

*HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK*

# EDUCATION AND CAREER NAVIGATION

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Knowledge and Skills Critical  
for Student Progress

**ACT**<sup>®</sup>

## 4 KEYS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

*Current gauges of college and career readiness tend to focus on academic preparation and achievement, but evidence shows that success in school and the workplace is dependent on multiple aspects in addition to academic ability.*

*Using ACT research, ACT's Holistic Framework provides four domains (core academic skills, cross-cutting capabilities, behavioral skills, and education and career navigation) that most effectively predict and prepare someone's college and career readiness.*

*Students and employees can use this framework as a map to track themselves along their journey to becoming college and career ready. Teachers and employers can use this framework to identify times for intervention or manage additional support for their students or employees.*

# BENEFICIAL FOR ALL

## *K-12 Educators & Administrators*

Sometimes it's about getting students interested in college. Talking with students about educational opportunities and their preferences helps educators point them to potential colleges. When students consider education options after high school, they are more likely to enroll in a college. Through navigation, students can see and act on possible futures while also boosting a high school's graduation and college enrollment rates.

## *Postsecondary Professionals*

A postsecondary institution will see an increase in their retention and graduation rates when students choose majors that match their interest.

## *Workforce Professionals*

Education and Career Navigation within the Holistic Framework can serve as a job counselor for those transitioning adults looking for that next job or looking to take the next step in their career. By evaluating what they know about themselves and their environments, these adults can find occupations that best fit them. Research shows that adults whose interests match their careers have more satisfying and fulfilling lives.

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## *WHAT IS EDUCATION AND CAREER NAVIGATION?*

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# COGNITIVE ABILITY OUTSIDE OF THE CORE AREAS

A domain in the ACT Holistic Framework focused on what individuals know about themselves and their environments, and how they use this information to make choices, plan actions, and move along their education and career paths:



**Self-Knowledge:** understanding of one's abilities, interests, skills, values, attitudes, and beliefs



**Environmental Factors:** education/work knowledge (e.g., types of colleges, work settings) and experiences, as well as the supports and barriers (e.g., financial, family, school resources) that influence education or work progress



**Integration:** exploring and using knowledge about oneself and the environment to evaluate options, and make good fit choices and action plans



**Managing Career and Education Actions:** carrying out plans (e.g., job search, college application), checking for progress, and making adjustments when needed

Those who are able to understand and use their personal attributes and beliefs along with knowledge of the world of work and education can make better decisions, increase their motivation, and experience positive outcomes in school and work settings.



# *SELF-KNOWLEDGE*

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# The Components of Self-Knowledge

## **Awareness:**

States of perceiving, feeling, or being conscious of oneself, education, work, and the gaps among them.

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## **Personal Attributes:**

Relatively stable individual differences in characteristics that contribute to one's thoughts, decisions, and behaviors

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## **Attitudes:**

Understands that education, work, and career development are important, and that engaging in relevant activities within each of these areas will contribute to success

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## **Expectations:**

Develops accurate and positive anticipatory beliefs about the causes and consequences of decisions and actions pertaining to education or work

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## **Self-Efficacies:**

Develops and strengthens confidence in the ability to successfully complete various tasks related to identifying and achieving education and work goals

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# *ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS*

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# The Components of Environmental Factors

## **Education and Work Knowledge:**

Specific information about the world of work and occupations, education, and training, and information applicable to developing and navigating one's education and work path

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## **Supports:**

Develops relationships with people and identifies environmental conditions that can facilitate efforts to navigate education/career tasks and achieve education/career goals

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## **Barriers:**

Identifies and evaluates the people and/or environmental conditions that may impede progress toward achieving one's education or career goals

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## **Experience:**

Participates in activities, paid or unpaid, that can strengthen or modify attitudes, skills, and knowledge that pertain to education and/or work

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# *INTEGRATION*

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# The Components of Integration

## **Identity Formation:**

Recognizing individual and distinct characteristics that define oneself and using these characteristics in combination when evaluating education and career information and making education/career decisions

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## **Exploration:**

Seeks education and occupation information and evaluates it with respect to self-knowledge

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## **Goals:**

Builds or identifies education/career aspirations that one wants to pursue

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## **Career and Education Decision Making:**

Engages in the process of making informed education- or work-related decisions, using appropriate decision-making strategies

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## **Fit:**

Evaluates the degree to which one's personal characteristics are similar to the corresponding characteristics of an education or work environment

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*MANAGING CAREER  
AND  
EDUCATION ACTIONS*

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# The Components of Career and Education Actions

## **Relational Behaviors:**

Self-initiated behaviors in relation to others that facilitate understanding different aspects of the environment and further an individual's progress toward education or work goals

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## **Roles:**

Understanding and managing identified life roles

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## **Search Behaviors:**

Self-initiated behaviors that pertain to seeking admittance to a particular education institution or employment at a particular work organization

