This exercise created by Richard Bolles is based on Dr. John Holland’s theory that people and work environments can be loosely classified into six different groups. Different peoples’ personalities may find different environments more to their liking. While you may have some interests in and similarities to several of the six groups, you may be attracted primarily to two or three of the areas. These two or three letters are your Holland Code.

Imagine walking into a room in which the six groups of people below are already interacting. Read the descriptions of each group and list the group you would be drawn to first, then your second choice, and finally your third choice. These represent your 3 letter Holland Code.

- **REALISTIC** “Doers”
  - People who have athletic or mechanical ability, prefer to work with objects, machines, tools, plants or animals, or to be outdoors.
- **INVESTIGATIVE** “Thinkers”
  - People who like to observe, learn, investigate, analyze, evaluate or solve problems
- **CONVENTIONAL** “Organizers”
  - People who like to work with data, have administrative or numerical ability, carry out tasks in detail or follow through on others' instructions
- **ENTERPRISING** “Persuaders”
  - People who like to work with people, influencing, persuading, performing, leading or managing for organizational goals or economic gain.
- **ARTISTIC** “Creators”
  - People who like to work with people who have artistic, innovating or intuitive abilities and like to work in unstructured situations using their imagination and creativity.
- **SOCIAL** “Helpers”
  - People who like to work with people to enlighten, inform, help, train, or cure them, or are skilled with words.

Circle the words or group of words from each group that appeals to you.

Write about when in the past you have used this word or group of words. Provide as much detail as you can recall. Include the situation, specific actions, and results you got from your past experience.

Project forward and write about how you would like to use these words or group of words in the future. Again, provide as much detail as you can. Include the situation, specific actions, and results you imagine for the future.
Explore occupations associated to the Holland Codes using http://online.onetcenter.org

Summary reports can provide more overall information while a detail report will give greater depth.

Review the summary descriptions for the tasks, knowledge, skills, etc. as a means to explore possible areas of career interest for yourself in greater detail.

Use the related occupations link to find other possible job titles for exploration.

TIP: It can be helpful to copy and paste specific tasks, knowledge, skills, etc. that appeal to you to create an outline of your ideal job. This can provide a solid foundation as you move forward into exploring careers.