



Chapter

5

Creating a Career Plan

What You'll Learn

- ▶ Understand the steps to create a career plan
- ▶ Explore possible lifestyles
- ▶ Define your goal
- ▶ Consider educational options
- ▶ Evaluate your findings
- ▶ Make a decision
- ▶ Put your plan into action
- ▶ Determine your educational path
- ▶ Gain career experience

What if selecting a career were like playing a game show? What if you selected the “wrong” curtain? Fortunately, you can have control of your choices. This chapter will introduce you to the questions you should ask about careers, and it will suggest sources to use for career information.

“Before everything else, getting ready is the secret of success.”
—Henry Ford

Key Terms

accredited
apprenticeship
associate degree
bachelor's degree
basic training
CTE schools
certificate programs
cosmetology
data

diploma programs
distance learning
doctoral degree
economic recession
enlist
flexibility
flextime
graduate degree
indentured

lifelong learner
master's degree
personal road map
postsecondary
salary
stepping-stone goal
things
transfer

Section 5-1: Steps to Creating a Career Plan

As a young child, you might have pretended that you were a teacher, astronaut, doctor, or professional basketball player. You enjoyed living in your imaginary world. You could be anything you imagined in your imaginary world on any particular day.

As a teenager, you are now realizing that you need to be more realistic than you were in the world of your imagination. You also realize that you are in control of your life as you prepare for a successful career. As you continue to mature and explore careers, you need to create a career plan. You can do this by exploring your lifestyle, defining your goal, evaluating your possible career choices, considering your educational options, making a decision, and putting your plan into action.



If you were a contestant on the Career Game Show, which curtain would you choose?

The Career Game Show

Announcer: "It's time for the Career Game Show! Please welcome our host."

Host: "Are you ready? You have five seconds to select your career. Behind one curtain is a career as a doctor!"

(Loud cheering and wild applause)

Host: "And behind another curtain is a career as a teacher!"

(More applause and cheering)

Host: "But behind a third curtain is unemployment."

(Boos and hisses from the audience)

Host: "But just one quick reminder before you select a curtain: This is what you will do for the next 40 years! Are you ready? Which curtain will you select?"

Explore Your Lifestyle

Your lifestyle is your way of living that reflects your values and attitudes; it is how you express yourself. How do you want to spend your day? What are the activities that you enjoy the most? To begin creating the lifestyle you want, identify your personality, aptitudes, interests, skills, and values. You can then narrow your choices to a few career groups or clusters that appear to be a good fit for you. Your next step is to evaluate those career-cluster choices through research. After researching your choices, you will be better prepared to determine which careers within the clusters are realistic for you, match your values, and fit the lifestyle you want for yourself.

It is important for you to realize that no one expects you to narrow your career choices to just one. At this time in your life, selecting just one career might mean ignoring other possibilities that could be better choices. Keep at least two or three in mind.

You will want to explore specific careers by comparing what you want or expect in a career and lifestyle to what the specific careers you have identified require or offer. Consider the following:

Career outlook. What will be the demand for your career choice 10 years from now? Why is this demand an important factor? Your research will give you predictions about the number of job openings in the future. Zack, for example, really enjoyed spending a day career-shadowing his uncle who is a plumber. He decided to research the career and discovered that there will be a demand for plumbers over the next several years.

Focus of the work. Do you prefer working with **data** (information, words, facts, numbers, or statistics), people, or **things** (objects such as machinery, computers, or tools)? Most careers involve working with all three categories, although usually more with one than the others. For example, auto service technicians work with all three categories, but most of their work is with things. Can you think of other examples?

CAREER FACT

Careers as mechanics, installers, and repairers can include appliance repair, auto mechanics, diesel mechanics, electrical repairers, heating and air conditioning technicians, millwrights, precision instrument repairers, and small engine mechanics.



Do you prefer to work with people, data, or things?

DIVERSITY

Why Is She So Snobby?

One of your co-workers is really quiet. You try to be friendly to her and include her in conversations, but she frequently does not reply. And she never starts a conversation. Why is she so snobby?

Education and training. It is critically important to understand that in today's workplace you must be a **lifelong learner**; your education and training will never be finished. Even if you stay at the same job or career for 30 years, you will need to upgrade your skills, training, and knowledge. It is also important to realize that different jobs and careers have different education and training requirements. By 2016, about 65 percent of all workers will be in jobs that require more education or training than they can learn in a few weeks on the job, according to government predictions. Will you hang in there and go to school for two more years after high school to get a better job? Does obtaining a four-year bachelor's degree sound reasonable for you? Do you value education enough to get a doctorate degree? These are options you must consider while making your career plan.

Responsibilities and tasks. What will you actually be doing in the career you have chosen? What will the day-to-day tasks include? Do you do the same thing day after day, or does each day bring new experiences? Is the career fast-paced and stressful or easy with less pressure? Consider responsibilities and tasks carefully as you choose a career.

Unemployment Rate by Level of Education

How can you use the information in these tables in making decisions about your future?

