

CAREER ASSESSMENT

When matching a career to a character, it can be helpful to think about **influential factors**. Work your way through the boxes below, filling in any important elements on the left and adding possible jobs for each on the right. Once you've finished, look for commonalities. Is there a job that matches several important factors? (For more help, review the **Career Assessment Cheat Sheet** on the next page.)

Character's Goal	→	
Missing Human Need	→	
Past Emotional Wound(s)	→	
Morals and Personal Beliefs	→	
Dominant Positive Trait(s)	→	
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CAREER ASSESSMENT CHEAT SHEET

To build a strong Career Assessment, writers should have a good grasp of *The Occupation Thesaurus*' **influential story factors**. Below is a condensed explanation of each from the book and our extensive tutorials and resources at [One Stop for Writers](#). **Note:** OSFW has a [free trial](#), should you wish to explore any of the **thesaurus databases** mentioned here.

Character's Goal: The goal (outer motivation) is the obvious thing your character is trying to achieve by the story's end. For example, Frodo's goal in *The Lord of the Rings* is to destroy the one ring. The **Professions that Help or Hinder Goal Achievement** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*) is a helpful read. To explore possible goals and a character's route toward them, use the [Character Motivation Thesaurus database](#).

Missing Human Need: All people have five basic needs that, when fulfilled, make them feel complete: physiological, safety and security, love and belonging, esteem and recognition, and self-actualization. If one of these needs is threatened or taken away, your character will become motivated to regain it. For more information, review the **Basic Needs** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*).

Past Emotional Wound(s): An emotional wound is a negative experience that causes pain on a deep psychological level. This event happened before the story began and changed the way the character views the world and him or herself. It may lead to biases, fears, and insecurities and can cause your character to limit themselves or avoid certain types of people or situations that they fear might hurt them again. The **Unresolved Wounds** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*) will help you dig deeper. For a detailed breakdown of the fallout associated with different types of trauma, visit the [Emotional Wound Thesaurus Database](#).

Morals and Personal Beliefs: These concepts are rooted in the character's foundational ideas about right and wrong and are tied to identity, helping to define who the character is. They are part of a personal code that steers decision making and establishes boundaries on what a character will or will not do. The **Moral Conflict** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*) explores this in detail.

Dominant Positive Trait(s): Positive attributes are traits that produce personal growth or aid a character in achieving goals through healthy means. They also help the character display their identity, live their moral beliefs, and communicate with others, fostering strong relationships. This is explored in the **Personality Traits** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*) and the [Positive Trait Thesaurus Database](#) will help you brainstorm the character's dominant trait.

Talents and Skills: Your character possesses certain aptitudes and abilities, both learned and innate. These provide authors with opportunities to individualize a run-of-the-mill character while also arming him or her with the capabilities needed to win in the story. Look into the section on **Talents and Skills** (*Occupation Thesaurus*) and use the [Talent and Skill Thesaurus Database](#) to brainstorm a character's special qualities.

Passions, Interests, and Hobbies: Everyone has activities they enjoy, and characters should be no exception. Beyond simply rounding out a character, these areas of interest can serve a deeper purpose in the story itself, providing a skill, experience, or knowledge that is vital to their success. We address this in the **Hobbies and Passions** section (*Occupation Thesaurus*), and you'll find ideas galore in One Stop for Writers' [Idea Generator](#).

Your Story's Theme: A theme is a central idea or message that is subtly conveyed throughout the story. Common themes include redemption, coming of age, sacrifice, and power. A thematic statement represents the author's take on that idea and often becomes the overall message in a literary work. Review the section on **Vocations as Thematic Devices** (*Occupation Thesaurus*) and visit the [Symbolism and Motif Thesaurus Database](#) to find symbols to represent common story themes.

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