

Stage 1: Understanding Self Worksheet

Understanding self includes knowing yourself and your values, interests, and skills. **Prepare** for your Career Counseling appointment on this stage by completing the activities below.



1. **Complete* (2) career assessments.** Save an electronic copy of the results to reference during the appointment. Some of the free assessments may require students to create an account.
 - [Free Career Aptitude and Career Assessment Tests \(thebalancecareers.com\)](https://www.thebalancecareers.com).
 - Focus 2 <https://www.nvcc.edu/career-services/focus2.html>
Access code: NOVA The VCCS student email account required to create an account.
 - Career One Stop <https://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/explore-careers.aspx>
 - VA Wizard <https://www.vawizard.org/wizard/students>

***When completing assessments, instruments, and activities**

- Work in a quiet, comfortable environment.
 - Answer every question.
 - Choose the response that reflects the natural way you would respond or think.
 - Stay away from giving too many *neutral responses* and “*I don’t know*” answers to open ended questions – provide thoughtful and detailed responses.
 - DO NOT think of work, being a student, or any other role - instead, consider your natural preferences.
 - DO NOT select answers based on what you perceive would be the desirable response, as no such thing exists.
2. **SELECT only ONE of the following two options.** Read the questions then **WRITE** (don’t just **THINK** about) your responses; be **prepared to discuss** your responses.

Option 1 – Values, Interests, Skills

- **Values:** Guiding principles that reflect what is most important to you in life.
- **Interests:** Topics you enjoy reading about and activities that leave you energized.
- **Skills:** Developed talents or abilities.

Values

- What did I like most and least about the past experiences I have had? (jobs, community service, school involvement, etc.)
- What is important to me?
- What makes my life and work meaningful?

Interests

- What do I enjoy doing?
- What kind of clubs/organizations am I interested in joining?
- When reading, surfing the Internet, or watching television, in which issues/topics am I most interested?

Skills

- What are the subjects/classes in which I perform well?
- Where have I had successful experiences?
- What do the people I am close to say I do well?

Option 2. What is My Vision for the Future?

- What do I want to accomplish in the future?
- What is my dream career?
- What inspires me? OR What am I passionate about?
- When I think about a happy life, what does that include?
- What interests me? How do I spend my free time?
- What activities do I enjoy most?
- What skills do I have? AND What skills would I like to develop?
- What motivates me? (what I would do, even if I didn't get paid for it)
- What are the top three "must-haves" for my career?
- Where am I now? What are my needs and value? What strengths and assets do I have?
- Describe, in vivid detail, what how you want your future to look. In addition to describing the work you will do, consider geography (where you will live), lifestyle (how you live and the kinds of people/places in your life), community activities, etc.