



Knowledge of the World of Work as it Relates to You

There are many things to consider when choosing a career, but the first place to start is the most important: you must be honest with yourself. Keep in mind that the path to a career is a journey and you should expect several detours, maybe even a roadblock or two. To navigate it well, you will need to know yourself. You will likely need to ask yourself some tough questions which may lead you down a different path than what you or even your family may have always envisioned. And that's okay, remember, you are looking for the right fit for you and your career.

It is important to know the things that you like and that you would enjoy in a career, as well as things that you would *not* enjoy or want in a career. Of course, not every day will be a dream; there some things that you would have to be responsible for that you really would not enjoy or be able to do day in and day out (for example: maybe math is not a subject you enjoy, and one career possibility you are thinking of requires it).

Thinking of your likes and dislikes will help you to weigh them against each other when evaluating careers. If a career choice has more positive than negative attributes, tasks, and responsibilities, then it is likely a good fit. If the typical day brings more tears than smiles, it will not matter if you are well paid or have some amazing benefits; it will eventually take a toll.

Some questions to ask yourself to determine your career interests:

- Can you sit behind a computer for long periods of time?
- Where will you work? In an office? Virtually?
- Do you enjoy social interaction or not really?
- Do you enjoy being a part of a team, or do you enjoy work that is more independent?
- What is a real, typical day like for the career you are considering?
- What are the pros and cons of the job? For the cons, do they go against your value system? Are they non-negotiable?
- What is the office environment and culture like? What is the company approach like? Are there company resources available to help you connect with others?
- What is the management style? Think micromanagement vs. more of a hands-off approach. How does that fit with what you need?
- Is there schedule flexibility? Is that something you need?
- What are the real hours of the job? Are you expected to work beyond 40 hours? How much more? How often? How do you feel about that? You have to expect to pay your dues to any position but if the "norm" beyond fulltime work is beyond what you want to do, you should take that into consideration.
- Will you be expected to travel or possibly relocate? Do you prefer certain regions of the country or state? What about urban vs rural locations? Remember, where you work will have a lot to do with how you live.
- What is the growth potential for your position? Are there professional development opportunities? When you first start out it could be limited, but you should expect to have some takeaways from the experience.

Some resources to aid you in your research:

- **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>): Examine career profiles, environment, job outlook, pay averages, and educational requirements for many different careers and industries
- **Self-Assessment through MyPlan** (<https://career.ucf.edu/students/discover-your-interests-and-ucf-majors/>): Take online assessments to assess your personality, interests, skills, and values and review career matches based on those results
- **Informational Interviews** (<https://career.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2017/08/Informational-Interview-NEW.pdf>): Find and meet with professionals in your careers of interest to find out their insights and advice for entering their field

Time to reflect!

Try the following reflection exercises to help you explore yourself and your interests. Reviewing your past jobs, interests, and career research can help you begin to discover opportunities that would be a good fit.

Review Past Jobs

Think of your current and past jobs. Reflect on what you liked and disliked about each title. Review the likes for themes and common traits to identify careers that relate to those themes. Think of all experiences: jobs, internships, volunteer positions, projects, clubs/campus involvement, etc.

Job Title and Employer: What was your role and where did you work?	Positives: What did you like about this job and the work?	Negatives: What didn't you like about this job and the work?
<i>Job 1</i>		
<i>Job 2</i>		
<i>Job 3</i>		
<i>Job 4</i>		

What are the common themes, traits, tasks, etc. from the positives for each job?

