What’s Your Plan After High School?
The World is Waiting
The Career Success tabloid offers a simple message: it is important for high school students to think about the world of work as they formulate their education plans and career choices. There has been no shortage of people who have helped us communicate the importance of this message; from Governor Rick Perry to the staff of the Labor Market and Career Information Department of the Texas Workforce Commission.

I’d like to recognize the efforts of Cindy Elliott who guided most of the content development in Career Success and who has spent the last seven years insuring that teachers, counselors and students alike have access to career information. Special appreciation is owed to Caesar Andreas of X Design Group as the chief author and graphic design specialist for this publication. As with prior efforts, Caesar has left the indelible print of his creativity and talent on this edition of Career Success. I’d also like to recognize the many authors and researchers from whom we drew inspiration, information and ideas for this tabloid.

I’d also like to honor the partnership between the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Workforce Commission; both of which proved through this publication that helping young Texans become successful in life is the ultimate goal. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the many teachers, counselors and other mentors who invest every day in the education of our children. Their often unsung contributions to shaping the minds and lives of our students form the front lines of creating a better tomorrow for Texas.

Richard Froeschle
Deputy Director
Labor Market and Career Information
Texas Workforce Commission
The world is waiting for you. It doesn’t matter whether you are a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior in high school. It doesn’t matter whether you are tall or short, rich or poor. The world is waiting for you.

You can choose to go into the world prepared or unprepared. You can choose to “wing it”—to have no plan. Or you can choose to prepare by selecting an educational program and create a plan that will prepare you for a career or additional education. It’s up to you.

If you’d rather have a plan, then Career Success is here to help. We have written this publication to cover most of the things you will need to accomplish in order to plan for life beyond high school and your entrance into the world of work.

Career Success is set up in six sections that follow the six steps of the Career Decision-Making Tool listed below. It is our goal to help you begin thinking about your career options, learn what’s important, look at your options, review your options, and then pursue a plan to make it all happen. We will even have you reconsider your decision, just to make sure you got it right.

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For many teens, one of the hardest questions to answer is, "What do you want to do in the world...of work?" Some teens seem to know from the day they are born what they want to do with their life. They might be pilots, doctors, actors, lawyers, politicians, singers, entrepreneurs or any of the other thousands of careers. It seems these teens somehow discovered their career path early on and had a passion for that career. They knew what they wanted to be.

So what about you? Do you fit into this category? If you do, great! If not, don’t worry, most teens don’t know what they want to be when they grow up. In fact, most of your parents were in the same situation when they were your age.

If you ask your parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents about how they chose their careers, you will get many different responses. One of them might tell you he wanted to be a nurse, but had to drop out of college (due to a death in the family) and worked in retail. Later he became a manager and then a regional manager and finally a vice president. Another relative might tell you she didn’t know what to study when she started college. But she took a course in astronomy, enjoyed it, took some related classes and eventually graduated with a degree in Astronomy. She then attended graduate school and finally began working for NASA.

Not knowing what career you want after high school is not a problem. However, if you do not begin to engage in knowing your options you will continue to stay in the dark. As a teen in high school, you are in the best position to start looking at different career directions. You have the opportunity to explore different classes and programs to determine what you like and don’t like. By finding your likes and dislikes, you will be able to pick among different career paths until you find the one you like the most. Once you find the career path you like, you will be able to answer the question, "What do you want to do in the world...of work?"

Drop Out of Choosing

Some teens who do not know what they want to do after high school often decide to drop out. But dropping out is not choosing a path. A teen who drops out of high school will not have their choice of careers. Instead the teen will have to accept whatever job they can get, usually a low paying one with little opportunity for advancement.

In a recent survey 9 out of 10 students who dropped out of high school had passing grades when they dropped out. So if bad grades are not the reason, why would a student drop out? Students give different reasons for dropping out such as:

1. Classes were not interesting
2. Missed too many days
3. Could not catch up
4. Hung around with other drop outs
5. Too much freedom & not enough rules

A teen may decide to drop out as a way to avoid school rules, attendance and learning; however, the reality is that these same tasks will be required at any job. And once out of high school, a drop out will need to get a job.

A drop out will probably work at a low paying job for several years until they realize they need more education in order to get a higher wage and to advance. The drop out will then have to attend GED classes in order to pass the GED exam. Once passed, it will be on to college or other training that you’ll have to pay for; sometimes covering the same material you could have studied for free in high school.

