

Title:

7 Criteria for Deciding Which Career Test Is Right for You

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Summary:

One of the best ways to determine your career direction is to complete a career assessment. Yet there are literally hundreds of career tests out there. Is a career test the same as an aptitude test? What about a career personality test? This article clarifies the differences and presents 7 criteria for deciding which career test is best for you.

Keywords:

career test, career change, career assessment, career tests, aptitude test, career personality test

Article Body:

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"I used to feel depressed at work, hate my boss, and was sometimes so bored that I actually fell asleep at my desk!" --- career test taker

If this sounds like you, then it's probably time to consider changing jobs or careers. But before you can make your career change, you need to figure out what you want to do.

One of the best ways to get clear is to complete a career assessment. Yet there are literally hundreds of career tests out there. Is a career test the same as an aptitude test? What about a career personality test? This article clarifies the differences and presents 7 criteria for deciding which career test is best for you.

#1 Career test vs. personality test

Is the assessment specifically designed to provide career guidance?

Personality tests only tell you about your character traits whereas a career assessment gives specific career advice. Of course, it helps to know whether you're an extrovert or an introvert and perceive by sensing or intuition. Personality tests such as the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the

Enneagram are quite useful as background information. Making the leap from simple awareness of your personality type to specific career strategies is very difficult, however. If you want a new job or career, it's better to take an assessment that is specifically geared to providing career guidance.

#2 Specific vs. general

Does the career assessment give concrete recommendations that you can use immediately rather than vague observations that are open to interpretation and not actionable? Aside from the change itself, the hardest part of changing careers is narrowing down your choices. But if you don't get specific, you won't be able to take action. A good assessment should not be general like the astrological horoscopes in the newspaper.

#3 Motivation rules: why motivation is a better indicator than aptitude or personality

Does the career assessment measure motivation?

Motivation is a far better career indicator than skill or personality because what you like to do is what you WILL do and what you will get very good at (if you aren't already). Why force a square peg into a round hole?

When you base your decisions on what motivates you, you'll probably feel much more fulfilled, and be much more successful, too.

#4 Where's the beef?

Even if you're a vegetarian, you'll want "meaty" results! A good career assessment should include hard data, as well as sufficient detail and explanation to help you interpret the results.

#5 Do you believe it?

Is the career assessment scientifically valid? An effective career assessment should have a high predictive reliability. Such things can be measured statistically. Anything over 95% is quite good.

Statistical validity is important for a number of reasons. Obviously, you want to feel that the assessment provides an accurate picture of what motivates you and you don't want to be misled by grossly inaccurate results. But another point is that when the results are believable this provides a boost to your self-confidence. In my case, I was relieved and encouraged to see from my results

that I had chosen the correct career path. It was a kind of confirmation or validation: "Whew! What a relief!"

Remember that ultimately it's up to you to decide whether a set of results makes sense or not. However, it helps to use a highly reliable assessment.

#6 Can you get from A to Z?

Are additional tools available to help you take your results and develop a clear career roadmap for yourself?

Honestly, a lot of people take career tests and get brilliant insights. Unfortunately, many of these same people are never able to turn their insights into results. What's needed is a support infrastructure of materials and people to help you apply your results over time.

#7 Is it fast?

Even in the internet age, there still are a lot of tests that you can only take on paper. It takes 30 minutes or even over an hour to take the test. Then you have to wait while the test is scored and processed. You may only get your results after several days or weeks.

Personally I prefer career tests that I can take online and that give me my results immediately.

Conclusion

A career test is just a tool and just one step on your career change journey. Nonetheless, it's worth spending some time to understand what types of tests are available and which is best for you. Just remember that even the best career test is only a tool. It's up to you to take charge of your own career.