Unemployment Rate	Level of Education
1.4%	Doctoral degree
1.1%	Professional degree
1.7%	Master's degree
2.3%	Bachelor's degree
3.0%	Associate degree
3.9%	Some college, no degree
4.3%	High school graduate
6.8%	Less than a high school diploma

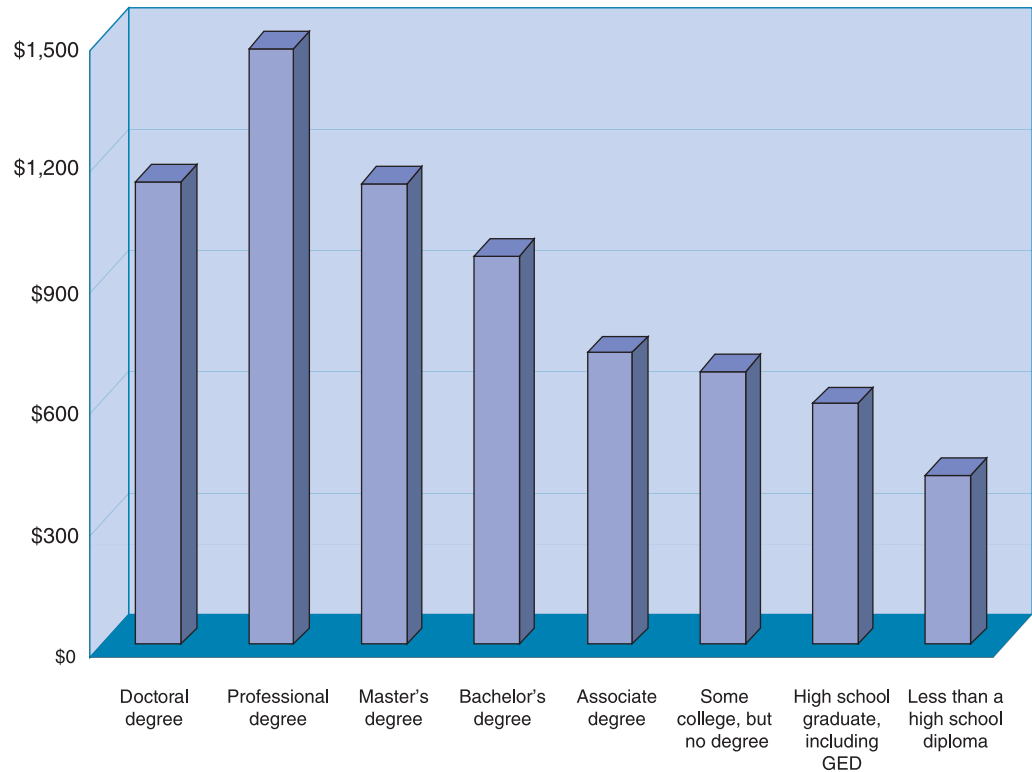
Note: This data reflects annual averages for 2006 for full-time workers age 25 and older.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Ten Fastest-Growing Occupations

Occupation	Employment		Number of New Jobs	Percent Growth	Source of Postsecondary Education and Training
	2006	2016			
Network systems and data communications analysts	262,000	402,000	140,000	53%	Bachelor's degree
Personal and home care aides	767,000	1,156,000	389,000	51%	Short-term on-the-job training
Home health aides	787,000	1,171,000	384,000	49%	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer software engineers, applications	507,000	733,000	226,000	45%	Bachelor's degree
Veterinary technologists and technicians	71,000	100,000	29,000	41%	Associate degree
Personal financial advisors	176,000	248,000	72,000	41%	Bachelor's degree
Makeup artists, theatrical and performance	2,000	3,000	1,000	40%	Postsecondary vocational award
Medical assistants	417,000	565,000	148,000	35%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Veterinarians	62,000	84,000	22,000	35%	First professional degree
Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors	83,000	112,000	29,000	34%	Bachelor's degree

Median Weekly Earnings by Education Level



Note: Median is the middle number in a set of ordered numbers, which means half of the workers at this level earn more and half earn less. Also, this data reflects annual averages for 2006 for full-time workers age 25 and older.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

How much schooling are you willing to complete to increase your earnings?

ETHICS

Whose Job Is It To Be Respectful, Anyway?

You were having a bad day even before you got to work. Your friends did not wait for you before school, you had to sit with strangers at lunch, and your teacher made fun of you in class because you flunked a quiz. The minute you stepped through the door, your supervisor growled, "Why are you late?" What will you say?

Salary. How much money do you expect to make each year? This is a very broad question that depends on many factors. They include how much education and training you have, how many years of experience you have, where the work is located (what part of the country), and how many people are available to fill the positions. You can find information about the **salary** (cash payment for work performed) to expect in each career you research.

Skills and aptitudes. Learning a skill is much easier if you already have the aptitude for it. If you can match your natural talents to careers that require the same abilities, you are on the road to success. Emily, for example, has always enjoyed helping and teaching others. During her high school career, she took a Cadet Teaching class and found out that she really enjoys working with five- and six-year-olds. She plans to attend college to become a kindergarten teacher.

Values. Your values should match the values required in a particular career. Michael wants to be an accountant. He knows that he will be expected to be very honest. Why is honesty important if you are considering being an accountant?

Work environment. What type of environment do you prefer to work in? Could you describe the "perfect" work setting? Do you like being indoors or outdoors? Could you spend 40 hours each week in an office with no windows? Would you be willing to work outdoors even if the temperature could range from 10 degrees in the winter to 90 degrees in the summer?

Working hours. If you could choose one of the following work schedules, which would it be: 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.? 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.? Midnight to 7:00 a.m.? Why? In some cases, you might be able to arrange **flextime** (employees set their schedules to fit their lives). For example, you might want to be home to meet a service technician or when your children get home from school at 4:00 p.m. By utilizing flextime, you could be at work by 7:30 a.m., take only half an hour for lunch, and leave work at 3:30 p.m.

