Career Cruising

ABILITY PROFILER

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

US

UPDATED AUGUST 2015

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the background necessary to ensure that your site's use of the Ability Profiler produces the most valid results possible. This guide is an important resource for individuals who will be administering the Career Cruising Ability Profiler and/or working with users to interpret their results.

The Administration Manual covers the following topics:

- An overview of the components and features of the Career Cruising Ability Profiler
- How to administer the assessment effectively
- How the Ability Profiler results should and should not be used
- How to help users interpret their results

In order to produce valid results, it is essential that the assessment be taken under the appropriate conditions and by users who meet the eligibility criteria. As an administrator, it is your responsibility to ensure the integrity of the testing environment. Please review this document before administering the Ability Profiler. If you have any questions, please contact us at:

Career Cruising
Phone: 1-800-965-8541
Email: support@careercruising.com

Much of the information provided in this guide is based on the *O*Net* Ability Profiler Administration Manual, U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration: 2002a.
http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf

The content has been modified to accommodate changes in the test format from a paper-based test to an online assessment.

Components of the Ability Profiler

The Career Cruising online Ability Profiler is based on the paper-based O*Net Ability Profiler, produced by the National Center for O*Net Development. The assessment consists of six timed sections designed to evaluate the examinee's level of ability in key areas.

ABILITIES MEASURED

The six component sections of the Ability Profiler measure the following abilities:[1]

Arithmetic Reasoning is the ability to use several math skills and logical thinking to solve problems in everyday situations. It involves gathering and sorting through all information related to a problem, making educated guesses about how best to solve the problem, picking a likely way to solve it, and then explaining your decisions. This ability is important in such fields as engineering, finance, mathematics, science, and technology. This ability is measured by the *Arithmetic Reasoning* exercise.

Verbal Ability is the ability to understand the meaning of words and use them effectively in good communication when you listen, speak, or write. This ability is important in such fields as communications, education, law, literary arts, and sales. This ability is measured by the *Vocabulary* exercise.

Spatial Ability is 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. This ability is important in such fields as architecture, carpentry, engineering technology, the visual arts, interior design, and clothing design. This ability is measured by the *Three-Dimensional Space* exercise.

Computation is the ability to use arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve everyday problems involving numbers. This ability is important in such fields as engineering, finance, bookkeeping, construction, mathematics, science, and technology. This ability is measured by the *Computation* exercise.

Clerical Perception is the ability to quickly and accurately see differences in detail in printed material. The material may be text or numbers on a page, in lists, or in tables. It involves noticing if there are mistakes in the text and numbers, or if there are careless errors in working math problems. This ability measures "speed of perception," which is required in many industrial jobs, even when these jobs do not have verbal or numerical content. This ability is important in such fields as administration, claims processing, library services, office machine operation, packaging, and word processing. This ability is measured by the *Name Comparison* exercise.

[1] Adapted from *O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual* (U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration: 2002a) I. 4 – I. 6. http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf

Components of the Ability Profiler

Form Perception is 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. This ability is important in such fields as craft arts, craft technology, jewelry making, production technology, production work, and quality control. This ability is measured by the *Object Matching* exercise.

EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS

The following table outlines the components tests of the online Ability Profiler.[2]

Order	Exercise	Description	Number of Items	Actual Test Time*
1	Arithmetic Reasoning	Consists of mathematical word problems requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division of whole numbers, fractions, and percentages.	18	20 minutes
2	Vocabulary	Consists of indicating which two words out of four have either the same or opposite meanings.	19	8 minutes
3	Three-Dimensional Space	Consists of determining which one of four three-dimensional figures can be made by bending and/or rolling a flat, two-dimensional form.	20	8 minutes
4	Computation	Consists of mathematical exercises requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division of whole numbers.	40	6 minutes
5	Name Comparison	Consists of determining whether two names are the same or different.	90	6 minutes
6	Object Matching	Consists of identifying the one drawing out of four that is the exact duplicate of the figure presented in the question stem.	42	5 minutes

* Please allow an additional 5 to 10 minutes per test for administration, reading instructions, and practice questions.

[2] Adapted from *O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual.* (U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration: 2002a) I. 4 – I. 6. http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf

Components of the Ability Profiler

TYPES OF EXERCISES

The Ability Profiler consists of two types of exercises: ***power tests*** and ***speeded tests***.

The ***power tests*** are the Arithmetic Reasoning, Vocabulary, and Three-Dimensional Space sections. Examinees should be able to complete all of the questions in each section within the time allotted. If they do not know the correct answer, examinees should take their best guess. There is no deduction for incorrect answers.

The ***speeded tests*** are the Computation, Name Comparison, and Object Matching sections. Time is critical in these sections and examinees are not expected to be able to answer every question. Depending on the section, partial points may be deducted for incorrect answers.

FEATURES OF THE ONLINE ABILITY PROFILER

Career Cruising has reproduced the paper-based O*Net Ability Profiler in an online format. The online Ability Profiler differs from the paper-based version in a number of ways.

1. The time limits for each section are enforced automatically. The timer will begin as soon as the user looks at the first test question. Users are alerted that the time will begin when they proceed from the practice questions to the test questions.

   A timer is located in the top right corner of the question screen showing the amount of time remaining for that section.

