Know your career preferences

The first step to finding a career that will be great for you is to discover what interests you, what your abilities and skills are, and what type of roles will suit your personality. Then you can market yourself more successfully to potential employers.

Identify key factors

Identifying your important values, interests, abilities, skills, knowledge and personality traits and prioritising these according to level of importance will assist you to increase your confidence in your decisions about your future.

If you are can clearly tell a potential employer what is great about you it will give you competitive edge over others and is also great to help you assess your potential career options.

Make some lists

Making a few lists based on the categories below will enable you to foresee any gaps between you and your potential first job.

Think about:

- Who/how you are rather than who/how you would like to be – be honest with yourself
- Past experiences in areas of study, work and extra curricular activities
- Primary wants and needs
- Your dreams, goals and aspirations
- Employment environment preferences and lifestyle considerations
- Feedback from others: friends, parents, teachers, employers, peer groups
- Why you think these things or think in these ways – this may help to reveal underlying influences

Category 1: Skills and abilities

- What can you do?
- What are you good at?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What special talents do you have?
- What would you like to improve or learn more about?

Category 2: Interests

- What do you like to do?
- What do you enjoy doing? (For example: writing, researching, problem solving, helping others etc)
- What would you prefer not to do?
- What are some of the things that energise you and give you satisfaction?
- What do you feel most comfortable doing?

Category 3: Work Attitudes and Values
• What is important to you in life?
• What do you want and need out of work?
• What task or job related things are important to you? (For example: autonomy, problem solving, challenge, variety, structure, money, job security, flexibility, promotion, personal development)
• What people related things are important to you? (For example: helping and supporting others, working alone, honesty, teamwork, open communication)
• What environment related things are important to you? (For example: industry, workplace culture, physical environment)

Category 4: Personality

• How do you typically behave?
• How do you interact with people?
• What is your approach to tasks?
• What kinds of information do you naturally notice?
• Factors to consider include: decisiveness, temperament, levels of assertiveness or agreeableness, tact, need for social interaction, social confidence, rule-awareness, impulsiveness, persuasiveness, intuition, levels of patience or tolerance, open-mindedness, self discipline, levels of perfectionism and anxiety

Other Self-Assessment Resources and Activities

Further information and tasks to help you to assess yourself are available at myfuture.