

## Introduction: What is this and how can I use it?

Whether you're just starting out, or planning your next move... choosing the direction to point your career is hard. There are so many options, and it's hard to tell in advance which choices may be good, and which should most likely be avoided.

What we do know from considerable research (and personal experience) is that career success is the result of a few important components lining up properly:

- **The right knowledge** – gained through training, education and/or professional certification;
- **The right experience** – gained through previous jobs, internships, volunteering and other activities;
- **The right fit** – as with any kind of relationship in life, certain jobs will be a much better match for you than others.

Knowledge and experience are building blocks you can build up over time, through study and activity. The part that's proven harder to measure and predict reliably is fit with the job.

That's where we come in.

This Career Planning Report has been prepared specifically for you. What we've done is taken the results of the TalentSorter questionnaire you completed and compared your unique characteristics to a library of jobs that contains information about the characteristics of people who have been successful in those roles.

This report won't evaluate whether you have the right knowledge or experience for the role, but it will tell you which roles are likely good choices to consider based on fit, and which ones are likely not.

Remember, finding the **right fit** benefits both you and your employer. Research tells us that when someone's a good fit for their job, they tend to be more successful and happy with their career – not to mention that they tend to be more productive and stay longer.

Here are your **Signature Traits** – characteristics that are more pronounced and that will likely have the biggest influence over your fit in a given job.

## Conscientiousness

Tendency to strive for perfection, sometimes at all costs.

You display your Conscientiousness differently than most people

- You usually prefer to work in an unstructured work environment that welcomes spontaneity.
- You often prefer to go with the flow and tend not to plan your actions too far in advance.
- Your work style is typically unstructured and may seem disorganized to others.
- You often jump into a task without an established plan.

## Decisiveness

Reflects how confident someone is in accepting the risk of making a decision in a timely fashion using what information is available at the time.

You tend to exhibit more of this trait than most people.

- You generally make decisions in a timely manner even if you lack information.
- You are typically not afraid to take risks and make quick decisions when you have adequate information.
- You generally feel sure of your ability to make a decision, even if you lack some information.
- Because of your certainty in your decision-making skills, you are generally able to make decisions in emergency situations.

## Resolve

Willingness to work for the intrinsic benefit of work and its ability to enhance character.

You display your Resolve differently than most people

- You typically believe your work is just an aspect of life, and it doesn't define you.
- The rewards associated with the work you do are generally more important to you than the sense of personal success.
- You are not driven by a need to be successful but rather by the compensation associated with your job.
- You generally are not passionate about your work and usually do not get a lot of enjoyment or pleasure out of it.

## Career Planning Report for Sally Sample

Based on the characteristics described above, your fit for various roles in the position library is laid out for you below, starting from the strongest matches and working down.

Producer  
Actor  
Athlete/Sports Competitor  
Dancer  
Entertainer/Performance Artist, All Other  
Musician, Instrumental  
Training and Development Specialist  
Health Educator  
Broadcast News Analyst  
Chief Executive  
Order Filler, Wholesale  
Arbitrator  
Mediator  
Conciliator  
Cargo/Freight Agent  
Public Relations Specialist  
Financial Analyst  
Insurance Underwriter  
Host/Hostess, Restaurant  
Waiter/Waitress  
Barber  
Massage Therapist  
Account Manager  
Labor Relations Specialist  
Credit Authorizers

If you are interested in learning more about specific jobs or industries, one of the very best resources we have seen is available online at [www.OnetOnline.org](http://www.OnetOnline.org). There, you can search all sorts of detailed descriptions about jobs, the skills and knowledge required, any educational and other prerequisites, median wages, career options, and more. It's a great complement to this workbook!

## So What, Now What... finding the Right Next Thing for Sally Sample

Remember what we said way back on the first page of this report... your happiness and success in any job is going to be based on a number of factors – your **knowledge**, your **experience**, and your **fit with the job**.

All three need to line up. This report may tell you that you could be a great fit as an ER nurse or a CFO or a lathe operator... but without the right education and training, it's just not going to happen.

