

# O\*NET CAREER INTERESTS INVENTORY and O\*NET CAREER VALUES INVENTORY

ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE  
THIRD EDITION

## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF JIST'S INVENTORIES

JIST's *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* and *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* help people identify their work interests or values and then use this information to explore career, learning, and lifestyle alternatives. Both instruments are based on assessments researched and developed by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and contain the latest government data drawn from the DOL's O\*NET database.

These assessments are useful to anyone involved in career exploration, including students deciding on a career or educational direction, unemployed adults identifying alternative job objectives, and individuals in the middle of a career transition. They are designed to be usable by anyone reading at the eighth-grade level or above and are ideally suited for both group and individual administration.

The instruments are designed to be self-scored and self-interpreted. Each instrument takes approximately 30 minutes to complete, though more time will be needed to research job titles of interest and engage in further career exploration activities.

Following are brief descriptions of the two inventories. Refer to the instruments as you read this brief administrator's guide.

### The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*

The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* consists of 180 items representing work, learning, and leisure activities such as "Market a new line of clothing" or "Study the personalities of world leaders." These activities are scored as either *like*, *unsure*, or *dislike*. Results are totaled in six dimensions corresponding to the six interest areas of the Holland scale: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. A high score indicates a high interest in that area.



This document is designed to accompany packages of the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*, Third Edition (ISBN 978-1-59357-912-8), and the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory*, Third Edition (ISBN 978-1-59357-913-5). © 2012 by JIST Publishing. Published by JIST Works, an imprint of JIST Publishing, 875 Montreal Way, St. Paul, MN 55102-4245. E-mail: [info@jist.com](mailto:info@jist.com). Website: [www.jist.com](http://www.jist.com). All rights reserved. Duplication of this document is permitted for internal distribution to staff using the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*, Third Edition, or the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory*, Third Edition. No other use is permitted without written permission from the publisher. For additional career resources or a JIST catalog, please visit [www.jist.com](http://www.jist.com).

The assessment folds out to a 6-panel “Work Interests to Careers Chart” listing more than 850 job titles arranged within the six interest groupings. The job titles are further organized into subgroups based on the level of education or training required. These job titles come from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Information Network (O\*NET). The inventory also tells the user where to get information on these O\*NET jobs, provides a “Job Information Worksheet” to help the user gather information on jobs of high interest, and provides space to set future goals.

### **The O\*NET Career Values Inventory**

The *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* consists of 36 items arranged in a forced-choice format. Each item pairs two values statements drawn from a pool of 20 and asks the user to choose the one he or she values more. The results are then scored in six major work values drawn from the O\*NET’s *Work Importance Locator*: Achievement, Independence, Recognition, Relationships, Support, and Working Conditions. Higher scores indicate a higher level of importance for exploring jobs that include those values.

The assessment folds out to a 6-panel “Work Values to Careers Chart” listing more than 850 job titles arranged within the six values groupings. The job titles are further organized into subgroups based on the level of education or training required. These job titles come from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Information Network (O\*NET). The inventory also tells the user where to get information on the O\*NET jobs, provides a “Job Information Worksheet” to help the user gather information on jobs that match his or her values, and provides space to set future goals.

## **BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT**

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) first released several self-scoring career exploration assessment instruments in 2001. Two of these, titled *O\*NET Interest Profiler* and *O\*NET Work Importance Locator*, were made available in booklet format and provide the basis for JIST’s inventories.

The U.S. Department of Labor maintains an Internet site at [www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org) that provides information on its *O\*NET Interest Profiler* and *O\*NET Work Importance Locator*. Among other things, this site offers free downloadable copies of the user’s guides for these instruments. You will find the user’s guides by selecting “Products” and then “Career Exploration Tools” from the drop-down menu. Select “Interest Profiler” or “Work Importance Locator” sections from the drop-down menu that appears on the next page. Because JIST based its instruments on those of the Department of Labor, most information the DOL provides will directly relate to JIST’s instruments.

