



How Career Assessments Can Help You Make School and Career Choices

When you were little, you might have always wanted to be a movie star or a basketball player. But, like all but a few people in the world, you realize you probably won't be one of those rare individuals. You find that you need to make decisions about what kind of work you want to do and what kind of education you want to have.

These are tough decisions. But you don't have to agonize over them. This is where career assessments and career counseling come in. These resources are designed to help you get a picture of your abilities, skills, values, and academic profile and match your profile with careers that will probably be a good fit for you.

Career assessments can tell you a lot about yourself. Working with a career counselor helps you pull together this information and explore your career options. They can tell you a lot that you might not know already about yourself, or may verify what you already know. No one but yourself can set your goals, but you will have a better idea about the careers that will be the most satisfying for you and what you need to do to work in those areas.

Assessment tools generally help you to:

- **Identify your strengths**, and take a look at your weaknesses. What do you do well and what you could do better?
- **Pinpoint your interests** and match them with your strengths. Do you prefer working with machines or drawing and painting?
- **Clarify your values**. Do you prefer working with others or alone? Do you want to help people? Or would you prefer to work with

products and machinery? How much money do you want to make and how much work are you willing to do to make that amount?

Look at your strengths, interests, and values and match your personal profile to areas of work and the training needed.

The Wisconsin Career Assessment

(<http://wisconsinjobcenter.org/planacareer/wiscareerslogin.htm>) is an internet assessment designed to help you identify your career interests, explore those career interests, and learn

what kind of education and training you need for those careers.

This test has 180 questions, and you take it online. You'll get the results immediately, and you can access them at any time.

If you have taken these tests, talk to your high school counselor. You

will be able to access them from the WISCareers Internet site, even if you took them at a different Wisconsin school. High school counselors will be able to help you find other career information, as well, including resources at the Wisconsin Job Centers, the local area technical colleges and the University of Wisconsin system.

Start looking at your options when you reach junior year in high school—and earlier is even better.

Use the career center services if you have dropped out or are working on a GED/HSED Job Centers. To find the address and telephone number of local Wisconsin Job Centers:

- Call 1-888-258-9966 (toll free)
- Use the online Job Center Directory at: <http://wisconsinjobcenter.org/directory/>

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Career Assessments, continued

Many job centers offer assessments and workshops to help you explore your career options, write a resume, and learn job seeking and interview skills. Ask what assessments, career planning workshops, and assistance is available in your area.

If you have had special education services in high school, or have been diagnosed with a physical or mental disability or illness, you may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Go to: www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/ to find the DVR office nearest to you. They offer comprehensive career planning assistance and financial aide if you seek further training.

Wisconsin Technical Colleges

The Wisconsin Technical College Career Planning Centers have excellent career assessment and counseling resources. To find contact information for the technical college nearest you, go to:

<http://www.wtcsystem.edu/colleges.htm>.

Following are some steps to help you through the process.

- The best way to start is to ask for an appointment to talk to a career counselor. Although you can take interest inventories and skills tests without talking to a counselor, this free career counseling is recommended to help you find out the most about yourself and possible work and training options.
- Most centers have free interest inventories which you can take. These inventories can be part of the whole career assessment package if you meet with a counselor. However, many

inventories the counselor recommends will have a fee associated with it.

- The counselor will give you an opportunity to talk about your options and help you decide about your next step.
- It will help the counselor if you tell them that you have been in foster care. Give them a brief history of your personal and educational background. This information will make it possible for them to refer you to all the resources that are available to you.
- Ask about resources that you know you need such as:
 - Referral to their GED/HSED program
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation assistance
 - Technical college programs
 - Apprenticeships
 - Financial aide and housing assistance
 - Four-year colleges.
 - The counselor will help you decide if you need a skills assessment in reading and/or math skills.

- Ask about career workshops and career assessments which will cost you money, and if there are any resources to help you pay for these assessments.
- Make a list of other questions.

Four year colleges

The University of Wisconsin College system has colleges and two-year centers located throughout the state. This system also has excellent resources for career counseling and assessment. To find the college or two year center closest to you, go to: <http://www.wisconsin.edu/campuses>.

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Career Assessments, continued

Ask the same questions listed above for the technical colleges.

The career centers at both the technical colleges, and the two- and four-year University of Wisconsin campuses offer a variety of career assessment and counseling services. For example, The University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menominee offers an in-depth week long comprehensive assessment. Other schools will offer a variety of assessment tools and counseling services to help you match yourself to good career options.

This testing does not lock you into attending these schools and may guide you to other work and education options.

Career assessments are not a once in a lifetime thing. As your life circumstances change, and as you change, having career counseling and career

assessments can be helpful and give you new direction.

As a young person who has been in care, you have faced many challenges. Making the transition from foster care to independence presents another mountain to conquer.

You have faced life and handled events that have required a tremendous capacity to cope and survive. Believe it or not, this also gives you some advantages over some kids who haven't been through what you've been through. Use these skills as you become independent, and be proud of yourself for doing well so far. One of the stepping stones that can make the transition easier is career counseling and assessment.



Resources

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
<http://www.nwtc.edu/Services/TestCenter/Default.htm>

<http://www.nwtc.edu/careers/worldwork.htm>

University of Wisconsin Career services offices throughout the state: <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/majorcareers/career/contacts.asp>

University of Wisconsin Career Planning Process Customized to your year in high school or college: <http://wiscareers.education.wisc.edu/olhelp/cpsa/cpsa.asp>

University of Wisconsin Continuing Studies for Students and Adults Services:
www.dcs.wisc.edu/info/assessments.htm

University of Wisconsin Online Career Assessment Tools which you can do online: <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/majorcareers/career/evaluate.asp>

Wisconsin Technical College System
<http://www.wtcsystem.edu/colleges.htm>

Wisconsin Administrator's Career Assessment Guide
http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/pdf/wca_admin.pdf

Wisconsin Job Centers <http://wisconsinjobcenter.org/>

Wisconsin Job Centers page for job seekers: <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/presentation/JobSeekers/Default.aspx>

Wisconsin Job Centers offers the WiscCareers Free Inventory that you can take online: <http://wisconsinjobcenter.org/planacareer/>

Workforce Development Centers of Washington, Ozaukee and Waukesha Counties:
<http://www.wfdc.org/job/career.htm>

Wisconsin's WorkNet:
http://worknet.wisconsin.gov/worknet/worknetinfo.aspx?htm=ce_links&menuselection=ce