2. The instruction sections are self-paced. Users can review the sample and practice questions until they are ready to proceed. Once they begin the section, examinees cannot go back to the introductory information.

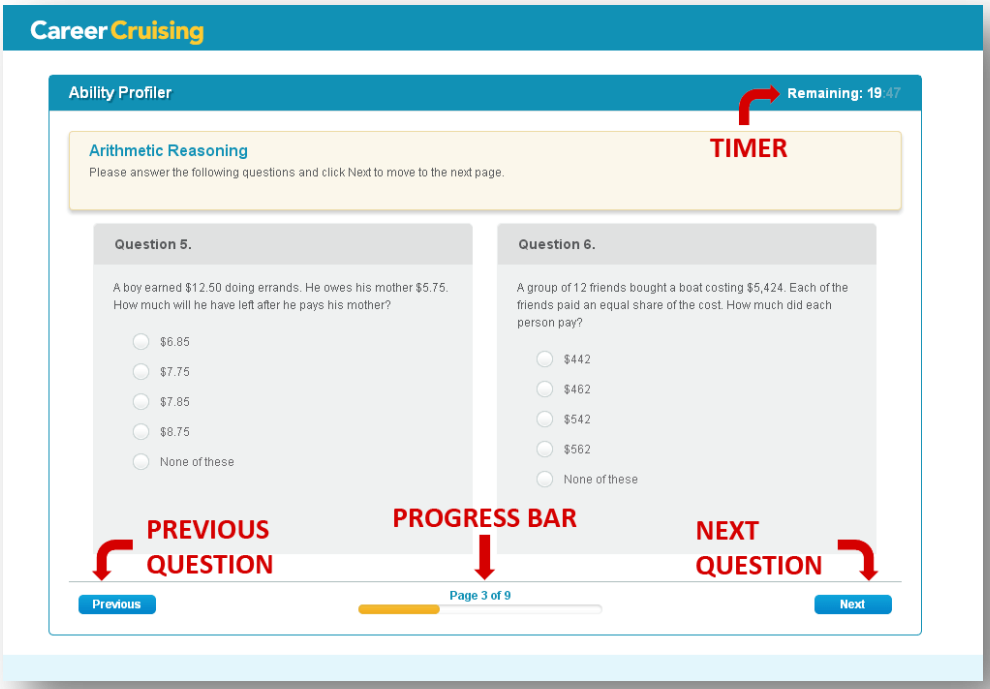
3. The online assessment can be completed in multiple sittings. While it is strongly recommended that users complete the entire assessment in one sitting, this may not always be possible. If necessary, test takers can stop at the end of any section. Please note: Users cannot stop during a section and cannot view their results until all six sections have been completed.

4. The number of questions per page has been modified from the paper test booklet to accommodate screen size.

5. A progress bar at the bottom of the question area indicates how much of the section has been completed and how many pages are left.

6. Examinees will receive their results immediately. At the end of the sixth test, users will be provided with their Ability Profile and will be able to explore the relationship between their abilities and the abilities of individuals in the careers that are of interest to them. Users can retrieve their results from the My Assessments section of their Plan.

Components of the Ability Profiler



Example Question Page

Scheduling Testing Windows

WHAT IS A TESTING WINDOW?

The Ability Profiler must be administered under monitored conditions to ensure the integrity of the results. Examinees may not talk with one another, use calculators, or consult reference resources, such as print or electronic dictionaries, during the test.

To help ensure that examinees are taking the Ability Profiler under proper testing conditions, administrators schedule test windows during which users with the appropriate access code can start the Ability Profiler.

Administrators can schedule as many testing windows as required.

When users who have completed Career Matchmaker click on the Ability Profiler button in their Plan during a test window, they will see a textbox labeled “Enter Registration Code” and a blue “Start Now” button. Users enter a valid registration code for that date and time, and then click on the blue button.

Users must begin or continue the test during a testing window; however, they are not required to finish the sections or test in that time.

Examinees MUST complete Career Matchmaker BEFORE they begin the Ability Profiler.