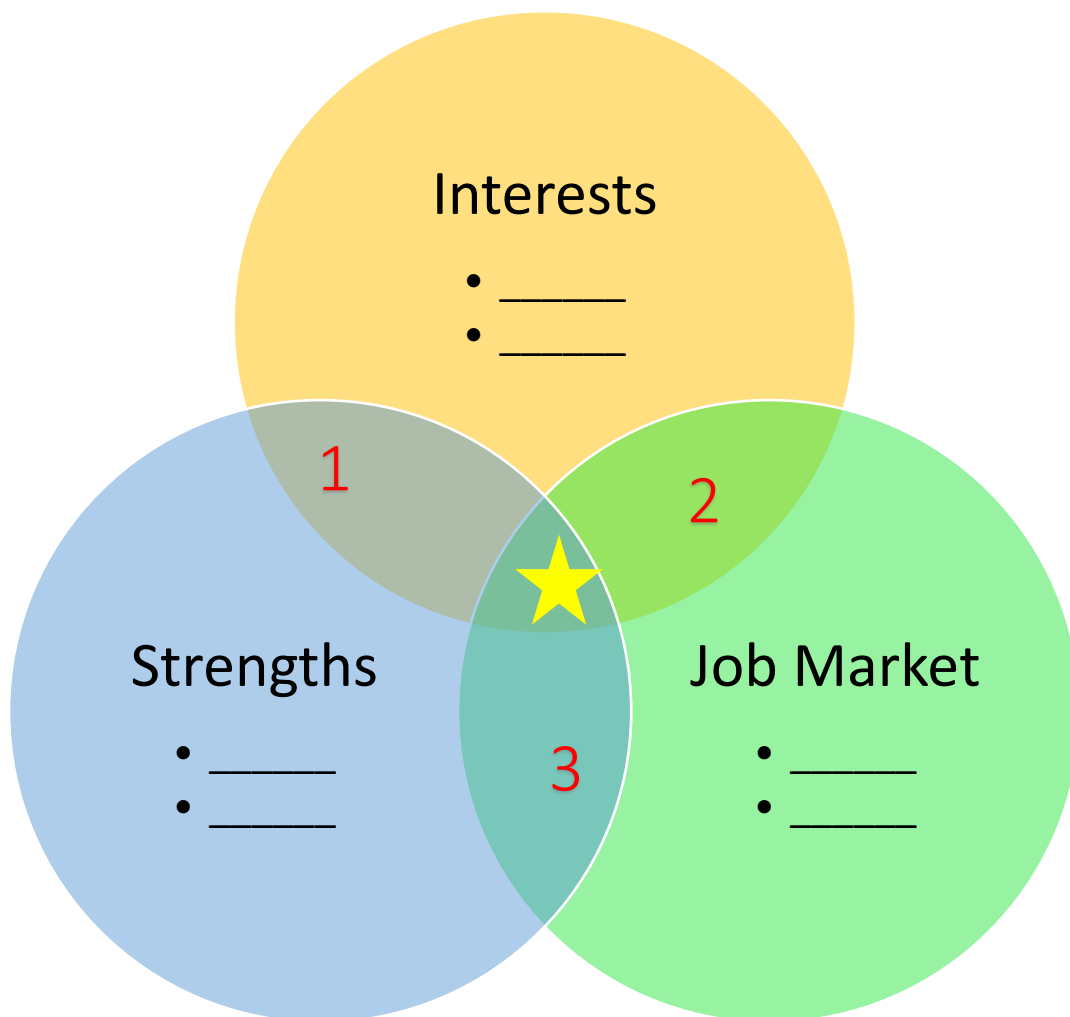
These themes can indicate your interests and strengths, and can reveal possible career matches to explore.

Draw a Venn Diagram

- What are your interests: What things do you like to do and enjoy doing?
- Consider your strengths: What are you good at it or skilled in?
- Review the current job market: What does the market look like today or where you want to work, and what jobs are available?

★ Where these **three** things intersect are career possibilities that fit your interests and skills, careers that you are good at, would enjoy doing on a daily basis, and are found in the current job market.

1. Careers that combine your interests and strengths are great, but you should consider the job market to determine opportunities, job prospects and growth, and salary information.
2. Careers that interest you and are available in the current job market may need you to develop skills or strengths.
3. Things that you are good at and are found in the current job market may not be things you are interested in and therefore may not enjoy on a daily basis.



Career Research: Things to Consider

Visit the Occupational Outlook Handbook website at <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/> and search for the career that interests you. Use the **OOH** to research this career and come up with a list of *PROS* and/or *CONS*.

Please use something you read/learned from the OOH to explain why it is a PRO or CON. Items you may wish to consider when exploring careers are listed below, but they are just meant to be a guide. There may be many factors you wish to consider when looking at potential careers!

Things to Consider:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary Education requirements Necessary skills for the job Job Outlook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duties License Requirements Opportunities for Advancement/ Professional Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Similar job(s) Certification Requirements Work schedule
PRO – What are the positive aspects of the job?		CON – What are the negative aspects of the job?

Reflection

1. Based on your PRO/CON chart, does this career seem like the best fit for you? Why or why not?

2. Based on what you've learned, are there other majors or careers of interest you would want to explore? If so, describe that career and repeat these this exercise to research it.

Conduct a Job Search

Now that you have some career options, it's time to check out actual job postings! Go to www.indeed.com and search positions related to your career choice above.

- Now that you see real job postings that are available, does this still sound like a good fit for you? If not, check out other careers that might be related or interest you more!
- In general, would you have to relocate in order to get this type of job? Would you be willing to relocate?
- If listed, does the salary offered in this job posting meet your expectations based on what you read in the OOH?
- Please list at least 3 of the "requirements" (KSA's – Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) for job candidates, **AND** explain how you can meet these requirements with a degree from UCF and previous, current, or future experience (internships, volunteer work, etc).

We're here to help!

Student Accessibility Services and Career Services are here to assist you with your job search. Feel free to reach out to learn how you can schedule an appointment.

UCF Student Accessibility Services: <https://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> | sas@ucf.edu | 407-823-2371

UCF Career Services: <https://career.ucf.edu> | career@ucf.edu | 407-823-2361