

Career counseling essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Career Counseling with Students Outline VALUES Your values are those aspects of work which you believe to be the most important and often the most rewarding. Therefore, looking at your values will help you identify those job characteristics that are most important to you.

For example, do you prefer to work alone or on a team? Do you want to earn a great deal of money? Is helping others of primary importance for you?

These are just some of the questions you will need to ask yourself. You will most likely find your career genuinely rewarding if it is consistent with your work-related values. VALUES EXERCISE The following exercise is designed to help you identify some of your most important work-related values. Of the following factors that give people satisfaction on the job, rate their importance to you on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important. Factors: diversity in workplace, work alone, money, social status, variety, leisure time, job security, low stress, job advancement, work for social change, creativity, health, benefits, supportive co-workers, travel, professional prestige. •What are your top five job-related values? Which of these would you be willing to do without? •What does this tell you about the kind of work you want to do? •What about your fantasy job.

.. Try to dream a little about an ideal occupation. The sky is the limit. – What would you be doing? – Where would you be working? – What do you like most about this job? •Now back to reality for a moment. What aspects of this fantasy job may actually be possible? SKILLS EXERCISE You can often discover what your skills are by looking at the experiences that have given you the most satisfaction and greatest feeling of accomplishment.

Think back on the accomplishments in your life so far. These successes may have occurred through a variety of experiences, do not restrict your self to job-related accomplishments. Reflect on these experiences for a moment and write down your responses to the following questions: 1. What three accomplishments are you most proud of? For example, being elected president of a sorority, editing the school paper, earning a scholarship, acting in a play.

2. What skills were involved in each of these activities? Try to classify them as functional, job-specific, or self-management skills. 3. Of the skills used in those experiences, which did you enjoy using the most, and the least? What does this say about the kind of tasks you enjoy the most? FROM SELF-ASSESSMENT TO CAREER EXPLORATION How does one begin to identify a possible career to pursue when there are thousands of occupations to choose from? Know thyself: It is crucial to learn about your interests, skills, and values. Knowing yourself helps to identify options that are best suited for you.

When beginning your career search, first identify a broad field for exploration, and then research specific options within that field. For example, if marketing is an area in which you have a general interest, then you might want to explore market research, direct marketing, and product development. Try to keep your options open. Exercise 1 •Identify two broad career fields you would like to explore further (e. g. , healthcare and business).

- Next, list three specific career options within each field (e. g. , healthcare – occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech pathology; business?? marketing, financial analysis, and auditing).
- Think about why your chosen fields and options are interesting to you.

GENERATING OPTIONS There are a number of ways in which you can generate a list of occupational alternatives. Consider the ways in which your interests, major(s), and skills relate to the world of work. Vocational interest and personality inventories may be helpful in pinpointing occupations worthy of further exploration (an appointment with a Career Development counselor can help you decide on the appropriateness of these inventories). Also try to determine how your academic training is preparing you for life after college.

What you enjoy studying often provides a good clue as to what you would enjoy doing professionally. Finally, you need to thoroughly assess your skills, determine which ones you enjoy using most, and figure out what occupations require those skills.

RESEARCHING CAREERS You can gather information about careers by: **READING** occupational, biographical, and professional literature; **TALKING** with and **OBSERVING** people in their work environments; and **EXPERIENCING** work by way of part-timer full-time jobs, internships, or volunteering. **Reading:** Reading about careers is one of the quickest ways to learn about occupations. There are many resources available which provide both general field summaries and highly detailed position descriptions. For those who prefer a computer screen to a book, various web sites and search engines exist on the Internet to assist users with their career/job research.

. Exercise 2 Find at least three sources in the library describing each career option. Then, for each field, fill out an index card with the following information: 1. Academic training that is most appropriate 2.

Skills that may be required to enter this field 3. Personality traits/characteristics that are valued by employers in this field 4. Typical entry-level positions and salaries 5. The ways in which one finds out about job openings . Opportunities for professional development and advancement within this field 7.

Employment outlook for the field Talking: Informational interviewing is another way of gathering information about the world of work. It enables you to acquire additional information about a field, industry, or particular type of work that you will not find in a book. Getting a personal and realistic view of the career you are exploring will help you make a sound decision. It is a good idea to talk with as many people as you can to ascertain the most complete picture. Ask friends, relatives, teachers, career counselors, and professional association members for suggestions of who to contact.

Speak with people who are working in your field of interest and arrange to meet them at their place of employment. You might want to inquire about the following: typical responsibilities of workers in this occupation, what an average day entails the work environment, some major frustrations and rewards in this line of work, and the level of supervision or training received. Practice informational interviewing with a friend or colleague. The following is a list of sample questions you might ask: 1. What are some steps one

could take to arrive at a position similar to yours? 2. Can you describe some of your typical job functions? 3.

What are some problems that arise in your work and how do you handle them? 4. Where do you see the industry going in the next five to ten years? 5. What do you like most about your job? What do you dislike about your job? 6. Can you describe some of the rewards associated with this position? 7. What kinds of classes, experience, and/or extracurricular activities would help me to gain relevant skills and knowledge? Conduct informational interviews with at least three professionals in your areas of interest. Through informational interviewing, you may be able to obtain more details about the nature of the work, lifestyle, and future considerations for the occupation you are considering.

Observing: Job shadowing is an excellent way to test your career goals by seeing “ a day in the life” of a particular field or position. Spend a few hours, a day, or several days on site, literally “ shadowing” a specific professional or group of professionals within an organization. Experiencing: Some people learn best by doing. Experience can provide invaluable information about careers and insights about yourself that books and informational interviewing cannot.

Being able to observe the actual work environment and interaction between co-workers can provide valuable clues as to whether or not a particular career is for you. Career-related experiences can be acquired through internships, part-time or temporary jobs, volunteering, and extracurricular activities. Working as an intern, part-time employee, or volunteer will

substantially increase your hiring potential for future career opportunities. Employers value career-related experience as much as academic achievement.