

The RIASEC Interest Themes

Holland Codes — A Career & Personality Framework

Theme	Also Called	Core Drive	Typical Traits	Example Careers
R — Realistic	"The Doer"	Working with hands, tools, machines, or nature	Practical, straightforward, mechanically inclined, independent	Engineer, carpenter, farmer, pilot, athlete
I — Investigative	"The Thinker"	Analyzing, researching, and solving complex problems	Curious, analytical, precise, intellectual, reserved	Scientist, doctor, researcher, programmer, economist
A — Artistic	"The Creator"	Expressing ideas through creative and aesthetic work	Imaginative, expressive, unconventional, intuitive, independent	Writer, musician, designer, actor, architect
S — Social	"The Helper"	Supporting, teaching, and connecting with people	Empathetic, cooperative, patient, communicative, nurturing	Teacher, counselor, nurse, social worker, HR manager
E — Enterprising	"The Persuader"	Leading, influencing, and achieving goals through others	Ambitious, confident, energetic, persuasive, goal-oriented	Lawyer, manager, entrepreneur, politician, sales executive
C — Conventional	"The Organizer"	Working with data, systems, and structured processes	Detail-oriented, orderly, reliable, efficient, rule-following	Accountant, analyst, administrator, librarian, auditor

Key Things to Know

- **It's a hexagon model** — The six themes are arranged in a circle (R-I-A-S-E-C). Adjacent themes share more overlap and compatibility; opposite themes tend to be the least similar (e.g. R and S, I and E).
- **You get a 3-letter code** — Most assessments identify your top three themes (e.g. ISA or ECS). This combination paints a much more nuanced picture of your interests and strengths than any single letter alone.
- **It applies to environments too** — Workplaces and job roles also carry RIASEC profiles. Career satisfaction tends to be highest when your personal code closely matches your work environment's code — this is called congruence.

Developed by psychologist John L. Holland in the 1950s–70s. Widely used in career counseling, recruitment, and vocational education worldwide.