

Trail Guide to Career Exploration for Adults

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coaching



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Table of Contents

Introduction	page 5
Part I - Finding the Will of God	page 6
Part II- My Experiences Influence My Career Choices	page 8
Part III- What Are My Values?	page 13
Part IV: Talents and Strengths	page 18
Part V: What is Your Career Personality?	page 23
Part VI: Adventure	page 27
Part VII: Solidify Your Data	page 29



Introduction

If you're reading this, you're probably in a life transition. You need to think completely differently about your career. Perhaps you're:

- In college and realize you HATE your major
- Out of college and don't really like your job
- Got downsized and there are no jobs in your field
- Have to re-enter the workforce due to life changes or loss
- Simply know, deep down inside, that you NEED a career change

This Trail Guide is for you! It will lead you through the journey of finding a great-fit career.

Career Exploration as an adult is different from the Career Exploration you might have done as a teen. You have life experience and some self-knowledge but you might be rusty. You might have forgotten or ignored important facets of your personality.

The Career Exploration as an Adult is re-invigorating, hopeful and adventurous because you re-discover yourself and re-align yourself with your strengths, needs, and values.

So, use this Trail Guide to complete this journey of Career Exploration as an Adult:

- 1) Read and follow instructions for each part of this book. Don't rush.
- 2) Don't skip any part.
- 3) Remember that God has placed you here on earth for His purposes.
- 4) Pray! As God to give you wisdom and direct your footsteps on this journey! *-Vicki Tillman*

Part I - Finding the Will of God

How do you find God's will? Many of us get pretty confused when we think about it. Let's talk about some things that are fairly easy to find.

I don't believe that God's will is a terrifying thing to seek. I don't think He's holding some cosmic paddle to walk you if you don't land on His will for you. Rather, I think God places some signs for us to follow and enjoys accompanying you on the journey of finding His great and gracious will.

Here are some "signs to guide you along the way".

The Bible: Now the Bible is not going to say, "Billy Boy, go and become an investment banker." However, there are some "careers" it might weed out - bank robber, gambler, forger.

Personality: God hardwires strengths and gifts into every person. These strengths and gifts close some doors (a great artist might make a terrible banker) and open other doors (a great artist might be able to influence his culture for good through his works.)

Circumstances: We can trust God to put us in circumstances that will help us to grow. Some of those experiences will spark your interest and make you think about the future. Maybe you will take a missions trip that sparks a passion for serving. Maybe you will visit a tea room that awakens a desire to become a restaurateur. Perhaps you admire your father or Sunday school teacher and decide to investigate their careers.

Inner witness and personal desires: Okay, this is NOT spooky. What I'm trying to say is, listen to your heart. Your heart is telling you something about what you like and what you don't like. I like to think about this scripture:
"Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psalm 37:4

Mature counsel: Mature counsel comes from people in your life that are trustworthy for their wisdom, people who care about you and know you well. This includes your parents, pastors, and other people close to you.

Common sense: Okay, take for instance the following story: MaryBelle has always admired her Sunday school teacher who is also a bank teller. MaryBelle decides that she would like to emulate her teacher. The only problem is that MaryBelle consistently gets "C's" in math and loses money every time she goes out the door. Common sense should tell MaryBelle that being a bank teller would be a stressful job for her.

When you put all the signs together, it will help clear the fog a bit on what might be

God's will.

Think About It

1) Are there any special Scriptures that are significant to you? List them. Think about it. What themes or common threads do you see?

2) Are there current circumstances that are significantly positive to you (have a family, home, church, etc)? Are there current circumstances that are significantly negative to you?

3) Are there past circumstances or events that are outstandingly significantly positive to you (have a family, home, church, etc)? Are there past circumstances or events that are outstandingly significantly negative to you?

3) What do you know so far? Has your heart told you anything yet? (No worries if you haven't heard anything yet- hang in there!)

4) What do friends, mentors, or leaders in your life think about you and your career? (This means - go have coffee with a few important people.)

Part II- My Experiences Influence My Career Choices

In order to make a good career choice, you need to answer to the ever-burning question, “Who am I really?”

