

WORKING IN RECOVERY



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Introduction

I have a lot of letters behind my name, which means I can make this presentation. Even without those letters, my experience can guide you on the path to employment, or to help someone else find their path.





AGENDA

- What if I have gaps in my employment?
- When and how do I explain justice involvement?
- How do I figure out who I want to be when I grow up?
- Who can help me when I figure it out?

WHAT IF I HAVE GAPS IN MY EMPLOYMENT?

Here's the secret: most of us do!

Do I Explain My Years of Use/Unemployment?

If they ask:

- Create a resume that hides the gaps.
- DON'T LIE, but don't tell the truth.
- Practice your response with someone.

If they don't ask:

- **DON'T SAY ANYTHING!**

WHEN AND HOW DO I EXPLAIN JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT?

Here's the secret: most of us have something on our background!

ROLE PLAY EXAMPLE #1

Employer: “I see from your application that you have been convicted of a felony. Will you explain this to me?”

Poor Answer: “Well, I was using drugs at the time, so I wasn’t thinking right. My boyfriend was selling drugs. He asked me to hold some drugs for him. The police said I was part of a conspiracy to sell drugs. But I didn’t do anything except trust the wrong person. They free-cased me and gave me two years.” (This response will not impress an employer. They will believe the applicant takes no responsibility for his or her own actions.)

Better Answer: “I’m glad you asked me, because I want you to feel comfortable hiring me. I want to assure you that it had nothing to do with my previous employers. In my past, I was involved with drugs. I made some poor decisions. As a result, I was convicted of distribution of a controlled substance. While I was incarcerated, I took the opportunity to enroll in a drug treatment program. I took several classes and maintained employment in food service. I now have a total of two years experience in food service. I want to stay in the industry and learn as much as possible. As a result of my past, when you hire me, your company may be eligible for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program, which can save you up to \$2,400. Are you familiar with this program?” Adapted from the U.S. Department of Labor publication, “Tips for Finding the Right Job.” (This response shows the applicant takes responsibility and does not blame others. The second half of the response focuses on the positives. As you consider your own response, be sure to use your own situation to shape your explanation, skills, and positives.)

ROLE PLAY EXAMPLE #2

Employer: “How can I be assured your legal and drug addiction troubles are behind you?”

Poor Answer: “Oh, I don’t use drugs anymore. I don’t hang around those people at all. I refuse to return to that lifestyle.” (This response lacks assurance and a plan for the future.)

Better Answer: “As I said, I completed a drug treatment program while I was incarcerated, I am sober now and I intend to maintain this lifestyle. I continue to attend support groups. As noted on my application, I am on a two-year term of supervision with a Probation Officer. She is also there to assist me in maintaining this productive lifestyle. If you have any concerns about dishonesty, I can obtain Federal bonding insurance, which would protect you as my employer. Are you familiar with this program? (This response tells the employer the positive things the applicant did to overcome a problem, that the applicant has a plan in place, and that there is third-party support.) (If you do not have drug use history, talk about the positive things you did to overcome the illegal issue and what you plan to do to remain productive. Tell the employer about any third-party support you may have, such as your Probation Officer.)

HOW DO I FIGURE OUT WHO I WANT TO BE WHEN I GROW UP?

Here's the secret: most of us had no idea!

