

Decision-Making Tools

Unit: Career Exploration

Problem Area: Decision-Making Strategies

Lesson: Decision-Making Tools

■ **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Identify career counseling tools.**
- 2 Apply career counseling tools to decision-making tasks.**
- 3 Explore career pathways using data from career counseling tool administration and decision-making efforts.**

■ **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

“Aptitude Assessment,” *The Work Suite*. Accessed May 23, 2011.
<<http://www.theworksuite.com/id15.html>>.

“Career and College Planning Resources,” *Vocational Information Center*.
Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.khake.com/page51.html>>.

“Career Aptitude Test,” *Career Explorer*. Accessed May 23, 2011.
<<http://www.careerexplorer.net/aptitude.asp>>.

“Career Click,” *Illinois Department of Employment Security*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.workforceinfo.state.il.us/>>.

“Career Guide to Industries (CGI), 2010–11 Edition,” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/>>.

“Curriculum Revitalization,” *Illinois Career & Technical Education*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.ilcte.org>>.



“Getting Started: Career Exploration,” *CareerOneStop*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.acinet.org/explore/View.aspx?pageID=1>>.

“Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018,” *Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://cew.georgetown.edu/jobs2018/>>.

“Illinois Career Development K–12 Competencies and Indicators,” *Illinois State Board of Education*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <http://isbe.net/career/pdf/career_competencies.pdf>.

Illinois workNet Center. Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.illinoisworknet.com>>.

Kalchik, Stephanie, and Kathleen Marie Oertle. “The Relationship of Individual Career Plans to Programs of Study and Career Pathways,” *Transition Highlights*, Issue 3, Jan. 2011. Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL). Accessed May 13, 2011. <http://occril.illinois.edu/files/Highlights/Highlight_01_2011.pdf>.

“National Sample Definitions,” *Career Clusters*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.careerclusters.org/definitions.php>>.

O*NET® OnLine. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://online.onetcenter.org/>>.

“Programs of Study,” *Illinois Community College Board*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://ilprogramsofstudy.org/CareerClusters.action>>.

“Related Websites,” *Career Clusters*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.careerclusters.org/related.php>>.

“Sixteen Career Clusters and Their Pathways,” *Career Clusters*. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<http://www.careerclusters.org/list16clusters.php>>.

What’s Next Illinois—Making College Accessible & Affordable, One Click at a Time. Illinois Student Assistance Commission. Accessed May 13, 2011. <<https://secure.whatsnextillinois.org/Default.aspx>>.

■ **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ career clusters
- ▶ career pathways
- ▶ knowledge and skills
- ▶ occupation / career specialty
- ▶ personal plan of study
- ▶ program of study (curriculum framework)

■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Counselors and teachers often develop approaches for their unique counseling and class situations. A possible approach is included here.

Introduce the topic of career exploration. Explain to the class that career exploration is an exciting adventure during which the students will learn more about themselves and the limitless number of exciting career options that exist. Some students may find the topic confusing or overwhelming, but typically this emotion is triggered by a lack of information rather than by too much information. Let them know that today they will increase their knowledge of the tools available and the process by which they can begin to discover their personal career future. They will discover that certain high school classes can serve as pathways to incredible career-focused programs at the postsecondary level and beyond.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING OR COUNSELING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Identify career counseling tools.

Anticipated Problem: What are some useful career counseling tools?

- I. Career counseling tools
 - A. Observation—Have students observe their aptitudes.
 - B. Survey—Have students take an interest survey.
 - C. Research—Demonstrate how to research **career clusters**—groupings of occupations / career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction. Occupations / career specialties are grouped into the career clusters based on the fact that they require a set of common knowledge and skills for career success.

1. Web resources
 - a. Career Clusters—<http://www.careerclusters.org/list16clusters.php>
 - b. What’s Next Illinois—<https://secure.whatsnextillinois.org/Default.aspx>
 - c. Career and College Planning Resources—<http://www.khake.com/page51.html>
 - d. Career Exploration Tools at O*NET®—<http://online.onetcenter.org/>
 - e. Career Click—<http://www.workforceinfo.state.il.us/>
 - f. CareerOneStop—<http://www.acinet.org/explore/View.aspx?pageID=1>
 - g. National Sample Definitions—<http://www.careerclusters.org/definitions.php>
 - h. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*—<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
2. Library resources
 - a. School library and librarian
 - b. Public library and librarian
 - c. Textbooks and references—Many career exploration textbooks and references exist. They are typically organized by cluster or profession.

Teaching or Counseling Strategies: *Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM–A to review this objective.*

Objective 2: Apply career counseling tools to decision-making tasks.

Anticipated Problem: How do career counseling tools apply to decision-making tasks?

