



HOW DO I CHOOSE A CAREER?



● ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE A CAREER CHOICE





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NEED SOME ASSISTANCE TO CHOOSE A CAREER?

Your career choice will be one of the most important choices you make in your life. Choosing a career is almost like choosing which road to take when you have come to a crossroad. Choosing a career is not an easy task. Proper understanding of your work-related interests and talents can make a career choice an easy task.

The fortunate thing is that this booklet can provide you with some pointers on how to get to your career choice!

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE A CAREER?

When choosing a career, choose something where you will be using your interests in life, talents, abilities and skills. Be sure that you choose something you enjoy doing, find satisfying and strongly believe in. Think about the things that are important to you and that will suit your personality.

Your career should entail the following:

- What you like (interests)
- What you are good at (abilities)
- Skills you have already build up in work/hobbies/leadership positions
- What you are like as a person (personality)
- What you regard as important in life (values)

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The booklet is divided up in a number of Sections, starting with Section A and ending with Section G. Go through each Section thoroughly and make the most of this booklet!

SECTION A

WHAT YOU LIKE (YOUR CAREER INTERESTS)

Reflect back on the following questions that can already give you some pointers on possible career field options, that you will like:

Subject (s) you enjoyed most in school:

Subject (s) you enjoyed least in school:

Things/Activities that you find interesting (can be your hobbies, something you read about, etc.)

Things/Activities that you find uninteresting:

Your dream career (Describe what you would ideally like to do):

Complete the exercise below, to give you some more direct pointers to possible career fields/interests:

Mark the activities you like with a ✓ in the column on the right:

CAREER FIELDS		✓
<p>1. Agriculture and nature conservation</p> <p>Careers such as farming for food, advising farmers, caring for gardens, forests and the nature, looking after animals, working in parks, managing game reserves and parks.</p>		
<p>2. Culture and Arts</p> <p>Careers such as making beautiful things, or performing beautiful activities for the enjoyment of people. Pottery and beadwork, dancing, singing, music, sport, filming and photography, television, video, actor, design of décor, doing artistic paintings and drawings, drawing cartoons, fashion designing, making jewellery, watch-repairing, entertaining people with jokes.</p>		
<p>3. Business, commerce and management</p> <p>Organising, planning and making sure a company is run smoothly. Doing the financial statements of a company, managing a company, managing human resources (staff) or buying goods for a company, administration of an office, developing of statistics, helping people buy and sell houses, promoting the products and services of a company. Dealing with phone calls, filing, taking minutes.</p>		
<p>4. Communication Studies and language</p> <p>Using language to help people obtain information by speaking and writing. Translator, journalist for a magazine or newspaper, language expert, copy writer (writing articles or documents), writing fiction or non-fiction, edits written material, publishes books.</p>		
<p>5. Education, training and development</p> <p>Teaching and training people. Educator for schools, higher education institutions like Universities of Technology and Technical Colleges, teaching small children (Early Childhood Development), school principal.</p>		
<p>6. Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology</p> <p>Drawing machines, bridges, roads, aeroplanes, electrical and electronic machines), making and fitting together parts of machines, so that they can work smoothly, mining, building and repairing engines and airplanes, plumbing, repairs radio's and TV sets, operates forklifts, design and make tools. Flies aeroplanes.</p>		
<p>7. Human and Social Studies</p> <p>Studying the habits of people to be able to help them. Working with and developing people (Psychology and life skills training), religious studies (clergyman and priest), history, study of the earth and why people are living in cities (Geography), studying human relations (sociologist), study of ancient people and animals (Archaeology)</p>		
<p>8. Law, Military Science and Security</p> <p>Looking after the safety and security of people and justice in the country. Police Force, lawyers and prosecutors, correctional (prison) services, following a military career (army, navy, air force), traffic cop,</p>		

9. Health Sciences and Social Services

Helping people by caring for their bodily and mental health and well-being. Preventing illnesses, promoting health, caring for ill people, nursing, medical careers, social work. Treats illnesses (doctor, nurse), dental care, making spectacles, diagnoses and treats eye disorders, performing a number of medical services such as paramedic, radiography, physiotherapy, dietician and sports trainer, etc

10. Mathematical, Physical, Computer and Life Sciences

Working with numbers to solve problems, working with computers to keep record of information, installing computers, designing robots, and working with living things. Computer studies, mathematician, biology (study of plants and animals).

11. Services

Helping other people like serving them in restaurants and hotels and other leisure facilities, working as chef, tour guide, travel agent, game ranger, Transport such as taxi-driver, bus-driver, personal care such as hair-dressing, care for the aged, domestic servant, work in a hotel, Working in sales such as salesperson.