The decisions you make about your career focus, amount of training, level of responsibility, desired salary, work environment, work hours, and the personal values that you want to emphasize in your job will determine your future lifestyle. What decisions will you make?

Define Your Goal

What is your goal? Where do you want to go? Would you take a long trip without a road map to give you visual directions? Think of your high school career as a “road map” that will lead you to your destination and a successful career. If you want to be successful, you must plan your route, a specific path that leads to where you want to go. As you move from middle school to high school, your parents and you need to meet with your high school counselors to outline the different academic paths available and how they relate to different career choices. Your teachers can also help you identify goals and routes.



What work environment do you prefer?

WELLNESS

Are You Your Own Best Friend?

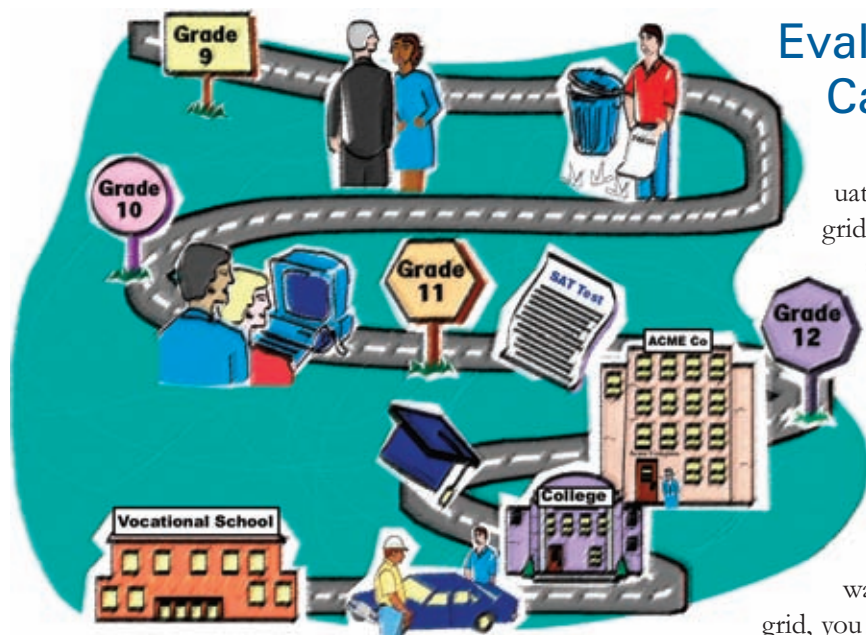
How do you know if you're being too critical of yourself? Do you think that you should do everything perfectly or you should be perfect? For four hours, write down all the negative thoughts that go through your head—anything that makes you feel sad, bad, or discouraged. Beside every negative thought, write a positive one.

Suppose that you got a low grade on a test; you cannot change that. Your negative thoughts might be “I’m stupid” or “I’ll never pass this class.” Replace those negative thoughts with positive ones, such as “I did not do as well on the test as I had hoped, but I’m smart and learn from my mistakes. I’ll look at what I missed and figure out what I need to study more. Then I’ll be better prepared for the next test.” You are the only one who can train your mind to think kind thoughts about yourself.

COMMUNITY

Create a mini-career fair based on the careers your class is exploring. Invite students from middle schools to come to the fair and to talk with you about the careers you have explored.

It is important that you develop your own **personal road map**, a plan for reaching your career goals, early in your high school career. When you do, you can realistically work toward your career goals.



What path will you take to career success?

Evaluate Your Possible Career Choices

You can use an expanded grid to evaluate possible career choices. To create your grid using paper, skip a couple of lines on a sheet of paper and then list all your possible career choices in columns across the top of the paper. Then, in the blank lines along the left edge of the paper, create a new row for each factor you think is important to consider, such as Career Outlook, Focus of the Work, Education and Training, or Responsibilities and Tasks. (If you want to use the computer to create the grid, you can use a spreadsheet or the Table feature in your word processing program.)

	Career 1	Career 2	Career 3
Career Outlook	20% increase	10% increase	10% increase
Focus of the Work	Data	Data	People
Education and Training	Bachelor's	Associate	Master's
Responsibilities and Tasks	Research Writing reports Supervising	Research Writing reports	Interview Counseling Training
Salary	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$75,000
Skills and Aptitudes	Math Writing	Math Writing	Communications Human relations Management
Values	Attention to detail	Attention to detail	Helping others
Work Environment	Office	Office	Office Travel
Working Hours	8 to 5 Some overtime	8 to 5	Variable

NETWORKING

Call three people who work in the career that interests you the most. Interview them about the type of personality that functions best in that career.

How would creating a chart like this help someone choose from among several career options?

Section 5-1: Review

Understanding Key Concepts

1. What steps are involved in creating a career plan?
2. Why is it important for you to develop your own personal road map?
3. How does gathering information about yourself help you with creating a career plan?
4. What are the areas of information about yourself and careers that you can compare?
5. How can you organize your findings so that you can make a decision?

Thinking Creatively

Why do children often have such strong beliefs about their future careers?

What causes them to abandon their dreams?

Taking It a Step Further

Identify a career that you doubt you could (but would really like to) achieve: famous pop star, doctor, Supreme Court judge, or whatever. List every obstacle in your path and brainstorm ways to remove those obstacles. Then create a plan you could follow to achieve the career.