VIEWING & MANAGING TEST WINDOWS

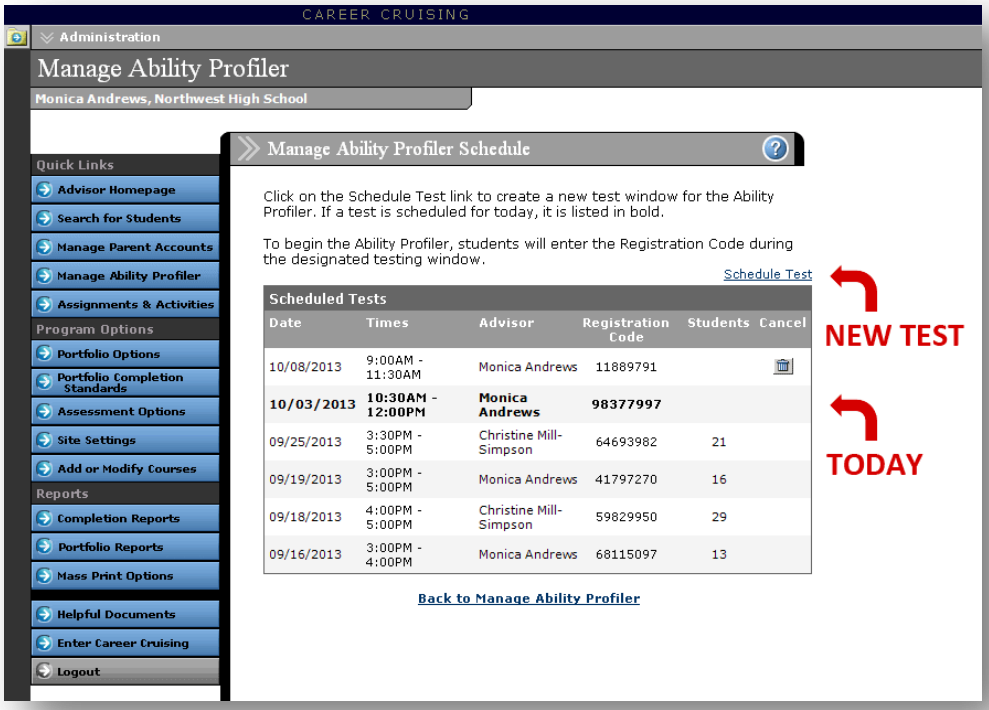
To view the scheduled testing windows for your site, log into the Career Advisor Management System (CAMS) and click on the “Manage Ability Profiler” button in the menu on the left side of the page. Then click on the “View & Edit the Test Schedule” link.

The following page displays a list of all tests that have been scheduled for your site. For those tests that have already taken place, you can view the number of users who completed one or more sections of the Ability Profiler on that date. You can also view upcoming tests. You may cancel future tests that you have scheduled that will no longer be taking place.

If there is a test scheduled for the current day, it will be listed in bold.

There is no limit to the number of test takers who can use a particular Registration Code, but the Registration Code will only be valid for the selected times.

Scheduling Testing Windows



Ability Profiler Schedule

CREATING A NEW TEST WINDOW

To add a new test, click on the “Schedule Test” link above the top right corner of the test schedule. On the next page, select the date and times on which you will be conducting the test and click Submit. Test windows must be between 30 minutes and 4 hours in length.

You will then be given a Registration Code that will be valid during the specified test window.

Examinee Eligibility and Accommodations

EXAMINEE ELIGIBILITY

Individuals taking the Ability Profiler should meet the following conditions in order to produce the most valid results:

- **Be at least 16 years old** - The Ability Profiler scores have been normalized for individuals 16 years of age and older. It is recommended that examinees be at least 16 years old when taking the assessment. If examinees are under 16 when completing the assessment, this should be taken into account in analyzing and interpreting their results. The greater the difference in age, the greater the potential effect on the validity of the scores will be.[3]

- **Be proficient in reading English** - The Ability Profiler requires at least a sixth grade English reading level. A Spanish version of the test is not currently available or planned. Translation of the test could affect the difficulty or interpretation of the questions and the validity of the results.[3]

- **Should not have taken any form of the Ability Profiler in the past six months** – This includes the Career Cruising online Ability Profiler, the paper-based O*Net Ability Profiler, and the General Aptitude Test Battery. Familiarity with the questions may affect the validity of the scores.[3]

- **Have completed Career Matchmaker** - The Ability Profiler results are integrated with the Career Matchmaker Career Suggestions feedback. Examinees must complete at least the first 39 questions in Matchmaker before they can begin the Ability Profiler.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Some examinees may require reasonable accommodations to enable them to complete the Ability Profiler. Please note that the underlying analyses were developed following standardized procedures. Accommodations may affect the validity of the results.[4]

For more information on accommodations, please consult the *O*Net Ability Profiler Administration Manual*, http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf.

[3] Adapted from *O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual.* (U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration: 2002a) II. 2. http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf
[4] Adapted from *O*NET Ability Profiler Administration Manual.* (U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration: 2002a) II. 2 – II 4. http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/AP_zips/AP-AM-deskp.pdf

Examinee Eligibility and Accommodations

- **Increasing Time Limits**
  Reasonable accommodations may include increasing time limits for Sections 1, 2, and 3, since these are considered power tests, and time limits were developed so examinees would have sufficient time to complete all questions. Therefore, you may consider increasing time limits for these sections if the examinee has a learning disability such as dyslexia.

  It would not be appropriate to increase time limits for Sections 4, 5, or 6 because these are speeded tests, when a person's ability to work quickly contributes significantly to his or her results.

- **Large Print**
  Another reasonable accommodation may be to increase the text size of the questions in Sections 1, 2, 4, and 5 for an examinee with visual impairments. However, it would not be reasonable to increase the image size for Sections 3 and 6, since a person's ability to detect differences in shapes and shading may be affected by their vision.

- **Additional Directions**
  The Ability Profiler is not intended to measure an examinee's ability to understand directions and follow instructions. Some examinees may need additional explanation of the introductory materials and should be encouraged to ask questions or to ask for further directions before they begin answering the assessment questions.

PRINT VERSION

To facilitate certain reasonable accommodations we have made a paper-based version of each section available for administrators to use with individuals with special needs. The examinee would complete the paper-based section(s) under the supervision of an administrator/proctor.

You can access the print version by clicking on the "Manage Ability Profiler" button in the Career Advisor Management System (CAMS) and then selecting the "For Students with Special Needs" link.

