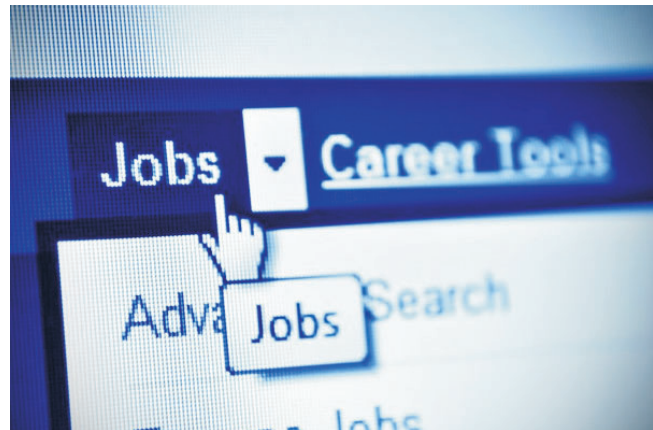


Career Searches

FOR USEFUL CAREER EXPLORATION and career planning, it is important to know what kind of information to gather. Having essential information about particular occupations will help you with your decision-making process.



Objective:



Identify and use key elements and terms in a career profile search.

Key Terms:



career ladder
job/market outlook
occupational
postsecondary

Understanding Career Exploration

What have you already done to prepare for a career? Can you list specific activities in which you have participated to explore and prepare for a career? Part of career exploration and career planning involves knowing where to look and what kind of information to gather.

In this E-unit you will learn the key elements of a career search. You will then use this information to research a specific occupation. As you perform your career search, you will come across medical terminology that relates directly to the career you are studying. Plan to use your career search activities as a way of building a



FIGURE 1. Part of career exploration and career planning involves knowing where to look and what kind of information to gather.

medical terminology vocabulary that will contribute to your ability to communicate appropriately in the health care industry.

IDENTIFY AND USE KEY ELEMENTS IN A CAREER PROFILE SEARCH

Several key elements for every career profile result from a career search. These profile components provide an accurate picture of a specific career. These components are as follows:

- ◆ Career title—This is the name of the specific occupation.
- ◆ Health science career pathway—This is the health science career pathway or health service area with which the occupation correlates. You should determine which career pathway the occupation you are searching falls into:
 - Biotechnology research and development
 - Diagnostic services
 - Health informatics
 - Support services
 - Therapeutic services
- ◆ Job description/nature of the work—During your research, you should locate a brief description of the nature of the work.
- ◆ Salary range—Research salary for this career and describe it in terms of an hourly or yearly range.
- ◆ Places of employment—Research, for each particular occupation, a list of the possible places of employment. You should list specific places of employment for this occupation as you fine-tune your search.
- ◆ Recommended high school courses—These are the courses that might be particularly important for high school students to take if they intend to pursue the occupation. You should look for specific course recommendations as you research. For example, rather than simply listing “science courses,” you should investigate which type of science courses would be particularly important for the occupation (e.g., chemistry, physics, and biology).
- ◆ Postsecondary training required—**Postsecondary** is the education and/or training required after high school to qualify for this occupation. If there are several paths of training or education leading to this career, you should list them.
- ◆ Personal skills required—Try to find information about what personal skills or abilities are particularly important to be successful in this occupation (e.g., dependability, punctuality, verbal/written communication, organization, leadership, and creativity).
- ◆ Physical skills required—During your research, locate information on what specific physical skills are required for an employee to be able to perform all the tasks involved in the occupation.

- ◆ Schools/colleges offering training—Research what schools/colleges offer education and training for a particular occupation. This information is essential for college preparation and planning and for helping you determine whether you can realistically pursue a particular occupation based on such issues as transportation, financing, admission requirements, and housing.
- ◆ **Occupational** (work-related) risks and hazards—In the course of your career research, you should find information on the occupational risks and hazards of the particular occupation. You need to be aware of any safety risks or other potential dangers that might be associated with a particular occupation.
- ◆ Certification, registration, licensing, continuing education—In the course of your research, you should determine whether certification, registration, licensure, and continuing education are available and/or required for the particular occupation. It is important for you to have this information for the careers you are considering so you are aware of requirements and can project and plan for the future.
- ◆ Relevant professional organizations—Knowledge of professional organizations associated with particular occupations is important. You may use these organizations for additional career exploration activities or as a means of arranging work-based learning activities related to an occupation. You should collect information on one or more student or professional organizations associated with the occupation you have chosen to research.
- ◆ Career ladder—When you do a career search, be aware of career ladders related to the occupation. A **career ladder** is the upward mobility, or promotion, within a career path as a result of additional training, education, and/or experience. It is essential that you understand the training and education required to move up a career ladder in a field that holds interest for you. Researching information on advancement opportunities in a particular occupation may assist you in career planning.



