

# BodhBridge

Educational Services (P) Ltd

## **My Choice My Future Career Guidance Framework Manual**

***MCMF***

MY CHOICE

MY FUTURE

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## MCMF CAREER GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK - MANUAL

### 1. THE NEED FOR CAREER GUIDANCE IN INDIA

Most students in India enter their undergraduate studies without really having chosen their courses themselves. As a result, at the end of graduation, they end up not knowing what to do, or how to employ the skills they may have learned in order to take up work that is both financially and personally viable.

Career guidance, therefore, is necessary in India because students need to be mentally prepared to face the world after graduation. Moreover, with a high percentage of youngsters making up the Indian demographic, we also need to make sure that the young workforce is employable, accountable and most importantly, happy. This is one of the main motivations of the MCMF career guidance framework as well.

### 2. THE CHALLENGES FACED BY PARENTS AND STUDENTS IN CHOOSING A CAREER

- Peer pressure
- Societal pressure to be successful
- Anxiety regarding future
- Lack of awareness in areas like:
  - Personality strengths/ interests
  - Aptitudes, skills, abilities
  - Available careers
  - Careers that are in demand
- Mismatch in career interest/personality strengths and abilities/aptitude
- Lack of knowledge to obtain required resources/opportunities:
  - Financial
  - Requirements for a career (like skills required, Entrance exams, educational qualifications, health and fitness conditions)
  - Educational and training institutions

#### 2.1 Drawbacks of pursuing a mismatched career

##### 2.1.1 Lack of interest/personality strengths lead to

- Poor satisfaction with the job
- Poor efficiency in other aspects of life too

### **2.1.2 Lack of skills or aptitudes lead to**

- Poor job performance
- Lower self-efficacy

## **2.2 Advantages of choosing a career that matches personality, ability and market demands**

The advantages of choosing careers that match personality, ability and market demands are a plethora. The major advantages are:

- Improved job satisfaction
- Improved overall satisfaction with life by finding meaning and purpose
- Improved motivation and commitment
- Improved success in terms of efficiency and quality of work
- Improved employment opportunities
- Increased remuneration

## **3. AIM OF MCMF CAREER GUIDANCE**

MCMF career guidance aims to provide a workable match between personality strengths/ interests, aptitudes/abilities and career choice while addressing the challenges faced by students and parents when choosing a career like peer pressure, financial restrictions, lack of awareness, etc.

### **3.1 How is career guidance different from layman's advice?**

Career guidance is a structured process facilitated by trained individuals. It includes the provision of factual information rather than opinionated information on various aspects of career choice. The use of standardized ways to identify an individual's abilities, aptitudes, interests, personality strengths separates career guidance from regular advice given by people. The counsellor is more flexible with allowing the student to set his own goals where advice is often more stern and inflexible. Career guidance includes an interactive approach rather than a unidirectional transfer of information.

