

Core Adult Career Transition Inventory



CACTI



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In our turbulent new world of career uncertainty and flux, adults are constantly re-inventing and re-careering to meet their internal drive for meaning and growth and the external demands of a competitive economy.

A recent Gallup Poll of American adults highlights the ongoing need at all stages of adulthood for career transition planning:

53% of respondents said they will need more training/education to maintain or increase their earning power.

70% would try to get more information about job and career options open to them than they got the first time they chose a career.

17% expect to change jobs voluntarily in the next three years.

Why the CACTI analogy for adult career transition? Like the hardy desert cactus, adults need some nurturing, light, and attention to the soil their lives are rooted in to grow and thrive. CACTI are also incredibly diverse, vital and vibrant and challenged by difficult environments.

Perhaps you've recently been downsized, voluntarily left a job you were no longer satisfied with, wondering if you need a radical career change, or are gearing up for an intensive job search. This CACTI guide may help you focus and clarify the next step in your job search/career transition.

SECTION I – WORK VALUES

Please **circle** the response that is important (YES) or not important (NO) in deciding to accept or reject a job.

I WANT A JOB WHERE I CAN:

1. Have high levels of authority or leadership. YES or NO
2. Challenge my mind, curiosity, and intellect. YES or NO
3. Contribute visionary ideas or beauty to the world by creating artistic products. YES or NO
4. Have high levels of autonomy, independence and control. YES or NO
5. Learn new skills, develop expertise. YES or NO
6. Contribute to humanity, improving social justice, equality, education and health. YES or NO
7. Earn an excellent salary and benefits. YES or NO

- 8. Know exactly what I'm going to do everyday and what is expected. YES or NO
- 9. Expect job security for many years to come. YES or NO
- 10. Attain prestige and status. YES or NO
- 11. Produce a tangible product or results I can see, count, taste, or touch. YES or NO
- 12. Spend the day with people who share my vocational interests and work values. YES or NO
- 13. Have no rush hour traffic or difficulty commuting. YES or NO
- 14. See a clearly defined promotional path to advance in the organization. YES or NO
- 15. Count on a predictable schedule knowing my hours or work shift assignment well in advance. YES or NO

We have coded the answers in this section to reflect two key ways of looking at the factors you rated as must have in any job, internal and external rewards.

External rewards are those controlled by others and/or the structure of the job, i.e. money and benefits, job security, prestige/status. Questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 15 all relate to external reward factors. Count your yes answers to these questions and place the total on the line by external below.

Internal rewards flow from the intrinsic content of the work itself and relate to the meaning, personal engagement, and value of the work itself to the individual. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11 and 12 relate to internal reward factors. Count your yes answers to these questions and place the total on the internal line below.

Look at your score patterns. Which reward structure is more important to you? Are you seeking meaning and contribution through your work or is a good paycheck with job security more important? Note your total yes scores in the boxes below.

External _____ Internal _____

Consider the pattern of your career so far as you answer the two following questions:

A. In my work life so far I have been significantly satisfied with my income, benefits, and job security. Circle one.

Yes _____ No _____

B. In my work life so far I have been significantly satisfied by the way my jobs have integrated my key values, skills and interests. Circle one.

Yes _____ No _____

SECTION II – SKILLS

Skills make the world go round and open the door to career transition/re-employment. The following section will ask you to assess your skills utilizing four key factors. As you read each skill summary you will be asked to assess whether you have competence in a skill at a VERY HIGH, HIGH, BELOW AVERAGE, OR LOW LEVEL. **Please circle** the appropriate response.

SKILLS:	LEVELS OF COMPETENCY:				
1. Computing and calculating data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
2. Proofreading/editing data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
3. Programming/documenting data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
4. Collecting and gathering data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
5. Researching/investigating data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
6. Keyboarding/typing/inputting data.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
7. Entertaining/hosting/greeting people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
8. Counseling/advising people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
9. Advocating/lobbying on behalf of people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
10. Training/instructing people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
11. Managing/supervising/leading/motivating people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
12. Curing/treating/rehabilitating people.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
13. Maintaining/cleaning things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
14. Renovating/Rebuilding things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
15. Regulating/controlling/monitoring things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
16.. Repairing/servicing/setting up things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
17. Operating/driving/piloting things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
18. Building and constructing things.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW

19. Synthesizing/creating new ideas.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
20. Visualizing ideas.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
21. Writing ideas.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
22. Designing art, literature, music, new concepts.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
23. Evaluating ideas.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW
24. Finding solutions to problems.	VERY HIGH	HIGH	BELOW	AVERAGE	LOW

SUMMARY – Questions 1 thru 6 focus on skills related to DATA, 7 thru 12 relate to PEOPLE, 13 thru 18 relate to THINGS, and 19 thru 24 relate to IDEAS. Look at your pattern of VERY HIGH, BELOW AVERAGE, and LOW scores. Do your skills focus on one or two areas in particular?