Section 5-2: Considering Your Educational Options

After you consider career choices, you are ready to look more closely at the education and training needed for the choices. Global competition and today's economy have increased the need for postsecondary education and training. Some type of education and training will be required for any career you choose. Many options are available. You will need to decide which one(s) are best for you.

Different Levels of Education

High School Diploma or GED

Proficiency Certificate

Associate of Science Degree (AS)

Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts (BS/BA)

Master of Science or Master of Arts (MS/MA)

Educational Specialist (EdS)

Doctorate (MD or PhD)

Do you understand what each of these levels of education requires?

On-the-Job Competency

What Is a Good Attitude Worth?

Amiya is 25 years old and travels around the country helping retail sales stores reorganize and improve their image, earning \$40,000 each year. While in high school, she did volunteer work and had part-time jobs. She went on to college, where she worked in non-paying internships as well as in paid part-time jobs. She received her bachelor's degree in communication and landed a full-time job as a store manager after graduation. At the end of two years, she was promoted to her current position. She suggests that teenagers get as much experience as they can, even if it is unpaid or entry-level. How has Amiya's attitude gotten her to the point where she is today?

CAREER FACT

Improvement in vehicle quality and increased demand for auto services will offset each other, making for average growth in the number of automotive service jobs throughout the next ten years.

High School Diploma or GED

GED (General Educational Development) tests measure whether a person has the knowledge and skill of a high school graduate. To earn a GED certificate, a person must score at a certain level on multiple-choice tests in reading, writing, social studies, science, and mathematics and write a satisfactory, timed essay. The GED enables people who are unable to complete a traditional high school education to continue their education and improve their job opportunities.

To receive a high school diploma, students must earn a certain number of credits. Students typically earn one credit for each class they pass. Some classes, such as English or mathematics, are required. Classes that students choose, such as foreign languages, music, or child development, are called *electives*. Students often question the value of required classes, but as the table of SCANS skills in Chapter 2 shows, today's employers expect all employees to have skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. However, some careers require more of one than others, as shown in the following list.

Careers That May Interest You

Requiring English	Requiring Math
Accountant	Accountant
Advertising Agent	Actuary
Arts Administrator	Aerospace Engineer
Banker	Air Traffic Control Analyst
Buyer	Applied Mathematician
Career Consultant	Architect
Civil Service Worker	Astronomer
Computer Programmer	Attorney
Customs and Immigration Agent	Civil Engineer
Editor	Communications Specialist
Health Service Worker	Computer/Engineer
Hotel and Catering Manager	Computer/Sales
Housing Manager	Computer Operator
Information Scientist	Cryptographer
Insurance Agent	Designer
IT Consultant	Ecologist
Journalist	Economist
Lawyer	Engineer
Librarian	Environmental Technologist
Market Researcher	Financial Analyst
Marketing Specialist	Information Scientist
Multimedia/Web Designer	Inventory Strategist
Nurse	Investment Banker
Occupational Therapist	Investment Manager
Officer in Armed Forces	Market Research Analyst

Requiring English	Requiring Math
Police Officer	Meteorologist
Politician	Network Programmer
Publicist	Operations Researcher/Analyst
Publisher	Physician
Radio/TV Personnel	Physicist
Real Estate Agent	Practical Nurse
Retail Manager	Research Scientist
Salesperson	Robotics Programmer
Social Worker	Software Developer
Systems Analyst	Statistical Analyst/Statistician
Teacher	Systems Analyst/Engineer
Writer	Teacher

Grades are becoming more critical in today's schools as well. Grades have been used as a factor for entrance into college for a long time, but more and more employers also consider high school grades. What if your school board decided to drop the letter grade *D* from the grading scale? In other words, any grade below *C* would be considered failing. This would certainly be more compatible with today's workplace. What do you believe are some reasons why employers want employees who perform at a higher level than *D* work?

The successful student will know how to learn; unsuccessful students will have excuses why they can't learn. What are some of these excuses? How would you argue against these excuses? The successful student and most valuable employee will find ways to acquire education and training beyond high school.

Graduating from high school without a specific purpose or job preparation increases your chances of being unemployed. Dropping out of high school increases your chances even more. In times of **economic recession**, a period of economic decline when demand for work is low or even stops, the first workers to be laid off are typically high school dropouts. The choice will be yours. Will *you* choose to drop out or graduate?

On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeship

Almost every job offers some on-the-job training (OJT) so that new employees can learn the specific skills necessary to working for a particular employer, such as using specialized equipment. The advantage of OJT is that trainees can earn money while they learn job skills.

In an **apprenticeship**, a person learns a trade while working for an employer. There are many occupations that require apprenticeships, as shown in the chart. Apprenticeships are centuries old. They date back to the 12th century in England. Men were **indentured** to an employer for about seven years. They had a legal contract for service with a specific trade. At the end of the seven years, the apprentice became a journeyman or craftsman and eventually a master craftsman who would indenture an apprentice of his own.

DISCRIMINATION

Do You Have a Right to Regular Breaks?

In your work as a data entry clerk, you get very tired after two hours of typing and staring at the computer screen. On a Web site on time management, you read that taking a 10-minute break can refresh your mind, protect your eyesight, and keep your wrists from getting Carpel Tunnel Syndrome. However, your employer refuses to allow any breaks other than your half-hour lunch. Can you sue him for discrimination or at least report him for poor working conditions?

