

Guide to Selected Self-Assessment Tools

Job seekers who search the Web will find a large number of career-focused websites devoted to self-assessment tools. These tools can help you learn more about your personality, interests, skills, strengths, and weaknesses as they relate to vocations. They can also highlight your preference for risk taking, management roles, and teamwork situations.

Through a combination of Web research and conversations with career counselors and human resource experts, we have compiled a starter list of a few well-known tools for you to investigate as you begin the self-assessment process.

Although these tools are not specifically designed for the nonprofit sector, they can be quite useful in helping you better understand your overall workplace preferences. You can then determine how your preferences might translate to the nonprofit sector. Career coaches suggest that you use multiple tools to get at the various aspects of self-assessment (e.g., personality, interests, skills, behavioral characteristics) and that you be prepared to spend a small amount of money to access the most commonly used tools.

Keep in mind that while all of these tools can be very helpful, they are only one piece of the self-exploration phase of your career transition. Networking, research, soul-searching, and informational interviews with individuals in prospective roles are also critical. The combination of these activities should help you come up with a better sense of what you are looking for in your next step, as well as give you some ideas about specific roles to investigate further.

Selected self-assessment tools

(Check the websites for pricing information for each of these tools.)

Interest-based assessment:

- **Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS)**

(www.pearsonassessments.com/tests/ciss.htm):

The CISS measures both your interest and confidence within particular skill areas in order to determine your best vocational paths. The test was formerly available to individuals only through licensed counselors, but is now available online.

- **Career Leader** (www.careerleader.com):

Career Leader is an online assessment tool designed to highlight your business interests.

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This assessment will help identify your strengths, weaknesses, and values as they relate to potential career paths within business vocations, including nonprofit management.

Personality and behavioral assessment:

- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** (www.myersbriggs.org):
The MBTI assessment is one of the most well-known personality assessments. The test, which must be given by a qualified test administrator, provides individuals with a personality profile based on 16 common types. The description can help you identify characteristics of new roles that might suit you.
- **DISC** (available through career coaches or at www.discprofile.com):
The DISC assessment helps you better understand your behavioral style in the workplace, your ideal work environment, and how you might be perceived by those around you.

Skill-based assessment:

- **Skillscan** (www.skillscan.net):
Skillscan is an interactive tool that will help you identify your natural strengths, understand their compatibility with your current role, and evaluate potential career options that capitalize on those strengths.

Other:

- **What Color is Your Parachute?** (www.jobhuntersbible.com):
One of the best-selling job search books available, What Color is Your Parachute offers advice on how to assess your personal strengths and then use that assessment as you evaluate the current openings in the job market.

Bridgestar (www.bridgestar.org), an initiative of the Bridgespan Group, provides a nonprofit management job board, content, and tools designed to help nonprofit organizations build strong leadership teams and individuals pursue career paths as nonprofit leaders.