

Self-Evaluation: The First Step

Self-evaluation is the first and most essential element of your career preparation. In fact, periodic self-evaluation and reassessment help as you adjust to your changing life and the ever-changing world around you. Furthermore, some of your priorities shift over time. Even if you stick with one thing until you retire, consistent self-evaluation will help you see your progress as well as areas for improvement. Your self-evaluation should begin right now.

There exist several evaluation tools; some are better than others. For this assignment we suggest you sit down by yourself, or with someone you trust, and ask yourself serious questions in the following areas. It is vital that you answer as honestly as you can, and write your responses down. Start by asking yourself questions about the following:

1. Life-style
2. Income
3. Family Life
4. Social/Religious life
5. Work Environment
6. Skills/Abilities/Experience

There are many other questions you could ask yourself. Formulate your own and have someone close to you help. At this level the questions should have to do with your life philosophy and what is absolutely most important to you.

Some will take a few minutes on this but most will and should take longer. Just remember, the more time you invest in this, the more likely you will have good results.

Below are some questions to consider:

Interests:

1. What do I enjoy doing? What am I good at? What am I interested in?
2. What skills and abilities have I already developed? Are there others I want to develop?
3. What classes do I want to take?
4. What are my interests? What talents or skills do I have or want to develop? How important is it that my job includes my interests?

Personal Mission

5. Do I feel morally, religiously, or personally that I have certain things to accomplish, or do I feel the need to make a contribution to a cause or purpose?
6. Do I want a job that provides a significant amount of self-fulfillment? How would I describe a fulfilling job?

Leisure time

7. How important to me is an involved family-life? Do I want time to go to soccer games and swimming lessons, and spend weekends with spouse and kids? Is my spouse OK with this? (Or will he/she be when/if I get married?)

Location

8. Where do I want to live? Is location important? How important? Is location—schools, social environment, proximity to different opportunities, safety, etc. worth considering?
9. Do I want or could I be happy in local, national, or international careers?
10. Do I mind traveling or long workweeks? Would my family mind and how important is that?

Money

11. How important is money to me? Do I want a lifestyle that requires a substantial income? Am I willing to continue to live on a small income for a few more years while I or my spouse attends more school?
12. Are job stability and benefits more important than a fat check?

Work Environment

13. How would I describe the perfect workday? How much responsibility do I want?
14. Do I want to be in charge; work with lots of people, alone, or at a desk job; do I enjoy teamwork?
15. Do I want a high risk/high return career or am I more interested in stability and consistency?