Who are you? You are a combination of your strengths, talents, weaknesses, personality, past experiences, dreams about your future, and present circumstances.

My Most Important Achievements

You may not believe it, but you HAVE accomplished some things during your lifetime. I have found this section is very hard for homeschoolers. They are used to being humble, which is good. I am not asking you to brag, but to see how God has worked in your life so far.

You can list sports awards, Bible verses memorized, drama or musical productions, anything.

List your achievements so far:

In childhood:

In high school:

In your 20s:

In your 30s:

In your 40s:

In your 50s:

In your 60s or older:

My Jobs So Far

List the jobs you've had so far. Describe for each what you liked and what you disliked about that job. (You can adapt your resume, if you wish- just make sure you include likes and dislikes.)

Things I Have Done

What are some interesting experiences you have had? Think about it, discuss it with your parents and friends, then answer the following:

1. Interesting vacations and trips (What did you enjoy and what would you never willingly repeat?)

2. Volunteer work (What did you enjoy and what would you never willingly repeat?)

3. Hobbies

4. What do you do when you have three hours to kill and no responsibility?

5. Any other interesting things going on in your life?

Look Over this Preliminary List

Directions:

Let's do some light-hearted brainstorming. Here is a partial list of careers. From what you know, so far in life, CROSS OUT any careers that would definitely NOT be interesting to you. CIRCLE any that might be interesting to investigate. Don't take this very seriously, it is simply a little brainstorm.

Accountant	Physical therapist	Linguist
Actor/actress	Police Officer	Translator
Assembly line worker	Psychologist	Intelligence
	Agent	
Athletic trainer	Psychiatrist	Sociologist
Biologist	Livestock range manager	Bookkeeper
College professor	Secretary	Nurse
Computer programmer	Space program member	Clothing designer
Computer repair person	Surgeon	Clothing buyer
Cosmetologist	Teacher	TV/Radio journalist
Dental assistant	Historian	Orthodontist
Dentist	Author	Veterinarian
Detective	Journalist	Medical researcher
Draftsman	Printer	Midwife
Engineer	Entrepreneur	Visiting nurse
Environmental lobbyist	Salesperson	Military chaplain
Factory foreman	Missionary	Military nurse
Farmer	Pastor	Framer
Firefighter	Choir director	Phys Ed teacher
Forensic psychologist	Social worker	Pharmacist
Forest ranger	Archeologist	Dietician
Full-time homemaker	Anthropologist	Radiologist
Geologist	Tour guide	Dance instructor
Horticulturist	Park ranger	Equestrian instructor
Jeweler	Park naturalist	Chiropractor

Jewelry maker	EMT	Karate instructor
Lab technician	Carpenter	Publisher
Lawn care worker	Electrician	Editor
Lawyer	Plumber	Child care worker
Landscaper	Building inspector	Chef
Mechanic	Mason	Hospitality worker
Medical doctor	Heating/air-conditioning tech	Resort manager
Massage Therapist	Floor coverer	Caterer
Meteorologist	Painter	Foster parent
Military serviceman	Renovations/restoration	Truck driver
Bakery worker	Insurance salesperson	Personal coach
Oceanographer	Airline pilot	Restaurateur
Photographer	Airline steward	Alpine guide
Airline mechanic	Bed and breakfast owner	Travel agent
Fishing vessel crewman	Conservation worker	Au pair
Peace Corps worker	Dog groomer	Podiatrist
Make-up artist	Cartographer	Delivery driver
Movie producer	Occupational therapist	Civil engineer
Theatrical set designer	Graphic designer	Hunting guide
Social director: nursing home	Museum curator	Urban planner
Social director: resort	USDA inspector	Speech pathologist
Furniture restorer	Natural sciences researcher	Optician
Insurance claim agent	Politician	Physicist
Diplomat	Cost estimator	Congressional aide
Loan counselor	Librarian	Air traffic controller
Chemist	Construction manager	Stock broker
Astronomer	Research and development	Sheep rancher
TV/Radio documentary writer	Reporter	Banker
Financial advisor	Cattle rancher	Photo journalist
Webpage designer	Advertising agent	Camp director
Campground owner	Special events organizer	
Display window designer	Groundskeeper	
	Non profit agencies fundraiser	Dairy worker
	Bookstore clerk/owner	



Part III- What Are My Values?

