4)** and in the Next Steps section as a helpful reminder.