WORKING IN RECOVERY

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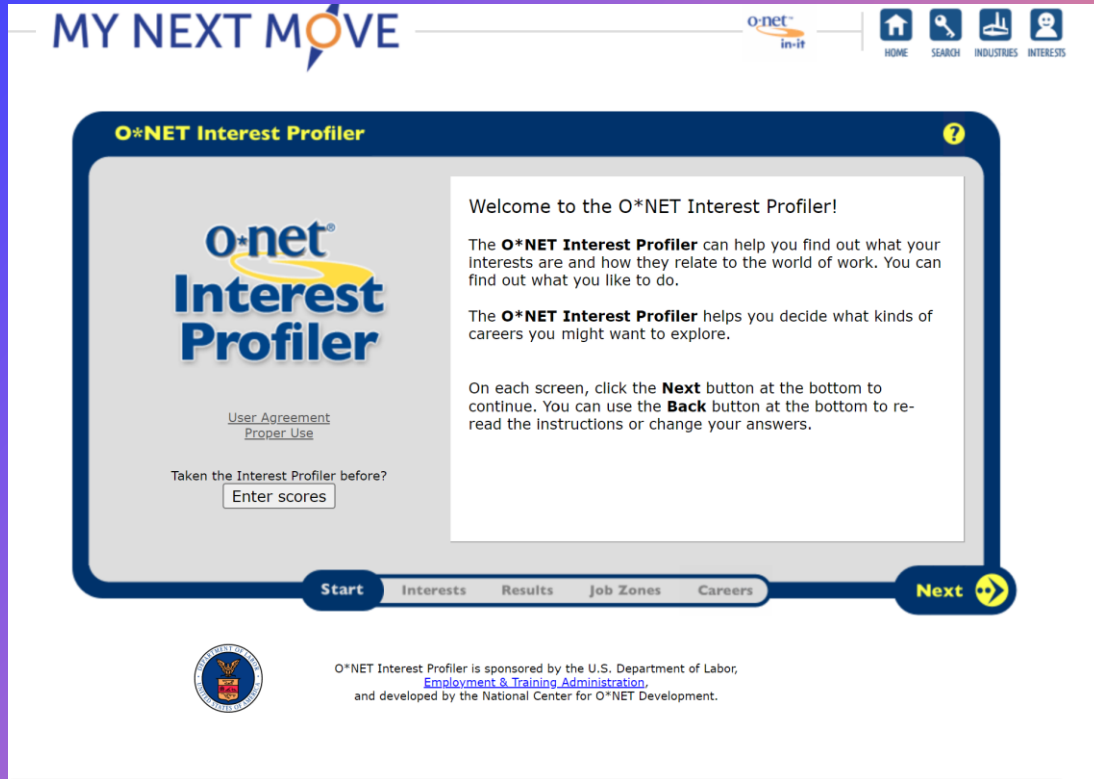
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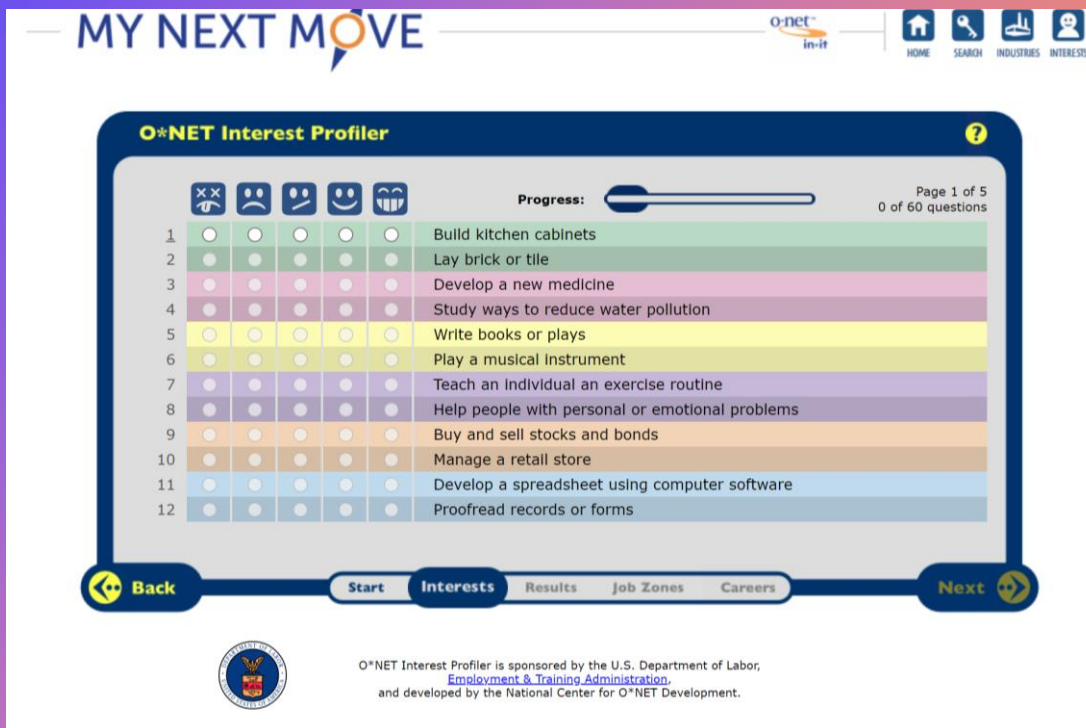
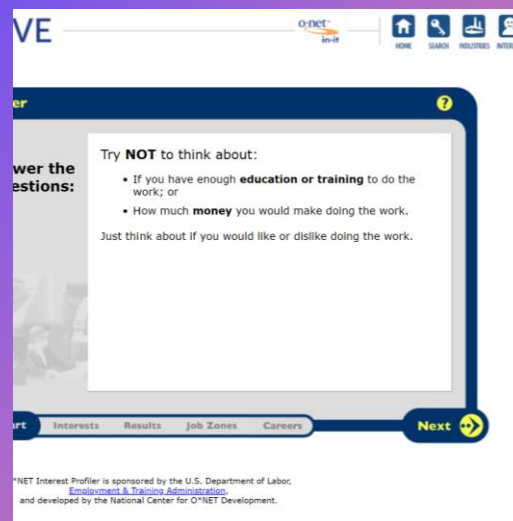
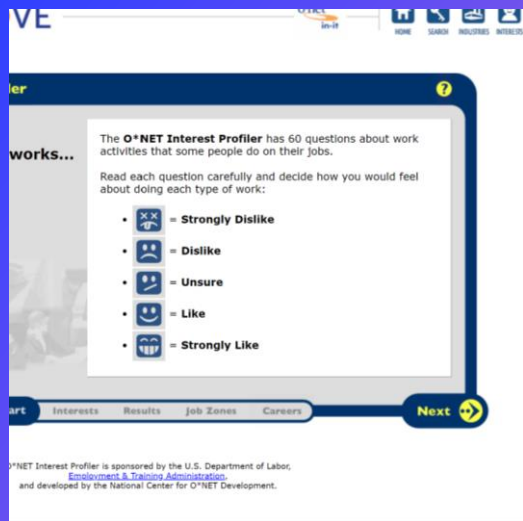


