

Research Careers, Identify Career Pathways of Interest, and List Work Skills Needed

A CAREER is a chosen profession or vocation. To make a wise career choice, you must be aware of the existing choices. In addition, you must be aware of your own personal interests, talents, and priorities as well as the skills and education needed to perform the job.



Objectives:



1. Define terminology related to exploring occupations.
2. Research a career of interest.
3. Present a prepared speech about the chosen career.

Key Terms:



occupation
occupational description
Occupational Outlook Handbook
occupational search
occupational skills

Terminology for Occupation Exploration

Before you can actually explore different careers, you need a good grasp of the terms used while conducting a solid career search. This foundation will allow you to more easily navigate the unlimited information available for your research of various occupations.

OCCUPATION

An **occupation** is a name given to a group of similar tasks that a person performs for pay; the occupation is the person's primary employment.

Occupational Description

An **occupational description** is a detailed summary of the tasks involved as well as the environment, salary, required specialized training, and education for a particular occupation.

OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

The **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (OOH) is a resource for occupational information and data. It is produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and can be found in print and online. It lists hundreds of jobs in addition to information on the training and education needed, the earnings, expected career futures, specific information on what workers do on a typical day, and the working conditions.

Occupational Skills

Occupational skills are the actual duties and tasks for a specific occupation. The OOH offers job search tips and information about the job market broken down by state.

Occupational Search

There are many resources for conducting a thorough **occupational search**, which is collected information about an occupation of interest using one or more printed resources or databases. Numerous occupational resources are available, and most of them are online. You may want to look into the Web sites for O*Net Center, the Illinois Department of Employment Security, America's Career Info Net, and products by Jist. Use a search engine for all of these titles to locate excellent career resources.



FIGURE 1. If you do not know where you want to go, there is no way to get there.

Researching Careers

All meaningful career interest research starts with you. You have to be ready to make decisions about your interests, talents, curiosities, drive, and willingness to persevere and work hard. Many different career interest surveys are available and can assist in your decision-making process.

SURVEY

To help identify your interests, go to your school career resource center where you can take a variety of easy paper and pencil interest surveys. Another option is to start right now by going to the Illinois Department of Employment Security Web site at <http://ilcis.intocareers.org/loginmain.aspx?cookieTest=y> to complete the “Interest Profiler.” The survey will help you identify your interests and chart them into 14 different clusters.

Interest Clusters

The interest clusters are accommodating, artistic, business detail, business leadership, humanitarian, industrial, mechanical-operator, mechanical-technical, nature, physical performing, protective, sales, scientific, and social leadership. You can click on any of the interests for more information, and then search for jobs within those interest areas.

Once you have an interest, a cluster, and a specific job interest, you can begin to do some solid career research using the IDES Web site, the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, and many other resources.



FIGURE 2. Once you know where you want to go, the road is obvious.



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: Personality Indicators

Investigate the Jung Typology Test to learn more about yourself. This is a free online survey that gives you insight into your personality type and the careers that best match your strengths. You will learn about the 16 different personality types based primarily on preferences. The idea is to investigate a career that matches your interests and preferences.

Most high school career centers and local community colleges offer this valuable assessment for free or at a nominal cost. The results are worth the time, money, and effort as they will launch you into your career research with a valuable navigation instrument.

Visit the following link:

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp>

Preparing and Presenting a Speech

The best way to make sure you have all the pertinent research completed is to test yourself by preparing a speech on the topic. As you prepare, keep in mind the different parts of a speech and the guidelines of an effective speech. Your speech should include an introduction, body, and conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

In the introduction, identify your topic for your audience and state the purpose of the speech. In this case, the purpose of your speech may be to explain why you would make a terrific restaurant manager, physical therapist, or carpenter. Let the audience know you have aligned your interests to those of the profession and how you discovered those interests.

BODY

In the body of the speech, describe the career facts and features. A handout or a visual aid may be beneficial to explain these facts to your classmates. In the body of the speech, include information on:

- ◆ Skills and abilities needed for this occupation
- ◆ Educational and training requirements
- ◆ High school level courses that would support this career
- ◆ Current and projected wages
- ◆ Promotional opportunities
- ◆ Locations where this type of job would exist
- ◆ Working conditions for this type of job
- ◆ Projected openings for this type of job

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion portion of your speech, recap or summarize why you are a perfect candidate for the career. Repeat the core message of how your interests match the interests of this job. Also, describe how your current behaviors and learning are preparing you for a successful future in this field.



FIGURE 3. Working toward success is an admirable goal.

Summary:



Choosing your first career is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. The best career decisions start with knowing about the choices that exist. In addition, you must be aware of your own personal interests, talents, and priorities as well as the skills and education needed to perform the given job.

Knowledge of key career research terms will make your research easier. With the help of your career center and the IDES Web site (<http://ilworkinfo.com>), you can begin to research your career interest.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What is included in an occupational description?
2. What is the *OOH*, and for what purpose is it used?
3. What is an occupational search, and how do you complete one?
4. How do your interests influence your career choice?
5. How does preparing a speech challenge you to complete solid research?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Visit your local community college's career service center. Explore their interest surveys, occupational research resources, and other services to further confirm your interests.

Web Links:



O*Net Online (Occupational Information Network)

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/>

Center for Applications of Psychological Type

<http://www.capt.org>