

Student Strengths

THE POSITION of medical assistant is expected to be the fastest-growing career into the next decade. More medical assistants will be needed to serve the demands of an aging population and technological advances that treat more conditions and diseases.



Objective:



Identify methods of self-assessment and psychometrics to assess personal strengths, facilitate learning, and plan a career as a medical assistant.

Key Terms:



aptitude
assessment
inventory

-metric
psycho-
psychometrics

self-assessment
skill

How Do You Choose a Career?

There are tools you can use to determine the best profession for you. **Self-assessment** is the process of gathering information about yourself. You may think of it as a self-evaluation. In self-assessments, you can evaluate your own values, personality, career interests, skills, and abilities.

Psychometrics is a method “to measure the mind.” The prefix **psycho-** means “the mind,” and the suffix **-metric** means “measurement” or “to measure.” **Psychometrics** is a method of measuring or assessing individual differences in ability, behavior, aptitude, intelligence, and other personal attributes through psychological testing. Psychometric tests measure your interests, personality type, skills, ability, aptitude, values, motivators, career aptitude, learning style, and management skills. It is estimated that 70 percent of employers use some form of psychometric testing in their recruitment and promotion processes.

The results of self-assessment and psychometric testing will help match you with careers and work environments that suit you. Self-assessment may help you gain confidence in your abilities, enabling you to better market yourself during interviews.

TABLE 1. Medical Assistants' Wages

State and National Wages						
Location	Pay Period	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$10.01	\$11.71	\$13.87	\$16.56	\$19.32
	Yearly	\$20,800	\$24,400	\$28,800	\$34,400	\$40,200
Illinois	Hourly	\$10.07	\$11.86	\$14.04	\$16.91	\$19.93
	Yearly	\$20,900	\$24,700	\$29,200	\$35,200	\$41,500

Source: Occupation Profile-America's Career InfoNet, sponsored by the Department of Labor



BROADENING AWARENESS...

AMAZING ASPECTS: Self-Assessment Tool

Multiple Intelligences for Adult Literacy and Education, <http://www.literacyworks.org/mi/intro/about.html>, features an assessment that will help you determine your strengths. Below are excerpts from a questionnaire by Dr. Terry Armstrong, of the Colorado Technical Institute.

Instructions: Read each statement carefully. Write the number of the statement that best describes you.

- 1 = Statement does not describe you at all
- 2 = Statement describes you somewhat
- 3 = Statement describes you exactly

1. I feel that people of all ages like me. _____
2. I enjoy learning new words. _____
3. I like to be with different types of people. _____
4. I sometimes think about the influence I have on others. _____
5. I love to read and learn new things. _____
6. Following directions is easy for me. _____
7. I respond to people enthusiastically, free of prejudice or bias. _____
8. I take responsibility for my actions. _____
9. I enjoy learning challenging information. _____
10. I enjoy new or unique situations. _____
11. I try not to waste time on trivial things. _____
12. I enjoy complimenting others on their achievements. _____
13. I like to promote personal and team cooperation. _____
14. I am always honest with myself. _____
15. I like to be active. _____
16. I feel confident when I am with strangers. _____



ON THE JOB...

CAREER CONNECTION: Psychometric Tests

College career centers and workforce development organizations offer research-based psychometric assessments to assist in career guidance and job placement. Listed are 12 psychometric tests and an explanation of the traits evaluated by each one.

1. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) evaluates personality.
2. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) evaluates personality.
3. Likert scale assesses attitude.
4. Ball Aptitude Battery measures aptitude.
5. Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) assesses career aptitude.
6. Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII) assesses interests.
7. Kudor Occupational Interest Survey (KOIS) predicts career interests.
8. Holland Self-Directed Search (SDS) measures interests.
9. Keirsey Temperament Sorter (KTS-II) assesses personality and temperament.
10. Kudor Skills Assessment measures skills.
11. Kudor Work Values Inventory measures work values.
12. Holland Codes predicts work personality.

TABLE 2. Actual and Anticipated Medical Assistant Employment Trends

State and National Trends				
United States	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings
	2008	2018		1*
Medical Assistants	483,600	647,500	+0.34	21,780
Illinois	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings
	2008	2018		1*
Medical Assistants	16,320	20,830	+0.28	630

1* Job openings refers to the annual job openings due to growth and net replacement

Source: Occupation Profile-America's Career InfoNet, sponsored by the Department of Labor

MEASURING QUALIFICATIONS

An **assessment** is a judgment, evaluation, or appraisal. It can be defined as a method, tool, or instrument for measuring performance and achievement. In contrast, a **skill** is the ability to do something well, often following experience or training. Being suited for a job will help increase your job satisfaction. Some skills needed to be a medical assistant include being an active

listener, paying attention to what other people say, asking appropriate questions, and not interrupting. You need to be able to talk with patients to convey information effectively. In addition, you need good reading comprehension to understand written information. Some evaluations include an accounting of abilities in an evaluation or survey, which is an **inventory**.

An **aptitude** is a natural talent or tendency; it is the ability to learn a particular skill or subject matter easily. A good medical assistant has the ability to sense and recognize patients' problems. You must have good vision to observe details.

Summary:



Understanding your personality, interests, values, skills, and aptitude will help you choose the right career. Self-assessment and psychometric tests are tools to help you assess your aptitudes and other qualities. Important considerations in choosing your career will be determining your interests and deciding what will be important to you in your job. Recognizing and understanding yourself and your abilities will help you choose a career path that will bring you success and satisfaction.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What medical field is expected to be the fastest-growing position into the next decade?
2. List two important tools that can help you determine your qualifications and channel your talents.
3. What percentage of employers use some type of psychometric testing in recruiting and promoting processes?
4. Name one psychometric test that assesses personality and temperament.
5. What word describes the ability to learn a particular skill or subject matter easily?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Visit a college career center or workforce development organization that will assist you with career guidance and job placement.

Web Links:



Jobs to Careers

<http://www.jobs-to-careers.com>

Medical Assistants

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos164.htm>

Medical Assistant Jobs and Careers

<http://medical.assistant.jobs.topusajobs.com/>