O*NET

What even IS O*Net??????

O*Net is an interest profiler that can be used to help individuals determine what their employment interests are.

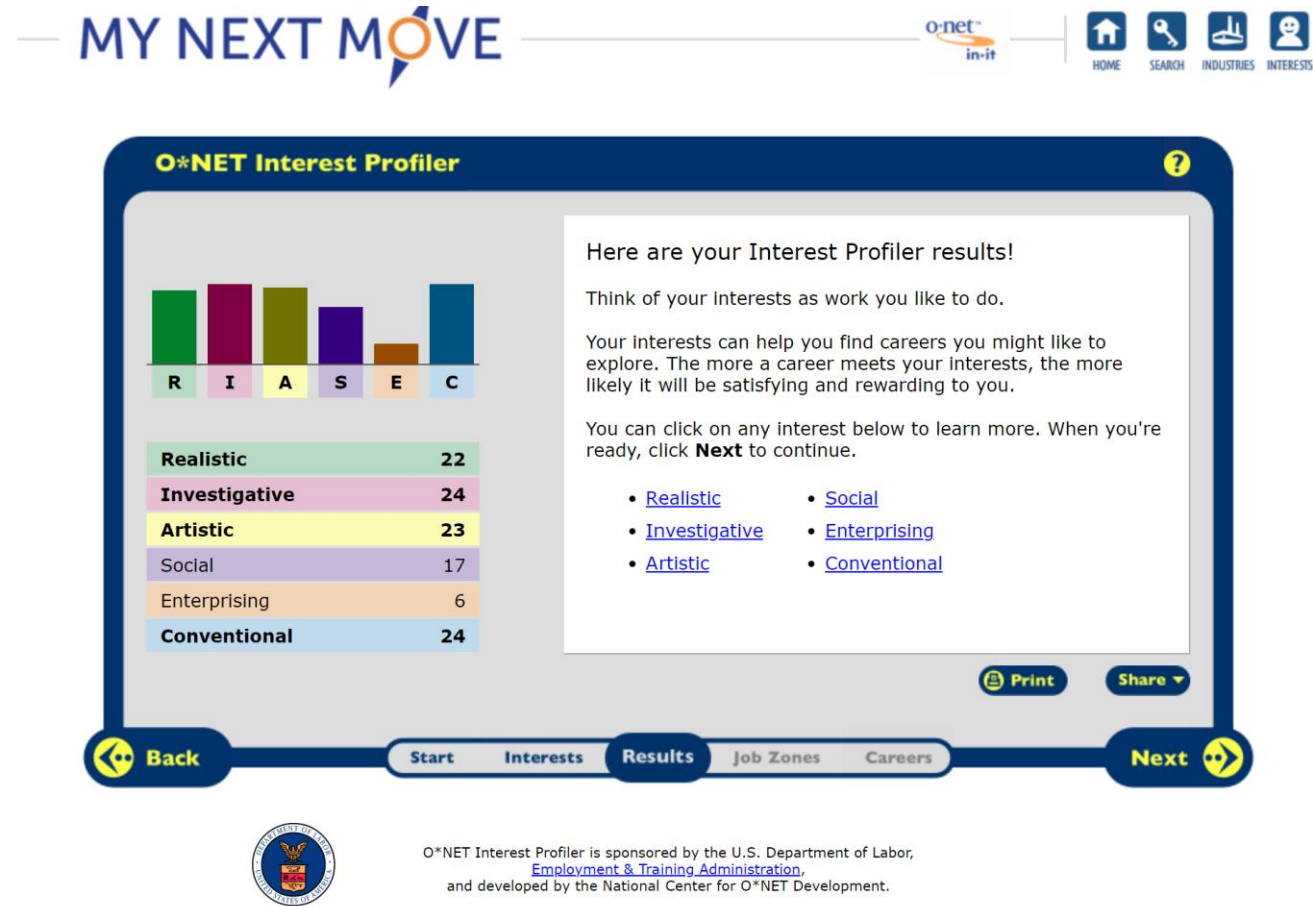




What can I expect?

