

# [Role of personality and career success](https://assignbuster.com/role-of-personality-and-career-success/)

Choosing a career plays a crucial part in an individuals life . More often than not we come across people who are unsuccessful or unhappy in their work life in spite of working hard.

They feel as if the work is a burden and they do it mechanically without any interest and thus they are not enjoying it at all. It seems that they are not fit somehow for the kind of work they are doing and that they are caught on the wrong foot. Most of these miseries are due to wrong career choices that they have made due to a variety of reasons. In our country career counseling is not very much in vogue and wherever it is happening it is only limited to disbursing the information related to various career options available. In these circumstances a student who has to take such a crucial decision on which his future depends turns for advice to his parents, peers and teachers who do their best to advise him based on their own perspectives and prejudices. Young people become aware of the career opportunities and choices around them as they become exposed to friends and people around them, parents’ occupations, role models, television programs, school programs and counselling, church etc

Also the glamour of some the most popular professions or institutions attract him and he ends up being lured by either of these. In this scenario which is completely bereft of any scientific method making a right career choice is almost impossible. For students whose backgrounds don’t provide a rich variety of role models and opportunities, making this choice is even more critical. At this stage, the focus needs to be on self-knowledge-such as recognizing their own personality and appreciating what that means in terms of work. Experts in both psychology and career education have spent years looking at personality differences in order to understand how human beings achieve satisfaction in life and in career.

Frank Parsons in his work, Choosing a Vocation (1909), described three key factors in making career choices: (1) clear self-understanding, (2) knowledge of occupations, and (3) the ability to draw relationships between them. He wrote: “ In the wise choice of a vocation there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitation; (2) a thorough knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; and (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of acts” (Parsons, 1909/1989, p. 5). He reasoned that if individuals possess these attributes, not only would they make appropriate choices for themselves but the production function of society would be served by promoting greater efficiency in matching persons to occupations.

## Career- meaning and definition

An established definition of career is the unfolding sequence of a person’s work experiences over time (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). Careers can also be described in two fundamentally different ways. On the one hand there are subjective careers, reflecting the individual’s own sense of his or her career and what it is becoming (Stebbins, 1970). On the other hand there are objective careers, reflecting the more or less publicly observable positions, situations, and status ‘ that serve as landmarks for gauging a person’s movement through the social milieu’ (Barley, 1989, p. 49). Brewer (1922, p. 290) defines life career as ‘ the occupation of a person; that which offers him opportunity for progress and satisfaction in his work.’Super, Tiedman and Borow (1961, p. 11) defined ‘ career’ as ‘ the sequence of occupations, jobs, and the positions in life of an individual.’ Some writers took an even wider view. By the 1970s the likes of the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) defined career as a ‘ time-extended working out of a purposeful life pattern through work undertaken by the individual’ (National Vocational Guidance Association, 1973, p. 7). In reviewing the diverse explanations on the term career, Herr & Cramer (1992) have postulated that careers are (a) unique to each individual, (b) created by the person’s choice and decision, (c) dynamic and unfold throughout one’s life journey, (d) integrated entities of prevocational and postvocational considerations, and (e) interrelated with one’s other life roles in family, community and leisure. Super (1976, p. 20) refined and expanded his earlier definition to:

The sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout his preoccupational, occupational, and post- occupational life; includes workrelated roles such as those of student, employee, and pensioner, together with complementary vocational, familial and civic roles. Careers exist only as people pursue them. They are person-centred.

“ A career is a person’s life, and in this usage, there is one career for every person” (Cochran, 1991, p. 7).

## Understanding Personality

Over the years, psychologists have proposed varying formal definitions of personality. Most of these definitions refer to a collection of psychological traits that comprise the mental functioning of a person. Allport (1937), one of the first psychologists to study personality, described it as the dynamic organization within a person of those psychological systems that determine his or her unique adjustment to the environment.

Carl Jung was one of the first theorists to see human behavior in terms of patterns, and he eventually wrote about four groups of personality types based on their four mental functions: sensing, intuiting, thinking, and feeling (Jung & Hull, 1991).

In the 1950s, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998) was developed based on Jung’s research to help people understand and identify personality types. The MBTI actually identifies 16 different personality types. The term “ type” refers to a person’s general disposition; As McCaulley et al. (1983) point out, good type development often involves responding in ways that one does not spontaneously prefer. “ The word type as used here refers to a dynamic system with interacting parts and forces. The characteristics and attitudes that result from the interactions of these forces do differ, but the basic components are the same in every human being” (p. 397)The essence of the theory behind the MBTI is that “ much seemingly random variation in behavior is actually quite orderly and consistent, being due to basic differences in the way individuals prefer to use their perception and judgment” (Myers and McCaulley, 1985, p. 1).