CAREER FACT

The number of jobs for small engine mechanics is projected to increase because people are buying more motorcycles, boats, and lawn and garden equipment that will need repairs.



What difference will it make in your life if you do not get your high school diploma?

Today, apprenticeships range from one to seven years and include men and women. The apprentice receives on-the-job training and classroom instruction from craftspeople and journey workers (certified, experienced, skilled people).

CAREER FACT

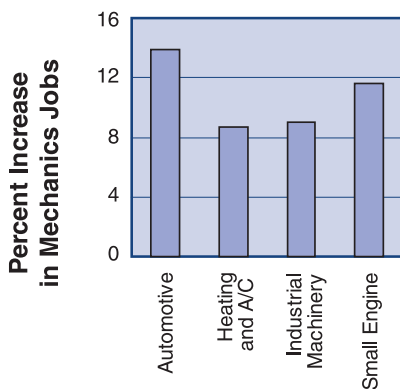
Heating and air conditioning mechanics and installers will be in high demand as older systems are being replaced to comply with new regulations.

A Brief Listing of Apprenticeship Programs

Carpenters	Plumbers
Millwrights	Pipefitters
Electricians	Sheet Metal Workers
Bricklayers	
Iron Workers	

Do you know anyone in an apprenticeship program? Are you considering one of these programs?

Projected Outlook for 2016



What does this chart tell you about future opportunities in these careers?

Career and Technical Education (CTE Schools)

CTE schools prepare students for the job market in very specific skills such as **cosmetology** (the art of styling hair, applying makeup, and grooming nails) or diesel mechanics. Sometimes these schools have other names, such as trade schools, technical colleges, business colleges, or conservatories. Most CTE schools look at trends in the labor market. Then they design programs for popular careers.

Programs can include many trades, but also include business and health-related careers—for example, certified nurse’s aid (CNA) and licensed practical nurse (LPN), firefighting, emergency medical technician (EMT), computer aided design (CAD), and computer programming and repair. The schools have small classes and offer job-placement assistance after graduation. CTE school classes focus specifically on the career you have selected. The overall amount of time spent in class is often shorter than required in other **postsecondary** (after high school) programs.

A Brief Listing of CTE Programs

Technology Training

Computer Applications	Information Technology
eCommerce Design	Network Administration
Electrical Engineering Technology	Web Engineering

Continuing Medical Education

Dental Assistant	Medical Transcription
Health and Exercise Sciences	Nursing
Health Care Administration	Pharmacy Technician
Massage Therapy	Ultrasound Technician
Medical Assistant	X-Ray Technician

Art Schools and Institutes

Advertising	Graphic Design
Culinary	Industrial Design
Fashion Design	Interior Design
Fashion Merchandising and Marketing	Photography
Film	Web Design

Career Education

Automotive Technician	Plumbing
Aviation Maintenance	Travel and Tourism
Electrician	Welding
Hospitality Management	

Business Schools

Accounting	Criminal Justice
Business Administration	Homeland Security
Secretarial	Legal Assistant
Court Reporting	Paralegal

CAREER FACT

The demand for appliance repairers is expected to grow slightly because appliances are becoming more complicated and expensive.

COMMUNITY

SkillsUSA is a career and technical student organization for high school and college students who are taking classes toward a career in technical, skilled, and service occupations. Members of SkillsUSA can participate in local, regional, and national competitions in a wide variety of skill areas, such as auto repair, electronics, food service, and health care. Visit your local chapter or the SkillsUSA Web site at www.skillsusa.org to find out more information.

Is attending a vocational or tech prep school a good decision for you?

Military Training

Military training requires self-discipline and dedication. Can you name all the branches of the U.S. military?

To **enlist** or join a branch of the military, you must provide a Social Security number, driver's license, birth certificate, and proof of high school graduation or the equivalent. Next is the three-part screening process: physical, moral or ethical, and aptitude. If you pass the prequalification, you must go to a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). You are then given further examinations, interviewed, and asked to take the Oath of Enlistment.

The Cost of Education

How will you pay for the education you choose? Not only will you have to pay tuition (the cost of classes), but you may also have to pay for books, laboratory fees, food, and housing. Have you and your parents started saving for these future costs?

About half of the students in postsecondary education receive some sort of financial aid to help them pay for their education. Financial aid can include the following:

- ▶ **Scholarships and grants:** Federal and state governments, colleges, and community organizations give this money to students. Students may receive this money because of outstanding athletic, artistic, or academic achievement or because of financial need.
- ▶ **Work-study programs:** Students who qualify for this program earn part of their tuition money by working for their school or a non-profit organization.
- ▶ **Student loans:** State and federal governments provide this money through schools and banks to qualified students to help with educational costs. When the students complete their education, they have to pay back this money with *interest* (a charge for borrowing money).

To apply for financial aid, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The government uses the financial information that students and their parents provide on this form, which can be completed online, to determine how much financial aid the students should receive.



Is a military career for you?

Each Armed Service has its own **basic training** (officially called Initial-Entry Training and informally called “Boot Camp”). This training develops the enlistees and helps them realize their potential. The training can vary between 6 and 13 weeks. However, the education doesn’t end at basic training. Each Armed Service also offers advanced training that builds on the foundation established in basic training. The advanced training gives you the opportunity to strengthen your skills and gain new ones for specialized roles in the military. When you complete your time of service, the government pays for additional education.

