



Basic Skills Curriculum

The Career Theory of John Holland

Participant's Curriculum

Summary and Rationale

John Holland's theory of career choice helps explain what career choices are likely to lead to success on the job and job satisfaction. It is the foundation of the U.S. Department of Labor's occupational information system and is widely used by career counselors throughout the United States. An understanding of Holland's theory will help you help persons with criminal convictions make good decisions concerning their education and training, occupations and careers.

At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- List the four primary concepts John L. Holland's career theory.
- State your personal career code and describe what it means.
- Describe specific ways this theory can be applied to persons with criminal convictions.

References

Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments* (3rded.). Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Print Resources

Holland, J. L. (1994). *The jobs finder*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Holmberg, K., Rosen, D., & Holland, J. L. (1999). *The leisure activities finder*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Rosen, D., Holmberg, K., & Holland, J. L. (1999). *The educational opportunities finder*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Websites

- You can access information about Holland's theory at these sites:
<http://career.missouri.edu/holland> and www.careerkey.ncsu.edu.

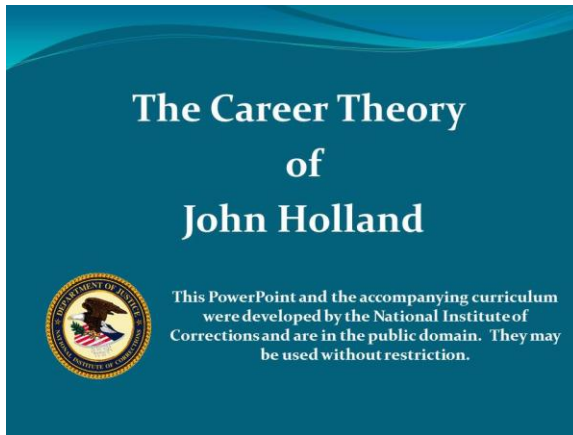
Prior to class, please click on the following link:

<http://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>

and take the O*Net Interest Profiler. The inventory will take about 10 minutes and measures your career interests. When you have completed the inventory, you will see a score for each of the following six categories: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. Print out or write out these scores and bring them to class with you. ***It is very important that you take the inventory, even if you have completed it in the past, and bring the results to class.*** Part of the first day involves examining and using your inventory scores and you will not be able to participate in these activities if you do not do the online assessment. If you have difficulty accessing the website or any question, please let me know.

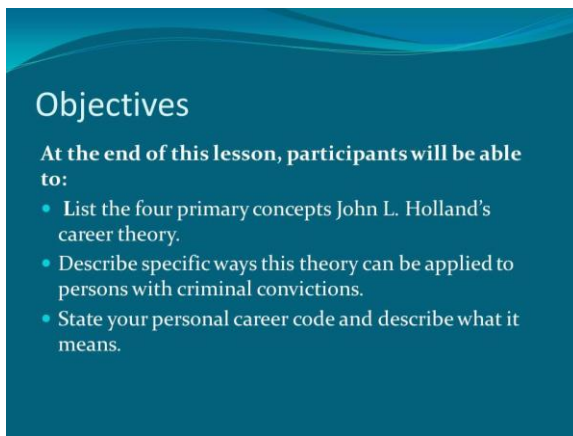
CONTENT

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This module will introduce you to the theory of work of John Holland, a prominent career choice theorist. Theory and research document the fact that individuals are likely to perform better and achieve satisfaction in work when they perform job duties that allow them to engage in activities in which they have interest and skill.

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At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- List the four primary concepts John L. Holland's career theory.
- Describe specific ways this theory can be applied to persons with criminal convictions.
- State your personal career code and describe what it means.

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The vocational theory of John Holland is an excellent example of a trait and factor theory. Let's start by looking at some of the assumptions of trait and factor theories. The first assumption is that people have unique characteristics. The second assumption is that occupations have unique characteristics. The third assumption is that for both people and occupations, these characteristics can be measured. The fourth assumption is that individuals have greater satisfaction in jobs when they can work in jobs matched to the characteristics they hold. We are going to look at John Holland's work in terms of four concepts.

The first concept is that all people can be described as a combination of two or more of six personality types. The types are called by the following names. The first type is realistic, the second type investigative, the third type artistic, the fourth social, the fifth enterprising, and the sixth conventional. There are several ways in which a person can learn what his or her type is. One way is to take an assessment instrument. There are also informal ways of learning one's code, such as describing the six environments and having the participant select the top one and second highest and so forth. Or playing informal kinds of activities such as something called the Holland Party Game.