Once the user has completed the assessments sections, the administrator can enter his or her responses in CAMS by clicking "Manage Ability Profiler" and then selecting the "For Students with Special Needs" link. On the following page, click on the "Enter Results" link and follow the on-screen instructions.

Preparing for the Ability Profiler

Proper administration of the Ability Profiler is essential to ensuring that individuals receive the most valid results.

FACILITIES & SUPPLIES

- Each examinee must have a workstation that meets the minimum system settings for the Career Cruising program. Please see *Appendix A - Minimum System Requirements*. The workstations should afford the examinee a reasonable amount of privacy and offer space for writing on scratch paper.

- Examinees should be provided with at least two pieces of blank scratch paper and two pencils with erasers. The administrator should have an extra supply of paper and pencils on hand.

- Examinees should not have any additional materials at their workstations. Please note: ***Calculators are not allowed.***

- The room should be well-lit, well-ventilated, quiet, and comfortable. Extreme conditions, such as high or low temperature, may interfere with examinees' concentration, adversely affecting their results.

- The room should also be reasonably free from extraneous noise and interruptions. While examinees may ask the administrator questions, they may not talk to each other during the session.

- The administrator should be able to see each examinee.

TIME REQUIRED

It is recommended that the Ability Profiler be scheduled such that test takers complete all six sections in a single sitting. To complete the assessment requires between 1 ½ to 2 hours.

The test sections themselves require just under an hour; however, it is important to allow sufficient time for examinees to be seated and log in to their Plans, for the administrator to provide instructions and set the stage for the assessment, and for users to complete the sample and practice questions before each section.

Please see **Exercise Descriptions** on page 3 for details on the individual section time requirements.

If completing the test in one sitting is not feasible, test takers may stop at the end of any section and finish additional sections during later testing windows. If you are administering only part of the test, make sure that the examinees are aware of the time remaining so that they do not begin a section without enough time to finish it.

Preparing for the Ability Profiler

RULES OF THE ROOM

During the assessment, the administrator should take actions to avoid distractions, disturbances, and unnecessary interruptions. Some rules to enforce include the following:

- Spectators are not allowed to watch examinees taking assessments.
- Foot traffic is not permitted through the assessment room.
- No one is permitted to enter the assessment room to converse with the administrator or the examinees after the assessment has started.
- If there is a telephone in the room, it must be unplugged if arrangements to eliminate all incoming and outgoing calls have not been made.
- Cell phones, pagers, and alarm wristwatches must be turned off during the assessment process.
- Examinees are prohibited from eating or drinking in the room.

The administrator should not engage in behavior that might distract individuals taking the test. The administrator should not:

- read outside materials (e.g., books, magazines, newspapers) during the assessment session;
- wear noisy jewelry, squeaky shoes, or clothes that rustle;
- eat or drink in the room;
- stand immediately behind or next to an examinee, but instead observe from a distance, moving quietly around the room.

COMPLETE CAREER MATCHMAKER FIRST

Users must complete Career Matchmaker before beginning the Ability Profiler.

Administering the Ability Profiler

STARTING THE ABILITY PROFILER

On the day of the assessment, follow the steps below.

Step 1 – Setting the stage

Have students sit down at their workstations and make sure they have their pencils and scratch paper. Provide an overview of what is about to happen and try to put the examinees at ease.

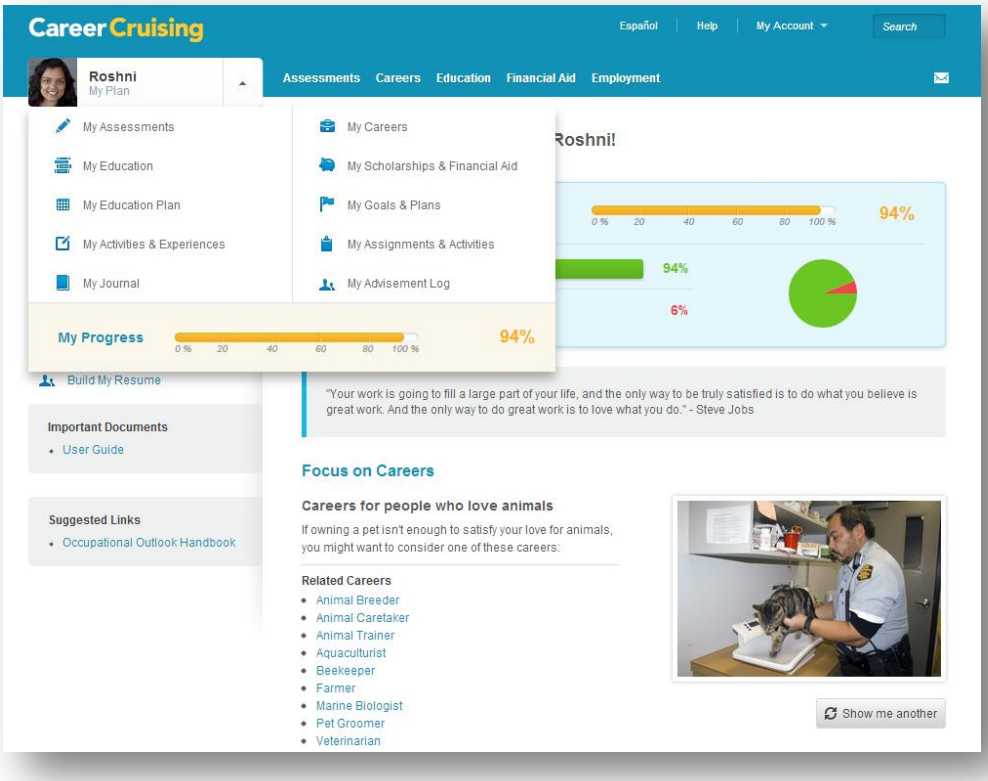
Let them know whether they will be completing the entire assessment or only part of it and review the rules of the room.

