

The "I" Test

Before taking the next step on your career path, ask yourself the questions below and read the following information:

You may be among the very few career-bound students who have what we call a high "IQ" (**Independence Quotient**).

YOUR QUESTIONS

Here are five basic questions about your attitude toward your career.



1) For the most part, I would prefer work that puts me in touch with:

- a. Machines exclusively
- b. Both people and machines
- c. People exclusively



2) For the most part, I would prefer a career where I:

- a. Work from 9 to 5
- b. Work roughly from 9 to 5
- c. Set my own schedule



3) I would prefer the kind of career which provides me:

- a. Total job security in a big company or bureaucracy
- b. Some security in a growth industry or in a medium-sized company
- c. Limited security



4) I would prefer a job in which I:

- a. Work in an office regularly
- b. Travel locally or regionally
- c. Travel exclusively



5) I would prefer a career with upward mobility:

- a. In which I climb to the top of an existing structure
- b. In which I make the structure of my enterprise grow and I grow with it

Your Answers

The answers to *The "I" Test* are not as obvious as you think. Each one has weighty implications.

Question 1 addresses a serious consideration. Some people prefer the limited responsiveness of the machine and are motivated by mechanical invention. Some prefer dealing with people almost 100% of the time. And some prefer a mix of people contact and machine technology.

If your answer was (b) your "independence quotient" is best served. You prefer harnessing technology for your people-to-people contact and you prefer working with both human and hardware resources.

Question 2 contrasts the total independence of an entertainer, answer (c), with the regularity of the 9 to 5 worker, answer (a). In the center lies a happy medium, answer (b) - the job which relies upon your initiative and is yet part of a larger, structured system.

Question 3 illustrates your job security motivation. A career should not be a gamble. But there are extremes. Answer (a) implies the total security situation in a large corporation or governmental bureaucracy. Answer (b) implies some security like that offered by a medium-sized company. If you chose (c) you are independent, but be careful – your future is at stake and at least *some* security is a good thing! If you chose (b) you may be headed for the security that comes from being part of the decision-making team of an independent insurance agency or insurance company.

Question 4 illustrates the extremes of your willingness to travel, from (a) virtually "none" to (c) "exclusively." If you chose (b), you are ready for the success that comes from personal contacts on a local and regional level.

Question 5 really asks whether you prefer (a) climbing up an existing corporate ladder or (b) making your own enterprise grow - and you growing with it. The independent thinker will probably choose (b).

Independence

Our purpose in illustrating these choices is to interest you in a career that combines the following opportunities:

- Working with people and with the latest technology
- Advancing within a growth system in which you are your own boss but not totally alone
- Relying upon your own initiative but not starting from zero all by yourself
- Traveling locally and regionally to make personal contacts
- Using all of your ability to make it on your own, instead of climbing an existing corporate ladder

The career that offers these opportunities is that of an *Independent Insurance Agent*. Independent Agents are entrepreneurs who...

- Represent several insurance companies
- Hold written contracts allowing them to represent these companies
- Select from these companies the kinds of insurance and policies that suit their clients' needs
- Work for their own success *directly*, as part of the independent agency system

Many Independent Agents own their own businesses and work for themselves and their clients. But they also work with the companies they represent, including some of the largest and most prestigious insurance companies in the world.

And there's much more to it. The insurance industry needs bright, forward-looking young people who can be INDEPENDENT and make lifelong careers in this rapidly growing, demanding field.

The Name of the Game...Your Clients

Insurance is probably the ultimate "people" business. Think of the variety of people an agent deals with directly; executives of all kinds, decision makers on every level of government, other insurance professionals, community leaders, directors of public and private organizations, store owners, homeowners, builders, motorists and apartment dwellers. In fact, the whole world of people, their business and pleasure activities, their properties, their projects, their lives and their families, are *all* the agent's domain.

Protecting Your Clients...

...from just about everything! No subject is foreign to insurance. From autos to oil rigs, from flood to fire, from teachers to professional athletes, and from the corner deli to a vacation resort, there is a form of insurance to cover it all. A successful agent must keep abreast of an ever-changing marketplace and a variety of insurance products to meet client needs.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM A CAREER AS AN INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENT?

THE INDEPENDENT AGENT

One of the greatest satisfactions of being your own boss is the knowledge that your work is meaningfully related to your earnings. As an independent agent, your work will draw from expertise in many areas, putting your talents to work directly. From personnel skills to automation, from your instincts to the acquired knowledge that comes from the study of insurance, you will be challenged to keep up and keep sharp.

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES...

- Earnings related to your own initiative
- Potential ownership of your own business
- Protecting people from the risk of financial loss
- Working with a broad spectrum of people
- Respect as a professional in your community

YOUR EARNINGS

When people seek insurance, Independent Agents assess the risks involved and select one of the companies they represent which best suits the client's needs. The client pays a premium for recommended insurance coverage. The agent earns commissions on the premiums the client pays. As the number and size of your accounts increase, so do your earnings. Independent Agents are members of a high-earning profession and the industry itself is among the world's largest. Billions of dollars in premiums and commissions are transacted every year.

GREAT POTENTIAL

A great place to start your insurance career is with InVEST, dedicated to insurance education and training. Visit www.InVESTprogram.org for more information about careers in the insurance industry.

Thank you for taking *The "I" Test*. If you feel you measure up, there may be a great career awaiting you as an Independent Agent!