Oh my, what if you got your dream career as a snadwarble measurer? What if you spent four long years in college to earn the right to measure those snadwarbles? Then you get hired by George Dowdle Snads, Inc. The first day on the job, you find out that your work schedule includes working all day Sunday, every Sunday for the rest of your LIFE!!! Was it worth it? If going to church on Sunday mornings is important to you, you'll be miserable. You'll probably end up quitting and working somewhere that lets you get to church and requires you to say, "Would you like fries with that?"

Ask Yourself

Let's look at things that are important to different people in different ways. Fill out the following questionnaire by checking off those things that are important to you.

Community and church involvement:

How active would you like to be in your community or church? Are these things important to you?

- attending church on Sundays
- attending mid-week meetings
- being active in special church activities
- helping others
- joining neighborhood activities
- volunteering with other organizations

Describe your desires for your level of involvement in church and/or community.

Finances:

What kind of financial situation would you prefer? Are these things important to you?

- funds for luxury items
- being socially active
- owning a large house
- having a prestigious job
- lots of travel and vacations
- living in an exclusive neighborhood
- joining a country club
- having lots of name-brand clothes

Describe your financial desires.

Family:

How important is family life to you? Are these things important to you?

- being married and having a family
- having ample time to be with your family and participate in family activities
- emphasizing your children's educational attainments
- providing security and a family life for children

Describe your desires for your family (or future family) and your level of involvement in that family, if it is important to you.

Work orientation:

How important is career development and commitment to you? Are these things important to you?

- having a challenging career
- having a lot of contact with the general public
- working independently
- having the chance to climb the career ladder to more and more important jobs
- meeting new and different people in the work environment
- making a significant contribution to society

Describe the level of challenge and opportunity for growth you would like to have.

Leadership:

How do you like being in leadership positions? Are these important to you?

- having opportunity to be a leader
- having authority and responsibility in the workplace
- being your own boss
- moving up the financial ladder
- being recognized as an expert

Describe how you feel about leadership or about the responsibility of being your own boss.

Education:

How important is higher education to you, or just how much education can you stand?

Are these important to you?

- reading and studying for advancement
- having educational materials in your home
- being a member of educational organizations
- having special vocational training
- doing an apprenticeship
- getting a two-year college degree
- getting a Bachelors degree
- getting a graduate degree

Describe how you feel about education and what level of education you think you would like to accomplish.

Structured work environment:

How much structure are you comfortable with? Are these important to you?

- having regularly scheduled work hours (i.e. 9 to 5)
- having a low pressure job
- knowing exactly what to do and when to do it (routines)
- not having to make many decisions

Describe what kind of structure you would like to have at work.

Leisure:

How much time do you need for leisure activities? Are these important to you?

- _____ ample free time
- _____ working on hobbies
- _____ having simple, inexpensive vacations
- _____ entertaining at home
- _____ spending time outdoors
- _____ relaxing

Describe how important your leisure time is to you.

Mobility:

How do you like change? Are these important to you?

- _____ having a job which would require occasional changes in living location
- _____ traveling to foreign countries
- _____ having different and changing worksites
- _____ experiencing new work environments and people
- _____ moving

How would you feel if you had to live across the country or world from your parents?

How would you like experiencing living in new places and trying new work environments? Describe.

Security:

How important is a moderate lifestyle to you? How important is security? Are these important to you?

- _____ having a lifestyle in which there is little pressure to have large sums of money
- _____ having a low pressure, moderately paced lifestyle
- _____ being comfortable, but not rich
- _____ not being burdened by too much responsibility
- _____ having a low financial risk

Describe the level of pressure, responsibility, and finances you would feel most comfortable with.

Outdoor work:

Is being outdoors important to you? Are these important to you?