Step 2 – Examinees should log in to their Plans

Users should then log in to their Plans with their personal My Plan username and password.

Step 3 – Go to the Ability Profiler assessment in My Plan

Students click on “My Assessments” in the My Plan menu and select “Ability Profiler” on the My Assessments page.

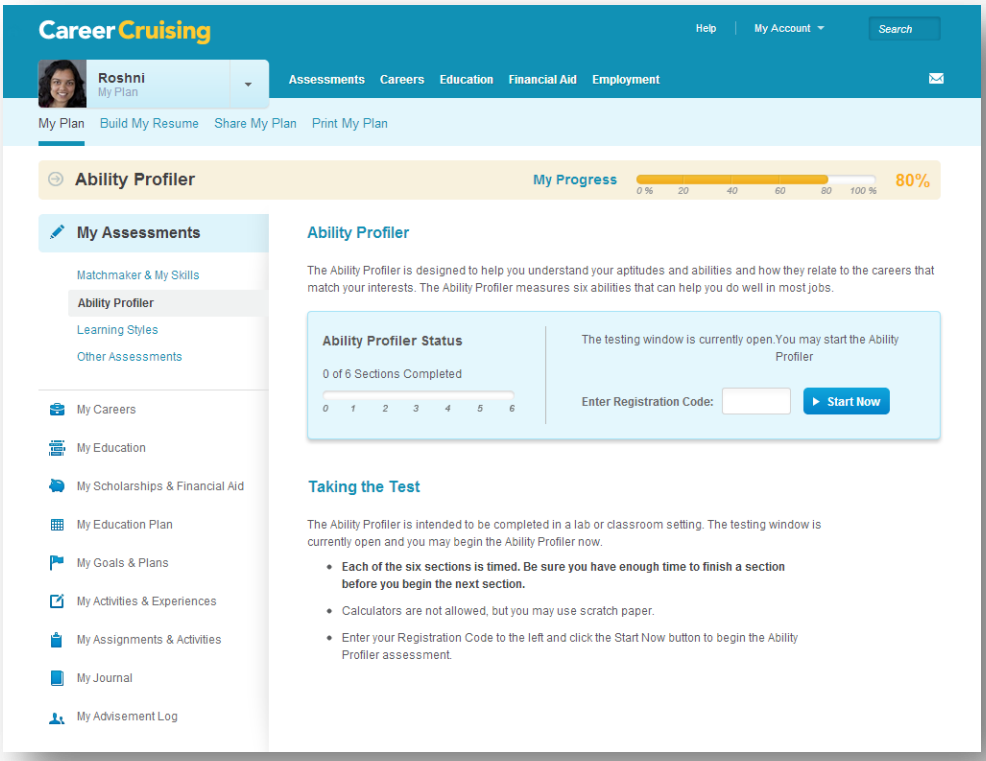


Choose My Assessments from the My Plan Menu

Administering the Ability Profiler

Step 4 – Start the Ability Profiler

In the "Registration Code" text box, examinees should enter the numerical code for the current time's test window and then click on the "Start Now" button. This takes users to the General Instructions for the Ability Profiler.



Start the Ability Profiler

If an examinee has already completed one or more of the sections and is continuing the assessment, he or she will enter the Registration Code and click on the "Start Now" button. This will take the user to the beginning of the next section of the assessment.

Troubleshooting: Students are unable to access the Ability Profiler

Users who have not yet completed Matchmaker will see a "Start Career Matchmaker" button. They must complete the first 39 questions of the Matchmaker Interest Assessment before they can begin the Ability Profiler.

Administering the Ability Profiler

Troubleshooting: The Registration Code doesn't work

If the registration code does not appear to be valid, please check the following:

- *Is the registration code that was distributed valid for the current time?*
- *Is the user entering the registration code correctly?*
- *Did the user log in to the correct My Plan account?*

There is no limit to the number of students who can use a registration code.

Step 5 – General Instructions

Guide examinees through the General Instructions for the Ability Profiler.

The Ability Profiler consists of six (6) sections. Each section has its own instructions and time limit.

Read all of the instructions carefully. The instructions will help you understand how to answer the questions and help you decide how fast you should work and when it is best to guess.

Before you begin each section, you will have a chance to work through a few practice questions.

When you start the assessment questions, the timer will start automatically. You can see how much time is left by checking the timer located in the top, right corner of the page.

You can mark only one answer for each question. If you want to change your answers, use the Previous and Next buttons at the bottom of page.

If you finish before time is up, you can review your answers. Once time expires or you move on to the next section, you cannot go back and change your answers from the previous section.

