

Career Planning Resources

Researching potential careers can seem overwhelming. Before choosing a career path, it is important to learn more about yourself; your values, personality, and interests can clue you in to what would be an enjoyable path to work towards. There are various ways you can learn about yourself and what fits you best, such as career assessments, values inventories, and informational interviews with professionals.

We all have different values. Begin considering what is truly important to you. Which of these priorities are at the top of your list?

- Making a lot of money
- Making a contribution to society
- Becoming recognized as exceptional
- Meeting new people
- Expressing creativity
- Encountering new challenges
- Becoming an expert in a specific field
- Leading others
- Having a flexible schedule
- Traveling

There are several assessments you can take to learn more about careers that fit you. An easy assessment to complete is through [My Next Move O*NET Interest Profiler](#) which analyzes your interests and matches you to careers that are broken down by the level of education you wish to pursue. When your career matches are generated, you can then click on those careers and learn about tasks, education level, salary, and job growth associated with that career.

Other helpful resources for career development:

Naviance (log in through Clever) → Careers

[Career & Technical Education](#)

[Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)

Finding a College Major

As you determine possible career paths that may lead to a college degree, you will then explore possible majors. A college major is a group of courses you take in a specific content that is required by your college or university to receive your degree or certificate. Some examples of popular majors are Business, Education, Nursing, Biology, etc. Most colleges require that you declare a major by the end of your Sophomore year of college, but for certain competitive programs, you may have to apply to that major when you apply for admission to that college.

You do not need to know what your major will be when you apply to colleges, but you do want to know what different programs are offered. Your major should match your career goals and be an area where you feel you will thrive!

The following tips are ways you can get more information on career paths and majors:

- Naviance has many resources for researching careers. Do the assessments for Career Interest Profiler. You can look up any career in the search box under “Careers.”
- Elgin Community College Development Center. High school students are eligible to use this resource. Ask for the Career Development Package (\$25) or attend one of their informative workshops and classes. Contact by email: careerservices@elgin.edu
- Big Future. Explore various careers and college majors. Set up an account at: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers>.
- Princeton Review. Explore college majors and link to the schools that offer the major. <https://www.princetonreview.com/college-major-search>
- Self-Discovery. Make note of current classes and hobbies that you enjoy and are good at. Pay equal attention to those areas where you do not excel. Figure out how to make a career doing what you love.
- Take community college classes to explore options. You do not have to have a high school diploma to take classes at the community college.
- Informational interviews. Take note of people in your family or in the community who are doing work you admire or might enjoy. Ask them for fifteen minutes of their time so you can learn about what they do and how they got there. Ask them what they would do differently.
- Shadowing. After conducting an informational interview, ask the professional if you could observe their work for a couple of hours. Ask the hard questions about what they do and do not like about their chosen career.
- Major in “undecided” and use college resources and classes to hone in on interest areas. There are hundreds of careers that you don’t even know exist!