Typically the personality type of a person is expressed as a three letter code. The first letter tells you the most dominant personality type. The second letter tells you the second most dominant and so forth. Let's take a look at each of these six types.

Let's examine each of the types

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Realistic

- Likes to work with tools, objects, machines, or animals
- Develops manual, mechanical, agricultural, and/or electrical skills
- Prefers occupations that involve building or repairing things
- Tends to be down-to-earth and practical




For the realistic type, these are people who really love to work with their hands. They like to work with tools and equipment. They like to repair things. They like to make things. They like to work alone. They have wonderful manual and mechanical skills.

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Investigative

- Likes activities involving the biological and physical sciences
- Develops math and science ability
- Prefers occupations in scientific and medical fields
- Tends to be curious, studious, and independent



The second type is investigative. These folks like to work with abstract ideas and concepts. They typically are good at math and science. They have good skills of observation. And they really like to work alone.

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Artistic

- Likes creative activities free from routine
- Develops skills in language, art, music, and/or drama
- Prefers occupations using creative talents
- Tends to be creative and free-thinking




The third type is called artistic. These are people who are imaginative, spontaneous. They have talent in one or more art forms. Typically, they like to entertain others, so they like to work with both ideas and people.

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Social

- Likes activities that involve informing, teaching, and helping others
- Develops ability to work with people
- Prefers jobs such as teaching, nursing, and counseling
- Tends to be helpful and friendly




The fourth type, social, are people who like to facilitate the development of other people. They like to teach, they like to counsel. They like to help them in a variety of ways, which may include working in the health professions. They really like to work face-to-face with people. They have an extremely high value on helping other people.

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Enterprising

- Likes activities that permit leading or influencing other people
- Develops leadership ability, persuasiveness, and other important “people” skills
- Prefers occupations involving sales or management of people or things
- Tends to be ambitious, outgoing, energetic, and self-confident




The fourth type enterprising, share some of the same characteristics. They also love to work with people, but their motive is different from the social type. They like to sell, manage, and influence. Sometimes manipulate in order to administer a task and they have fairly high value on authority and power and perhaps on money as well.

PowerPoint Slide 9

Conventional

- Likes activities that permit organization of information in a clear and orderly way
- Develops organizational, clerical, and arithmetical skills
- Prefers occupations involving record keeping, computation, typing, or computer operation
- Tends to be responsible, dependable, and detail-oriented




The conventional type, these are people who really need to keep the world in order. They have high skills on orderliness and organization. They are wonderful at dealing with details. They like to work with dates, facts, and figures. And those are the six types of personality.

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Holland's Codes

- An individual's personality is a composite of all of the types and each individual has a unique combination. Persons are typically attracted to two or three areas of interest.



An individual's personality is a composite of all of the types and each individual has a unique combination. Persons are typically attracted to two or three areas of interest. These two or three letters are a person's "Holland Code." For example, a code of "RES" means the person has a personality and interests that are associated with the Realistic type and to a lesser extent, has personality and interests that are associated with the Enterprising and Social types.

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Holland's Second Concept


Just as people can be coded by these six types, so can environments, such as jobs, schools, and leisure activities.



Let's go on to Holland's Second Concept. That concept is that just as people can be coded by these six types, so can environments, such as jobs, schools, and leisure activities. Occupations are assigned Holland Codes by expert raters who are able to read a job description and to give it a code. Or sometimes hundreds of people who are in a given occupation and say that they love it are given a Holland assessment instrument, so that the actual code from the instrument can be calculated for an occupational group. Now let's look at some career possibilities for each code.