- _____ having a job that requires outdoor work
- _____ gardening
- _____ spending leisure time outdoors
- _____ camping vacations
- _____ being a member of a conservation organization
- _____ hunting and fishing

In writing, describe how valuable your time outdoors is to you. Is it important as a career?

Synopsis

You've just define some important values that should affect career choices. What your your most powerful values?

Part IV: Talents and Strengths

It is important, for peace of mind, to have a career that works with your gifts and talents. Think about it. Would God call you to a career as an English teacher if you have an innate ability to learn foreign languages at the drop of a hat? What if you were great at fixing things and were really talented at working on cars. Would it be likely that God would call you to be a bank teller?

I believe our strengths are given to us by God to use in service. Often this service is also used in our careers.

Fill out the following questionnaires.

Things I Do Well

List things you are good at, anything - cooking, fishing, math, history, art, singing, and so on.

Things I am NOT Good at

List the things that you should avoid like the plague in a job because you are not good at them at all.

Feedback from Others

Positive Feedback:

Positive feedback is an easy way to figure out how other folks view your talents and strengths. They may be able to point out strengths you have overlooked or confirm what you already believe. Besides, positive feedback feels good.

Think back over the years. List two times you have received some positive feedback for anything you have done. Answer the questions.

Positive feedback number 1:

Who was the person who gave the feedback?

What was the context (what did you do to earn the feedback)?

What was the feedback?

Positive feedback number 2:

Who was the person who gave the feedback?

What was the context (what did you do to earn the feedback)?

What was the feedback?

More Personal Feedback:

Interview two relatives and two friends. (Really, you MUST do this). Ask them what you are good at, in their opinion. (Offer them bribes.)

Person number 1:

Name:

What this person says you are good at:

Person number 2:

Name:

What this person says you are good at:

Person number 3:

Name:

What this person says you are good at:

Person number 4:

Name:

What this person says you are good at:

Strengths and Weaknesses Checklist

Circle your strengths; cross off your weaknesses. If the word is neither a strength nor a weakness, ignore it.

Paying attention to detail	Taking care of children	Being visionary
Organizing things	Caring for animals	Making people laugh
Taking charge	Math	Motivating others
Cooking	Science	Giving Bible studies
Sewing	History	Sharing the Gospel
Needlework	Reading	Service
Repairing things	Spelling/vocabulary	Brainstorming ideas
Drawing	Foreign language(s)	Devising plans
Painting	Critical thinking	Hiking
Sculpting/modeling	Acting	Sports
Writing	Reciting	Extreme sports
Singing	Being philosophical	Travel
Playing an instrument	Problem solving	Manual work
Designing webpages	Assembling things	Planning meals
Typing	Gardening	Planning events
Public speaking	Driving	Editing
Talking to people	Taking orders	Being compassionate
Listening to people	Giving orders	Personal fitness

Make Some Lists

Talent List: List those things you are naturally good at. Use the above list, personal feedback, and your own ideas.

Nobody's Perfect List: Okay, nobody's perfect. So, list a few things that are not on your talent list, but may need to be improved just because they are good life skills (like - listening to people).

Part V: What is Your Career Personality?

This part of the journey is about discovering your career personality. Let's do 3 online tests, 2 of them are free:

1) My Next Move

<https://www.mynextmove.org>

MyNextMove is a free interest survey with great information about careers using the RIASEC model. It breaks interests into these categories:

- Realistic- like realistic, practical, often hands-on, problem-fixing careers
- Investigative- like scientific and mathematical careers, often problem-solving Artistic- like creative careers where they can be expressive and independent
- Social- like helping or teaching careers in a number of fields
- Enterprising- like careers where they can lead, start projects or make sales
- Conventional- like traditional careers that have clear guidelines to follow

At the end of the interest survey, MyNextMove helps you explore various careers in your interest area (and at the level of training you're willing to undergo). For each career it shares information about that field, like average salary, and the occupational outlook (probability of getting a job in the future).

2) Jung Typology Test

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes1.htm>

The Jung Typology Test is a free version of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, one of the best researched personality tests ever.

