

Decide



Find the Fit

A self-help tool

Introduction

When you're choosing a career, you are likely to ask: how suitable is it for me? Does it fit me like a glove or does it feel, well... uncomfortable? These are very important questions to ask, as research shows that you are more likely to be successful and satisfied if you choose a career which matches your personality, abilities and values (Yates, 2019, pp. 80-82).

This tool will help you assess how far different careers are a good match for you, using the factors that you consider important. It works best if you already have a fairly good idea of which factors are key for you and want to compare a moderate number of careers.

It adds a 'weighting' to the traditional 'Pros and Cons' technique, which means that the relative importance of different factors is fully accounted for when deciding which option is best for you. While matching is an important part of the process of careers choice for most people, it is not the only approach to deciding if a career is 'right'. So, if it feels a bit too restrictive or 'mechanical' for you, do try out some of our more 'creative' and intuitive career self-help tools.

If you are unsure whether you really know which choice factors are important for you then look at some of our other tools like:

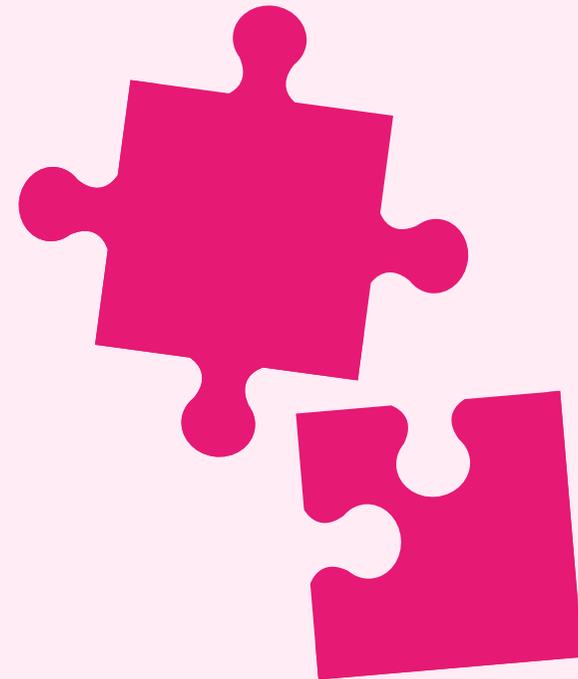
- **Personal Construct Theory** (a powerful way to compare occupations to identify the similarities and differences that matter to you).
- **Thumbs Up** (a way to quickly get a handle on a lot of career ideas and so you can pick the likely winners and focus further research on these).

This tool is designed to...

- Use your key choice factors to compare and contrast a fairly small number of careers.
- Take into account which of your key factors matter most to you.
- Show which career is the best fit for you.

Consider using this tool if you...

- Want to see how good a fit different choices are for you.
- Want to analyse different options logically and carefully.
- Are clear which career choice factors are key for you.



How to use this tool

First, note your key choice factors in a table like the one on the next page.

A choice factor can be anything that is important for you when choosing a career and which will affect how well it fits you. For example, consider:

- Abilities;
- Activities you take to naturally and feel absorbing and rewarding to do;
- Interests;
- Values;
- Life style aspirations and ambitions;
- The things that give meaning and significance to your life;
- Things that make you feel happy.

Write each one in its own cell in the left-hand column. Add as many rows as you need for all your choice factors. Be as a specific as possible.

Next you have 10 'bonus' points to distribute between your factors. The more important a factor is for you, the more 'weighted' points it should have. In the illustration below, the you see that 'Variety', Creativity, 'Team-work' and the 'Possibility of working for a not for profit' are the most important factor for this person. The restriction to just 10 bonus points is important as it requires you to prioritise. Now give all the remaining factors each a score of 1 point. An illustrative example is shown on the next page.

Choice Factor and Weighting	Social Media Marketing		Media Buyer		Media Account Planner	
	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =
Regular office hours (1)	2	2	0	0	0	0
Variety (3)	3	9	3	9	3	9
Creativity (3)	5	15	0	0	0	0
High earnings (1)	2	2	3	3	4	4
Teamwork (2)	3	6	2	4	2	4
Possibility for working for a not-for-profit organisation (1)	3	6	0	0	0	0
Data Analysis (1)	1	1	5	5	5	5
Total Weighted Score		41		21		22

If you're unsure what factors to use, consider the following list of broad factors which have been shown to be important for job satisfaction, (Yates, 2019, Chpt 4) - though you'll need to say what each looks like for you.

- 1.Task variety (what sort of variety and how much?)
 - 2.Colleagues (what sort of people do you want to work with and how etc?)
 - 3.Working conditions (office, travelling, commute etc as well as things you value about work, like being creative for example?)
 - 4.Work-load (easy, high-pressured etc?)
 - 5.Autonomy (how much and in what form?)
 - 6.Educational and developmental opportunities (scope to become more skilled).
 - 7.Congruence (how far does the role play to your strengths?)
- 

Second, rate each of your career ideas on how much the career gives you of a particular factor.

Enter these into the table. These are the 'un-weighted' or raw scores. You can make these as high or low as you need to, to show how much a career offers you that thing.

Third, multiply the raw score by the points per factor to give you the weighted score and total these for each career.

This will show which career scores highest according to the things that you have identified as most important for you. Remember, like all tools this is only a guide.

Blank table for your use

Choice Factor and Weighting						
	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =	How much does the career offer this? (Raw score)	Weighted score =
Total Weighted Score						

Pause, Reflect, Act

- Although the approach looks very precise, remember that this is not an exact science.
- Were your assessments based on good information. Did you check using Prospects, for example?
- Does the 'winner' look / feel right to you?
- What new ideas / insight have you got now that you didn't have before?
- What ideas do you want to follow up next?
- What practically do you want to do now to take forward the insights from this exercise?
- Who could help you with this?
- Which other self-help tools would you like to look at next?

NB: Because everyone is different and no one solution on its own is necessarily a magic bullet, please look at our other self-help tools as well and use the ones that work best for you.

References and Resources

- Yates, J. (2019). *The Career Coaching Toolkit*. Routledge.



If you are a member of staff from another educational organisation and want to use a limited number of our self-help tools with your students, we'd love to hear from you and share good practice. We'd ask that you retain references to University of Huddersfield as a matter of courtesy and acknowledge the other sources we've used. Thank you.