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Realistic Career Possibilities




- Construction Worker
- Engineer
- Automotive service technician
- Carpenters
- Baker
- Bookbinder
- Bricklayer
- Bus Driver
- Diesel Mechanic
- Electrician

Here are some possibilities for a people with a realistic personality – people who likes to work their hands. They include:

- Construction worker
- Short order cook
- Automotive service technician
- Carpenter
- Baker
- Production welder
- Bricklayer
- Spraying machine operator
- Highway maintenance worker
- Electrician

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Investigative Career Possibilities

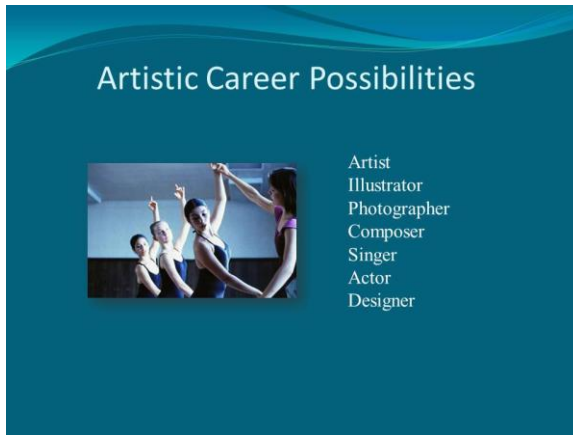


- Biologist
- Computer programmer
- Geologist
- Hazardous Waste Technician
- Market Research Analyst
- Medical Lab Technologist

And here are some possibilities for a people with an investigative personality, folks like to work with abstract ideas and concepts. They include:

Biologist
Computer programmer
Geologist
Hazardous waste technician
Market research analyst
Medical lab technologist

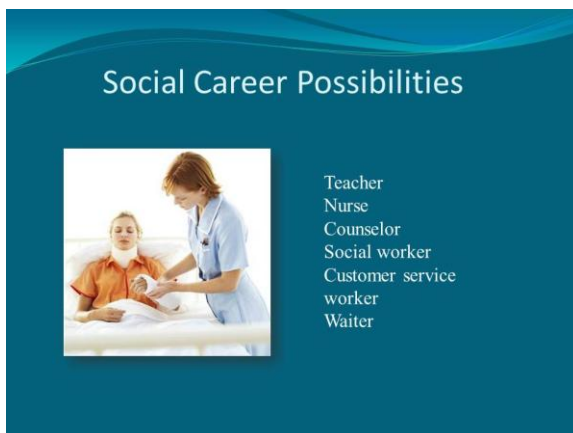
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And here are some possibilities for people with an artistic personality, folks who are imaginative, and spontaneous. They include:

Artist
Illustrator
Makeup artist
Graphic designer
Singer
Actor
Floral designer

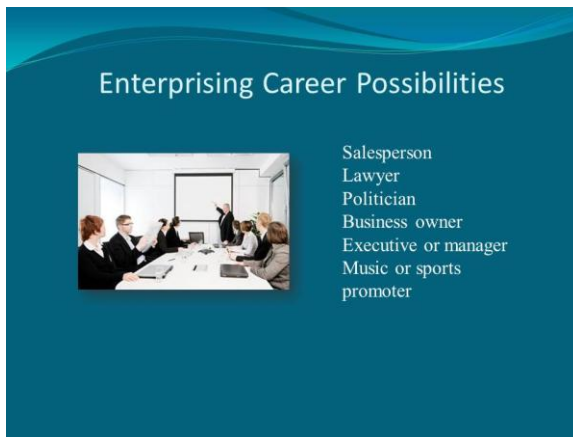
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Now let's look at career possibilities for people with a social personality, those who like to help others. They include:

Fitness trainer
Food server
Counselor
Tour guide
Customer service worker

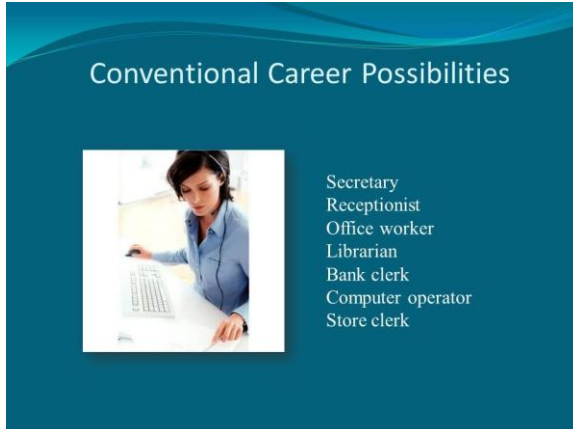
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And here are some possibilities for people with the enterprising personality, people who like to sell, manage, and influence. They include:

Retail salesperson
Telemarketer
Manicurists and pedicurists
Business owner
Executive or manager
Music or sports promoter

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Conventional Career Possibilities

