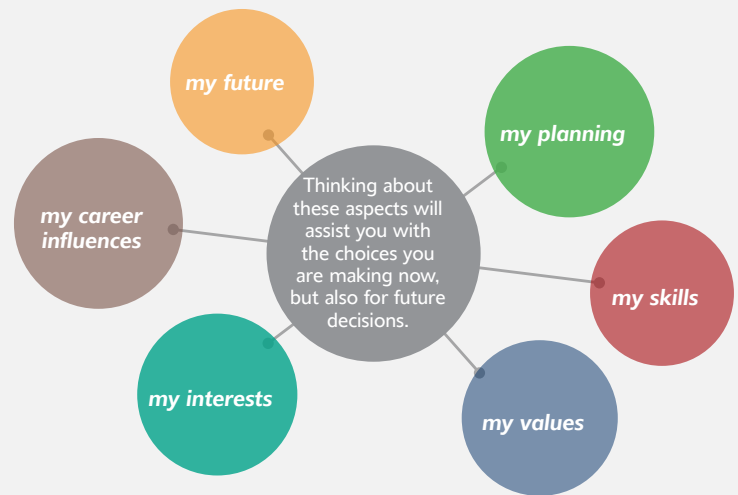


Knowing myself

Knowing yourself

Knowing yourself in the career context means that you are aware of how you make decisions, your skills, your values and interests and how these shape your career decisions.

Take some time now to work through the following activities to reflect on these aspects.



How I make decisions

You make hundreds, if not thousands of decisions, each day. These decisions range from what to eat for breakfast to what to wear today. Other decisions require more thought, for example which school your child should attend, and which qualification you should apply for. One important thing to keep in mind with making career choices (such as choosing a qualification) is that you will ask others for information about your decision, but in the end the responsibility is yours to evaluate the information you have and to make the final decision. It would also be important for you to be able to distinguish between facts and opinion.

People have different ways of making decisions, for example, some prefer to gather a lot of information and then weigh all the options in terms of positives and negatives; others solve problems by eliciting opinions from others.

- 1 Think about the last time you made an important decision and make some notes about how you went about making your decision. Then think about what you could have done differently (for example, did you make a hasty decision or did you not have enough information).**

My skills

Skills are abilities you've developed and can use effectively. You learn skills from your experiences (e.g. voluntary, paid or unpaid work, and family and community responsibilities). Basic skills are important when working within a fast-changing society:

- communication skills (reading, writing, creating online content, communicating visually and evaluating information)
- social intelligence (connecting meaningfully with others and wanting to make a difference)
- teamwork (negotiating, motivating and engaging with diverse groups online and offline)
- problem solving and novel thinking (creating unique solutions to problems) and
- information management (filtering and making sense of information).

You will learn new skills in each module of your qualification. These can help you become employed and improve your community contribution. You need to connect what you learn at university with what you can contribute in the workplace and in your community. As you study and your skills develop, your frame of reference will expand and you will become aware of more opportunities.

- 2 Think about your life experiences (work, volunteering, school, studies and personal) and then answer the following questions: What skills do I have? What skills do I need to develop related to the kind of opportunities I am hoping for? How will I develop these skills?**

Further exploration: Use the O*Net website (<http://www.onetonline.org/find/descriptor/browse/Skills/>) to identify job titles related to specific skills.

My values

Your values show what is important to you. As such they have a significant effect on your career choices. Values are shaped by your family, community, work environment and life experiences. For example, Matome is unhappy with his current administrative job and wants more challenges. He sees a job advert at his company for a sales representative training programme and is interested. If he takes the position, it will mean a lot of travelling. Is he willing to be away from his family for long periods? Is the excitement of travelling for a sales job more important?

- 3 Make a list of your values (see <http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/About/Service-departments/Counselling-and-Career-Development/Choose-a-career/Understand-yourself/Your-values> for some examples). Can you link your values to specific occupations? How would your values be supported by the career choice you are making? How would your career choice support your values?**

My career influences

Do you know who and what influences your career choices?

- 4** Think about how other people, events, and things have influenced you. For example, school subjects, friends, family, knowing myself, money, media (TV, movies, the internet, radio), observing others at work, economic/job trends, and role models.

Chance events have a huge influence on careers. Think about the times when something happened that you did not plan for and could not control, but that impacted on your career direction, such as how you heard about Unisa or got your first job. Think about a chance event that influenced your career decision.

Your name and surname

Your student number

Need to have a further conversation about your career?

Talk to a counsellor by e-mail: counselling@unisa.ac.za or phone: 012 441 5388.