

Sample Self Assessment Exercise

Holland Occupational Themes

Based on the theory of John Holland, Ph.D., people with the same or similar interests are often found in the same work environments. To discover the work environments suited to your interests, abilities, and personality, consider the following categories/themes.

Step 1: For each theme, check those items that describe you.

REALISTIC				R Total =	
Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Practical		Fix electrical things		Tinker with mechanics
	Athletic		Solve mechanical problems		Work outdoors
	Straight forward		Pitch a tent		Be physically active
	Mechanically inclined		Play a sport		Use your hands
	A nature lover		Read a blueprint		Build things
	Operate tools and machinery		Work on cars		

INVESTIGATIVE				I Total =	
Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Inquisitive		Think abstractly		Explore ideas
	Analytical		Solve math problems		Use computers
	Scientific		Understand physical theories		Work independently
	Observant		Do complex calculations		Perform lab experiments
	Precise		Use a microscope		Read scientific or technical magazines
	Operate tools and machinery		Work on cars		
			Analyze data		

ARTISTIC				A Total =	
Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Creative		Sketch, draw, paint		Attend concerts, theaters, art exhibits
	Intuitive		Play a musical instrument		Read fiction, plays, poetry
	Imaginative		Write stories, poetry, music, sing, act, dance		Work on crafts
	Innovative		Design fashions or interiors		Take photographs

	An individualist				Express yourself creatively
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SOCIAL	S Total =
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Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Friendly		Teach/train others		Work in groups
	Helpful		Express yourself clearly		Help people with problems
	Idealistic		Lead a group discussion		Participate in meetings
	Insightful		Mediate disputes		Do volunteer service
	Outgoing		Plan and supervise an activity		Work with young people
	Understanding		Cooperate well with others		Play team sports

ENTERPRISING	E Total =
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Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Self-confident		Initiate projects		Make decisions affecting others
	Assertive		Convince people to do things your way		Be elected to office
	Sociable		Sell things or promote ideas		Win a leadership or sales award
	Persuasive		Give talks or speeches		Start your own political campaign
	Enthusiastic		Organize activities and events		Meet important people
	Energetic		Lead a group		

CONVENTIONAL	C Total =
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Are You:		Can You:		Like To:	
	Well groomed		Work well within a system		Follow clearly defined procedures
	Accurate		Do a lot of paper work in a short time		Use data processing equipment
	Numerically inclined		Keep accurate records		Work with numbers
	Methodical		Use a computer terminal		Type or take shorthand
	Conscientious		Write effective business letters		Be responsible for details
	Efficient				

Step 2: Total the items checked for each theme/category. Identify the top 3 categories/themes that create the most accurate picture of you.

My top 3 categories/themes are: _____, _____, _____.

Step 3: How accurately do you believe your (3) top themes describe your personality and interests?

REALISTIC people are characterized by competitive/assertive behavior and by interest in activities that require motor coordination, skill, and physical strength. People oriented toward this role prefer situations involving "action solutions" rather than tasks involving verbal or interpersonal skills. They like to take a concrete approach to problem-solving rather than relying on abstract theory. They tend to be interested in scientific or mechanical rather than cultural and aesthetic areas.

INVESTIGATIVE people prefer to think rather than to act, to organize and understand rather than to persuade. They are not apt to be very "people oriented."

SOCIAL people seem to satisfy their needs in teaching or helping situations. In contrast to investigative and realistic people, social types are drawn more to seek close interpersonal relationships and are less apt to engage in intellectual or extensive physical activity.

CONVENTIONAL people don't mind rules and regulations and emphasize self-control. They prefer structure and order to ambiguity in work and interpersonal situations. They place value on prestige or status.

ENTERPRISING people are verbally skilled and use this skill in persuasion rather than support of others. They also value prestige and status and are more apt to pursue it than conventional people.

ARTISTIC people value self-expression and relationships with others through artistic expression. They dislike structure, prefer tasks involving personal or physical skills, and are more prone to expression of emotion than others. They are similar to investigative people, but are more interested in the cultural-aesthetic than the scientific.

Step 4: Visit [Career Briefs](#) to view a sample of occupations that match your three Holland themes. (Look for your 3-letter code in all its configurations, for example: ASE, AES, SAE, etc.)

Based on John L. Holland's *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Careers* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ; Prentice Hall, 1973). The formal validated assessment instrument using John Holland's theory is the Self-Directed Search, available from PAR, Inc.

Adapted in part from [Career Development Resource Guide and User's Guide for "Career Choices in North Carolina," 2003-2004](#), published by the North Carolina State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee.