Ability Profiler (Optional Add-On)

Description

The Ability Profiler is available as an online assessment which can be purchased and integrated with Choices Planner.

Designed specifically for career exploration, planning and counseling, the Ability Profiler measures aptitudes. Aptitude reflects a person's ability to acquire skills and knowledge. Aptitude ratings reflect how quickly and easily a person learns in comparison to others.

The Ability Profiler is a computer-based, multi-aptitude battery that gives individuals one indication of their potential for successfully performing work tasks in specific occupations. The assessment relates aptitude levels to careers based on the information about job aptitude requirements from the Department of Labor. The Choices Planner Ability Profiler is an electronic version of the paper-pencil components of the O*NET Ability Profiler (Department of Labor).

This career exploration tool should be administered under professional supervision. Results can be used to:

- explore areas for which users might want to receive more training and education
- compare users' abilities with the abilities necessary to perform different occupations that fit their strengths

The Ability Profiler is designed for the purpose of career exploration and counseling. Its results should not be used for employment or hiring decisions. Employers, education programs or other job-related programs should not use results as part of a screening process.

Results from the Ability Profiler can be linked to all the occupations in the Choices Planner database to facilitate comparison of an individual's abilities and those recommended for success in an occupation. The results report is easily interpreted. Scores can be compared to the aptitude levels assigned to occupations.

Users should use additional information about themselves when making career decisions. They can import results into the Career Finder and combine them with other factors in their search for occupations. For example, users can obtain information about their individual attributes from any or all of the three Profilers (Ability Profiler, Interest Profiler and the Work Values Sorter). They can then explore the occupations that most closely correspond to their array of abilities, interests and work values.

The Ability Profiler takes 30 to 60 minutes to complete. Users may then want to take more time to check out suggested careers. All the subtests are timed, but only the last three subtests are considered "speeded".
The Ability Profiler measures six basic abilities:

- **Arithmetic Reasoning** -- The ability to use several math skills and logical thinking to solve problems in everyday situations
- **Verbal Ability** -- The ability to understand the meaning of words and use them effectively in good communication when you listen, speak or write
- **Spatial Ability** -- The ability to form pictures of objects in your mind; it involves easily understanding how drawings represent real objects and correctly imagining how parts fit together
- **Computation** -- The ability to use arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve everyday problems involving numbers
- **Clerical Perception** -- The ability to quickly and accurately see differences in detail in printed material
- **Form Perception** -- The ability to quickly and accurately see details in objects, pictures or drawings; it involves noticing little differences in shapes of figures, shading, and lengths and widths of lines

These six abilities are assessed using computer-administered exercises as follows (listed in the standard order that the exercises are presented to the user):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise and Item Content</th>
<th>Ability Measured</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Test Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic Reasoning -- Mathematical word problems requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication or division of whole numbers, fractions, and percentages</td>
<td>Arithmetic Reasoning</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary -- Two of the four words presented in each item have either the same or opposite meanings</td>
<td>Verbal Ability</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Dimensional Space -- Consists of determining which one of four three-dimensional objects can be made by bending and/or rolling a flat, two-dimensional form</td>
<td>Spatial Ability</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computation -- Mathematical problems requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication or division of whole numbers</td>
<td>Computation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Comparison -- Identifying whether pairs of names are the same or different</td>
<td>Clerical Perception</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Matching -- Determining which of four drawings is the exact duplicate of the first figure</td>
<td>Form Perception</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first three subtests, Arithmetic Reasoning, Vocabulary and Three-Dimensional Space, are "power tests." That is, most people will have enough time to complete all the items and demonstrate how much they know. The last three subtests, Computation, Name Comparison and Object Matching, are "timed tests." In other words, users are being tested to see how quickly they can perform the tasks and still be accurate.

In addition to these exercises that are computer-administered and scored, the Ability Profiler can accept manually entered raw scores from the additional mark-making and dexterity board exercises that may be administered using the O*NET Ability Profiler paper-based materials described below, resulting in a comprehensive report of a user's abilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise &amp; Item Content</th>
<th>Ability Measured</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Test Time</th>
<th>O*NET Apparatus Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mark Making</strong> -- Using the dominant hand to make three lines within a square</td>
<td><strong>Motor Coordination</strong></td>
<td>130 square</td>
<td>60 second</td>
<td>Part 7 Mark Making Answer Sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong> -- Using both hands to move pegs from the upper to the lower part of the board</td>
<td><strong>Manual Dexterity</strong></td>
<td>48 pegs</td>
<td>3 15-second test trials</td>
<td>Manual dexterity pegboards and pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turn</strong> -- Using the dominant hand to turn pegs and insert them back in the board</td>
<td><strong>Manual Dexterity</strong></td>
<td>48 pegs</td>
<td>3 30-second timed trials</td>
<td>Manual dexterity pegboards and pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assemble</strong> -- Using both hands to put a washer on a rivet and move the assembled piece from one part of the board to another</td>
<td><strong>Finger Dexterity</strong></td>
<td>50 rivets</td>
<td>1.5 minutes</td>
<td>Finger dexterity boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disassemble</strong> -- Using both hands to remove a washer from a rivet and put the disassembled pieces into different places on the board</td>
<td><strong>Finger Dexterity</strong></td>
<td>50 rivets</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>Finger dexterity boards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more complete descriptions of the abilities measured by the components of the O*NET Ability Profiler, refer to the O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual at [http://www.onetcenter.org/AP.html](http://www.onetcenter.org/AP.html)

**Background**

The Choices Planner Ability Profiler is based on the O*NET Ability Profiler. It is essentially a computer-administered version of the six subtests contained in the O*NET Ability Profiler Test Booklet. (The scores for the O*NET Ability Profiler mark-making and dexterity board exercises can be manually entered in Choices Planner.)
In developing this assessment, careful attention was paid to ensure fairness of the items; that is, that the assessment is equally valid for all segments of the population for the factors it was designed to measure.

A study was undertaken to establish alternate form reliability. This enabled Choices Planner to take full advantage of the wealth of information available from O*NET about their test and to support the linking of assessment results to occupations.

The occupations that have been linked to the O*NET Career Exploration Tools are the 1,122 O*NET occupations identified by the National Center for O*NET Development during the Dictionary of Occupational Titles Conversion Project. A user's score profile(s) from the completed assessment tool(s) is(are) compared to occupational-specific information contained in O*NET related to the particular tool used.

The O*NET Ability Profiler was developed following rigorous scientific procedures with help from customers and leading experts in the field of assessment research. These procedures were followed to ensure that it is a valid, user-friendly, assessment tool for career exploration, career planning and career counseling. The development of the O*NET Ability Profiler was undertaken as the result of a Department of Labor research project to improve the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB).

The O*NET Ability Profiler was not intended as a replacement for the GATB. Rather, it was designed and validated solely for use in career exploration, career counseling and career planning. Therefore it does not apply to all of the purposes for which the GATB was used. The Ability Profiler can be seen, however, as a useful update of the GATB. Original research for the GATB was conducted in the 1940s and most recently updated in the 1980s.

For technical information about the adaptation of this computer-administered version from the original O*NET Ability Profiler, see the Ability Profiler Technical Guide.

**Administration Guidelines**

**Administration Conditions**

The procedures and conditions under which an assessment is administered are essential to eliciting users’ best performance. It is the responsibility of the test supervisor to make sure that users take the Ability Profiler under conditions that produce valid results. Specifically, attention should be paid to both the physical and psychological environment to make sure that every user:

- is not distracted by the environment
- is physically comfortable
- sees value in the assessment
- is willing and able to perform his/her best

A number of issues related to ensuring standardized administration conditions arise when using the O*NET Ability Profiler. Many of these issues are largely solved by the Choices Planner computer-administered version. For example, the computer manages all the timing of the subtests. This not only ensures accurately-timed sessions, but also prevents users from moving to pages where they should not be -- a behavior that may go unnoticed when administering the...
O*NET Ability Profiler (paper-pencil version).

The computer administration also facilitates the use of the assessment in classroom-type settings, where there could be one test supervisor per 30 or 35 users in a session. However, every effort should be made to ensure that the room is free from noise and interruptions so users will not be distracted. Also, the configuration of the room should allow the test supervisor to be visible to every user and enable the supervisor to easily observe users' progress without causing any disturbance.

Participant Criteria

The Ability Profiler was designed for people who:

- are at least 16 years of age
- are able to read and understand English on at least a sixth grade level
- have not taken the Ability Profiler or the paper-pencil O*NET Ability Profiler within the past six months

Test supervisors should confirm that participants meet these criteria before they begin the test. Since the Ability Profiler was designed for career exploration and counseling, results from the Ability Profiler should not be used for job selection or selection into job training programs.

Note: For information regarding reasonable accommodations to be made for users with special needs, consult the O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual, pp. II. 2-4.

Administration Supervision

There is no certification required to supervise the administration of the Ability Profiler. However, it is highly recommended that the test supervisor be generally familiar with career assessment tools and able to arrange for an assessment environment that will ensure that a test-taker's results are representative of his/her abilities.