Dropping out of school does not mean you get to avoid choosing what to do with your life. Instead a drop out enters the work world at the very bottom and stays there until they decide to choose for themselves.

In Texas about 30% of high school students drop out and do not graduate. This means if you’re a freshman and your class has 100 students now, then by the time you’re a senior 30 of your friends will probably drop out. Don’t be part of the 30%.
Where's Your Head Right Now?

So where's your head right now? What interests you the most? Is it acting in the drama club? Going shopping? Working at the local pizza place and earning some money? Planning your quinceañera? Playing basketball? Cheerleading? Or is it something else like science or math class or a hobby such as cooking.

In order to engage in a career direction it is important that you assess your current situation. By the time you are in high school you should have taken several years of math, English, science, history and physical education. In addition, you might have the opportunity to join in group activities such as band, sports, student government, etc. At home you might have watched T.V., done chores, done volunteer work or visited your parents at their work place.

Have any of the classes or activities caught your attention? Is there a television show that you like, and could it be because of the work that is done by the main character?

To find your current interests you will want to make a list of your ten favorite things to do. It doesn't matter what they are. Your favorite things could be eating, watching television, shopping, etc... or it could be a history class, drama club, basketball, etc... Simply list your ten favorite things to do.

Next list your 10 least favorite things to do. There are no right or wrong answers. This is just so you know your current interests.

Whatever is of interest to you is a great place to start thinking about your career direction. Why? Because it could be that one of the things you currently like to do might lead to your future career.

They Know What You Did Last Summer

To find the career direction that will be best for you will require you get help from people who know you. People who know what you did last summer, last year—your whole life. People like your parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, teachers and counselors.

Getting help from adults in your life might seem like a scary thing. But it isn’t. These are people who care about you and can assist you with your career direction. They have gone through the process of searching for their career and can help you.

If you survey the adults in your life you will find that some went to college, some went to technical school, some went to work right out of high school and some even dropped out. You can learn from their experiences and from their mistakes.

In addition, the adults in your life can provide opportunities for you to enter the work world through a part-time job, internship or volunteer opportunity. These types of activities will help you narrow down your career direction because you will have hands on experience of things you like and don’t like to do.

But it is up to you to seek out their advice and guidance. Your teachers and counselors want to help but they have hundreds of students to keep up with. If you do not ask for help they may assume you either don’t need it or don’t want it.
Let’s be up front, there is a strong connection between how much money you make and what you can buy. Duh! There is also a very strong connection between your educational background and your ability to earn money. For example, on average, workers with a college degree will earn almost a million and a half dollars more in their lifetime than the typical student who stops their education at high school. So the question is, what kind of lifestyle do you want for yourself and what is the best way to get there?

As a teen you often see your favorite singer in their mansion or see your favorite actor in an expensive car. Most teens aren’t destined to be celebrities, but that doesn’t mean you can’t have the lifestyle of your dreams. You can have any standard of living; you just have to decide what is important to you.

If having a lot of material things is important, then you will need to find a career that will pay you enough to cover your purchases. There are hundreds of careers in different industries that pay substantial salaries where you do not have to be able to sing or act. Many of them are included in Career Success.

But making a lot of money is not the only consideration in your educational choice and eventual career decision. Other things can be equally or more important, such as family life, job satisfaction, work environment, making a difference in your community or outdoor/indoor activities. You get to decide what is important. It’s your life.

Let’s Go Shopping

There’s a good chance you’ve never figured out what your ideal lifestyle will really cost. Do you want to live in a basic or luxury apartment or a house? Wear regular or designer clothes? Drive a used or expensive car or ride the bus? Do you need a cell phone, gym membership, want to travel, or all of the above? If you want it, you can get it. But, you have to know what it costs and how you can afford it all. Log on to: www.lmci.state.tx.us/realitycheck and start shopping.

The goal of Reality Check is to make you aware of all the expenses you will encounter once you become an adult. If you know how much money you will be spending, it is a good idea to know which careers pay enough to cover your expenses; and how important education after high school really is.

Are You a Good Shopper?

Can you spot the best deals? Are you always looking for a sale? Do you spend hours going from store to store looking for the best bargain? If you are like most Americans you want the best deal on everything you buy.