12. Physical planning and construction

Planning and drawing buildings like in architecture, building houses, building roads and bridges, putting electrical wires in buildings. Paints and plasters buildings, working out building costs.



SECTION B:

THE THINGS YOU CAN DO WELL (ABILITIES)

Your hobbies, school education, work experience and skills development programmes, or formal tertiary studies already completed, can give you an indication on possible talents you have. This section will deal with the talents you have that you can use to choose a career.

First reflect back and think as to when somebody complimented you on good skills/talents, and write those down below:

Write down what formal tertiary degree or diploma you already have and whether you would like to pursue this further, or whether you would like to choose a totally different career field:

Now do Part 1 below on previous education and training:

PART 1: PREVIOUS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ABILITIES AS SHOWING UP IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

Your school education and other training you have received, or work that you have done, can give you an idea of your abilities and a possible career choice. You might have found that you did better in some subjects at school or that you have a talent to do certain things.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

Highest school qualification: _____

Subjects taken for highest school qualification: (List your school subjects and underline the three subjects you obtained highest marks for.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

OTHER TRAINING

Other training obtained: For example a learner could have completed a skills development programme in building houses or cutting alien trees, or you might have done certain parts of a learnership in motor mechanics or hair-dressing, or could have gained knowledge by working part-time, or as a volunteer worker. Underline the skills development programmes you did best in.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What have you learnt so far about your talents and skills? Summarise below:

Now do the exercise in Part 2

You may have other skills and talents that did not show up in your previous education and training. Often teachers, parents or co-workers or even people for whom you have done work, comment on your good talents and skills. Mark these underneath with a ✓ in the box provided. Which are your two best skills?

PART 2: SKILLS		✓
1 Work with numbers (adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing) (Work through things step by step, neat, accurate, good with numbers, use my mind, find mistakes easily, precise)		
2. Solve problems (Good at using reasoning, debating, using mind to think things through, analysing information, good memory, use rules and steps to solve problems, scientific, use imagination, intellectual.)		
3. Mechanical (Using tools such as spanners or machines such as sewing machine, working with your hands, practical, accurate, make or repair things.)		
4. Work with art (Drawing and making beautiful things such as beadwork and paintings, create new things/ideas, be original, singing, acting in plays, expressing yourself in the things you make or do.)		
5. Communication (Talking and writing well. Use ideas, words and thoughts through speaking and writing in a manner that people enjoy.)		

6. Deal with people

(Friendly, persuasive, helpful, give advice, teach people, give love.)

7. Other

(What else can you do that is not mentioned here? List these skills underneath. The list of CAREER FIELDS under Section A can provide an idea.)



PART C:

SUMMARY SHEET

Your summary sheet will help you to pull strings together, so that you can come to a career decision. Use the information that you filled in under Section A and Section B and transfer your strongest career interests and skills/talents in the appropriate blocks below:

C. SUMMARY SHEET

INTERESTS:

List five learning fields that you are most interested in underneath:

SKILLS AND TALENTS:

List your five strongest skills underneath:



SECTION D:

HOW TO USE THE SUMMARY SHEET

HOW TO USE THE SUMMARY SHEET

You have to compare the blocks on the Summary Sheet and look for things that are the same (match each other) in all blocks. Your interests will already guide you to possible learning fields. You will just have to double-check whether your skills and talents also fit in. Answer these questions:

1. Are there things that look the same in all the blocks? Perhaps you can for example pick up that you are both interested in the learning field of Mechanical, Engineering and Technology and are good at mechanical work? Also you did a basic course in motor mechanics.

If so, this clearly shows you that you should look for careers in the Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology learning field. If this is the case with you, write down underneath the learning field(s) you should most likely consider:

2. Do your interests and skills and talents differ from each other? Perhaps you find that you are interested in the Mathematics, Physical, Computer and Life Sciences learning field, but your strongest skills and talents lie in languages and communication.

You can choose a career where you can use both your interests and skills, eg by becoming a teacher in Mathematics. In this way you can have a match for both your interests and skills. Be on the look-out for these careers! Perhaps you could also consider one of your other interests to get a better match. If this is the case with you, write down the learning fields underneath that gives you the best match:

3. If you already have training in a skills development programme/tertiary qualification and want to do further training in this field, read up on the careers in the learning field of your skills development programme/tertiary studies in a Career Guide to see what progression there can be in the career path.

Each qualification/skills programme can be combined with higher level subjects/different subjects, to either give you a higher level qualification or branch you out on a different career path. Write your choice here:

SECTION E:

CAREERS INFORMATION

New careers come into being every year as technology develops. Many people make a wrong career choice, because they did not know of other careers that exist. It is only when you read up widely on career information, that you can be sure that the career will be to your liking.