Once you have gone over the general instructions, take questions from the students.

Administering the Ability Profiler

Step 6 - Instructions for Sections 1, 2, and 3

Guide students through the Instructions for Sections 1, 2, and 3.

> *In the next three sections, work CAREFULLY. You should have enough time to answer each question.*
>
> *It is to your advantage to ANSWER EVERY QUESTION. Even if you're not sure of an answer, make your BEST GUESS, select your answer, and then go to the next question.*
>
> *Your score for each section will be based on the number of questions you answer correctly. There is no penalty for answering incorrectly.*
>
> *Calculators are not allowed, but you may use scratch paper.*

Once you have gone over these instructions, take questions from the examinees.

Step 7 – Sample and Practice Questions

Allow examinees to work through the sample and practice questions independently. When they are ready to begin the exercise, they may do so. The timer will begin automatically when they proceed to the first question.

DURING THE ASSESSMENT SESSION

As an administrator, you need to monitor the examinees during the assessment to ensure that the testing conditions remain stable and appropriate behavior is maintained. Once the assessment has started, the administrator should quietly walk around the room to observe the work of each person. The administrator should not make any comments to the examinees about their performance, express encouragement or discouragement, or urge examinees to work harder or faster.

While the test is in progress, the administrator should be on the lookout for significant examinee behavior indicating that the assessment results may not represent accurate measurements of ability. Here are some examples of situations that would necessitate special handling:

- A user becomes sick or leaves during the assessment.
- A user has reading or language difficulties that were not apparent prior to the assessment.
- A user has difficulty in following oral or written directions.
- A user appears to be answering questions randomly or exhibiting other signs that may indicate that he or she has difficulty reading or lacks motivation.

Administering the Ability Profiler

- A user is caught cheating.
- An unusual interruption or incident occurred (e.g., a chair fell over, a maintenance worker entered the room, the lights went out).

Examinees will complete the sections and the assessment as a whole at varying times. If examinees are permitted to leave the assessment area early, they should do so as quietly as possible.

If the Ability Profiler is not being completed in one sitting, you should make examinees aware when the period is winding down to ensure that they do not begin a section without sufficient time to finish it. The first section, Arithmetic Reasoning, requires 20 minutes of assessment time; the other sections are each 5 to 8 minutes long. Please see **Time Required** on page 10 for more information.

Proper Use of Ability Profiler Results

The Ability Profiler is intended to be used as a tool for career exploration and planning. The results of this assessment are useful for helping users to understand their abilities, how abilities are related to occupations, and how their abilities relate to the occupations that interest them. The goal of the assessment is also to help examinees and counselors/advisors to identify areas where users may need additional training or support in order for them to achieve their goals.

This assessment should not be used to limit users' career exploration activities and should be part of an overall career exploration and/or counseling program.

The results of the Ability Profiler may not be used for any other purposes, such as hiring or placement decisions.

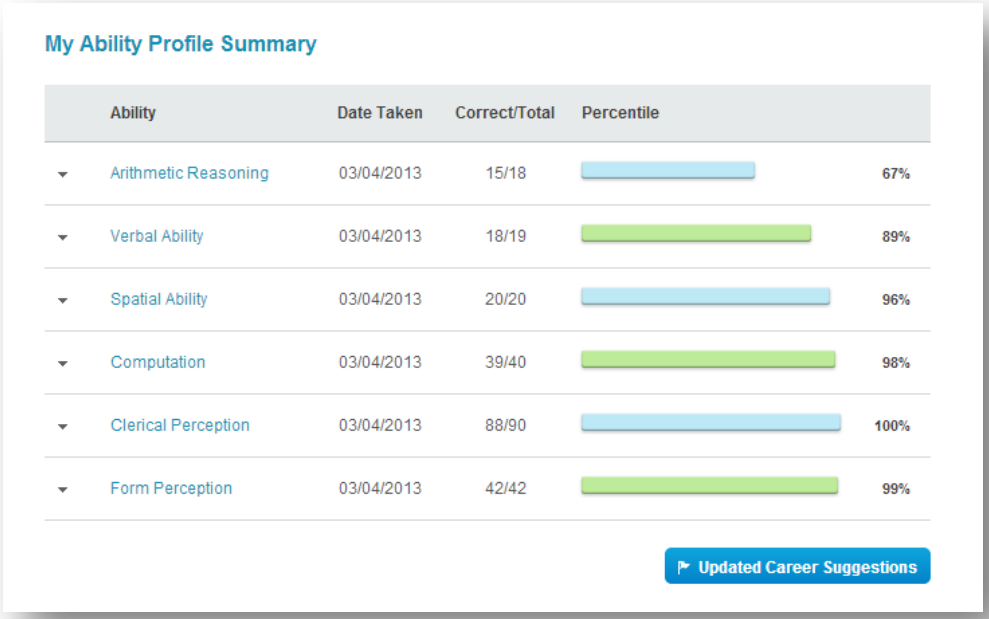
The Career Cruising online Ability Profiler is based on the O*Net Ability Profiler, produced by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration. For additional information on the development of the Ability Profiler and the use of the results, please consult the O*Net Resource Center: http://www.onetcenter.org/AP.html .

