



CAREER VISION

What Is Career Literacy™?

Career Literacy* is the basic knowledge and skills that we all need to help us read the 21st Century work environment. While it isn't news that the workplace is changing, it is always news when those changes impact us. To be prepared, we need to understand what forces are driving the changes and what we need to know to position ourselves for a successful and satisfying work life. Career Management is the application of the Career Literacy skill set to manage your career over time.

What do you need to know? First, we all need a baseline of information about ourselves. Foremost is a good understanding of our aptitude profile -- an objective indicator of our strengths. This information stays relatively stable across the lifespan, so is the foundation of your work profile. Other baseline information includes your interests, personality style, and values. These may change a bit over the years as you gain experience or are exposed to new ideas. This baseline of information, or work profile, will be the core information you use to evaluate educational and career goals throughout your working years. It is one of the few constants you can rely on in a changing environment.

Secondly, we need to understand the economics of work. Why do employers hire us? What is our talent worth? What industry or profession are we associated with? What trends are going to have ripple effects in our work life? We know that the speed of change is a hallmark of the 21st Century. For example, while we are adjusting to one new technological change, others are emerging. It probably isn't a big problem to miss a change the first year or two, but it's dangerous to not see the signs of a trend. Today the shelf life of many occupations, knowledge, and skill sets is only three years. Understanding workplace basics and knowing how to monitor trends is an essential element of Career Literacy.

Finally, it's critical to recognize that as sudden shifts or incremental changes in the world impact our work lives, we may find that our work profile and job descriptions are no longer aligned. We will increasingly be called on to personally define the type of work that will be satisfying for us. To make informed choices, we will increasingly depend on understanding our work profile so we can adapt and find new opportunities that "fit" who we are. According to a National Career Development Association survey, 1 out of every 5 people expected a job change within three years, either by choice or through downsizing. And that was in mid-1999, when we enjoyed a robust economy!

Career Literacy is having the knowledge and basic skills to evaluate your performance in today's workplace. Career Management is how you apply the knowledge, communicate and implement your plan to create a meaningful work life for tomorrow.

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Direction. Decisions. Satisfaction.