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## **Implementation:**

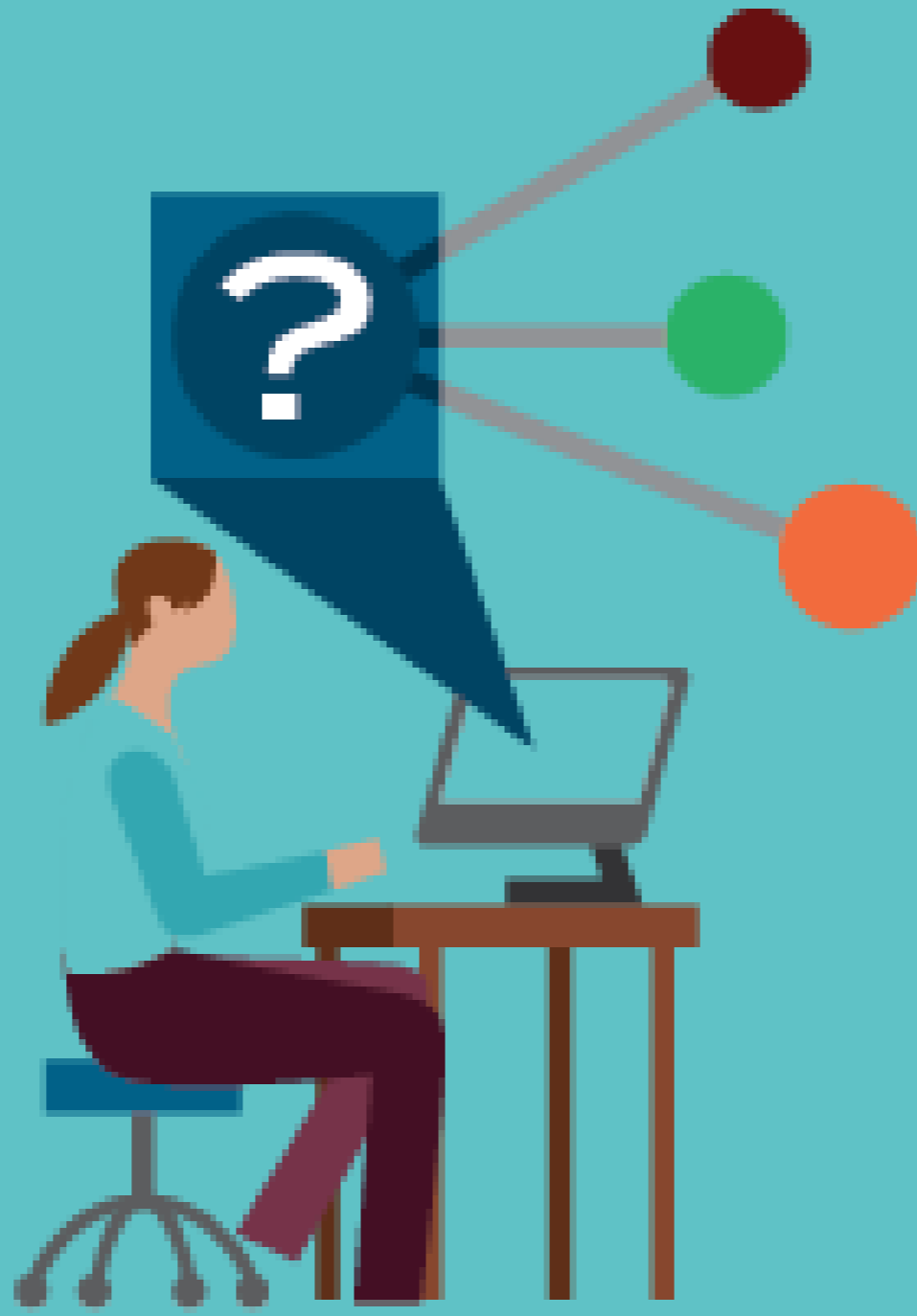
Ongoing actions that take place to execute, monitor, and evaluate one's plan for achieving goals

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## **Lifelong Learning:**

Ongoing actions to acquire new skills and knowledge, and master new experiences

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## *T A K E A W A Y S*

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## Applying this to college and career readiness

Students who have interests in the academic subjects they are studying have higher grades and are more likely to persist in school.

High school students who seek out college information to learn about their education options are more likely to enroll in college.

College students who choose majors that fit their interests have higher GPAs and are more likely to persist in college and complete their degrees in a timely manner.

College students are also more likely to persist and obtain degrees when they are more certain about their educational goals.

College students are more satisfied with their college experience when they attend institutions that better fit them socially, academically, and physically.





## Applying this to college and career readiness

Individuals who have knowledge of and engage in effective job search behaviors obtain more job interviews and receive more job offers leading directly to employment.

Individuals who enter jobs that better fit them have both higher job performance and greater job satisfaction.

Once in jobs, individuals' confidence about their ability to perform work tasks effectively has a positive influence on salary and tenure.

## Tracking & Evaluating Skills

How do you get started? How do you integrate Education and Career Navigation into your school or organization?

ACT is dedicated to helping individuals develop and use their navigation knowledge and skills to achieve education and career success.



The PreACT® allows students to select a career area and then they can see how well this selection fits their interests. Educators can use the information from PreACT to help students explore options to consider.



When it comes to education and career navigation, how do you know where to start? Connect with your students and start those planning conversations with your students using the information found in ACT® Profile.



How can you ensure your employees will be satisfied and committed to the job? In ACT® WorkKeys, the Fit assessment measures how an individual's interests and values fit with particular occupations.