But you will have wasted all that time trying to find the best price if you use a credit card to pay for the merchandise and you only make a low or minimum credit card payment each month. In doing so you may end up paying two or three times as much for the items you charged.

Look at the “Slow” table below to see how much a great shopping spree will really cost you if you use a credit card and do not pay it off immediately.

If you initially spent $445, after 6.5 years you will have paid a total of $790. That is $345 in interest! If you fail to make the monthly payment on time every month, you will be charged an additional late fee of $20-$30 each time. Since it will take 6.5 years to pay off the balance it is likely you will miss a payment or more. This means it will take even longer to pay off the balance.

So for that one month of great shopping you will end up paying for the next 6 or 7 years. This means the clothes or items you bought have probably long gone out of style. If you do plan to use a credit card make sure you pay it off as quickly as possible. The “Fast” table below is the same shopping spree but paid off much quicker. Of course, you can avoid all of these costs and debts if you buy only what you can afford.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paying Off Credit Cards</th>
<th>Slow</th>
<th>Shopping Spree Cost $445.00</th>
<th>Minimum Payment $10.00</th>
<th>Interest Rate 21%</th>
<th>Years To Finish Payment 6.5 yrs</th>
<th>Total Credit Card Payments $790</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Shopping Spree Cost $445.00</td>
<td>Minimum Payment $50.00</td>
<td>Interest Rate 21%</td>
<td>Months To Finish Payment 10 mo</td>
<td>Total Credit Card Payments $500</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
If you’re like most teens, you want a car. Of course it can’t be just any car, it has to have style, performance, and good size (not too large, but enough room for friends). A car may become a projection of your personality, sense of freedom, and desire for peer approval — as well as possibly serving a practical need for getting to school and a job.

Your parents, on the other hand, will want a safe car for you. They will place more importance on reliability/dependability, low purchase/operation/maintenance cost and low insurance cost. So if your parents pay the bills you will have to abide by their car choice. However, once you are an adult you will be able to pay for your own car and you will be able to get anything you want—as long as you can afford it. Below you can see the total costs of buying a car. To get a total Reality Check on the costs of other things such as rent, utilities, food, etc. go to www.lmci.state.tx.us/realitycheck

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLE CAR: Ford Mustang V6 Premium 2dr Coupe (4.0L 6cyl, automatic transmission, pony package) Sticker Price = $22,322</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost after 5 Years</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sticker Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes &amp; Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual Total Cost</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check the total costs for the car of your choice by logging into: http://www.edmunds.com/apps/cto/CTIntroController

My Plan

Hey, my name is Kiara and my plan is to go to college. I’m not sure which college I’m going to enroll in or what my major will be. I haven’t found something I like so I hope it comes to me soon. I graduate in two years. If all else fails I’ll pick a university where most of my friends will attend and go there. Then after taking some classes I’m sure I’ll be able to pick a major.

Want Your Own Car?

When you buy a pair of jeans the price you pay at the register is the total cost you pay for the pair of pants. When you buy a car it’s a different story. When you buy a car most people also have to pay for financing, insurance, taxes, fuel, maintenance and repairs. On the right is an example of a Ford Mustang that initially costs $22,322; however, after five years the actual cost is $50,726.
You have now become engaged and started thinking about a career direction. The next step is to understand yourself. You will want to find out what’s important and what’s not. You will want to think about your likes and dislikes. But you will also want to consider your abilities and any disabilities you might have.

Simply because you like doing something does not necessarily mean you have the ability to do it. Here’s an example. Many of you have seen the television show American Idol. It’s an annual singing competition where thousands of young people audition in an effort to land a spot on the show. The goal is to be crowned the best new singer in the country.

During the first few episodes of the season, the program shows many singers with great ability to sing. But they also show people with a great passion to sing, but who do not have the ability to sing well.

Therefore, it is important to know what you like, but also to know what you are able and not able to do. This does not mean that bad singers should forget about a career in music. By engaging in finding a career direction people will understand that other opportunities exist such as recording engineer, concert promoter, music video director and many other careers within the music industry.

So what’s not important? As you think about your career direction, do not let things such as your current economic status, race or gender affect your thinking. Not being able to sing will stop you from winning American Idol, but being rich or poor, male or female will have nothing to do with it.

