

Questioning yourself about your areas of interest is the most critical step in beginning the career development process. Career satisfaction depends on more than the monetary benefits of employment. You should also consider your wants and needs for finding fulfillment in job responsibilities, the work environment, job location, and many other factors. Ask yourself the following questions to identify some of your future career goals:

What setting do you want to work in?

- What is my ideal work environment?
- What do I like to do?
- What kind of working conditions do I want?
- What types of benefits do I want?
- For whom would I most like to work?
- Do I want to work in a small business or in a large company?
- Do I envision working for a government agency or a non-profit agency?
- Do I prefer a desk job, an outdoor job, or a combination of both?
- Do I want to work with people, data, or things?
- Do I prefer to work by myself, with others, and/or as part of a team?
- Do I want to follow directions or manage others?
- Do I prefer to be self-guided or closely supervised?
- Do I prefer projects or regular routines?
- Do I want to do mental work or physical work?
- Do I want a career requiring a structured schedule or one in which I can set my own hours?
- Do I thrive in a high stress atmosphere, or would I prefer something more relaxed?

What are your lifestyle needs?

- Geographic considerations – where do I want to start out my career?
- Do I have a geographic preference or constraint?
- How much money do I need to live comfortably?
- How much time do I want for friends, family, hobbies, etc.?
- Do I want an office position or one that involves travel?
- Do I want to settle in a particular city, or do I want to frequently relocate?
- Do I want to be where the action is or would I rather be a “big fish in a small pond?”

Skills Related Questions

- What skills/traits would I like to develop or improve?
- Are there skills I would like to attain in order to move toward my final goal?
- What are my strongest and most useful skills?
- What are other skills/traits that could help me in my job?
- What skills/traits do others tell me that I have?