Here are some topics covered in the user’s guides provided by the O\*NET Center’s pages that you may find relevant to JIST’s assessments as well:

- **Administering the instruments:** Reading level and age level
- **Procedures for administering:** Overview, getting started, completing the instrument, scoring, and interpretation
- **Group administration:** Best location, when group administration is appropriate, time required, and what size groups
- **Interpretation of results:** Theory behind work interests/work values, using the results to identify occupations to explore, and the role of abilities in occupational selection

- **Understanding the score report:** Highest scores, using the results to explore careers, what the groupings mean, what occupations are linked to the groupings, job zone definitions, using the results with other career exploration tools, and O\*NET occupations
- **Development of the instrument:** Initial version, early studies, changes to the instrument, final version, reliability results, and validity evidence
- **References and additional sources of information**

These materials available online. JIST's assessments differ in one important way: the lists of occupations that are linked to the career interests and career values. If you compare the lists from the O\*NET Development Center and from JIST, you will find many overlapping occupations, but you will also find some that do not overlap. They differ for two reasons: (1) The occupational titles are likely to be based on different releases of the O\*NET database, which adds, removes, and renames occupational titles and also modifies data regarding interests and values for occupations with each new release. (2) For some levels of education and training (job zones), the number of occupations matching certain interests and values was very small, even zero. For example, no occupations in job zone 1 (little or no preparation needed) had Investigative as their highest-rated interest field. For the sake of a balanced score report, in some job zones it was useful to add some occupations that had the interest or value as their second-highest or third-highest. The O\*NET Development Center has not published its criteria for selecting these additional occupations, so the additional occupations in Step 3 of the JIST inventories often do not match those in the O\*NET Development Center's score reports.

## Key Points of the DOL's O\*NET Inventories

Here are some key points from the Department of Labor's user's guides that also apply to JIST's assessments:

- **Intended audience:** Both instruments are for use by persons 14 years of age and older. The inventories can be used with a wide variety of populations, including workers in transition, unemployed adults, college students, and junior high and high school students.
- **Reading level:** People with reading levels below eighth grade may have difficulty understanding the information in the instruments without assistance. Adults and junior high school and high school students with average reading skills will have no difficulty reading them and handling their concepts.
- **Time required to complete:** Either instrument can be completed in 30 minutes. Additional time may be required to interpret the scores and to explore occupations listed in the instruments.

## Development of JIST's Inventories

In 2002 JIST developed its own versions of the *O\*NET Interest Profiler* and *O\*NET Work Importance Locator* in an attempt to build upon the efforts of the Department of Labor and make the assessments more user friendly. The first edition of the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* was a shorter version of the *O\*NET Interest Profiler*. It used the *Interest Profiler's* work activity items, scoring system, and cross-references to job titles but combined them into one device. Directions were simplified and additional content was added to help users further their career research.

Changes in the second edition of the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* included further streamlined instructions, an updated list of resources, an improved job information worksheet, and job titles drawn directly from the latest version of the O\*NET database.

This third edition of the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* features changes to five work activity items that were appropriate for earlier editions but needed updating to match current conditions and usage. For example, “Work with mentally disabled children” has been updated to “Work with children with developmental disabilities” to reflect current terminology. “Sell compact discs and tapes at a music store” has been updated to “Sell furniture at a home furnishings store” to reflect recent changes in the distribution of music recordings.

The first edition of the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* was a shorter version of the *O\*NET Work Importance Locator*. It used the *Work Importance Locator*'s card-sorting mechanism, work values, scoring system, and cross-references to job titles but combined them into one device with fewer components, streamlined directions, and additional content to aid in career research.

The second edition of the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* still used the *Work Importance Locator*'s work values, item statements, and cross-references to job titles. In an attempt to make it even easier to use, however, the second edition reformatted the assessment as a forced-choice inventory rather than a card sort. Items were carefully matched so that each of the six values was represented equally and to ensure an equitable distribution and juxtaposition of the *Work Importance Locator*'s item statements. The result was still a rank order preference of the six work values from most to least important. This revised method was designed to provide accurate results in less time, as well as simplify administration and scoring. This third edition preserves all of these innovations.

## Advantages of JIST's Inventories

Because they use the same items (except where updated), score into the same interest categories and work values, and share the same theoretical background, JIST's assessments are comparable to those developed by the Department of Labor in terms of validity and reliability. However, the versions developed by JIST have several advantages:

- **Lower Cost:** You can get paper-and-pencil versions of the DOL's instruments from government sources, but, when all of the necessary components are factored in, they cost considerably more than JIST's comparable assessments.
- **Easier to Use:** The government versions can be complex, requiring the user to wade through long explanations and use two or more booklets. For example, the interest booklets total more than 60 pages. While some users may prefer the long narrative explanations and details in the government version, we think most people will find JIST's shorter, simpler, and more direct approach easier to use, score, and understand.
- **Self-Directed:** Not only are JIST's versions designed to be self-scoring and self-interpreting, they also encourage users to engage in further career exploration by providing additional information and worksheets. These additions guide people in their job search and expand upon the possibilities opened up by the assessments.
- **Updated:** The job titles offered in the charts of JIST's assessments are taken from the latest government data.