Hi, my name is Koji and my plan is to enlist in the Air Force. My father is a marine but I really want to fly planes. I am in JROTC at school and am looking into what I have to do to make sure I become an Air Force pilot. I have visited the Air Force website. Wow, I didn’t know there was more to the Air Force than flying. They have hundreds of different careers. I have talked to the recruiter and she is helping me through the process. I didn’t realize it would take so long to become a pilot. I am working on keeping in shape so that when I go to basic training I will be able to handle anything they throw at me.

What’s Important?  What’s Not!

Rate This Plan

Fail  Succeed

Why?

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It’s time to start finding out what you care about. To do this simply write down all of your interests and abilities. Or better yet, use an assessment tool. Ask your teacher or counselor if one is available at your school.

Use the assessment tool to complete a formal career interest and aptitude assessment. The goal is to match your interests, values and abilities to career opportunities.

Many assessment tools are available online. Use the Internet and enter the term: “assessment tool” in your favorite search engine to find free assessment tools.

A great software package that has both an interest inventory and a work values assessment tool is called: Texas CARES. It is a multi-media career information system which is available in many Texas schools. It’s designed for individuals to explore different careers and related education opportunities.

Within Texas CARES you will find two automated assessment tools that help explore what you value in a job and your personal interests. These tools will help you find what it is you care about and will help you find matching careers. You can also find Texas CARES on the Internet by logging onto www.TexasCaresOnline.com.
Now that you have begun to find out about your interests and abilities, it is time to put it all together. You will want to find a notebook or folder where you can keep all of your information in one place. By keeping everything together you will be creating your career portfolio.

In your career portfolio, you will identify your top interests, abilities, career needs and wants. You will want to write down the names and addresses of people you can turn to for advice and assistance when you need it. Get their email address and telephone number, too.

As you go through the rest of this publication we will cover other topics that you will include in your career portfolio. You will write down the career options that interest you and the kinds of occupations you have decided to consider as occupational goals. You will identify any concerns you have regarding reaching your educational and/or occupational goals and will describe the strategies you intend to use in dealing with your concerns. You will indicate your educational goals, and start to develop your educational plan. All of this may change as you grow older, have new experiences, and gain new knowledge and skills, so be sure to put a date on each of your entries.

You will be adding and making changes to your portfolio as you make new decisions, create new plans, or take new actions. So you may want to keep this document in electronic format; just be sure to periodically print and keep an updated hard copy. Your career portfolio will document your own career development over time and will help you stay on track for your educational pursuits as well as your career direction.

So far you have looked at your interests and abilities. You have created a portfolio and will soon begin to look for careers that match your interests. Before you start selecting careers you will want to know what is required in all work situations.

Knowing what kind of employer you would like to have, the kind of co-workers you hope to work with and understanding what an employer might expect from you will help you better understand the world of work. In addition, it will help you understand the kind of behavior that is expected of you, as well as the things you’re expected to know, and the things you might be expected to do.

TexasWorkPrep.com has created fun and entertaining online web courses that teach you how to get, and keep, the job of your choice. Texas Work Prep contains on-line courses ideal for students: Texas Job Hunter’s Guide and Succeed at Work. Each course is designed to teach you techniques of successful job hunting and excelling on the job.

The Succeed at Work online course will help you learn the attributes of work excellence expected by Texas employers. When you complete this course, you will have a better idea what work involves and be able to better select occupations that match your interests.

www.TexasWorkPrep.com
If you’re a senior, your time in high school is almost over and it will soon be time to graduate. Juniors, sophomores, freshmen—the clock is ticking away for you.

In order for you to graduate from a Texas high school, you must complete the Texas Graduation Plan listed below.

Each subject is listed and the number of credits you need for each subject. Instead of randomly selecting your classes you will want to create a meaningful graduation plan. One that will prepare you for life after high school.

Will you attend college or enroll in a technical school? Will you go to a community college or enlist in the military? You will not be able to answer these questions unless you know what type of career you want to pursue.

Knowing what type of career you will work toward after high school can help you create your Graduation Plan and prepare you for that career. In the following pages you will be introduced to Career Clusters and other career alternatives. Use the information to help you select classes. As you complete each class, decide if the subject/career is still of interest or if you want to try something completely different.

You have 3.5 credits of elective courses; that means you have 3 and 1/2 years to try out different electives of your own choosing. Don’t take courses that you are familiar with just so you can have an “easy” class. Instead use the opportunity to explore different subjects that may lead to your future career.