II. Applying career counseling tools

A. Aptitudes and interests point to clusters.

1. Direct students to explore their top three career clusters of interest as indicated by in-house assessment tools, the websites listed in Objective 1, or the interest survey on the Career Clusters website: <http://www.careerclusters.org/ccinterestsurvey.php>.
2. Demonstrate how to research cluster **knowledge and skills**—industry-validated statements that describe what learners/employees need to know and be able to do for career success within a cluster and/or pathway. The knowledge and skills for each cluster can be found by clicking on the specific cluster located on the drop-down menu of the “16 Career Clusters” tab at <http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/web/ks.php>.
3. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is another excellent resource. It is located at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>.
4. Direct students to review cluster descriptions and related jobs using other websites, including search engines such as Google and Yippy.

Teaching or Counseling Strategies: *Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM–B to review this objective.*

Objective 3: Explore career pathways using data from career counseling tool administration and decision-making efforts.

Anticipated Problem: What does exploration of the career pathways indicate?

- III. Career pathways
 - A. Explain how to examine the clusters' **career pathways**—subgroupings of occupations / career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction. Occupations / career specialties are grouped into pathways based on the fact that they require a set of common knowledge and skills for career success. Each cluster has three to nine career pathways associated with it.
 - B. Have students review the **program of study (curriculum framework)**—a sequence of instruction (based on recommended standards and knowledge and skills) consisting of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning, and other learning experiences. This sequence of instruction provides preparation for a career.
 - C. Work with each student to create and chart a **personal plan of study**—an individual learner's scope and sequence of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning, and other learning experiences based on his or her chosen career goals and aspirations. This is a flexible resource designed to change in concert with the interests and needs of the learner. The plan of study should be revisited at least annually to make adjustments as the interests and career aspirations of the learner change.
 - D. Have students confirm interests by their participation in workplace experiences, such as job shadowing or internships.
 - E. Explain how a student can further investigate a cluster and interest by researching an **occupation / career specialty**—a particular career or occupation based on advanced knowledge and skills specific to that career or occupation.
 - F. Make special note of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Illinois Fact Sheet to students. It can be found at http://www.isbe.net/career/pdf/CTE_fact_sheet.pdf. (Users from other states can check for CTE information within their states.)
 - G. Note the significant high-growth fields that demand highly skilled employees with career and technical training. In Illinois, students who have taken at least three CTE courses earn 18 percent, or \$212, more a month after high school than comparable high school graduates. (Data from the ISBE website: http://www.isbe.net/career/pdf/CTE_fact_sheet.pdf.)
 - H. Have each student follow a specific program of study, and then have the student personalize it with other learning experiences.
 - I. Have every student note all the above research and career exploration progress in his or her Individual Career Portfolio or Plan (ICP) or Senior Project folder.

Teaching or Counseling Strategies: *Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM–C to review this objective. Assign LS–A.*

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the Review/Summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Matching

1. f
2. e
3. c
4. b
5. d
6. a

Part Two: True/False

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. T
5. T
6. T

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Answers may vary but should include at least the following steps:
 - Interest survey
 - Career cluster identification
 - Career cluster research
 - Research of pathways and jobs within
 - Real-world experience and further research to confirm interest
2. Answers may vary but should include the concept that a career cluster is a grouping of related careers while a career pathway is a subgrouping within the career cluster.

Decision-Making Tools

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| a. knowledge and skills | d. program of study (curriculum framework) |
| b. personal plan of study | e. career pathways |
| c. career clusters | f. occupation / career specialty |

- _____ 1. A particular career or occupation based on advanced knowledge and skills specific to that career or occupation
- _____ 2. Subgroupings of occupations / career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction
- _____ 3. Groupings of occupations / career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction
- _____ 4. An individual learner's scope and sequence of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning and other learning experiences based upon his or her chosen career goals and aspirations
- _____ 5. A sequence of instruction (based on recommended standards and knowledge and skills) consisting of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning, and other learning experiences
- _____ 6. Industry-validated statements that describe what learners/employees need to know and be able to do for career success within a cluster and/or pathway

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- _____ 1. There is no need to complete a career interest survey now because you decide what you want to be when you are older.



CAREER COUNSELING TOOLS

How to Explore a Career

- ◆ Observe your aptitudes.
- ◆ Take an interest survey.
- ◆ Research indicated career clusters.

Web Resources

- ◆ Career Clusters—<http://www.careerclusters.org/list16clusters.php>
- ◆ What's Next Illinois—
<https://secure.whatsnextillinois.org/Default.aspx>
- ◆ Career and College Planning Resources—
<http://www.khake.com/page51.html>
- ◆ Career Exploration Tools at O*NET®—
<http://online.onetcenter.org/>



- ◆ Career Click—<http://www.workforceinfo.state.il.us/>
- ◆ CareerOneStop—<http://www.acinet.org/explore/View.aspx?pageID=1>
- ◆ National Sample Definitions—
<http://www.careerclusters.org/definitions.php>
- ◆ *Occupational Outlook Handbook*—
<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

There are so many others; see what YOU can find!

Library Resources

- ◆ School library and librarian
- ◆ Public library and librarian

Textbooks and References

- ◆ Career exploration by cluster or profession

APPLYING CAREER COUNSELING TOOLS

Aptitudes and interests point to clusters.

