

Career Development for Youth

When you are beginning to make decisions about your future, it is important to face situations that might hold you back. Decisions that you make now will affect your life in the future. Learn to make plans and set goals. Some situations that could keep you from reaching your goals may include the following:

- *Unwanted pregnancy*
- *Illnesses/disease (high blood pressure, AIDS, venereal disease)*
- *Death of a parent, family member, or close friend*
- *Failing grades, failing to complete high school*
- *Too many absences*
- *Negative attitude*
- *Trouble with the law*
- *Alcohol or drug abuse*
- *Divorce or family-related problems*
- *Violence and abuse*

Even though it may not be obvious to you, most workers face some of these problems, too. It may not seem as if they have problems, but they do. Problems happen because we are all part of an exciting and changing world. If you want to be part of the working world, you will probably encounter some problems. Whether you make the most of these situations or let them overwhelm you is in your hands. When you take school seriously, many doors can be opened that would otherwise be closed. Pathways to success are your responsibility—attending school regularly, making passing grades, and not

doing things that will get you in trouble with the law. Don't allow these problems to stop you from reaching the goals in life you have set for yourself.

When deciding what career is best for you, look first at your interests. Second, decide how much of a sacrifice you are willing to make to reach your goals.

In deciding what career to choose, consider the points below and circle all that apply to you:

I. Main interests

What kinds of hobbies, clubs, and interests do I really enjoy?

- *Outdoor activities*
- *Travel*
- *Animals*
- *Computers*
- *Physical activity*
- *Reading*
- *Art*
- *Working with people*
- *Other*

What would I like to learn more about?

- *Science*
- *Writing and literature*

- *Mechanics*
- *Law*
- *Math*
- *Music*
- *Psychology*
- *Art*
- *Other*

What are my talents and special qualities?

- *Writing*
- *Listening*
- *Getting along well with others*
- *Solving problems*
- *Other*

II. Requirements and benefits in this field

How much education will I need to enter this field?

- *High school or graduate equivalency (GED) diploma*
- *Trade or technical school certificate*
- *Short training program certificate*
- *Junior or community college associate degree*
- *Professional school degree*
- *University degree*
- *Other*

What programs are available to help pay for my education?

- *Guaranteed student loans (must pay back)*
- *Work/study (work part-time, take classes part-time)*
- *Grants-in-aid (must pay back)*
- *Scholarships*
- *Other*

How can I work and go to school, too?

- *Part-time job*
- *Work/study*
- *Federally funded research/employment programs for minorities*
- *Other*

III. Your most outstanding talent and how you plan to use it

Your first step in preparing for a career is to get training. How can you reach your educational goal? Below are the levels of education you can achieve and a listing of the types of degrees earned if you choose to complete that particular level. A major consideration in choosing a career is how much education is required.

- **Level 1:** High school or graduate equivalency degree (GED)
Degree: Diploma
- **Level 2:** Trade school or business school
Degree: Certificate of completion
- **Level 3:** Junior or community college (2 years)
Degree: Associate degree
- **Level 4:** College or university (4 or more years)
Degree: Bachelor's degree
- **Level 5:** Graduate school
Degree: Master's degree (6 or more years)
Doctorate (8 or more years)
- **Level 6:** Professional school
Degree: Medical doctor, dentist, lawyer, veterinarian

Note: Some professional schools, such as Eastman or Julliard, may not give a degree. These are for musicians only.

In most cases, education involves a series of steps. In order to enter one level of study, you must first complete the steps before it. For example, if Jane wants an associate in arts degree (AA), she must first complete high school or earn a GED and meet the appropriate college entrance requirements before she is allowed to enter a junior college.

College isn't the only choice you have. Technical, trade, and business schools are other alternatives following high school. In most cases, the more education you have in your field the more money you can make in the future. For example, with just a high school diploma you may earn from \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year. With a college degree or trade school training, you may earn from \$12,000 to \$20,000.

You might find out how much a person in your community would earn in each of the following jobs to see how worthwhile it would be to complete more education. Here are some examples of this process:

Bob likes working on car engines. He is interested in how engines are put together and how they work. Bob has several career choices. This is what is required for each choice. How much does a person in each of these jobs make in your community?

Job title:	Education needed:
Mechanic	High school, experience, or trade school
Industrial arts teacher	Bachelor's degree
Mechanical engineer	Bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate

Jane's favorite subject in high school was biology. She enjoys learning about how the human body works, and she also enjoys helping other people.

Job title:	Education needed:
Nurse's aide	High school and training program
Physical therapist	Bachelor's degree
Registered Nurse (RN)	Bachelor's degree
Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)	Hospital training program
Lab technician	Bachelor's degree
Doctor (MD)	Medical school (8 or more years)

Lloyd likes video games and computers. He's good with puzzles and solving mechanical problems.

Job title:	Education needed:
Computer programmer	High school/technical school
Computer repairperson, technician	High school/trade school, experience
Computer science teacher	Bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate

Other factors to consider when choosing a career are listed below. (Circle those that apply to you.)

1. I like to work:

- A. Indoors
- B. Outdoors
- C. Both

2. I like working:

- A. With people
- B. By myself
- C. Both

3. I like to travel:

- A. Yes
- B. No

4. I like a schedule to have:

- A. Constant change
- B. Be routine
- C. Both

What type of work setting would I enjoy? (Circle one.)

1. Office
2. Classroom
3. Hospital
4. Park
5. Factory
6. Outdoors

If you love excitement, think about choosing a career as a police officer, firefighter, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or corrections officer, or think about joining the armed forces. Most of these jobs require an intense training program, but the training is often given on the job. Some may require college credit.

Once you have decided what your interests are and have some idea of what type of career you would enjoy, the next step is to talk with people who work in that field. This will give you a true picture of what that job really will be like. While you are in school, try to gain some experience in the career that interests you. Experience gained now can help you obtain the career you want later.

For starters, you may consider volunteer work. Volunteer jobs offer you the chance to get your first bit of experience. Another option is joining a training program for that particular job. Often, help with finding a job is provided as part of a training program. This service usually is only available to those who complete the training. If you attend college, the school will usually offer job placement services.

Below are some general titles and lists of the places you can check in order to start your career search.

Cook (if you like to cook and to work around lots of people)

Restaurant

Child care center

School cafeteria

Prison

Hospital

Office Worker (if you enjoy a routine and have an interest in computers)

Government agencies

School offices

Small businesses

Hospitals

Companies or corporations

Pet Care (if you enjoy working with animals)

Veterinarians

Kennels

Pet stores

Laboratories

Humane societies

Farms

Outdoor Jobs (if you like the outdoors and plants)

Landscape contracting

Road work companies

Golf courses, parks

Government agencies: parks, forestry, ecology, fish and wildlife

When checking out any of these places, ask to speak to or make an appointment to see these people:

- *Personnel officer*
- *Department head*
- *Supervisor*
- *Manager*
- *Director*
- *Owner*

These are the people who will be able to give you the

most information about the job. Remember, choosing the right career will take time and careful consideration. If you already have a job and are considering changing to a different field, follow these same guidelines to help you make the best decision possible.

The goals you set for yourself can be as high as you want them to be. You already have the talent, interest, and desire. It's just a matter of putting your skills and determination to work. Your future depends on it.

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