ON THE JOB...

CAREER CONNECTION: Job Shadowing and Internships

Many people learn about career exploration in the same way. Generally, people begin by taking an interest and personality survey that serves to confirm their career interest starting point. Career ladders are helpful, and a follow-up appointment with your counselor to document your career exploration progress into your individual career portfolio (ICP) or senior project is also extremely useful.

There is another step in the career exploration process. Job shadowing allows you to see the career of your choice in action. You will have the opportunity to meet a professional in your field of choice and shadow him or her “in action.” Generally, job shadowing opportunities last anywhere from a day to a week in length. An internship is similar to job shadowing except that the intern typically makes some type of work contribution during the experience, providing he or she has some applicable skills to donate. Internships often last anywhere from a week to several months. These real-world opportunities can be designed to fit your interests. You will need to schedule an appointment with your career counselor to discuss your school requirements.

- ◆ **Job/market outlook**—Researching **job/market outlook** is an essential part of career searching and career planning. Research on an occupation should reveal whether experts in the labor field (e.g., U.S. Department of Labor) expect growth for that occupation in the future. The Occupational Outlook Handbook is an excellent resource for this information.
- ◆ **Resource(s)**—Documenting a resource where career information is found is also essential. This allows you to be able to return to the site for additional information and follow up. It will assist your counselors and instructors in determining whether the information was from a valid, reliable source attributable to experts in that occupational area.
- ◆ **Vocabulary**—An understanding of medical terminology and abbreviations is an essential skill for health care workers. Developing a medical vocabulary requires time and effort. You can begin building and developing a medical and health care vocabulary by collecting, defining, and using the medical terms and abbreviations you come across as you complete career exploration activities. Medical vocabulary terms should be defined in the context of the occupation researched. A definition should include an explanation of word parts (prefix, root word, and suffix), as applicable. After learning the meanings of words, you can build vocabulary skills by using the words in sentences of your own. Various resources are available for defining medical terminology:

1. Dictionaries and medical dictionaries
2. Medical terminology textbooks
3. Online and medical dictionaries



FIGURE 2. As a health care worker, you will need to have a strong medical terminology vocabulary to communicate successfully with your co-workers.

ANALYSIS OF MEDICAL TERMS

It is critical to be able to identify, define, and analyze medical terms found in the course of career exploration activities. As a health care worker, you will need to have a strong medical terminology vocabulary in order to communicate successfully with your co-workers. Building a medical terminology vocabulary requires time and effort. You can use your career exploration activities as an opportunity to learn and use new medical terms in the context of the career you are researching.

Many medical terms are composed of word elements or word parts that have specific meanings. Understanding the meanings of various word parts will help you decipher the meaning of the whole word and will lend meaning to other medical terms as well. It is helpful to translate the medical terms into understandable, everyday language.

- ◆ Root word—main part, or subject, of word
- ◆ Prefix—part added to the beginning of the root word that changes the meaning or makes the root more specific
- ◆ Suffix—the part added to the end of the root word that changes the meaning or makes the root more specific
- ◆ Combining vowel—the part added between several root words that makes the whole word easier to pronounce

Summary:



There are several key elements for every career profile that result from a career search. These components provide an accurate picture of a specific career. These components are a career title, health science career pathway, job description/nature of the work, salary range, places of employment, recommended high school courses, postsecondary training required, personal skills required, physical skills required, schools/colleges offering training, occupational risks and hazards, certification, registration, licensing, continuing education, relevant professional organizations, career ladder, job/market outlook, resource(s), and vocabulary.

It is critical to be able to identify, define, and analyze medical terms found in the course of career exploration activities. As a health care worker, you will need to have a strong medical terminology vocabulary to communicate successfully with your co-workers.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. Explain the term “career ladder” and why it is relevant to career exploration.
2. Define the term “job/market outlook” and why it is relevant to career exploration.
3. Why is it important to be aware of certification and licensing requirements?
4. What bearing do high school recommended courses have on your postsecondary coursework?
5. Why is it important to be aware of the salary and pay range for the intended career goal?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



After completing career exploration activities, meet with your school counselor. Your counselor will record your research, interests, and other pertinent career information into your individual career portfolio (ICP) or senior project folder. Your counselor will also verify that you are enrolled in the right classes to get you to where you want to go next.

Web Links:



Occupational Outlook Handbook

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

CareerShip®

<http://mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/>

Careers

[http://www.careeronestop.org/StudentsandCareerAdvisors/
ExploreCareersStudents.aspx](http://www.careeronestop.org/StudentsandCareerAdvisors/ExploreCareersStudents.aspx)