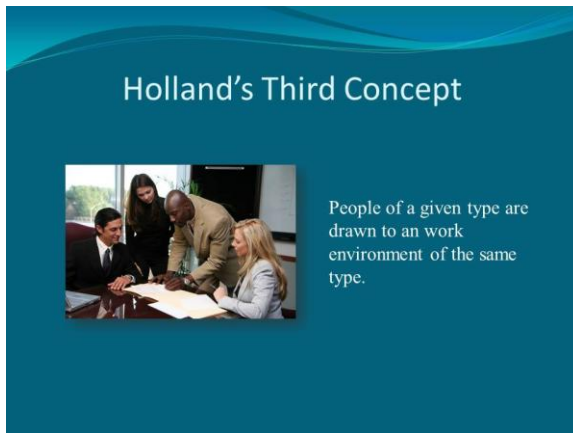


- Secretary
- Receptionist
- Office worker
- Librarian
- Bank clerk
- Computer operator
- Store clerk


Finally, here are some possibilities for people with a conventional personality, those who like to keep the world in order. They include:

- Secretary
- Receptionist
- Office worker
- File clerk
- Cashier
- Library assistant
- Shipping clerk

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Holland's Third Concept



People of a given type are drawn to a work environment of the same type.

Now that we've looked at the types of occupation that are related to each personality type, let's look at Holland's third concept. Holland's third concept is that people of a given type very much enjoy being in an environment of the same or similar type. So we can understand why people of a given type really are attracted to an environment which is of the same or very type because they can feel very fulfilled there.

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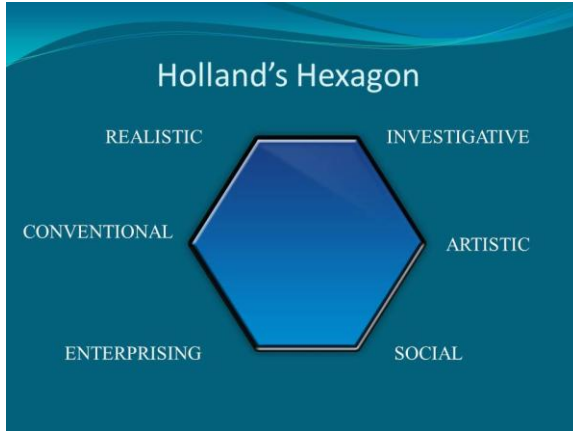
Holland's Fourth Concept



A person is likely to be most satisfied and productive if there is a fit between their personality-interest type and their work environment.

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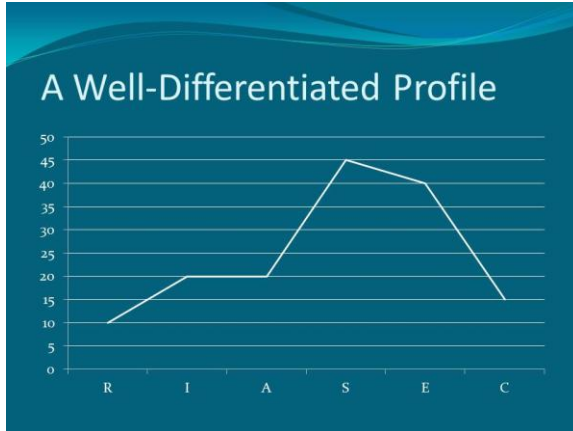
Holland and others have researched this theory for more than 40 years. One of the things they studied is the order in which these six types should be organized. And that's where Holland famous Hexagon comes in.

The letter R can be placed at any point on the hexagon, but once it is placed, the order, in clockwise fashion, must be R, I, A, S, E, C. For this reason, the theory is sometimes called the RIASEC theory. Notice the order of these six types. Personality types or jobs that are next door to each other are most alike. For example, people like the R type are most like the I types and the C types. This is what is meant by consistency. On the other hand, types most unlike each other are across the hexagon from each other, just as in the relationship of R and S or I and E.

According to Holland, higher degrees of consistency within personality types can make it easier to make career decisions and maintain career achievement and satisfaction.