Understanding & Interpreting Ability Profiler Results

The Ability Profiler results consist of two components: the Ability Profile and the integrated Career Suggestions.

ABILITY PROFILE

The individual Ability Profile includes information on the abilities measured, how the Ability Profiler results may and may not be used, and the examinee's score for each ability. The scores section shows students their percentile for each of the six sections as well as their raw score (i.e., how many questions were answered correctly).



Sample Ability Profile Summary

These results help examinees understand what their strengths are relative to their other abilities. Users should work with a counselor to understand and interpret their percentile scores. The scores are determined based on a sample from the general population of individuals 16 years of age or older. If examinees do not meet the eligibility requirements listed on page 8, it may impact the validity of their results.

HOW ABILITIES RELATE TO CAREER INTERESTS

In linking the individual's Ability Profiler results to careers, the goal is to help users understand the relationship between their abilities and the abilities of individuals in the careers they are interested in. It is not to limit their career exploration activities or to determine whether or not they are qualified for a particular occupation.

Understanding & Interpreting Ability Profiler Results

Abilities are related to occupations in two ways: Fit and Level.

Fit compares the individual's relative areas of strength and weakness to those of individuals in an occupation.

Why is fit important? Particularly for individuals who are still in the process of developing and improving their abilities, looking at how general ability strengths and weaknesses match up with those of occupations may be a better overall indicator of potential job satisfaction than current level of ability. Focusing on fit avoids unduly or prematurely restricting career exploration opportunities for which the individual may not yet have the ability or education.

Level compares the individual's results from the assessment to the abilities of individuals in an occupation.

Why is level important? Examining how the user's current level of ability compares to those of individuals in occupations that match his or her interests helps both the counselor and the test taker evaluate how well his or her current level of ability matches up with those required for that career. If the examinee's scores are significantly lower or higher than those of the individuals in the careers that interest him or her, the examinee should speak with a career advisor.

Most importantly, looking at level of ability can help identify areas in which the test taker may need to improve in order to achieve his or her goals.

INTEGRATED CAREER SUGGESTIONS

The Matchmaker Career Suggestions page shows the user's top 40 career suggestions **ranked in order of INTEREST SUITABILITY**. Beside each career name is a chart indicating the number of abilities in which the user is close to or exceeds the ability level for individuals in that occupation and the number of areas in which he or she needs improvement.

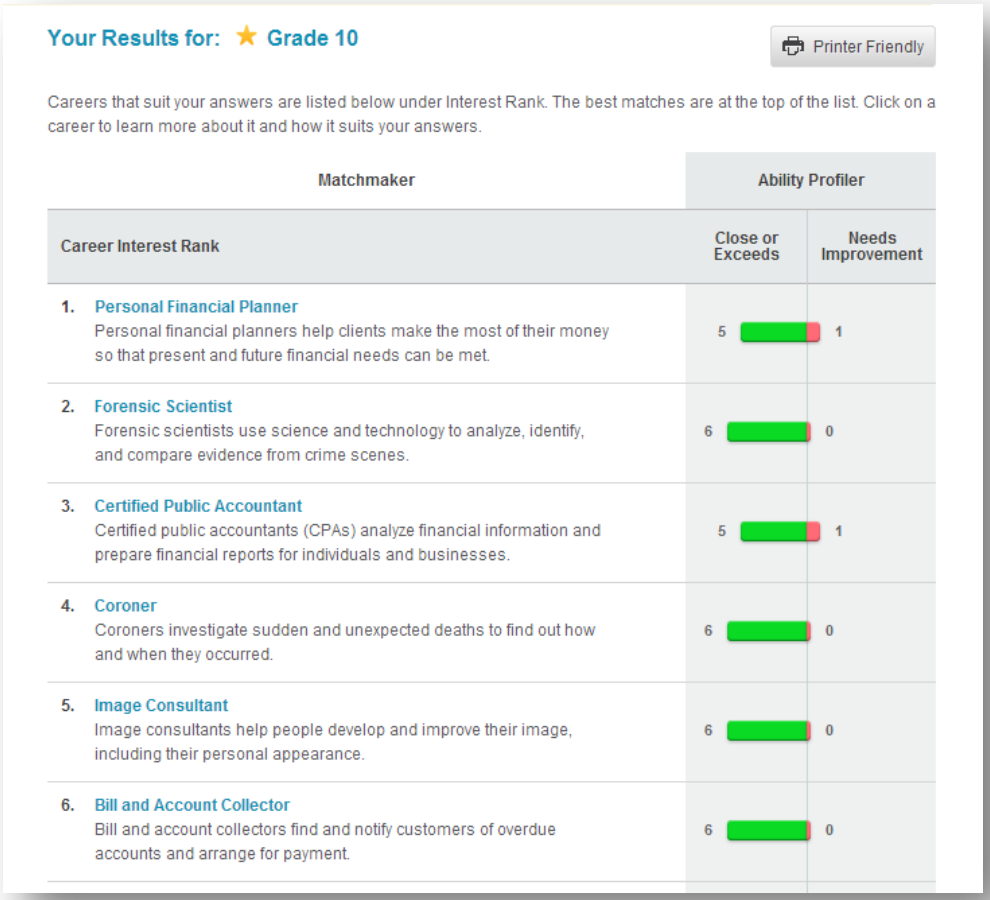
ABILITY COMPARISON DESCRIPTORS

The Ability Profiler Descriptors are determined by comparing the user's ability percentile to the percentile for individuals within an occupation.