## ADMINISTRATION TIPS FOR JIST'S INVENTORIES

The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* and the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* can be used in various settings. Here are some suggestions to help you adapt the materials for use in your situation.

## Using the Inventories in a Group Setting

The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* and *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* are designed for ease of use, so that most people can simply read the instructions and get started. Even so, you may find it helpful to review the steps involved in taking the inventory and answer any questions. Here are some points to cover:

- Give a brief overview of the inventory's purpose: It is a tool to help users explore career and learning options based on their interests or values.
- Emphasize that the inventory is not a test in the traditional sense and that there are no right or wrong answers.
- Explain that low scores are not bad and high scores are not good. The scoring is simply a way to help users identify areas they want to explore in more detail.
- Inform participants in advance if you have a time limit for when they will have to stop working. Tell them what to do if they get done early. Explain to those who do not complete the inventory in the allotted time that you will make arrangements for them to complete it after the session.
- Review the basic step-by-step elements of the inventory, explaining each step and answering questions as you go.
- Explain that the inventory has lots of information but that the participants will be interested in only some of it. For example, the chart includes lots of job titles, but most users will be interested in only certain areas and can quickly eliminate others.
- Mention any steps you do not want the participants to complete, particularly the ones that require additional research. Advise them that you will tell them what to do on these steps after they have completed the other steps.

## Using the Inventories When Time Is Short

The inventories are designed to be self-administered, self-scored, and self-interpreted. No staff supervision is required, although it is usually helpful. Most people can complete either inventory within 30 minutes, although some may require as much as 60 minutes. If time is especially short, encourage participants to focus only on the job titles that match up with their highest interest area or their highest work value, and then suggest that they go back and explore other job titles of interest later.

Step 4 of both inventories encourages users to begin researching and exploring those jobs that match their interests or values. While participants will certainly benefit from spending additional time researching various occupations, this is not required for completing either inventory. You can then ask that this last step be completed as homework.

## Using the Inventories to Help Structure One or More Career Exploration Sessions

JIST's *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* and *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* are well suited for use in a class or group setting. With some creativity, they can be used to help structure a career exploration program lasting several sessions. Because there are so many ways such a program might be organized, here are some general tips you can use in developing your own sessions:

- **Small-group discussion:** Dividing large groups into groups of 3 to 5 people allows test takers to discuss a topic and interact more constructively. After participants finish completing the inventory and scoring their responses, you can divide the large group into small discussion groups. Give these groups a specific task. For example, ask that each person in the group tell the others his or her highest three scores, whether the scores make sense to the person, and why. Alternatively, you

could ask each person in the group to discuss possible jobs or job tasks that might satisfy his or her interests or values to get an even clearer understanding of what they want in a career.

- **Homework:** You can assign one or more of the inventory's steps or activities as homework. The results or experiences can be discussed when the group meets again. For example, group members might be asked to research one or more job descriptions that interest them and report back to the group what they learned. Small groups can be formed on the basis of highest interest area or work value so that group members are sharing information that is of value to the other members in their small group.
- **Action activities:** Action activities encourage participants to use the knowledge they've gained from taking the assessment and to physically go out and act on it. For example, you can ask group members to make one or more personal contacts to learn more about an occupation, training option, educational program, or leisure activity that is related to their interests or that matches their values.

Another approach is to ask each group member to select a particular job that interests him or her and to find someone who works in this or a related job. Outside the session, group members should interview these persons about their work. Participants can use questions from the worksheet provided in Step 4 of the inventory or ones you assign. They can document what they learn and later share it with the group.