## The Importance of Personality in Career Choices

The match between personality and occupation and work environment cannot be understated. The assessment and evaluation of personality and the matching between personality and occupations is considered critical in the career planning. Liptak (2008) agreed that personality plays as important a role as interests and skills in determining the types of jobs that people will be attracted to and that “ the greater the match between your occupation and your personality, the greater life and career satisfaction you will have” (p. 93). Holland (1997) said that knowing one’s personality pattern and the pattern of various work environments allows predictions to be made about a person’s occupational choice, job changes, vocational achievements, personal competence, and educational and social behavior. Seligman (1994) suggested that personality influences many career behaviors including how people make career decisions, estimate their probability of success in an occupation, perform on a job, relate to supervisors and coworkers, and enjoy a job. Seligman concluded that “ personality inventories can be useful, then, in helping people identify work settings in which they are likely to be successful and also in helping people understand the nature of dissatisfaction or disappointment they might be experiencing with their careers” (p. 153). Provost and Anchors (1987) discuss the uses of the MBTI in higher education.

In the MBTI manual Myers and McCaulley (1985) give numerous rankings of students and colleges by means of various preferences. Schurr, Ruble, and Henriksen (1989) look at the effects of different admissions practices on the MBTI and gender types. The report of McCaulley et al. (1983) with the ASEE-MBTI Engineering Consortium provides data showing the breakdown of engineering students by type preference.

Engineering disciplines attract different types of students. The fields with the highest proportion of extroverts were industrial (56 percent), computer (55 percent), petroleum (51 percent) and mineral (51 percent). Introverts were more frequent in aerospace (61 percent), geological (60 percent) and electrical (59 percent) engineering. The fields with the highest proportion of the practical sensing types were civil (69 percent), industrial (61 percent), mechanical (61 percent), and mining (60 percent). Intuitives were frequent in geological (62 percent), aerospace (60 percent) and metallurgical (54 percent). As noted above, all fields had a majority of T types, with the highest proportions in aerospace (82 percent), electrical (80 percent), mechanical (80 percent) and physics (76 percent). The fields with the lowest proportion of T types were undecided students (68 percent), geological (69 percent), computer (69 percent) and general (70 percent) engineering.

## Personality types and careers

The differences described by type theory are familiar parts of everyday life, and so the theory can be used for a wide range of applications: education, counseling, career guidance. Jung’s (1990) theory of personality types is concerned with the conscious use of the functions, of perception and decision making (or judgment) and the areas of life in which these functions are used. Jung (1990) assumes that apart from a dominant attitude, each person also has a specific way in which he/she observes his/her world and assigns meaning to each experience. He distinguishes four such conscious mental functions, or processes, namely: two perception processes (sensing and intuition) and two judgment processes (thinking and feeling). By combining an individual’s dominant attitude and function, the basic personality type may be determined. The personality types are thus patterns in the way people prefer to perceive and make judgments. Myers (1980) extended Jung’s (1990) theory on personality types by including the presence of an auxiliary process to supply a degree of balance between the functions of perception and judgment, and the attitudes of extraversion and introversion. Myers (1980) theory on personality types distinguishes between sixteen personality types. Combinations of perception (S and N) with judgment (T and F) give four groupings of personality types, namely Sensing-Thinking (ST); Sensing-Feeling (SF); Intuition-feeling (NF) and Intuition-Thinking (NT) types. Each personality type has specific characteristics which are assumed to stem from the preferred use of the mental functions. Myers and McCaulley (1992) considered these four personality type groupings as the most important of the groupings of the types, particularly when career choices are concerned.

The various personality types differ in their interests, values and needs. They learn in different ways and cherish different occupations (Myers, 1980). According to Personality Type theory, one of the most important motivations for career choice is a desire for work that is intrinsically interesting and satisfying and that will permit use of preferred functions and attitudes (Myers & McCaulley, 1992). Knowledge and understanding of Personality Type theory give individuals a sense of worth and dignity concerning their own qualities. Individuals can be aided in expanding their choices by helping them to realize their strengths and to develop their less preferred functions. New tasks, jobs or careers can be made more palatable if they are construed as challenges for personal growth. Cultivating new and different career patterns can actually become a good arena for personality type development (Myers &McCaulley, 1992).

Conclusion

Through this study we can conclude that making the right career choices is possible if we have self knowledge and understanding about our own preferences and personality type. We have enough evidence to prove a positive relationship between personality types and suitable career. Thus this can be applied for career counseling by administering the MBTI instrument and finding out the personality type of the person and advising him to choose the appropriate career based on his preferences. In this way we can scientifically advise the student to choose a career so that he or she is not only effective but happy in his professional as well as personal life.