

# CareerSMARTZ (CS1)

*A highly effective career success strategy built around “Find a need and fill it.”*



## Task 1: Define Your Career Selection Criteria

**Note:** All underlined words are hyperlinks to Internet websites and will only function when viewing this document on your computer.

### Objective

Your objective in this guide is to define who you are as an individual. Specifically, you are to describe what you believe are your:

- Interests
- Skills and aptitudes
- Values and needs
- Behavioral traits
- Decision-making style
- Career/work/employer preferences
- Personal barriers
- Personal definition of career success

### Rationale

Why collect this kind of information and why now at the beginning of the CareerSMARTZ program?

When trying to make career decisions and plans that will affect your life, it is critically important to first know who you are as an individual. Self-knowledge is one of the essential keys to successful career decision-making.

For example, just imagine how difficult it would be to buy the right kind of clothing if you DID NOT KNOW certain facts about yourself, such as:

- Your gender?
- Your height and body dimensions?
- The purpose of the clothing you are about to buy. For example, are you shopping for sportswear, formal attire, or beachwear?
- How much money you can spend?

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- What fabric styles and colors you prefer?

Without this information and considering the thousands of clothing options available to select from in today’s marketplace, you are not likely to make the right choice. At best, you would have to try on a lot of clothing options to find the right ones resulting in wasted time, money, and energy!

***The same is true when selecting a career goal. Without first gathering certain facts about yourself and with thousands of career options to choose from, selecting the right career direction is difficult and often poorly done.***

## **Future use**

The data that you collect in this exercise will be used several times later in the CareerSMARTZ program. For example, you will need this information when you are asked to make decisions about which occupation you want to pursue as your career goal and, still further on, when you attempt to decide which types of employers are best suited to your career and employment needs.

## **Caution**

Do not assume that you know everything about yourself! While you may be the person who knows the most about you, it is still likely that through this assessment process you will discover new facts about yourself. **We recommend that you ask people who know you to share with you what they know about you. *Be open to suggestions from others!***

## **Materials needed (download and print)**

- PDF CS1 the document that you are reading now
- PDF CS2 My Ideal Career Criteria
- PDF CS3: Interests and Skills (Do not print this file as it is a long document.)
- PDF CS4 Other Criteria (Do not print this file as it is a long document.)

## **Important**

To complete this guide and to identify your career criteria, you will use a strategy called “self-assessment,” whereby you will draw upon your own thoughts and self-knowledge when attempting to describe yourself. Self-assessment is one of several strategies that could be used to gather data regarding your career selection criteria. We believe self-assessment is the place

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to begin the process of self-awareness. There are other personal assessment options which will be discussed later in this guide.

**Follow the steps below to complete this guide.**

1. **Think about your INTERESTS.** Ask yourself the following questions:

- What appeals to me in life?
- What am I passionate about?
- What would I like to learn more about?
- Which subjects are most appealing in school?
- What do I like to do with my free time?
- What do I wish I could change or improve in life?
- What have other people suggested are my interests?

**Summarize your answers to the above questions on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.**

2. **Expand your thinking about your Interests.** Review the PDF CS3 to expand your thinking about your interests. Note those activities that strongly appeal to you and then add them to your list of Interests on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.

**(Optional) Use other forms of INTEREST assessment:** If you would like to dig deeper into your interests, try these free online resources:

[Career Cluster Interest Survey](#)

[ONET Interest Profiler](#)

**If you discover any new interests using these resources, add them to your list of Interests on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.**

3. **Describe your top 3 INTERESTS.** Review carefully the interests that you have listed on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2. Select three (3) activities that are the **most interesting** to you. List your selections on the **FRONT** side of PDF CS2 under the section labeled “Interests.”

List only one activity per line. It is not necessary to prioritize your interests – just list up to 3 activities.

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4. **Think about your SKILLS and APTITUDES.** **Note:** Skills are what you can do well today. Aptitudes are (with training) what you could do well in the future. Ask yourself the following questions:
- What activities can I do well?
  - With training, which activities could I do well?
  - What have others said are my skills or aptitudes?
  - Which subjects in school can I do well?

**Summarize your answers to the above questions on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.**

5. **Expand your thinking about your skills and aptitudes.** Review the “Interests and Skills” section in the PDF CS3 to expand your thinking about your skills and aptitudes. Note those activities that you can do well now, or in the future with additional training.

**Add any new skills and aptitudes found in PDF CS3 to your list of skills and aptitudes on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.**

**(Optional) Use other forms of SKILLS and APTITUDE assessment.** If you would like to dig deeper into your skills and aptitudes, try this free online resource:

[CareerOneStop Skills Assessment](#)

**If you discover any new skills or aptitudes using this resource, add them to your list of skills and aptitudes on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.**

6. **Describe your top 3 SKILLS or APTITUDES.** Review carefully the skills/aptitudes that you have listed on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2. Select three (3) activities that represent your **strongest skills or aptitudes**. List your selections on the front side of PDF CS2 under the section labeled “Skills and Aptitudes.”

List only one activity per line. It is not necessary to prioritize your skills or aptitudes – just list up to 3 activities.

**Please note the 4-step strategy that you used above to gather information about yourself:**

1. First, you reflected upon your own thoughts and knowledge and then listed your thoughts on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.
2. Second, you referred to PDF CS3 for clues to expand your thinking and then if any new information was found, you updated your answers on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.

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3. Third, you may have used other materials to expand your thinking, and again if any new information was found, you updated your answers on the REVERSE side of PDF CS2.
4. And finally, you selected 3 top choices for Interests and Skills and Aptitudes and listed your top 3 selections on the FRONT\_side of PDF CS2.

Now, you are going to follow the same 4-step strategy used above to define the following 6 factors about yourself. *However, this time, you will use the PDF CS4 Other Criteria - rather than PDF CS3.*

7. **Define your Values and Needs.** What are your most important values and/or needs for a happy and satisfying career and life? Use the 4-step strategy above to define your values and needs. Can't think of any? Then go directly to PDF CS4 for clues.
8. **Define your Behavioral Traits.** What words would you use to best describe how you typically behave? For example, are you patient, an introvert, rambunctious, aggressive, etc. Use the 4-step strategy above to define your behavioral traits. Can't think of any? Then go directly to PDF CS4 for clues.
9. **Define your Decision-Making Style.** How would you describe your method of making decisions? For example, do you make decisions solely based on your gut feelings or do you need proven facts? Use the 4-step strategy above to define your decision-making style. Can't think of any words to describe your decision-making style? Then go directly to PDF CS4 for clues.
10. **Define your Career/Work/Employer Preferences.** What type of preferences do you have regarding your future career, work, and/or employers? Use the 4-step strategy to define your career/work/employer preferences. If necessary, use PDF CS4 for clues.
11. **Define your Personal Barriers.** What is it about you that may prevent you from becoming successful in your career or life? Use the 4-step strategy to define your personal barriers. If necessary, use PDF CS4 for clues.
12. **Define your Personal Definition of Career Success.** What must happen for you to consider yourself successful in a career? Use the 4-step strategy to define your personal definition of career success. If necessary, use PDF CS4 for clues.

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**Your next step...**

Move on to Task 2 Identify Possible Career Options - to identify occupations (potential career goals) that match your interests and skills.

**Need more help?** Visit the [Contact US](http://www.CareerSMARTZ.com) page at [www.CareerSMARTZ.com](http://www.CareerSMARTZ.com).