

# A guide to **CHOOSING A CAREER**

Developed as part of  
ICMR's Multistate Implementation Research Study on Improving  
Mental Well Being Among School and College Students





about

# CHOOSING A CAREER

Growing up can be exciting. We often look at people older than us and wonder how it would feel to be a grown up, to have a job and enjoy independence.

A part of growing can also involve planning career goals and finding the right path to achieve them.

It is true that choosing a career can sometimes be challenging.

You might find yourself wondering about a profession that will truly suit you.

We often receive a range of suggestions from friends, family, and teachers, don't we?

It is quite natural to feel lost when everyone has suggestions on what you could do. Some may suggest playing it safe, while others may push for the latest trends or high-paying jobs.



*However, choosing a career is not just about working hard, but also about finding what you enjoy and what gives you a sense of purpose. With some introspection and understanding of your passions, you can discover a career that truly feels fulfilling to you!*

## Ikigai

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that means "*a reason for being*". It helps you find a fulfilling career by identifying the intersection of four key elements:

1. What you love
2. What you are good at
3. What the world needs
4. What you can be paid for.

*Here is a step-by-step guide to using Ikigai to choose your career:*

### Step 1:

#### Discover what you love

**What You Love**

Interests:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Activities you liked or engaged in as a child:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies:

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## Step 2:

### Find what you are good

#### What are you good at?

What are my skills & strengths?

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What subjects am I good at or interested in?

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What do my friends/ family identify as my strengths?

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#### What does the world need?

What jobs are in demand right now?

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What issues in your local community would you like to address?

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What major issues, such as those related to health, education, or the environment, interest you?

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## Step 3:

### Know What the World Needs

## Step 4:

### Identify What You Can Be Paid For

**What can you be paid for?**

What are some well-paying jobs in the fields you are interested in?

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What is the average salary for different jobs that may interest you?

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Which industries are growing and have good future opportunities?

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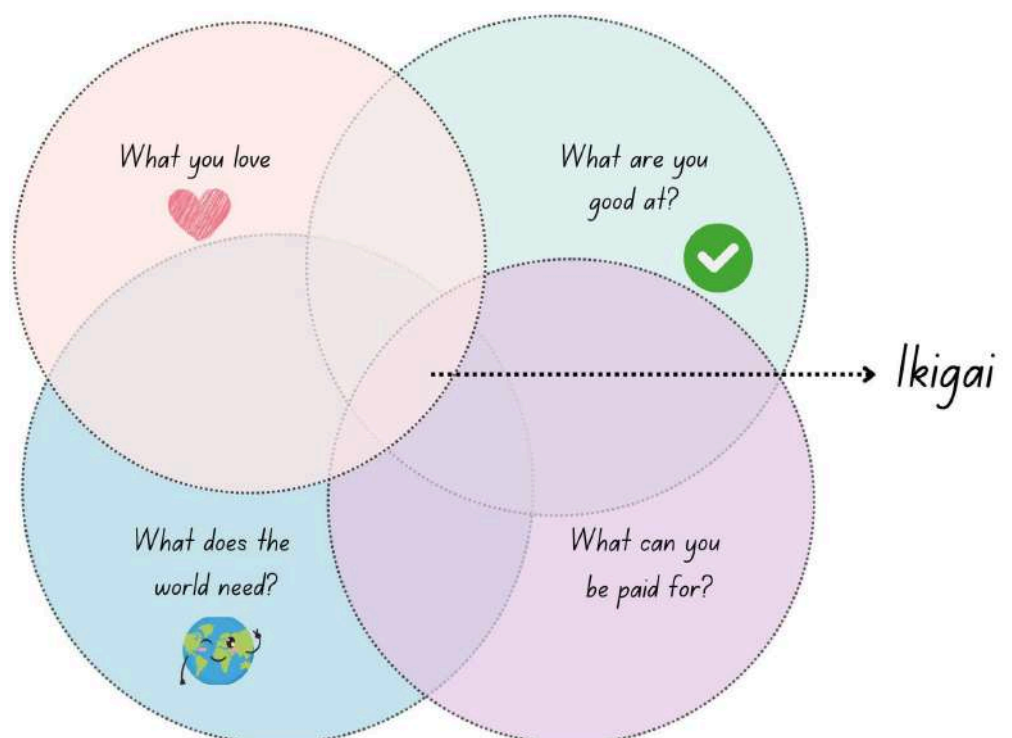
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## Step 5:

### Find the Intersection

**The intersection of all four circles is your Ikigai!**

**This will help you identify career options that may feel fulfilling to you.**



## Some things that will help you!

This guide provides clear steps to help you choose a career and the right education path for it:

### Step 1: Self-Exploration



**Ikigai Exercise:** Start by identifying your passions, skills, values, and what the world needs. This will help you find a career that is fulfilling and aligned with your interests.

### Step 2: Research Educational Institutions

**Identify Options:** Look up schools, colleges, and universities that offer programs related to your interests.

**Visit Institutions:** If possible, visit the campuses to get a sense of the environment and available resources. This can help you determine if a particular institution feels like the right fit for you.



### Step 3: Review Course Content



**Syllabus Analysis:** Go through the syllabus and course materials for the programs you are considering. Ensure that the topics and subjects align with your career goals and expectations.

