

HOW CAN I FIND A CAREER PATH THAT FITS LIKE A GLOVE?



Question: I am not able to finish my computer-science degree right now due to financial reasons and I don't know if that field really is for me. I have been doing customer service but I don't really like it. I know I have unexplored abilities and qualities. How can I discover what I am good at and will enjoy?

Answer: "What do I really want to be when I grow up?" seems to be an ironically recurring question of adult life. Coming up with a fitting response requires a combination of self-assessment, along with career and labor-market exploration.

Through self-assessment you can create a profile of the skills, values and work environments that are most satisfying and stimulating for you. If you are still affiliated with a college, take advantage of free career-center offerings to meet with a career counselor and inventory your talents and interests. An alternative, if a career counselor isn't accessible, is to work through Richard Nelson Bolles's "[What Color is Your Parachute](#)" (Ten Speed Press, 2015) in its entirety. While you may not arrive at just one right answer for your career, the activities will greatly help you to focus on specific options related to your preferences.

To supplement the introspective part of the process, research careers that sound interesting to you by reading related books and plunking in keywords with your favorite Internet search engine. The best way to obtain information about careers and the labor market, however, is by talking to people who are employed doing the things you would like to do in the places you would like to work. You may even work out an arrangement where you could shadow someone for a day. Ultimately, it is the combination of this market research with your self-assessment findings that will best align your interests and talents in a career that is right for you.