Please add the total number of very high and high responses per skill area:

- DATA (Questions 1 – 6): _____
- PEOPLE (Questions 7 – 12): _____
- THINGS (Questions 13 – 18): _____
- IDEAS (Questions 19 – 24): _____

Circle one or two skill areas where you prefer to use your best skills:

- DATA
- PEOPLE
- THINGS
- IDEAS

Are there skills related to one or two categories you particularly want to explore developing expertise in for career transition?

- DATA
- PEOPLE
- THINGS
- IDEAS

It's quite possible for adults to have excellent skills in areas they dislike. Recently a counseling client of the Career Center filled out this inventory and scored HIGH on the six PEOPLE related skills and then said, "I'm so tired of listening to peoples' troubles, solving their problems, being sympathetic, acting like I care – I want to develop skills with things and become a computer programmer." He had spent 11 years as a bartender!

SECTION III - JOB SEARCH NOW OR CAREER EXPLORATION

Please circle yes or no.

1. Right now, finding the job I want is my top priority.

YES OR NO

2. I would rather focus my energies on leisure, marriage/family, physical fitness, social, etc. than a job search now.

YES OR NO

3. I would like to do more testing of interest/personality before I commit to a job search.

YES OR NO

4. I need more individual career counseling before I will be ready to job search.

YES OR NO

5. I am really looking forward to getting my resume out there NOW, interviewing, and starting a new job.

YES OR NO

6. I would like to go back to school for an extended period of time and be refocused/retrained in an entirely new career.

YES OR NO

7. I cannot face another month in the job I am in now - I need to learn job search skills and get my search going.

YES OR NO

8. My current skills do not match with my career transition goals, and I am interested in becoming skilled in new areas.

YES OR NO

9. I have not ruled out a *career* change in the future, but I need a new job now.

YES OR NO

SUMMARY – YES answers to questions 1, 5, 7 and 9 indicate strong motivation to initiate a job search NOW. YES answers to questions 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8 indicate that you want to explore career transition/refocus rather than search for a job similar to those you have had so far. Let's look at next steps in the final summary section.

Count your yes answers to questions 1, 5, 7, 9:

Total _____ (Job Search).

Count your yes answers to questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 8:

Total _____ (Career Transition).

SECTION IV – SUMMARY

We have looked at external and internal rewards, skills, and implementing an immediate job search versus continuing long-range career exploration. Please circle one of the two choices *before* you go on to read the suggested follow up steps:

- (A) I want to initiate an immediate job search. I am clear on the reward structure, skills, and job titles/overall career field where I will focus my job search efforts.
- (B) At this point, I want to explore new *career* options reflecting different rewards, skills, and re-education for a new direction.

IF YOUR NEXT STEP IS EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS:

Contact a career counselor for individual assessment or career decision workshops. Appendix B of *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, Richard Bolles annual guide, lists career counseling programs nationwide and evaluation standards for quality. Contact the National Career Development Association, 10820 East 45th, Suite 210, Tulsa, OK 74146 at 918.663.7060 for career counseling standards and services, (www.ncda.org)

Visit your local public library and speak to a librarian about print and on line career information resources.

Set up an informational interview or career shadowing *experience* with someone in a field you want to explore.

IF YOUR NEXT STEP IS IMMEDIATE JOB SEARCH

Contact your local community college, social services agencies, union, professional association to see if there are job support clubs/workshops.

Visit your local library for resume, job search strategy and interviewing resource guides.

Research companies and industries in your area using Cuyahoga County Public Library's collection of Business and Property Databases on the library's website: www.cuyahogalibrary.org.

Review your family budget to assess life style adjustments during your job search.

Remember the ***CACTI (Core Adult Career Transition Inventory)***.

Career Transition/Job Search are major life challenges. Keep your head up toward the nurturing light, nourish your roots with the advice and counsel of family, friends and professional resources, and you will continue to thrive.

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