

CAREER CENTER

As you begin to explore careers, you will need to understand yourself: What do you want to do? What are you prepared to do? What is important to you? What are your goals? You need to know yourself before you begin a job search. Your career goals give you the focus you need to find a job. And if your values and interests are not compatible with your job, you will probably not be happy.

Self-assessment is important both in choosing a major and in conducting a job search. You will want to choose a major that fits your interests and that will help you achieve your career goals. In addition, you must be able to describe yourself and express your goals clearly and concisely to employers.

How do you begin setting Goals? First of all, remember that goals must be **SMART**:

Specific Measurable Attainable Results Oriented Time Bound

You might begin by completing the statement, "I will [state what you plan to do] by [specify a date]." Then list the steps you will take to accomplish your goal, what you hope the results will be, and how you will know whether you have been successful.

You will be much more likely to strive to achieve your goals if you write them down. As you progress through your career, review your goals from time to time and revise them as your experience grows and your interests change. To get started, answer these questions:

- What is my long-term career goal?
- Where can I get more information about my ideal career?
- What skills and experience do I need?
- What classes do I need to take to obtain them?
- What kinds of jobs (part-time, internship, etc.) can I get to obtain the experience I need?

Skills

Many people tend to believe that they have few marketable skills, especially if they have limited experience. You need to remember, however, that your

Self-Assessment

Career Lab Lucina Hall Room 235

skills come from many sources. You may have developed special abilities in classes, workshops, informal jobs, volunteer work, and even hobbies. Skills fall into three categories: technical or job-specific, which usually require special training or education; adaptive, like loyalty and punctuality, which pertain to your work style; and transferable, like leadership and decision making, which are applicable in many work settings.

Think of examples of how you have used your skills. You'll need this information as you write your résumé and when you prepare for job interviews. Develop at least two or three brief stories describing how you have used each skill. Begin by analyzing an achievement you are proud of. Break it down into the skills that you used. Include the Problem, the Action you took, and the Result. Use numbers to quantify your accomplishments. For example, if an employer asks about your marketing or promotional skills, you might say

Membership was falling in my student organization. As membership chair, I developed a special recruiting campaign and sought help from the faculty. Through class announcements, a reception with an off-campus professional speaker, and a special dues package, I helped increase our membership by 40 percent and raised an additional \$200 in dues revenue.

Values

- What is important to you?
- What sacrifices would you be willing to make for a job?
- Would you work for a company that did not share your moral or ethical values?
- Do you want to work in an inner city, a suburb, a small town, or a rural area?
- Would you rather work with people, information, or things?
- How important to you is making a high salary?

As you consider questions such as these, begin to weigh them against one another:

- Would you accept a lower salary so that you could work for an organization that exemplified your ethical standards?
- If you preferred working in a suburb, would you accept an inner-city position that paid a much higher salary?

KEY Careers

The KEY (Knowledge+Experience+You) Careers program helps you make informed decisions about majors and careers early on during your time at Ball State. This program starts during orientation and features events designed specifically for first-year students. By participating in the program you can reduce the risk of multiple major changes and extended time in college. For more information, check out http://www.bsu.edu/keycareers.

If you are no longer a freshman, you can still use the KEY Careers resources located on the KEY Careers web page. On the KEY Careers page click Resources. The KEY Careers workbook is a self-paced guide to help you use resources to assess your personality and interests, as well as explore majors and careers.

Resources

You can begin your self-assessment by working through the exercises presented in the computer programs Quest, TypeFocus, and SIGI 3, which you can access from the Career Center's website at http://www.bsu.edu/careers. On the Career Center's home page click Career Lab and Resources, Great Links to Explore, then Self-Assessment. Use your regular Ball State login for TypeFocus and SIGI 3.

For more information about the topics covered here, be sure to visit the Career Lab in Lucina 235. These are a few of the items available:

- 50 Best Jobs for Your Personality
- Career Match
- The Complete Job-Search Handbook
- Courting Your Career: Match Yourself with the Perfect Job
- Discover the Best Jobs for You
- Discover What You're Best At
- Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You through the Secrets of Personality Type

- Finding Your Perfect Work
- Please Understand Me II
- The Right Job for You
- What Type Am I? Discover Who You Really Are
- What's Your Type of Career: Unlock the Secrets of Your Personality to Find Your Perfect Career Path
- Who Do You Think You Are?

Websites

- Career Center Online Resources: http://www.bsu.edu/careers/links
- Career Center: http://www.bsu.edu/careers
- Career Management Action Plan (Career MAP): http://www.bsu.edu/careers/cmap
- KEY Careers: http://www.bsu.edu/keycareers
- Quest: http://www.bsu.edu/careers/quest
- TypeFocus: http://www.bsu.edu/careercenter/secure/typefocus/
- Keirsey Temperament and Character Tests: http://www.keirsey.com/
- Know Your Type.com: http://www.knowyourtype.com/16_types.html
- O*NET Interest Profiler: http://www.onetcenter.org/IPSF.html?p=3
- Riley Guide: Self-Assessment Resources: http://www.rileyguide.com/assess.html

If you need adaptations or accommodations for any of our educational programs or publications because of a disability, please contact Career Center

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