- **Individual or cooperative presentations:** Individuals or small groups can make a large-group presentation on a topic of your or their choice. For example, they might present what they learned about a specific career area, community education resources, the results of visits to local training programs, available financial aid, reviews of occupational information books or software, or any other career exploration topic.
- **Group brainstorming and feedback:** You can allow groups to react to something or to provide additional ideas. For example, participants can review their goals from their Job Information Worksheets in small groups and get feedback, support, and ideas from other group members. Then, in the large group, they can discuss what they learned and present problems that the large group might have ideas for resolving.
- **Field visits and guest presenters:** You can take your group to a public library and have the librarian explain the career resources that are available there, including any computerized systems or Internet resources. You can also have a vocational counselor, employer, or other person come to a session to make a presentation or to answer questions.
- **Show and tell:** You can bring some career resource materials (such as those suggested in Step 4 of both assessments) to the session and show the group how they work, or you can have individuals or groups do this as an assignment.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* and *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* are ideal for career exploration purposes. However, they only represent one important step in that process. Further career research requires learning about the job titles that individuals found to match their interests or values. Because of their correlation to the O\*NET database, there is a wide variety of career reference materials and other resources individuals can use to further their exploration. While Step 4 of both inventories briefly explains some of these resources, what follows is a more exhaustive list.

- ***O\*NET Dictionary of Occupational Titles:*** This book includes thorough descriptions of the approximately 950 jobs in the O\*NET database. Descriptions feature information on earnings, projected growth, education and training, knowledge and skills, and other helpful details.
- ***Best Jobs for the 21st Century:*** Includes lists of jobs with high pay, numerous openings, or fast growth, plus descriptions for the O\*NET jobs related to the titles on these lists.
- ***50 Best Jobs for Your Personality:*** Offers job descriptions and other useful information for each of the six interest areas/personality types used in the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*.
- ***The Best College Majors for Your Personality:*** Includes lists of college majors related to jobs with high pay, numerous openings, or fast growth, plus descriptions of these majors and jobs. These majors are organized by the six interest areas/personality types used in the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*.
- ***Occupational Outlook Handbook:*** Published by the U.S. Department of Labor and available from JIST Publishing, this book describes about 340 major jobs covering 90 percent of the workforce. Descriptions offer details on pay, working conditions, training or education required, related jobs, projected growth, and additional information sources, including Internet addresses for further research. An easy-to-use, quicker, and more accessible version titled the *EZ Occupational Outlook Handbook* is also available from JIST Publishing.

In addition, a website maintained by the U.S. Department of Labor at <http://online.onetcenter.org> provides complete data on all O\*NET jobs.

## VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

While the Department of Labor's instruments were revised to make them easier to use, the important content that underlies the validity of those instruments remains. The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* uses most of the same 180 activity statements (five have been updated) and the same scoring scheme as those in the original Department of Labor (DOL) instrument. In a similar way, the *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* asks users to rank the same work values statements as those in the DOL's instrument. Because we've not changed most of the essential elements of these instruments, the validity and reliability measures determined by DOL research form the basis for the validity and reliability of JIST's editions.

The DOL's career interests instrument and values instrument both have reasonable reliability and validity, according to the research findings of the Department of Labor. The *O\*NET Interest Profiler*, upon which the *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory* is based, scores into Holland's RIASEC interest categories, which are widely accepted and used in other popular and heavily researched career interests inventories, including the *Self-Directed Search* and the *Strong Interest Inventory*. In addition, the DOL has established construct validity and reliability for the *Interest Profiler*, including high internal consistency across the RIASEC scales and high test/retest reliability.

Likewise, the *O\*NET Work Importance Locator* underwent an extensive development process, including extensive pilot testing, resulting in construct validity and reliability evidence. The work values used by both the DOL assessment and JIST's *O\*NET Career Values Inventory* were derived from more than 30 years of vocational psychology research.

More information about the validity and reliability of the Department of Labor's assessments can be found by visiting its website at [www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org) and downloading the user's guides that are published by the U.S. Department of Labor for each instrument.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you for your interest in our inventories. We also want to thank the staff of the U.S. Department of Labor and other organizations who contributed their time and talent to the development of the DOL inventories upon which our versions are based. We appreciate all they do and know that many people will be helped in planning more productive and satisfying careers as a result of their work.

**Restrictions for use:** The *O\*NET Career Interests Inventory*, *O\*NET Career Values Inventory*, and any other form of the *O\*NET Interest Profiler* or *O\*NET Work Importance Locator* should be used for career exploration, career planning, and vocational counseling purposes only, and no other use has been authorized or is valid. Results should not be used for employment or hiring decisions or for applicant screening for jobs or training programs. Please see the DOL's separate Special Notice: User's Agreement at [www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org) for additional details on restrictions and use. The word "O\*NET" is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.