#### 4. THE MCMF FRAMEWORK OF CAREER GUIDANCE

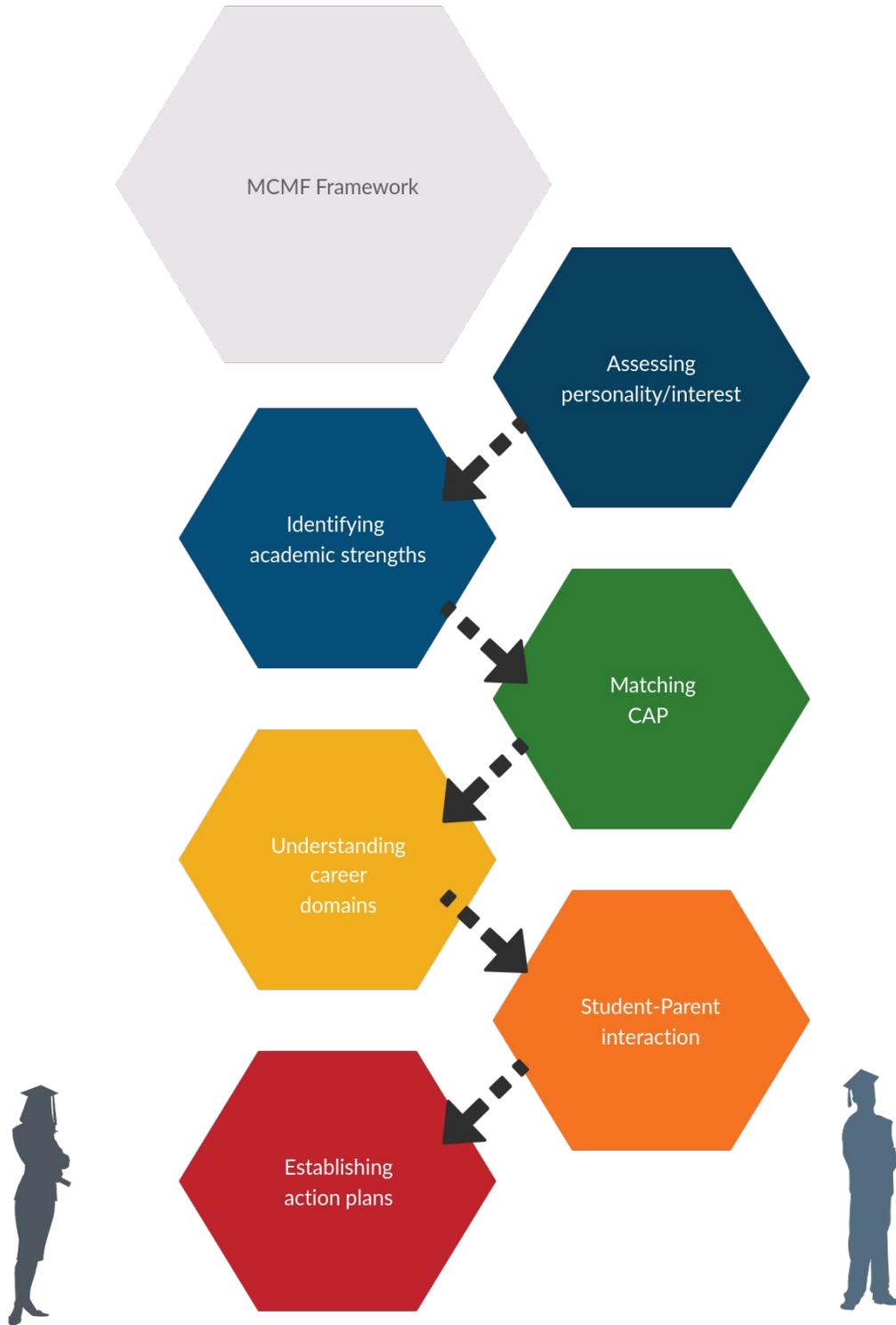


Figure 1: The MCMF career guidance framework model

The MCMF framework is abbreviated as **AIM-USE**. The framework provides a structure to fulfil the aims of career guidance through rigid yet flexible methods which include the following:

- **Assessing Personality/Interest**
- **Identifying academic strengths**
- **Matching CAP**
- **Understanding career domain**
- **Student/parent interaction**
- **Establishing action plans**

## 5. THE FRAMEWORK IN ACTION

### 5.1 Assessing Personality/Interest

The personality/interest indication is considered the first step in MCMF career guidance framework because interests are better predictors of long term sustained efforts than ability. The MCMF inventory is a '*Career Interest Indicator*'. It provides an insight into the emotional inclination of an individual towards a field. The emotional inclination is important because it encourages more effort in activities associated with that field. The interest orientation of an individual can be considered more important than abilities as it is what ensures sustained effort and practice to improve one's abilities. The interest and personality strengths of an individual are assessed by the administration of MCMF to find out the individual's area of interest/personality strengths.

In addition to the use of the assessment tool, it is the counsellor's responsibility to collect information on interests and personality when interacting with the student by asking questions like:

- How would you describe yourself?
- Do you like organizing their things?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What sports do you play?
- How are you at school, with friends, teachers, etc?

The MCMF test provides a '*Suggestive report*' which is not used for diagnosis and categorization of individuals. It is used to identify the natural interest inclinations and personality strengths of an individual. It can, however, be used to check the compatibility of the three career dimensions of choice with one's personality strengths and innate interest inclinations. The test provides insight into the student or client on what areas he/she needs to work on to achieve the intended choice of careers. If the individual is self-persuaded by looking at the report to choose an alternative career that indicates a higher match with one's personality strengths, it is fine and can be encouraged. But, *the counsellor shouldn't suggest the student to choose an alternative*

*career based on the report.* By the end of this step, the individual finds his personality strengths and the compatibility of his career choices with them. The counsellor should ensure that the individual understands that MCMF report only provides information for making informed career decisions and does not dictate career choices.

