

Career Choice Checklist

This is a basic checklist for how to choose a career and be sure that it is something that you want to do and are capable of achieving within your parameters and goals for the future. Is this tool a sure thing- a 100% answer for what you should do, how you should do it and why it's a good idea? Absolutely not. But it's a good start...

- #1: Evaluate personality and talents. For help doing these complete the talent exercise, and for more information on personality testing, feel free to contact Youth Quest. Once you've got a good idea of what you're like and what talents you possess, select one or two talents that fit in with your personality and you would enjoy working with daily.
- #2: Alone or with a partner, brainstorm what fields of work (not necessarily a specific career, but if you already have a career in mind, more power to you) you think you would enjoy and could use your chosen talents in doing.
- #3: Take your list and visit <http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>. On this website research some of the career choices available to you in your chosen fields.
- #4: This is where the game starts getting a little bit tougher. You are now going to have to research each and every career that looks interesting to you. This is time consuming, but can end up being easier than you might think (even fun!) and it is also exceptionally helpful. Here are some of the facts, but by no means all the facts, you should gather about potential careers:

Median Salary/Wage:

Educational Prerequisite:

Work Environment:

Job responsibilities:

Do Positions Require Experience? How much?

How Do People Get Experience?

Career Plan Checklist

Now that you have completed the career choice checklist, hopefully you have narrowed down the options open to you to just a few options that you're interested in. If not, that's perfectly fine. Always remember that *every choice available is always available to you*. Nothing should be left out of this process unless you want it left out.

The next step is to actually decide which option is really best for you. Sit down with your list of interesting careers and complete this next checklist. If you have multiple careers, write up copies of the checklist freehand or have photocopies made to assist you with all your choices.

- #1: Career Choice:
- #2: List the colleges or other postsecondary organizations that you are interested in attending that can provide you with the necessary training for this career choice.
- #3: Complete the College Questionnaire for each school that you may possibly attend. It is highly encouraged that you do not limit yourself to the questions on the College Questionnaire, but simply use that as a basis and jumping off point for your enquiries into postsecondary education.
- #4: You have to pick a location. This can be factored in to your choice of postsecondary institution, or could just be where you would like to end up after completing your education. Knowing where you want to be now is important because it will be much easier to choose a location and then begin a career there rather than choosing a career, then having to change locations and possibly jobs. List some places that you'd like to be, as few or as many as you'd like. You've got a long while to think about this one.
- #5: Research and discuss your financial possibilities. Your parents may be in a position to help you, or you may qualify for financial aid. Will you be able to work part time while going to school? And, one option often overlooked or ruled out off-the-bat, do you qualify for any scholarships? Do some research and you may be surprised at what you can find.

The Final Step

Okay, now that you've completed the preceding checklists for all the careers you are interested in, it's time to take the final step. Unfortunately, this is the hardest step, but the strain of it should be alleviated somewhat by all of the research that you've now done on your career interests. There's not really any clever way to put this, but it's important enough that I think it warrants to be set apart. Here it goes...

NOW YOU HAVE TO REVIEW ALL THE INFORMATION YOU'VE GATHERED AND CHOOSE JUST ONE CAREER PATH.

To reiterate, the preceding checklists were only tools, not answers. Tools *help* in making tasks easier but in the end they don't actually do the tasks themselves. That part, the motivation, the skill and the intelligence is left up to you, the individual, and only you. But don't agonize over your choice. Just relax and realize that you've done the research, you know your options. If you've really looked into yourself and your desires as well as into the world with all its options, you probably have already determined what the right course is for you. Now go for it!



There is your final check box for when you've decided what you want to do. When you're ready, when you're confident and sure of your decision, check that box, and write out for yourself what your plan is in the space below.