The difference is, you can add to your knowledge and experience over time, if you are determined to go up a certain path. But fit with the job, on the other hand, isn't likely to change much over time... with few exceptions, we are pretty much who we are by the time we hit our early twenties, and our personality traits don't change that much after then. So if a job you are considering falls in the 'Weaker Fit' category, think twice. What we want for you is to find a job that is such a great fit that it is a source of energy, pride and satisfaction for you.

Let's break down this 'Job Fit' thing a little. The TalentSorter questionnaire you completed is designed to report out how much your traits are like those of people who have been successful in the jobs listed on the previous pages. It's been built on leading edge psychometric science, which has been shown over time to be highly predictive of success.

Even so, psychometric probability is only part of the 'fit' equation. Over the years, we have developed a model that actually incorporates **four critical aspects of fit**. They are:

- Fit with the **Manager** or the person you report to.
- Fit with the **Job** (includes more than your psychometric fit).
- Fit with the **People** you spend your day with at work.
- Fit with the **Organization** – its mission, culture and values.

Unlike our core behavioral traits, our needs in these areas DO change over time, which is why we make this 'workbook' section of this Career Planning Report all about giving you tools to get really clear on what the RIGHT next thing is (and is not) for you, in these four critical aspects of fit.

Your answers will give you a really good set of filters to use in evaluating opportunities that come your way – but don't try to do this all in one sitting; in fact, it's best to take it a question or two at a time. Some people have had the best success simply taking a couple of questions with them through the day and letting them percolate, noticing and jotting down the insights and ideas that bubble up from the subconscious, and not worrying about making sense of them until they have been at it for a week or two.

Also - be prepared for your answers to these questions to change over time, as you gain experience and mature... so it's an exercise worth repeating regularly.

So... what's *your* Right Next Thing?



## 1. Think about your right next manager:

- What are the attributes of the perfect manager/boss, for you?
- Think of the managers you've responded best to, who stretched and developed you the most, and for whom you were most productive. List all the attributes that define them - how they communicated with you, engaged with you, challenged you, inspired you, handled breakdowns... build a detailed list.
- How did they assign work? Hold you accountable? Actually manage you and your output?
- Then create the same list for the managers you've responded least well to.
- Now build a profile of your "right next manager". You have grown, changed and matured and need different things from a manager than you have needed in any previous - what do you most need from the next one?

## 2. What are the attributes of the right next role for me?

- What activities give you energy?
- What taps your energy?
- What are your natural talents and strengths? How have they been productively applied in the past?
- What are the things that, despite your best efforts, you have only ever been adequate at?
- What are you passionate about in life? What are the issues or situations that elicit a strong response in you, positive and negative?
- What are the activities that, when you are engaged in them, you become so absorbed that you lose all track of time?
- How will you be spending your time? What will you be doing? Where? With whom?
- Find the courage to ask ten people who are close to you (including folks you have worked with and for) what they see as your unique gifts, the things you do so well, and the things that define what is uniquely you.

### 3. Think about Customers and Co-workers

- Are you most effective as an individual contributor or as a fully integrated member of a team? What works well and not so well for you in either scenario?
- What do you need to be able to count on coworkers to provide you?
- What have you admired and respected most in people you've worked with in the past? Least?
- Think about your own standards. When have you found yourself surrounded by people with lower standards than you? What was the standard that was compromised? Did that happen elsewhere also? What about the flip side – when have you been inspired to be better by those around you? What aspects of your game improved? What kind of people do you need around you to keep your 'A' game?
- What behaviours in others tend to shut you down? Expand you? Describe the 'right next' environment.
- Same questions above about customers and other external relationships.

#### **4. What are the attributes of the right next organization, for me?**

- What factors make you proud to tell others you work there?
- What's important to you in any organization you'd consider joining?
- What business will they be in?
- What clients will they serve? What issues will they address?
- What relationship do they have with those clients? How do they invest in / preserve it?
- Same question, about relationships with their employees
- What attributes of culture are critical?
- How will people work together?
- What will you be accountable for?