- ◆ Explore your top three career clusters of interest as indicated by in-house assessment tools, the websites discussed in this lesson, or the interest survey on the Career Clusters website: <http://www.careerclusters.org/ccinterestsurvey.php>.
- ◆ Research cluster knowledge and skills—industry-validated statements that describe what learners/employees need to know and be able to do for career success within a cluster and/or pathway. The knowledge and skills for each cluster can be found by clicking on the specific cluster located on the drop-down menu of the “16 Career Clusters” tab at <http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/web/ks.php>.
- ◆ *The Occupational Outlook Handbook* is another excellent resource. It is located at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>.



Let's research a cluster and pathway using the Career Clusters website.

- ◆ For example, let's use the Business Management & Administration cluster.
- ◆ Click on the Career Cluster Models page at <http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/web/16ccall.php?action=models>.
- ◆ Locate the Business Management & Administration cluster, and click on it. Choose the PDF file. This will take you to <http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/ClusterDocuments/badocuments/1BAModel.pdf>.
- ◆ Review the cluster breakdowns, the five pathways, and the specific job titles. Use the O*NET® at <http://online.onetcenter.org/> to research some of the job titles. Try “human resources manager” for example. This will take you to the following site: <http://www.onetonline.org/find/quick?s=human+resources+manager>.
- ◆ Review the Pathway Knowledge and Skills Chart at http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/pos_ks/KSChart/2008/BA-115-KSCHART.pdf. It describes what all or most learners/workers need to know and be able to do to demonstrate competence within a career pathway.
- ◆ Review several job titles from each of the five pathways: General Management, Business Information Management, Human Resources Management, Operations Management, and Administrative Support.

- ◆ Review cluster descriptions and related jobs using other websites.
- ◆ Keep track of your research and notes.
- ◆ Begin to narrow or evolve your interest from the cluster level to the career pathway.
- ◆ Review the online brochure for this cluster. For the Business Management & Administration cluster see <http://www.careerclusters.org/resources/ClusterDocuments/badocuments/brochure.pdf>.
- ◆ Now try the same type of research using your actual interest area.

CAREER PATHWAYS

- ◆ Examine the clusters' **career pathways**—subgroupings of occupations / career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction. Occupations / career specialties are grouped into pathways based on the fact that they require a set of common knowledge and skills for career success.
- ◆ Review the **program of study (curriculum framework)**—a sequence of instruction (based on recommended standards and knowledge and skills) consisting of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning, and other learning experiences. This sequence of instruction provides preparation for a career.
- ◆ Work with your teacher to create and chart a **personal plan of study**—your scope and sequence of coursework, co-curricular activities, work-site learning, service learning, and other learning experiences based on your chosen career goals and aspirations. This is a flexible resource designed to change in concert with your interests and needs. The plan of study should be revisited at least annually to make adjustments as your interests and career aspirations change.



- ◆ Confirm your interest by participating in a **workplace experience**, such as job shadowing or an internship.
- ◆ Research an **occupation / career specialty**—a particular career or occupation based on advanced knowledge and skills specific to that career or occupation.
- ◆ Take special note of the **Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Illinois Fact Sheet**. It can be found at http://www.isbe.net/career/pdf/CTE_fact_sheet.pdf. (If you are from a state other than Illinois, check for CTE information within your state.)
- ◆ Note the significant **high-growth fields** that demand highly skilled employees with career and technical training. In Illinois, students who have taken at least three CTE courses earn 18 percent, or \$212, more a month after high school than comparable high school graduates. (Data from the ISBE website.)
- ◆ Follow a specific personal plan of study, and then personalize it with other learning experiences.
- ◆ Note your research and career exploration progress in your **Individual Career Portfolio or Plan (ICP)** or **Senior Project** folder.

Apply Career Counseling Tools and Decision-Making Skills

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to apply career counseling tools and decision-making skills in order to select a career cluster or pathway for further exploration.

Objectives

1. Apply career counseling tools.
2. Use keen decision-making skills.
3. Select a career cluster or pathway for further exploration.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ computer with Internet access

Procedure

1. Take a survey to identify career interest areas. You may use Internet resources or a survey provided by your counselor/teacher.
2. Use the results to identify cluster interest areas.
3. Use clusters to research pathways, job titles, job duties, and job requirements.
4. Complete the following questionnaire.
5. Meet with your counselor/teacher to discuss your questionnaire and the results. Place the results into your ICP or Senior Project folder.



Questionnaire

Interest Survey Used: _____

Date Used: _____

Career Clusters Indicated

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cluster One

Pathways

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Cluster Two

Pathways

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Cluster Three

Pathways

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Job Titles Researched from Each Pathway for Each Cluster

Cluster One

Pathway One

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Two

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Three

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Four

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Five

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cluster Two

Pathway One

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Two

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Three

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Four

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Five

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cluster Three

Pathway One

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Two

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Three

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Four

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pathway Five

Job Titles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List the clusters and pathways that are grabbing your interest.

Explain why.

What other research can you complete to further confirm your interest?

What type of firsthand experiences (job shadowing, internship) can you use to confirm your interest?