Just a reminder to male students: Nearly all 18-year-old men living in the U.S. must register with the Selective Service. It’s the law and your civic duty. In fact, most states require a young man to be registered with the Selective Service before renewing his driver’s license. The easiest way to register is to go to www.sss.gov and register online. By registering, you also stay eligible for college loans and grants, job training, and federal jobs.

Females in the United States do not have to register. However, there are equal opportunities for males and females in today’s military. You will have many opportunities to discuss career opportunities with the U.S. military while you are in high school.

Colleges and Universities

If you attend a college or university after high school, you need to decide which college program will prepare you for your chosen career path. You have many choices, including the college to attend, the major (area of study) to pursue, and the classes to take.

One- and Two-Year Community Colleges

One- and two-year community colleges offer full- and part-time degree programs and other programs. Full-time and part-time study can lead to a two-year **associate degree** and requires attending school several hours each day, several days per week. Just as with high school, attending school and studying will be your priority for several months or years as you work toward your career objective. Credits earned in an associate degree program will usually **transfer** to (be accepted by) another college or university.

Some people do not need two to four years of college to prepare for a career. They need a series of classes that teach specific skills for specific careers. These series of classes, called **certificate programs** or **diploma programs**, typically require completing several months to two years of classes. The certificate you receive verifies that you have the skills necessary to work in the particular career field.

Community colleges also often offer short courses that will help you upgrade your job skills. Short courses might last for only a few days or weeks. More and more short courses are being taught via the Internet.

CAREER FACT

A millwright installs, repairs, replaces, and dismantles machines used in many factories. Most are trained through apprenticeship programs or community colleges. Although there are few new jobs, skilled applicants usually have good job opportunities.

Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Approximately 2,000 accredited colleges and universities across the United States offer many of the same programs that the one- and two-year community schools offer, but also four-year programs of study. These four-year programs lead to a four-year **bachelor's degree**, either a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. Many professional positions require a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

Universities are organized by a number of different schools or colleges for teaching and research. Each school or college within the university might offer both undergraduate- and graduate-level degrees. They also offer advanced study or specialized degrees in many areas, such as law and medicine. Which careers require a **graduate degree**? Which careers require an advanced degree—such as a **master's degree** or **doctoral degree**—that is earned after a bachelor's degree?



What are the advantages of attending a college?

Purdue University - West Lafayette Campus Schools

Agriculture
Consumer and Family Sciences
Education
Engineering
Health Sciences
Liberal Arts
Management
Nursing
Pharmacy
Science
Technology →
Veterinary Medicine

Educational Requirements in Technology

Computer Repair —
Technical Certificate (CISCO)
Computer Programmer —
Associate Degree (2 years college)
Computer System Administrator —
Bachelor's Degree (4+ years college)

What programs does the college nearest you offer?

Distance Learning

One of the newest sources of education is **distance learning** or Internet classes. These “virtual universities” exist only as Internet sites. This form of education can be helpful to people who live a great distance from a college campus or because of their jobs or personal lives can't take the time to go to a class several days each week.

Section 5-2: Review

Understanding Key Concepts

1. List three careers that require both math and English skills.
2. What is the difference between an apprentice program and a CTE school?
3. What are three advantages of selecting military training to receive your education?
4. What is the difference between a community college and a university?

Thinking Creatively

What types of postsecondary schools are located near you?
What are the advantages of going to a postsecondary school that is far away from your home? What are the disadvantages?

Taking It a Step Further

Research the topic of distance learning on the Internet. What courses are offered that interest you? What problems would you have if that were the only type of education available to you? Write a paper that discusses the Internet courses that interest you and the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning for you personally.

Section 5-3: Developing a Career Plan

Two important actions you need to take early in your high school career are to make a decision about the career area that interests you and to begin planning. These action areas can affect whether you achieve your career goal.

Make a Decision

“Jump in! Come on. Just jump in.” Haven’t you heard this at the swimming pool? It is a brave move in some cases, isn’t it? How is selecting a career similar to just “jumping in”? Now is the time to make some choices. Which careers you choose to pursue will depend on many factors, but unless you begin now, it is unlikely that anything will happen at all. The good news is that if you set a goal, you are more likely to achieve it. Also, remember that **flexibility**, your willingness to change or adapt, is very important because you have many, many years to make changes in your life.

Case Study: What Should Mariasha Do?

Mariasha loves to fix computers, televisions, and other electrical equipment. She enjoys finding the problem and fixing it. She also is very good at math, but found out after one semester of the class that she dislikes accounting.



What career options should Mariasha consider?

The Decision-Making Process

The following seven-step process is a helpful tool to use whenever you make a complex decision, such as deciding which career to pursue:

1. Describe the situation or state the question. What kind of person are you? What do you like to do?
2. Define a goal. What do you want to achieve in your career? What will you have to do to make that happen?
3. Find information and resources. Do everything you can to learn about the careers that interest you.
4. Evaluate choices. Are the careers you are considering realistic for you?
5. Make a decision. Choose a career and develop a plan to prepare for that career.
6. Put the plan into action. Start taking classes and participating in activities that support your career goals.
7. Review the results. If you don’t like the path you have chosen, make adjustments to your plan.

Begin Planning

Planning is an important part of everyday life. It is also critical for reaching your goals. Individuals and groups have plans for reaching goals, whether it is a game, an event, or a career choice. What are some examples of planning?