## 5.2 Identifying academic abilities

Identifying a student's academic performance (school subjects like physics, chemistry, math, etc.) and possibly aptitudes is the second step in the MCMF framework. Information on the academic performance of a student and his talents can be collected from various sources like teachers' reports, scores on school tests, parent's reports, and the student's report. The counsellor is encouraged to probe and identify areas of strengths by asking the individual questions like,

- What activities do you excel in?
- What are your favourite subjects at school?
- What are some of your topics of interest in a subject?
- In which subject do they excel at school?
- Are there subjects that you are weak in?
- Are there subjects that you don't like studying?
- Have they participated in any olympiad exams?
- What extracurricular activities do you involve yourself in?

The MCMF test only measures the personality/interests of an individual. The counsellor's interaction with the individual on academic performance alone can be used as a valid indicator of ability. Because aptitude tests are often highly correlated with academic scores.

However, if the counsellor feels there is a need for aptitude tests, he/she may use one. Aptitude only assesses the potential of an individual to learn things. But with sustained effort, an individual with below-average aptitude can attain a level of skill and ability that is par with those high in aptitude. The factor which ensures sustained effort in an area is interest. Hence, focusing on personality/ interest over ability/attitude is important.

## 5.3 Matching CAP (Choice, Academics, Personality)

After having assessed one's academic abilities and personality strengths/interests, the next step involves matching the individual's career choices with academic abilities and personality strengths/interest. The counsellor helps the student identify the strengths and skills needed for each of the chosen careers. Consider matching of the academic abilities and personality/interest as finding the intersection between two sets using a Venn diagram. If the individual's choice of careers also falls within the intersection of interests and abilities, the career match is bound to be more successful and satisfying than other careers. But it is not often the case. If the career choices are not aligning with the intersection of personality strengths and academic ability, the

counsellor is again not advised to persuade the individual to change career choices. Just list out the skills/strengths that the student already possesses and identify the areas that need improvement.

### **5.3.1 Things to be considered:**

- What made them choose these particular fields?
- Do all of their career choices fit with their academic strengths?
- Do all of their career choices fit with their personality/interests?
- Do they need help in identifying the best career option?
- Do they need help in improving the strengths needed for their choices?
- What are the strengths that they need for the chosen careers?
- What are the strengths that they already possess?

### **5.4. Understanding career domains**

Having understood the extent of the match between career choices, academic abilities and personality, the counsellor now has to list out the skills and strengths necessary for chosen careers.

Collect information on what the student already has been doing to meet requirements in the areas indicated as one's preferred careers. Get to know if they are aware of the path that leads to the chosen careers. Identify areas that the student is already working on improving. Identify areas that the student needs improvement in or lacks knowledge. Gather the information by asking questions like,

- How do you fare in competitive exams?
- Are you attending any coaching classes currently?
- Have you participated in school/district level/state-level competitions, etc?
- Have you received prizes/recognition for your performances?
- Who do you consider as a role model in the chosen career?
- Are you aware of what their duties, roles and responsibilities are?

Make sure to probe into areas that show an individual's inclination towards their chosen careers.

### **5.5 Student-parent interaction**

The next step involves letting the stake-holders like parents, guardians and sponsors in the counselling process know what the best career choices are. It is the counsellor's responsibility to get them involved in deciding a feasible, practical and meaningful goal with the students' career choice as the base. The counsellor can guide the stake-holders using the information gained by

the MCMF test and the earlier interaction with the student to aid in the decision making. In some cases, the parents might need to be guided about the importance of matching - career choices, academic abilities and personality strengths, rather than blindly following a career based on majority and for monetary benefits alone.

Here, the counsellor and parents with the student consider the costs of pursuing goals, time taken in educational pursuits, financial capabilities of the parent/guardian, level of competition in getting admitted into a college, etc. to finalize a minimum of three career goals that match their choices, personality strengths and academic abilities. In the case of mismatches, it is important for counsellors to help them arrive at a workable match.

It could include finding middle grounds like a diploma course instead of a professional degree when finances are a barrier. Make sure that only very little compromises are made to the choices of students. At the end of this step, the student-parent-counsellor trio should have set three goals A, B and C.

## **5.6 Establishing action plans**

The next logical step is to draft an action plan based on the goals that are set by the student and parents. The MCMF framework suggests adopting a two fold action plan that are worked on simultaneously.

### **5.6.1 Two fold action plan**

At this stage the counsellor's responsibility is a two-fold action plan focusing on improving strengths and the career path. (Refer Figure 1 on page 11)

#### **5.6.1.1 Working on strengths**

This further includes personality strengths and academic abilities. It is the responsibility of the counsellor to first work on an action plan improving personality and academic abilities and later on the career paths. The counsellor can refer to the document on ways to improve MCMF personality traits for guiding students on the action plan. For improving abilities, various crash courses, coaching centres, online courses are available for it. The counsellor is encouraged to help with three career plans A, B and C for each of the choices made previously.

