



I need a job! Where do I start...?

Checklist for exploring and deciding on careers

Explore
yourself

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Explore
occupations

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Make better
career decisions

Explore yourself: Reflect on and assess your interests, personality, skills, values and accomplishments

Career Services offers a number of assessment tools to help you articulate who you are:

- Strong Interest Inventory (online)
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (personality assessment) (online)
- Career Values Card Sort (e.g. helping society, security, status, working alone or in groups, spending time with family, being outdoors, etc.)
- SkillScan Card Sort
- Reflection Activities

Other steps include:

- Create a list of accomplishments/strengths as well as weaknesses
- Brainstorm skills you possess (use Liberal Arts Transferable Skills checklist as a tool) and write examples of how you've used these skills
- Identify classes you've really enjoyed
- Identify what you like to do when you're not in school, what extracurricular activities you have been involved in

Answer logistical questions:

- Will I need an income right away after graduation? (i.e. will I be homeless and foodless if I don't have a paying job?)
- Will I have student load debt to repay?
- Will I need to live with my family? (i.e. will I need to work where my family lives?)
- Do I have other commitments I need to consider? (e.g. significant other's career/educational plans)
- Are there particular geographical areas I want to be in/be away from?

Explore occupations

Read

- Career Services' Resource Center (more than 500 print publications with information about different occupations)
- US Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/oco/) – For thousands of job titles, learn what preparation is needed, whether the field is growing, shrinking or stable, earnings potential, tasks and responsibilities, etc.
- Career Services' Major Possibilities guides – For each SU major, get alumni contacts, see what jobs recent grads have gone on to, get weblinks, lists of professional organizations, etc.
- Google – Try researching fields that interest you in your favorite search engine; just type in keyword such as "healthcare jobs"

Talk to real people

- Ask your family members, friends' family members, older friends already working and anyone you meet what they do and how they got there
- Use contacts from Career Services (e.g. SU alumni and parents, other employers)
- Conduct "informational interviews" (i.e. "interview" your contact about their occupation) – see Career Services' Informational Interviewing handout
- Attend Career Services events (e.g. Careers in..., Career Connections BBQ, SU Connections)
- Attend job fairs just to learn more about different companies

Test the waters

- Job shadow – Arrange to follow around someone whose profession interests you. School breaks are good times to do so.
- Volunteer – It's easier to convince someone to let you get experience at no cost to them than to demand pay.
- Intern – Some organizations offer structured internship programs. For others, you can contact them and pitch the idea. Some companies hire for full-time jobs from their intern pools.
- Work – You may just have to take the plunge and try out a career field, any one of your interest areas, to see if you really like it. If not, you can always change.



Career Services

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Explore. Experience. Engage.