CAREER FACT

If you enjoy classes in auto mechanics, drafting, industrial arts, or math you may want to consider one of these careers:

- ▶ Appliance repairers
- ▶ Auto mechanics
- ▶ Diesel mechanics
- ▶ Electrical repairers
- ▶ Heating and air conditioning technicians
- ▶ Precision instrument repairers
- ▶ Small engine mechanics

To say that you're planning to win the game is good, but is it enough? You must be ready to put your plan into action. What equipment do you need? What skills does your opponent have? To decide that you are going to be a teacher is great, but what's your plan? What type of a teacher do you want to be? What degree will you need? The more specific your plan, the easier it will be to put your plan into action—and the more likely you will be to succeed.

In creating your plan, think of these specific issues for two different careers:

- ▶ Would I most like a career in which I work with data, people, or things?
- ▶ What work environment would I enjoy the most?
- ▶ What work environment would I enjoy the least?
- ▶ What physical requirements would I like for my job to have?
- ▶ What physical requirements would I not want my job to have?
- ▶ Would I like to own my own business?

Begin achieving your career goal by setting realistic short-term goals that will help you reach your long-term goal. These short-term goals are called **stepping-stone goals**. There are several advantages of setting stepping-stone goals. They help you achieve results and give you opportunities to make changes along the way.

Determine Your Educational Path

You have thousands of schools to choose from. The following are some suggestions for selecting a school—whether you are considering a certificate program, a community college, or a university:

- ▶ Check to see whether the school is **accredited**—that it has met certain minimum standards by an accrediting agency in the U.S.
- ▶ Write or visit several schools before making a choice.
- ▶ Ask questions about course offerings, costs, job placement, and hours of instruction.
- ▶ Check to see whether local employers or government programs offer similar training at no cost.
- ▶ Talk with people who have attended the school.

First, narrow your choices. Then begin the admissions application process for each school. You can complete most of this process online, although

paper applications are still available. Admission requirements for a four-year university are often very similar to those in the chart.

Typical University Admission Requirements for Beginning Students

High school diploma or GED	All applicants must either graduate from high school or have a GED.
Subject-matter requirements	Universities have subject-matter requirements in English, math, and laboratory science; some students might have foreign language requirements as well.
Quality requirements	Applicants who meet the minimum subject-matter requirements are evaluated on the basis of quality. Quality includes much more than just high school class rank; it also encompasses your probability of success, overall grade average, grade average in degree-related subjects, trends in achievement, SAT and/or ACT scores, and the strength of your college prep program.

What admissions requirements does the school that most interests you have?

Gain Career Experience

What do these activities have in common: babysitting, baling hay, delivering newspapers, and selling lemonade? These are all experiences that can contribute to your career plans. Every experience you have shapes your likes and dislikes, your skills and aptitudes, and your values and goals. How can a grade school experience such as selling lemonade affect your future career plans?

Plan hands-on experiences, actually working in the career environment, that allow you to explore careers. You can use career-shadowing, part-time work, temporary work, internships, volunteering, or entrepreneurships. You can also take part in cooperative education programs such as I.C.E. or service learning programs to learn more.

An important part of exploring careers and creating your own career plan is comparing the information about a career with your reactions to your experiences. For example, if you dislike mowing lawns because of the heat, you might not want to seek a career involving working outside in hot weather. On the other hand, if you enjoy working in the school bookstore, you might be interested in marketing and sales. Can you think of other examples?

Be aware, though, that most careers involve some activities that you might not enjoy. The goal is to choose a career that involves as many of your interests and as few of your dislikes as possible.

Consider the Alternative

After reading this book, you should have a clearer idea about your primary career goal, which is the career you want most. As you work toward this goal, however, you also should consider alternative career goals.

Suppose your primary career goal has strict physical requirements, such as an athlete or a dancer. What happens if you are injured and can't meet those requirements? What if changes in technology or the economy eliminate jobs in the career you want? What if you aren't accepted into the professional school for your career?

To find alternative career goals, look at careers that are related to your primary career goal. Also, consider other interests and skills you have. Is self-employment a possibility? Remember that you are likely to change careers several times in your lifetime, so you shouldn't focus on only one career goal.



What careers might interest someone who enjoys this type of work?

ROLE-PLAYING

Scenario: A school counselor interviews a student about his career plans.

Roles: A student and a counselor

Discussion: Answering the questions “who, what, when, where, why, and how,” discuss the student’s career plans.

Case Study: What School Should Levi Attend?

Levi is a senior in high school and has been working for Overbeck Construction through the I.C.E. program. He likes working on construction equipment and wants to further his education in this career field.



What are three options for Levi?

What are one advantage and one disadvantage of each option?

Section 5-3: Review

Understanding Key Concepts

1. What are two action areas of your career plan that you can definitely do right now?
2. What factors do you need to consider as you make educational choices?
3. What three types of admissions requirements do most postsecondary education programs have?
4. How can gaining career experiences help you determine your future career?

Thinking Creatively

How can earning excellent grades in school affect your adult life?
Can you think of any experience you had that didn't teach you something about yourself?

Taking It a Step Further

Using the Internet, find at least three schools that you might attend after high school. Look for one that is close to your home, another that is within your state, and the third one in another state or country. Prepare an expense grid that compares the costs of attending all three schools.

Spotlight on a Career

Mike Hurst, President Tune Tech, Inc.

I own and operate an eight-bay auto repair facility in Indianapolis, Indiana. How did I get here? When I was in high school, I wanted to be a race car driver. I got my diploma and completed an A.A.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology at Lakeland College in Mentor, Ohio.