Ask your counselor about earning college credit for academic classes. These “dual credit” courses can save you money since you won’t have to pay for the same credit hours when you go to college. You might also consider technical courses which connect your high school courses with those at a local community college. There’s no need to study the same material twice and participating in a Tech Prep program lets you build a career by combining high school and college courses.

Use the FREE automated high school graduation planning tool from LMCI. The Grad Plan application was designed to help you select the courses you will need to take.

Grad Plan includes core academic subjects and TEA approved elective courses. Not all courses in the program may be available in your school. While Grad Plan will make it easier to coordinate with the school counselor, it is NOT a substitute for an actual student schedule completed with the counselor at your school.

1. Go to: www.lmci.state.tx.us/shared/HighSchoolGradPlan.asp

2. Pick the courses you want to take each school year.

3. Click on View Plan to see your selections. Did you meet the goal of 26 credits? Great. Now print your Grad Plan and remember to check back every semester to make sure you stay on track to graduate.

### Texas Graduation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Credits Needed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Other than English</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Applications</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>Speech</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Courses</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next step is to research career options. Since there are hundreds of potential careers the best way to look at your options is to first understand career clusters.

A career cluster is a group of occupations that share certain features. There are 16 career clusters. Each cluster is described in the following pages. Review how the clusters are organized and the kinds of occupations they include. For example, within the Health Science cluster, all the occupations are related to the medical field.

Within each cluster are pathways, which are more specific groupings of similar occupations that are connected to particular coursework. In each cluster there are occupations that require a significant education investment, like doctors, and others that may require less education such as a pharmacy technician.

You will want to look at all of the career clusters and see which are of interest to you. For those clusters that get your attention, see if any of the careers listed appeal to you. Later on you will have the opportunity to explore the work content, requirements, and outlook for related occupations.

Information such as the educational requirements, employment projections and wage information will also be very useful in your career decision-making process. Therefore, on every page we have listed the Career Information Hotline: 1-800-822-PLAN which you can call to obtain detailed information on any career of your choice. But for now, the important thing is to explore the career clusters and become familiar with all of the different options.
AGRICULTURE, FOOD & NATURAL RESOURCES CLUSTER

What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in the production, processing, marketing, distribution, financing, and development of agricultural commodities and resources including food, fiber, wood products, natural resources, horticulture, and other plant and animal products/resources.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Agriculture.htm
What's This?
This cluster encompasses careers in designing, planning, managing, building and maintaining the built environment.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Architecture.htm
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in designing, producing, exhibiting, performing, writing, and publishing multimedia content including visual and performing arts and design, journalism, and entertainment services.

I’m Most Interested In These Careers:  #1  #2  #3

Sample Career
Choreographer
$31,800 /yr
165 Job Openings /yr
Work experience in a related occupation required.

Sample Career
Film & Video Editor
$53,584 /yr
40 Job Openings /yr
Bachelor’s degree required.

Sample Career
Librarian
$46,892 /yr
475 Job Openings /yr
Master’s degree required.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Arts.htm

CALL THE CAREER INFORMATION HOTLINE: 1•800•822•PLAN FOR INFORMATION ON ANY CAREER OF YOUR CHOICE.
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, organizing, directing and evaluating business functions essential to efficient and productive business operations. Business Management and Administration career opportunities are available in every sector of the economy.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Business.htm
Education & Training Cluster

What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing and providing education and training services, and related learning support services.

Sample Career
Elementary Teacher
$42,656 / yr
8,035 Job Openings / yr
Bachelor’s degree required.

Sample Career
Biological Science Teacher, Postsecondary
$106,539 / yr
1,150 Job Openings / yr
Doctoral degree required.

Sample Career
Fitness Trainer
$31,731 / yr
530 Job Openings / yr
Postsecondary technical training required.

I’m Most Interested In These Careers: #1 #2 #3

Sample Careers
- Director, Special Education
- Education Administrators, Elementary & Secondary School
- Education Administrators, Postsecondary
- Education Administrators, Preschool & Child Care Center/Program
- Instructional Coordinators
- Instructional Materials Developers
- School Principals
- Statisticians
- Academic Advisors
- Career Development Specialists
- Child, Family, & School Social Workers
- College Recruiters
- Educational, Vocational, & School Counselors
- Employment Case Managers
- Financial Aid Counselors
- Outreach Specialists
- Speech-Language Pathologists
- Student Registrars
- Child Care Workers
- Coaches & Scouts
- Computer Training Specialists
- Continuing Education Instructors
- Elementary School Teachers
- Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors
- Middle School Teachers
- Preschool Teachers
- Recreation Workers
- Secondary School Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Teacher Assistants
- Training & Development Specialists
- Vocational Education Teachers

Get more information on this cluster at
www.AchieveTexas.org/Education.htm

Call the Career Information Hotline: 1•800•822•PLAN for information on any career of your choice.
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, services for financial and investment planning, banking, insurance, and business financial management.