As you might surmise from your knowledge of the six different types, there are fewer jobs available that combine opposites (such as CA, IE, RS, and the reverse of these letters). Also, people with the opposite codes might feel torn between doing one kind of work or the other. If jobs that combine these opposites cannot be found, it may be better to assist the individual to choose one of the two areas for work and to attempt to use the other in community, home, or leisure activities

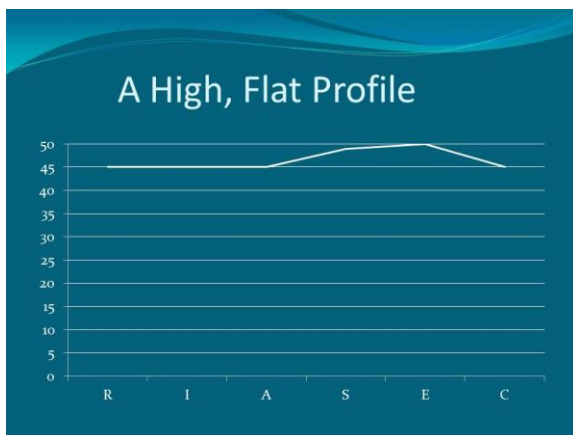
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Differentiation simply refers to the shape of the profile of a person's interest. If a person takes an interest inventory and you plot the scores, differentiation simply refers to the shape of the profile. Let's look at several profiles. This is a well-differentiated profile. Notice that it has one R which is quite low and there's S which is quite high. There are four others that are in-between. Just by the shape of this profile, you can tell that this person has well-defined interests. So a person seeking to help this person find a training program or a job would start out with training programs or jobs that are coded with the Holland Code letters S and E.

You will note that one of the six Holland types, S, is markedly higher than the other five. The second area, E, is also high; and related to the order on the hexagon, these two are next door to each other. So, this is a well-differentiated, consistent profile. There should be a number of jobs that combine these two interest areas, and this person is ready to make a choice.

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Let's look at another profile, a high flat profile. Notice that all six of the Holland Codes are high, although S and E are slightly higher than the rest. But that does not mean much

with this type of differentiation. This person has really high interests in all six areas. So if you were working with this person, you would help him or her to decide which of these six areas to use in work and which to use in other life roles. You might determine which occupations by considering the person's educational level, the job market related to each of the groups, and the values of the person.

It appears that this person has several strong areas of interest. This gives you a lot to work with, but the person will need help in deciding which one or two areas of interest to use in work. You can consider the person's work skills, educational level, risk factors, and the job market in assisting this offender to identify possible jobs.

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Here's the third and final profile, a low flat profile. This person does not have well-defined interests. This person would be a challenge to work with. You might start by eliminating areas where the person does not have skills and those where the job market is really tough.

It appears that this person has no strong areas of interest. This person may not have been exposed to any of these areas of work. This kind of profile can also reflect depression, but you should not jump to this conclusion. A person with this type of profile needs extensive assistance to eliminate areas that are impossible due to lack of education or other reasons, and to focus in on remaining areas.

A profile is a graphic representation of the "peaks and valleys" of a person's interests and self-rated skills. It shows us what areas are high (if any) and how defined an individual's interests are.

Let's look at the shape of your personal O*Net Interest Profiler.

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Personal profile


- Using the *O*Net Interest Profiler* worksheet to graph your own score.
- Follow directions on assessment and record your scores.
- After connecting the dots, discuss your profile with a partner.

1. Use the O*Net Interest Profiler worksheet to profile your own score.
2. Looking at the tally of your own scores on your assessment booklet, place a dot across from the numerical value of each of your six scores.
3. Draw a line through the six dots.
4. Look at the shape of your personal interest profile and discuss with a partner.

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Brainstorm Uses of Holland's Theory

Write down as many possible uses of this theory as you can using the worksheet.



HOLLAND CODE PROFILE WORKSHEET
(for results from the *O*Net Interest Profiler*)

30
25
20
15
10
5

R I A S E C

Instructions

1. Look at page 1 of the *O*Net Interest Profiler* Score Report, and look at the six total scores at the bottom of the page for the six Holland types. Place a dot on the graphic above at the appropriate place to indicate your score for each of the six types.
2. Connect the six dots in order to see the shape of your own personal profile.
3. List below any inferences that you can draw from this profile.

 **Activity: Brainstorm Uses of the Holland Theory**

Directions: Your group's task is to think of as many ways as you can to use the classification system and theory of John Holland. You have 10 minutes to do the following:

1. Discuss ways in which you can use Holland's classification system and/or theory in your work with offenders. List those ways in the spaces below:

2. Record these ideas on the flip chart paper provided in the classroom so that they can be shared with others.