I loved racing so much that I volunteered with a rally-racing team in Michigan, a team so respected that it gained factory support from the Oldsmobile division of General Motors. Through that volunteering, I made connections. Friends there found me a position on the crew of a NASCAR Cup team. The moral of the story: Always leave a good impression. You never know who you may be impressing.

Running a successful auto shop has enabled me to pursue my own motorsport goals. I've raced stock cars, sports cars, and rally cars, in which I won three national championships. I have competed in long-distance events, such as the *Car & Driver* magazine One Lap of America.

Lately I'm spending less time on racing and more time with my family. After 20 years of driving, I've stepped back and accepted the position of Club Rally Series Manager. I negotiate sanctions with event organizers and monitor the conduct of rally races nationwide for the 60,000 member Sports Car Club of America.



Chapter Review and Activities

The following sections can help you review the contents of this chapter and develop your workplace competencies.

Key Concepts

Following are the key concepts presented in the chapter.

- ▶ As you continue to mature and explore careers, you need to create a career plan by exploring your lifestyle, defining your goal, evaluating your possible career choices, considering your educational options, making a decision, and putting your plan into action.
- ▶ Your lifestyle reflects your values and attitudes.
- ▶ Compare what you want or expect in a career and lifestyle to what the specific careers you have identified require or offer, including career outlook, focus of the work, education and training, responsibilities and tasks, salary, skills and aptitudes, values, work environment, and working hours.
- ▶ Define your goals and determine a personal road map to success.
- ▶ Evaluate possible career choices.

TECHNOLOGY

According to a recent study released by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 28 percent of teens who are online write blogs. Creating a blog can be a great way to build your writing and computer skills, connect with friends, impress future employers, and exercise your freedom of speech. However, writing a blog can have negative consequences, too. People have been sued, suspended from school, and fired from their jobs for material they have posted on their blogs.

Keep these issues in mind when you blog:

- ▶ Opinions are great, but rumors are not. Writing untrue statements that harm someone's reputation is called defamation, and you can be sued for it.
- ▶ Respect people's privacy. Ask permission before you share photos or other information about your family and friends.
- ▶ Don't include illegal or obscene content. For example, you may threaten a teacher or student in your blog as a joke, but school authorities will take it quite seriously.

- ▶ Carefully consider the education and training needed.
- ▶ There are many different levels of education available, and your choices will depend on the specific career.
- ▶ Making a decision about a career area and planning how to reach this goal are important.
- ▶ Set realistic goals, both short and long-term. Short-term goals are also called stepping-stone goals.
- ▶ Gain career experience.
- ▶ An important part of exploring careers and creating your own career plan is comparing the information about a career with your reactions to your experiences.

Key Term Review

Complete the following activity to review your understanding of the key terms.

accredited	diploma programs	lifelong learner
apprenticeship	distance learning	master's degree
associate degree	doctoral degree	personal road map
bachelor's degree	economic recession	postsecondary
basic training	enlist	salary
CTE schools	flexibility	stepping-stone goal
certificate programs	flextime	things
cosmetology	graduate degree	transfer
data	indentured	

The automotive company where you work is cutting 300 jobs. The supervisor has asked you to prepare and post a chart that lists and explains the different types of education available in your state. Use at least ten of the key terms in your chart.

Comprehension Review

Answer the following questions to review the main points in the chapter.

1. What are the steps of making a career decision?
2. How can you evaluate what you discover about yourself and the careers that interest you?
3. What are educational options for people who do not want to go to a four-year college or university?

4. What are the degrees you can obtain at a four-year college or university?
5. How can you choose a school from among the many postsecondary options available to you?
6. How can experiences help you determine careers that might not interest you?

School-to-Work

Math: Your salary is \$43,500, and you have a sign-on bonus of \$1,500. How much money will you be losing if you take an unpaid vacation of four days? Write down the steps you would take to solve this mathematical problem and the correct answer.

Social Studies: What are some attributes of a workplace? How can some of the attributes affect a family? Create a cause-effect chart that illustrates your ideas.

Writing: Write an e-mail message to an organization and request information about its purpose, openings for volunteers, and how to become a volunteer.

Science: Using the Internet or magazine articles, research high-definition television. Then write a report that explains how the technology works, discusses the advantages of the new technology, and lists the number of programs that your favorite TV network currently broadcasts in HDTV.

Does This Job Interest You?

The following job ad was posted on the Internet. What education and experience are required? What requirement does this job have that most jobs do not have? What types of education, interests, and skills should a person working in this position have? How could someone apply for the job?

FIND JOBS

POST RESUMES

Workover Rig and Truck Mechanic

Employer: Key Energy Services, Inc.
Desired Expertise: Mechanic, Rig Mechanic
Experience: 5+ years

Education: Trade school or apprenticeship
Location: International, Egypt

Job Description

Responsible for the maintenance and repair of a workover rig and truck project. Must be able to work on all aspects of light and heavy trucks. Good understanding of mechanical and electrical technology required. Must be able to train and develop national personnel and work with national clients. Must be able to plan maintenance and repair projects, including material requisitions. Contract has stringent performance standards that must be met safely.

Airfare provided by company to and from reasonable commercial airport.

Job Requirements

Apply via e-mail.

To apply for this position, applicants **MUST** meet the following criterion:
Be located in North America.

Contact

wrtm@aol.com

Apply Online



What career appeals to you?