Banking & Related Services
- Bill & Account Collectors
- Computer Programmers
- Credit Analysts
- Credit Checkers
- Database Administrators
- Financial Managers
- Loan Officers
- Personal Financial Advisors
- Tellers

Business Financial Management
- Accountants
- Auditors
- Economists
- Financial Analysts
- Tax Examiners, Collectors, & Revenue Agents
- Treasurers, Controllers & Chief Financial Officers

Financial & Investment Planning
- Brokerage Clerks
- Credit Counselors
- Certified Financial Planners
- Estate Planners
- Investment Advisors
- Personal Financial Advisors
- Sales Agents, Securities & Commodities
- Tax Preparers

Insurance Services
- Actuarial Mathematicians
- Actuaries
- Insurance Appraisers, Auto Damage
- Insurance Claims Clerks
- Insurance Sales Agents
- Insurance Underwriters
- Marketing Managers
- Pricing Analysts
- Real Estate Appraisers

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Finance.htm

CALL THE CAREER INFORMATION HOTLINE: 1•800•822•PLAN for information on any career of your choice.
What's This?
This cluster encompasses careers in governance; national security; foreign service; planning; revenue and taxation; regulation; and management and administration at the local, state, and federal levels.

Sample Career
Postal Service
Mail Carrier
$43,911 / yr
745 Job Openings / yr
Short-term on-the-job training required.

Sample Career
Hazardous Materials Removal Worker
$29,758 / yr
155 Job Openings / yr
Moderate-term on-the-job training required.

CALL THE CAREER INFORMATION HOTLINE: 1•800•822•PLAN for information on any career of your choice.
Health Science Cluster

What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Health.htm
You may think of volunteer work as something that only millionaires or retirees do with their spare time. Wrong. Volunteering can be a way to help your community, but it can also be an excellent way to beef up your resume and investigate work environments in which you’re interested, plus make you feel good about yourself.

Volunteer work will help you learn new skills and is a great way to help you get accepted into the college of your choice. Colleges look for well-rounded students and volunteerism is one of the things admissions officers love to see on a student’s application. It shows that you are community-minded and it will give you an edge over those who have done no volunteering.

As you pursue a profession or look for a new job, volunteer work can do wonders for your resume. You can find volunteer work in just about any area and profession and it gives you noted experience, which your prospective employers will find very appealing. Volunteering shows you are ambitious and enthusiastic about your field and also shows that you take your work seriously and are interested in sharing your skills. Whether you volunteer for a community organization or start your own volunteer project, your resume will glow with the reference.

Go to www.VolunteerMatch.org and enter your zip code and your interest area (animals, disaster relief, media/broadcasting, etc...). You will be provided a list of volunteer opportunities in your area. Or look for other volunteer opportunities through your church, school or community center.

Get Paid to Learn

The Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) apprenticeship program is a job training system for skilled trade and craft workers. There are over 170 apprenticeship careers such as: electrician, carpenter, chef and bricklayer.

An apprenticeship combines structured on-the-job training supervised by experienced journey workers and some related classroom training. Apprentices who successfully complete the prescribed number of training hours in an apprenticeship program become certified skilled craft workers.

Apprentices are full-time, paid employees who work a regular 40-hour week and earn while they learn. Most training programs last from three to five years.

Apprenticeship is an effective program that provides employees with more informed, productive, and motivated employees. Statistics show that apprenticeship program graduates earn higher wages, have more stable work records, and are promoted sooner and more often than workers who have not been trained through apprenticeship programs.