CAREERS INFORMATION

You need to read up as much as you can on the Career fields that you have listed on the summary sheet. For example if you have written down Physical Planning and Construction, read through all the careers in a Career Guide/Book under Physical Planning and Construction.

You can find a Career Guide/Book at a library or speak to a Careers Counsellor of the Department of Employment and Labour. You can also read up careers information on the internet under www.careersportal.co.za, or on your cellphone under www.gostudy.mobi.

Check whether you will find the career interesting, where you can study, what will be required of you, but most of all, whether you meet the entry requirements. A career you are interested in, might require that you have very high marks for Mathematics to be selected for the course.

You might then have to improve your marks first, choose a career in the same learning field, but on a lower level, or choose another career altogether. Also check whether the career will match your personality and values, eg you should not be choosing a career that will require that you do public speaking, if you are too shy, or a career in which you will make little money, if you put high value on earning much money.

Some personality traits

Shy
Persevering
Practical
Convincing
Co-operative
Helpful
Sociable
Tactful
Inquisitive
Systematic
Precise
Logical
Leader
Supporter
Negotiator
Creative
Orderly
Calm

Some values

Earn much money
Work in a team
Work alone
Use my brain
Like a challenge
Advance to higher positions
Enjoy my work
Use my abilities
Have beautiful things around me
Help others
Want to compete
Have job security

A very important aspect to consider

Scarce and critical skills are those skills that are in high demand in the labour market, thus employers will snap up people with such skills very quickly, since they are short in supply.

It is very important that you choose a career in which you will excel and also be interested in, but do not forget to also check which opportunities are in short supply in the labour market. Ensure you become trained in a scarce skill or critical skill-this is your insurance policy to a job! Find out about opportunities in scarce skills from the Career Counsellor at your closest Labour Centre.

SECTION F:

TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

There are a number of different educational institutions that offer different options for further studies. You must read up in Career Guides which educational institution will suit your career choice best. You also need to have a look at the entry requirements that these educational institutions set and see whether you will obtain approval for entry. Selection for entry is very strict, due to the fact that there are many students that want to study. If you cannot find entry for one institution, you may decide to first study a course at another institution, to ensure you can get access to the institution you actually target, or you can improve your subject marks, or redo your matric. The following options exist:

- **Universities:** They offer degree courses that are normally more theoretical
Universities require matric exemption and set other strict entry requirements, such as certain subjects and symbols
- **Universities of Technologies:** They provide qualifications that are more practical and lead students to careers
The Universities of Technology also have entry requirements
- **Further Education and Training Colleges:** They train skills and students usually obtain work experience, thus integrating theory, practice and work experience
- **Learnerships** can be studied through Sector Education and Training Authorities. Studies consist of both theory and practice and work experience.

SECTION G:

FUNDING FOR STUDIES

Many people cannot afford studies. Here are a few options to consider:

- Obtain a study loan from National Students Financial Aid Scheme-you might have to repay part or all of the loan. Apply online at www.nsfas.org.za or phone 0860 067 327. You can also obtain a loan from a bank
- Bursaries: Students with good academic results and who are needy, can obtain a number of bursaries-ask your Career Counsellor at the Labour Centre for advice
- Study while you work and pay for your own study. Some companies offer bursaries to their employees.

General tips

- The most important point of advice is to apply very early for entry to the educational institution, accommodation in a hostel and the bursary/loan. There are closing dates for all of these Your Grade 11 marks must be good as well as your first semester marks for Grade 12
- Make sure you provide additional information as soon as possible, if you are asked for that
- Sign all applications and date it.

Further assistance

The Department of Employment and Labour has Career Counsellors that can assist you with career advice. You can get career advice on how to choose a career/ skills development opportunity, bursaries, job placement, where to look for a job, CV-writing, interviewing skills, work ethics and basic advice on starting a small business or co-operative.

Contact your nearest Labour Centre (contact details on the website www.labour.gov.za). The service is free of charge.



CONTACT DETAILS

Labour Head Office:

Telephone Number(s): (012) 309 4000

Provincial Offices:

Eastern Cape Provincial Office
Free State Provincial Office
Gauteng Provincial Office
KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Office
Limpopo Provincial Office
Mpumalanga Provincial Office
North West Provincial Office
Northern Cape Provincial Office
Western Cape Provincial Office

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CONTACT DETAILS: LABOUR CENTRES
(SCAN THE CODE WITH YOUR PHONE)

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Employment and Labour
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