#### **5.6.1.2 Working on the career path**

This includes identifying the barriers, challenges and ways to overcome them in order to achieve their career goals. This part of the action plan is to understand if the student has an idea of the career path that leads to career goals. The counsellor can enquire about if the student is attempting any entrance exams, attending coaching classes for the same. The counsellor has to provide information on the courses and help with information on the places where the courses

are offered, the entrance exams (if any) that lead to the goal. If the counsellor is not equipped with the information about the career path, he/she can refer the students to working professionals after helping them with action plans to develop strengths.

#### **5.6.2 Things to be considered in developing an action plan:**

- What are the strengths that are lacking?
- What is the current level of strengths of the student?
- What are the ways to improve those strengths?
- What are the possible challenges or barriers to the goals?
- How to evaluate growth and progress?
- When to switch to plans?
- How to go about with plan B or C?

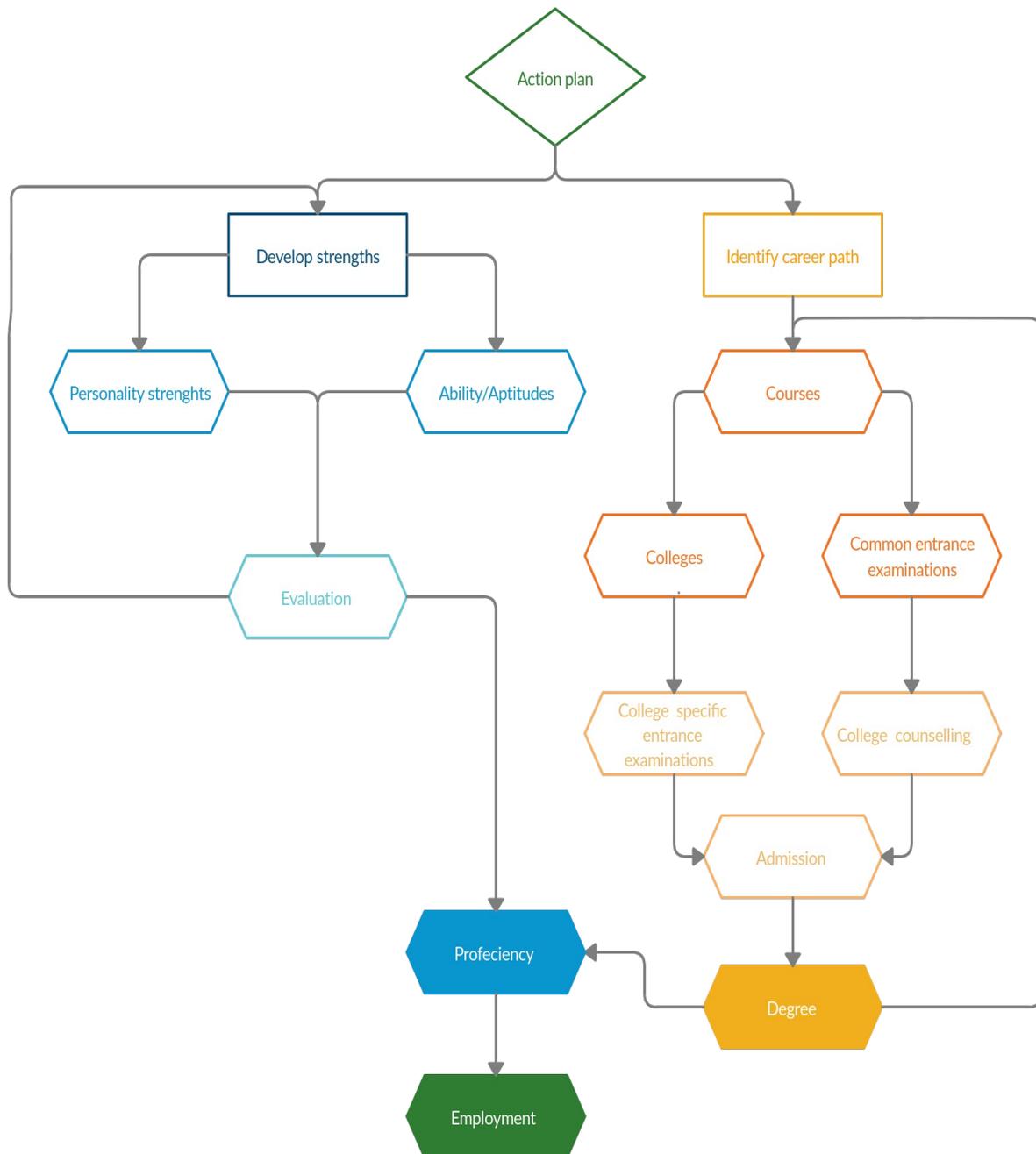


Figure 2: Two-fold action plan

7. SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS OF MCMF CAREER GUIDANCE

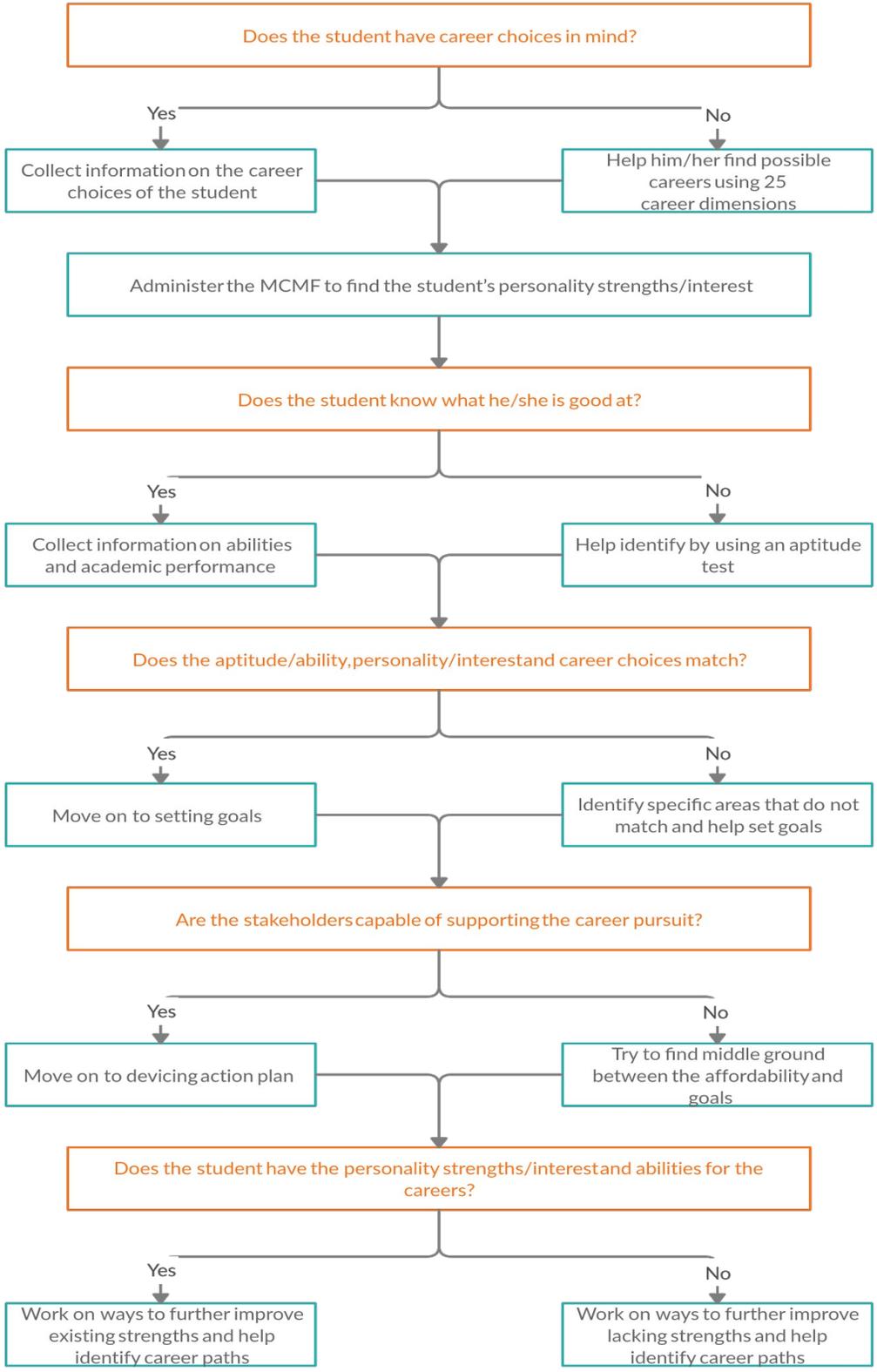


Figure 3: Process Of Mcmf Career Guidance