

# Occupational Interests and VoicePrint

## Research Insight

American psychologist John Holland studied the relationship between personality and occupation, and his model distinguishes six types of vocational interest, work context and personality. Although one type is often the primary feature, most jobs entail some combination of interests, with complex roles requiring more. The six types are summarised very briefly below.

**Realistic** - enjoys working with hands, tools, machines, equipment. Prefers the concrete and practical. Apt to be conforming, persistent, inflexible, materialistic, un-insightful.

**Investigative** - enjoys mental work, observing, analysing and discovering. Values the scientific and scholarly. Apt to be independent, curious, complex, rational, critical.

**Artistic** - prefers free, unsystematised activities and the opportunity to create. Values imagination and self-expression. Apt to be intuitive, idealistic, non-conforming, sensitive, disorderly.

**Social** - enjoys helping and developing others. Uses social beliefs, competencies and values in work and beyond. Apt to be agreeable, co-operative, responsible, generous, tactful.

**Enterprising** - enjoys work that entails the manipulation of others to attain organisational goals or economic gain. Values power and influence. Apt to be assertive, energetic, self-confident, adventurous, acquisitive.

**Conventional** - prefers orderly, organised, predictable, routine activities. Values procedures and discipline. Apt to be methodical, conscientious, thorough, cautious, inhibited.

### Findings

Our Holland/VoicePrint cross-correlational analysis revealed modest rather than strong associations for different types with some of the nine voices, and an absence of any distinctive associations with others. This underlines the fact that the two instruments are focused on different issues with only occasional overlap. (\* indicates correlations of  $p < 0.01$  or stronger)

### *The Exploring Voices*

The use of the **Inquire** voice is most clearly associated (in descending strength of correlation) with the Social\*, Investigative, Artistic and Enterprising interests, reflecting the central importance of inquiry in all these activities.

**Probe** - there are correlations between the Probe voice and all the Occupational Interests, but none are either distinctly higher than others or statistically significant, suggesting that some level of probing is a normal feature in all occupations.

The use of the **Diagnose** voice is most clearly associated with the Investigative\* interest, but there are also statistically significant correlations with both the Enterprising and Conventional interests, showing that analytical process can be important in very different work environments.

### *The Positioning Voices*

The use of the **Advocate** voice is, unsurprisingly, most evident with the Enterprising\* interest and, to a lesser extent, with the Artistic.

**Advise** - the surprising finding is that there is zero correlation with the Social type (which, is about helping by asking rather than suggesting). There is a modest negative correlation with the Investigative interest, probably simply reflecting that analysing and advising are quite different activities.

The **Articulate** voice is positively correlated with the Social, and negatively with the Realistic interest.

### ***The Controlling Voices***

**Direct** - the most hierarchical and least involving of the voices is *negatively* associated with the Artistic\*, Social\*, Investigative\* and Enterprising interests. Surprisingly, we found no statistically significant correlation with the Conventional type.

The use of the **Challenge** voice is significantly more frequent with the Enterprising and Realistic types, and less frequent with the Social.

The dysfunctional form of the **Evaluate** voice (criticising) is negatively associated with the Social\* type, but otherwise evaluating simply seems to be another normal feature in all occupational contexts.