- If the user's percentile is 15% or more above that of the individuals within the occupation, the user *Exceeds* the average abilities within that occupation.
- If the user's percentile is within 15% of that for individuals within the occupation, the user is *Close* to the average abilities within that occupation.
- If the user's percentile is 15% or more below that for individuals within the occupation, the user *Needs Improvement* to match average abilities within that occupation.

Understanding & Interpreting Ability Profiler Results

Ability Comparison Descriptor	Percentile Difference
Exceeds	> 15
Close	15 to -15
Needs Improvement	< -15



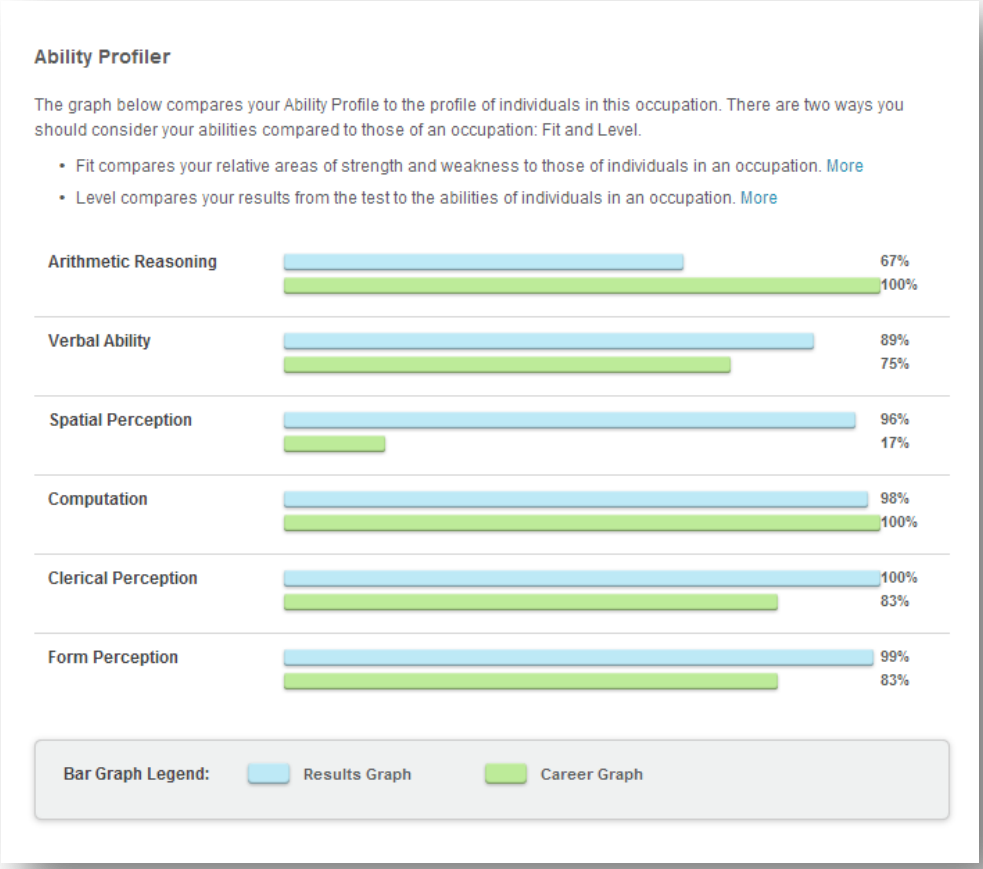
Sample Integrated Career Suggestions List

Users can filter their list of suggested careers by level of education in order to tailor the results to their goals.

SUITABLE FOR YOU? FEEDBACK

Clicking on the name of an occupation takes the student to the Suitable for You? feedback for the selected career. A bar graph under the Matchmaker feedback represents the student's percentile score in the ability areas (blue) compared to those of individuals in that occupation (green).

Understanding & Interpreting Ability Profiler Results



Suitable For You? Feedback

Where the bar representing the user's abilities is slightly longer or slightly shorter than the bar representing the career, the user's abilities are close to those of individuals in that occupation. If the user's line is significantly longer than that of the occupation, his or her level of ability exceeds that of most individuals in the occupation; if the user's bar is significantly shorter than that of the occupation, his or her level of ability does not meet that of most individuals in the occupation.

Appendix A – Minimum System Requirements

The following document outlines the minimum system requirements for the Career Cruising website.

Windows Browsers

- Internet Explorer 8.0 and higher
- Firefox 9 and higher
- Chrome

Macintosh Browsers

- Safari
- Firefox 9 and higher
- Chrome

Tablet Browsers

- Safari on iPad
- Default browser on Android

Browser Settings

- JavaScript must be enabled
- Set to check for new versions of pages automatically
- First party cookies must be enabled

System Settings

- Proxy servers must NOT cache pages from www.careercruising.com
- Network firewalls should include www.careercruising.com as a trusted site

Viewing Sound and Video Clips

As long as you are using one of the supported browsers, no additional plugins are needed. A text transcription of the multimedia clips is provided.