This delightful, quick test will give you a 4-letter score (for instance, INTJ or ESFP). You can click links to personality descriptions and good job fits for your personality.

Next, take your 4-letter score and visit <http://www.keirsey.com/>

Keirsey writes a lovely report about your personality type and also gives more career suggestions.

3) StrengthsFinder 2.0 by Tom Rath

This online strengths survey is NOT free but it is terrific and fairly inexpensive. Strengths Finder is an extensive assessment of your strengths. When you finish the online quiz, you will receive a report that describes your top 5 strengths. The report is highly individualized and includes good job fits and personal development strategies.

Think About It

- 1) What does MyNextMove tell you about your career personality? (Are you Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional?)

- 2) What are some good-fit careers based on MyNextMove's data?

- 3) Describe your personality according to the Jung Typology Test and Keirsey.

- 4) What are some good-fit careers for your personality type?

- 5) What are your top 5 strengths according to StrengthsFinder?

- 6) What are some good-fit careers for your strengths?

Expand Your Data

Based on the things you discovered in MyNextMove, Jung Typology Test, and StrengthsFinder answer these fill in these details about 4 top career choices. You can find more information if necessary by searching the Dictionary of Occupational Titles <http://www.occupationalinfo.org/>

You will also need to review your values criteria from Part III.

Career #1

Job title:

Level of education:

Do I need to relocate?

Income possibilities:

Does it look like it meets my values criteria?

What is the outlook for this job?

Comments:

Career #2

Job title:

Level of education:

Do I need to relocate?

Income possibilities:

Does it look like it meets my values criteria?

What is the outlook for this job?

Comments:

Career #3

Job title:

Level of education:

Do I need to relocate?

Income possibilities:

Does it look like it meets my values criteria?

What is the outlook for this job?

Comments:

Career #4

Job title:

Level of education:

Do I need to relocate?

Income possibilities:

Does it look like it meets my values criteria?

What is the outlook for this job?

Comments:

Part VI: Adventure

The Most Important Thing to Do in Career Exploration is:

Try new things.

Try new things.

Try new things.

Try new things.

You get the idea. Try new things. Sometimes a person doesn't know what he wants to do for a career because he hasn't run across it yet. The ways to try new things include:

Take Courses

Learn something new. Anything:

- Guitar
- Watercolor painting
- Coding
- Excel
- American History
- Creative Writing
- Public Speaking

Anything! The point is to get your brain engaged with fresh ideas and your soul busy meeting new people. You might be able to leverage what you learned or maybe you'll meet somebody who knows somebody...

Take Trips

It doesn't need to be cruises to Hawaii, a local field trip to someplace you've never been to will do. Check your local paper often for community events that you have never experienced. The key is NEVER experienced before. We're broadening your horizons here.

It probably won't turn into a new career, but the stimulation of a new thing helps your brain work better. AND if you like the experience enough to go back and get involved, the networking might pay off in some manner.

Take Stock

By now, you should have some solid ideas, or maybe, one solid idea about what you want to do as a career.

Let's take stock: What's actually out there right now?

Start reading about employment opportunities on LinkedIn, Monster, state employment agencies, and any other employment networking websites you can find. Keep a OneNote or other kind of list of jobs that catch your eye.

Note:

- Corporation/Agency
- Location
- Qualifications
- Salary
- Anything else that's interesting.

What you are doing here is gaining a personalized database of useful information. It will help in the long run.

Which Jobs Look Interesting and Why?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

Part VII: Solidify Your Data

Let's solidify all you've worked on. In a few words, answer each question:

- 1) What do you know so far about the will of God for you? (It is ok to not be certain.)
- 2) What life experiences do you see as influencing your career choices?
- 3) What are your personal values?
- 4) What are your talents and strengths?
- 5) What is your career personality?
- 6) What have you learned about yourself as far as careers go?
- 7) What will you do next? (This might be a time to do some Life Transition Coaching with Vicki.)

Now get busy adventuring!

God bless you on your travels through the world of Career Exploration.- Vicki

