

Career Search

Each person holds so much power within themselves that needs to be let out. Sometimes they just need a little nudge, a little direction, a little support, a little coaching, and the greatest things can happen. - Pete Carroll

Did you know that many college students spend an extra one or two years in college because they never took the time to determine their major before entering college and in turn, end up changing their major, sometimes multiple times? Likewise, many students pick fields of study with declining growth trends and are unable to find a job upon graduation.

One of the most difficult challenges many students face is deciding what s/he is going to major in at college or what future career path to choose. They often dread the two questions that every inquisitive friend or family member is inevitably going to ask:

- Where are you going to college?
- What are you going to major in?

One additional question to ask yourself is:

- Have you taken the career you are considering for a test-ride by setting up a job shadowing opportunity with a friend, relative or acquaintance already in the career?

If a student takes the time to determine the best career for him/herself before entering college, they tend to spend less time in college, which in turn, maximizes the investment (time and money) they spend on getting their education. With a little work and self-reflection, selecting a wise course of study can lead to a lifelong, rewarding career, with personal growth, and long-term financial security.

Though choosing a career path is one of the significant milestones every student faces, change in this modern age is inevitable. On average men change careers within their professional life span 3 to 4 times, while woman change 3 to 6 times so flexibility is key for every student as s/he prepares for their future. This can be accomplished by focusing on transferable skill sets and similar interests over a set path. The exception to this would be those students who are already laser-focused on going into a pre-professional field (for ex. medicine, law etc.)

To help clarify and answer the second question that has perplexed generations of students and provoked many a sleepless night, we offer the following **5 Step Solution**:

First Step – Career Interest Inventory

We suggest every student complete a career interest inventory assessment before entering college. Even if a student thinks they know what they want to study, it is always a good idea to have a plan B (according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 80 % percent of all students change their major in college). Taking a career assessment will help a student research all possible career fields that fit their skill set, personality, interests, and/or values. Worse case, going through this process may confirm that a student is on the right career path.

But please note, not all assessments are created equally. Some are free to students (ex. the assessment done in conjunction with the ACT® Test or as administered by some school districts or states: Career Cruising – ILP or Naviance) and others require a small fee to take their assessment. In other cases, it might make sense to work with a qualified career advisor to do the evaluation (ex. Living My Purpose, My Career Profile, etc.).

We encourage every student to take a few of these assessments over their time in middle school and high school so that as they mature, learn new skills, and discover new interests they can uncover their future career path. For those who just don't know what they want to do when they enter college as "undecided" OR change their mind in college, seek out the Career Counseling Departments on your campus for additional help and guidance.

Below are a few websites for some of the most popular Career Interest Inventory programs:

Holland Codes: www.hollandcodes.com According to John Holland's theory, most people are one of 6 personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, & Conventional.

My Career Planner: <http://careerdimensions.com/mcp.php>

Self-Directed Search: <http://www.self-directed-search.com/>

MyPlan: <http://www.myplan.com/>

Pymetrics: <https://www.pymetrics.com/>

MBTI Complete: www.mbticomplete.com

ISEEK.org: <http://www.iseek.org/careers/clusterSurvey>

My Next Move: www.mynextmove.org

Big Future (College Board): www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org