It is important to engender the cooperation of users and alleviate their anxiety to the best extent possible so that they are able to do their best work. (As part of this effort, the supervisor may want to avoid using the word "test," and refer to the assessment by its name, "profiler", and the subtests as "parts," or "exercises.") Supervisors can also stimulate the interest of users by explaining the purpose and uses of the assessment, and how their results can benefit them.

Once the Ability Profiler password is entered and each user begins the assessment, the supervisor's role shifts from giving directions to simply monitoring the computer administration of the instrument. Test supervisors can answer individual questions that arise when users are not being timed -- that is, when they are reading the directions for subtests and attempting the practice items. Users should be advised that they should get any clarification about what they need to do before the timing begins.

The supervisor must not make comments to users during the test. If any unusual circumstance arises, the test supervisor is responsible for documenting the circumstance for future reference, as it may affect the users' results.
Examples of behaviors and circumstances worth noting since they may indicate that the results do not accurately portray the abilities of the users include:

- A user finishes a subtest in a very short time.
- A user has difficulty following directions.
- A user lacks motivation (note specific behavior observed).
- There was an unusual incident (e.g., fire drill, power outage).

Other responsibilities of the test supervisor include controlling the access to the Ability Profiler and safeguarding the confidentiality of the results.

Getting Started

1. Click on the Ability Profiler located in the right sidebar of assessments on the Work page of Choices Planner.
2. Sign in to your portfolio if you have not already done so.
3. Enter your password, found in your Ability Profiler Installation Guide.
4. Read the instructions to get started taking the Ability Profiler aptitude assessment.

Ability Profiler Disclaimer

Bridges' Ability Profiler modifies the paper-and-pencil O*NET Ability Profiler, a component of the O*NET Career Exploration Tools, in order to deliver the assessment in an electronic format.

Bridges Transitions Inc. has modified the O*NET™ Career Exploration Tools. The Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration ("DOL/ETA") has not approved, endorsed or tested the Bridges-modified O*NET Career Exploration Tools or any products incorporating or containing the modified O*NET Career Exploration Tools. As such, DOL/ETA will not be liable to any third party or end-user for any damages arising out of or from the use or misuse of the modified O*NET Career Exploration Tools or any products incorporating or containing the modified O*NET Career Exploration Tools.

The modifications to the Ability Profiler were:

- The General Instruction section was shortened, removing parts 1 -- 6.
- The "How to change an answer" section was modified.
- Instructions have been updated, removing booklet and answer sheet references.
- Answers to practice questions are shown.
- "Three-Dimensional Space" now has two practice questions instead of three.
- The number of questions presented at one time has been reduced to fit on a computer screen.
  - Arithmetic Reasoning: Six questions to two questions
  - Vocabulary: 10 questions to four questions
  - Three Dimensional Space: Five questions to two questions
  - Computation: Eight questions to two questions
  - Name Comparison: 30 questions to 15 questions
  - Object Matching: Five questions to two questions
- A screen at the end of each section notes any unanswered questions or confirms that the
section was completed in full.
• A "skipped" button allows users to find unanswered questions quickly.
• Time remaining is shown.
• Answers are entered directly online instead of having to transfer them to an answer sheet.
• The final results are converted to GATB aptitudes in order to get a list of Choices Planner occupations.

These modifications enhance the assessment, making the software version more efficient for test-takers and providing results that can be matched to Choices planning and exploration products.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How long does it take to complete the Ability Profiler?**

   Each of the six parts of the Ability Profiler is timed, for a total of 55 minutes. With the time needed to read directions, etc., most people will complete the Ability Profiler in 30 to 60 minutes. Test-takers should be encouraged to study their results and connect to matching occupations.

2. **How do I enter results from the paper-based O*NET Ability Profiler into the Choices Planner version?**

   Five components from the original paper-pencil O*NET Ability Profiler were not included in the Choices Planner electronic version of the Ability Profiler. These components measure aptitudes in the areas of motor coordination, manual dexterity and finger dexterity.

   To manually enter score results from these paper-based tests into the Choices Planner version, get to the Results screen that appears after you have completed all components of the Ability Profiler. Then enter these other scoring results in the Manual Test Scores right sidebar.

3. **Where can I see the Ability Profiler results in my portfolio?**

   Ability Profiler results are automatically saved in your portfolio if you signed in when taking the assessment. They will be in the All About You page of the portfolio, under Aptitudes.

4. **Where are the abilities for each career displayed?**

   The related abilities (aptitudes) are in the Is This For You? tab within a Choices Planner career profile.

   For example, you can log into Choices Planner and click on Work. Click on Alphabetical List and then Accountant (or any other career). Click on Is This For You? You will see the level required in this career for each aptitude.