- 60 question survey
- Don't think too hard
- Don't consider current skills or training
- Answer whether you like or dislike
- Keep it simple

What do results look like?



Results continued...

Zone 2

MY NEXT MOVE

ONET in-IT

HOME SEARCH INDUSTRIES INTERESTS

O*NET Interest Profiler

Click to change your Job Zone: **Job Zone Two** some job preparation

R I A S E C

Careers that fit your interests and preparation level:

- Best fit Great fit
- Brickmasons & Blockmasons
- Carpenters
- Dental Laboratory Technicians
- Earth Drillers
- Fiberglass Laminators & Fabricators
- Floor Layers

Click on a career to learn what they do.

Print Share

Back Start Interests Results Job Zones Careers Find More Careers



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Zone 5

MY NEXT MOVE

ONET in-IT

HOME SEARCH INDUSTRIES INTERESTS

O*NET Interest Profiler

Click to change your Job Zone: **Job Zone Five** extensive job preparation

R I A S E C

Careers that fit your interests and preparation level:

- Best fit Great fit
- Bioinformatics Scientists
- Computer & Information Research Scientists
- Geographers
- Molecular & Cellular Biologists
- Anthropologists & Archeologists
- Astronomers

Click on a career to learn what they do.

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Zone 5, Artistic

MY NEXT MOVE

ONET in-IT

HOME SEARCH INDUSTRIES INTERESTS

O*NET Interest Profiler

Your score: **23**

Click to change your Job Zone: **Job Zone Five** extensive job preparation

R I A S E C

Artistic careers that fit your preparation level:

- Philosophy & Religion Teachers, Postsecondary
- Political Scientists
- Set & Exhibit Designers
- Sociologists
- Special Education Teachers, Preschool
- Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors
- Urban & Regional Planners

Click on a career to learn what they do.

Print

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Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors

Also called: Addictions Counselor, Chemical Dependency Counselor (CD Counselor), Counselor, Substance Abuse Counselor (SA Counselor)

Watch Career Video

What they do:

Counsel and advise individuals with alcohol, tobacco, drug, or other problems, such as gambling and eating disorders. May counsel individuals, families, or groups or engage in prevention programs.

On the job, you would:

- Complete and maintain accurate records or reports regarding the patients' histories and progress, services provided, or other required information.
- Counsel clients or patients, individually or in group sessions, to assist in overcoming dependencies, adjusting to life, or making changes.
- Assess individuals' degree of drug dependency by collecting and analyzing urine samples.

KNOWLEDGE

Health

- therapy and counseling
- medicine and dentistry

Math and Science

- psychology
- sociology and anthropology

Education and Training

- teaching and course design

Arts and Humanities

- English language

SKILLS

Basic Skills

- listening to others, not interrupting, and asking good questions
- talking to others

Social

- understanding people's reactions
- looking for ways to help people

Problem Solving

- noticing a problem and figuring out the best way to solve it

ABILITIES

Verbal

- communicate by speaking
- communicate by writing

Ideas and Logic

- notice when problems happen
- make general rules or come up with answers from lots of detailed information

Attention

- pay attention to something without being distracted
- do two or more things at the same time

WHO CAN HELP ME WHEN I FIGURE IT OUT?

Here's the secret: most of us had no idea!

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

To be eligible for VRS services, individuals must:

- Be an Alabama resident
- Have a **physical or mental impairment** that is a substantial impediment to employment
- Must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work

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SUMMARY

We, as peers, can help the people we work with to find a path to employment. This is another tool for our box that we can use to walk with our peers into a better life.

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THANK YOU

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References and Resources

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- <https://www.rehab.alabama.gov/services/vr/vr>
- The National Council on Aging. (n.d.). Retrieved February 24, 2023, from <https://www.ncoa.org/article/how-to-explain-gaps-in-your-resume-what-mature-workers-should-know>
- *Explaining a felony conviction - united states district court for the ...* (n.d.). Retrieved February 24, 2023, from <https://www.moed.uscourts.gov/sites/moed/files/documents/Explaining%20a%20Felony%20Conviction.pdf>