**Skill Development:** Check if the programs offer practical skills training, internships, or hands-on experiences that will be beneficial for your future career.



## Step 4: Explore Career Opportunities

**Career Research:** Investigate the various career paths associated with the field you are considering. Look into job prospects, salary expectations, and growth potential within those careers.

**Develop a Backup Plan:** Create a Plan B by identifying alternative careers or educational paths that can serve as a safety net if your initial choice does not work out.



## Step 5: Seek Guidance and Networking



**Connect with Professionals:** Reach out to individuals currently working in your field of interest. Informational interviews can provide insights into the realities of the job and career advancement.

**Find a Mentor:** Seek out mentors who can guide you through the decision-making process, offer valuable advice, and share their experiences in the field.

## Step 6: Evaluate Your Choices

**Decision-Making:** After gathering all necessary information, evaluate your options. Consider how each aligns with your personal values, interests, and long-term goals.

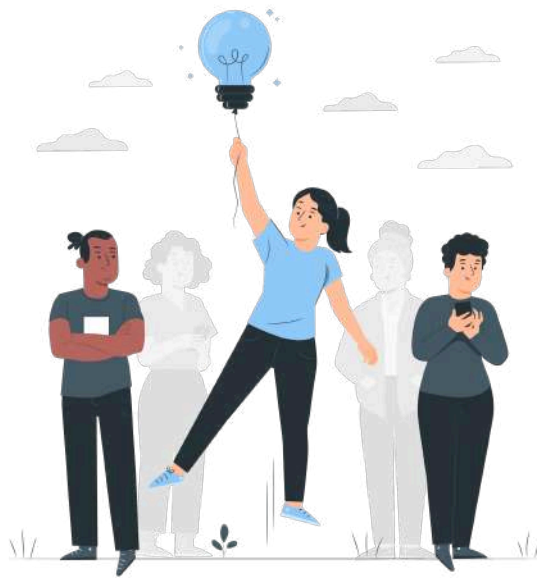
**Set Actionable Goals:** Define short-term and long-term goals based on your research and reflections, and outline specific steps to achieve them.



## Step 7: Continuous Learning and Adaptation

**Stay Informed:** Keep up with industry trends and developments in educational programs to ensure you remain adaptable in your career planning.

**Be Open to Change:** Recognize that career paths can evolve. Embrace new opportunities and be willing to adjust your plans as needed.





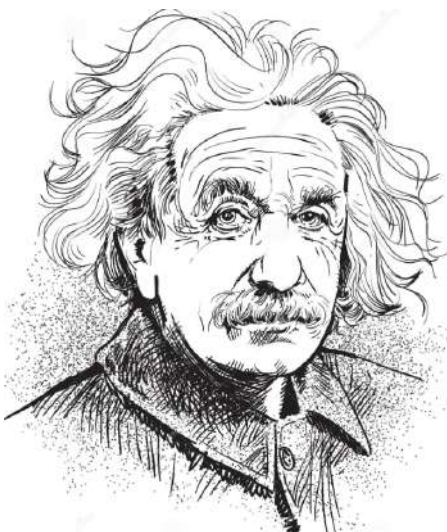
## Around The World

Identifying your interests is the crucial first step in career planning and creating a career path. While moving forward on your career path, there may be many moments of achievement and satisfaction. However, you may also face challenges along the way.

Remember, persistence and determination are essential for a successful career.

### **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam: Journey to Presidency**

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, born into poverty, worked tirelessly from a young age to support his education. Despite financial hardships, he pursued his passion for science and technology. Through immense effort and resilience, he became a distinguished aerospace scientist and the President of India. His story exemplifies that with determination and self-belief, extraordinary achievements are possible.



### **Albert Einstein: Overcoming Doubts**

Albert Einstein struggled with Math and Physics in school and was told he would never excel in these subjects. Nevertheless, he went on to become one of the most celebrated geniuses. His experience demonstrates that obstacles are only barriers if we allow them to be. With persistence and confidence, we can surpass any challenge.

### **MS Dhoni: Journey to Cricket Stardom**


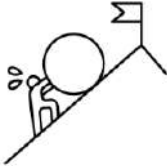


MS Dhoni's path to becoming one of India's top cricketers was marked by significant challenges. Growing up in a small town in Jharkhand with limited resources, he worked as a ticket collector with the Indian Railways to support his cricket dreams. Balancing this demanding job with his passion for cricket was tough, but Dhoni dedicated early mornings and late evenings to practise despite the constraints. His commitment, calm demeanour, and hard work eventually led him to captain the Indian cricket team to victories in the ICC T20 World Cup in 2007 and the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2011. His journey highlights how overcoming adversity and staying dedicated can lead to extraordinary success.



## Let us Plan and Execute!

Use the chart below to plan your journey toward your goals.

Outline your objectives, identify potential challenges, and develop strategies to address them. Reflect on how you anticipate feeling throughout this journey. Do not hesitate to seek feedback from peers or discuss your chart with others.

What I want	What challenges might I face	What can I do	What will I feel
			

Source: Created by TISS

## Time to ponder



Who is one person that I find inspiring and why?

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Having a role model can often guide us in our career journey  
when we feel lost or uncertain.



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