To get more information on how you can get paid to learn ask your counselor about apprenticeship programs or go to www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/apprentice.html

Carter Oosterhouse is a Mexican-American television personality who first gained national fame as a carpenter on the TLC series Trading Spaces. He now has his own television show “Carter Can” on HGTV. Oosterhouse’s career as a carpenter began at the early age of 11, when he began learning carpentry as an apprentice to his neighbor, a master carpenter.
Catherine Cook, 17, teamed up with her brother, a Harvard graduate and started www.MyYearBook.com. Ben Casnocha, 19, started the software company Comcate and is the author of the memoir My Start-Up Life. He is the son of a San Francisco lawyer. Each became their own boss at a very early age. But what if you don’t have any business professionals in the family. No rich aunt or uncle.

Ashley Qualls, 17, started her own website www.WhatEverLife.com despite not having any connections. She came from a divorced working class family whose parents did not attend college. But she saw a need to create custom My-Space web pages and off took her business. The business brings in as much as $70,000 a month. It gives away free My-Space web page designs which brings in over 7 million visitors a month. She makes money by selling advertising.

Ashley found a way to be her own boss at an early age by filling a need that existed in the marketplace. Then she worked non-stop to make it succeed. Do you have a service or product that people want? If so, you could be your own boss. For more information enter: “young entrepreneurs” into a search engine to find how others became their own boss at an early age.

To make sure your new business succeeds go to www.sba.gov and www.bplans.com to get detailed instructions on starting a business, including writing a business plan.

The Military is more than wearing uniforms and surviving boot camp. Today’s Military is more computerized than ever, offering many high-tech occupations. There are over 140 military occupations, enlisted and officer.

While in the military you get a steady paycheck and a lot of extras such as free training in a job specialty, free medical and dental care, free gym and exercise facilities, free on-base housing (if available), and 30 days per year of vacation with pay. Then, after your tour of enlistment is over, you can collect up to $39,636 from the Montgomery GI Bill toward your education. Depending on the circumstances, your benefit amount might be as high as $72,000.

It does not cost you money to join the military, just a commitment of time. And you’ll actually get paid while you do it. You make a decent salary in the Military when you remember that the Military helps pay for your major living expenses and includes many free services including health care.

And it doesn’t stop there. You can collect a bonus simply for joining, depending on the service you choose and your job specialty. Also, you should be able to save money during your tour of duty so that you have a nice financial cushion saved for yourself by the time you leave.

If you want to participate on a team, learn job skills, earn money for education, and meet some challenges, the Military may be for you. To start to delve into all the U.S. Military offers, talk to a local recruiter or your high school counselor or check out the benefits of service at www.military.com. See if your school offers the ASVAB military aptitude assessment to explore occupational specialities for which you qualify.
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in management, marketing and operations of restaurants and other food services, lodging, attractions, recreation events and travel related services.

Sample Career
Lodging Manager
$58,029 / yr
140 Job Openings / yr
Work experience in a related field required.

Sample Career
Cook
$18,147 / yr
3,555 Job Openings / yr
Long-term on-the-job training required.

Sample Career
Amusement & Recreation Attendant
$16,358 / yr
815 Job Openings / yr
Short-term on-the-job training required.

I’m Most Interested In These Careers:  #1  #2  #3

Sample Career
Amusement & Recreation Attendants
Animal Trainers
Curators
Fitness Trainers
Food Service Managers
Gaming Dealers
Meeting Planners
Production, Planning, & Expediting Clerks
Travel Guides

Sample Career
Bakers, Bread & Pastry
Bartenders
Chefs & Head Cooks
Cookbooks, Restaurant
Counter Attendants
Food Servers
Food Service Managers
Hosts & Hostesses
Waiters & Waitresses

Sample Career
Advertising & Promotions Managers
Bus Drivers, Transit
Government Serv Execs
Marketing Managers
Producers
Program Directors
Sales Managers
Tour Guides & Escorts
Travel Agents

CALL THE CAREER INFORMATION HOTLINE: 1•800•822•PLAN FOR INFORMATION ON ANY CAREER OF YOUR CHOICE.
**What's This?**
This cluster encompasses careers that prepare individuals for employment in career pathways that relate to families and human needs.

**Sample Career**
Clinical, Counseling & School Psychologist
- $57,531 / yr
- 380 Job Openings / yr
- Doctoral degree required.

**Sample Career**
Personal & Home Care Aide
- $13,547 / yr
- 7,930 Job Openings / yr
- Short-term on-the-job training required.

**Sample Career**
Child Care Worker
- $15,697 / yr
- 7,595 Job Openings / yr
- Short-term on-the-job training required.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Human_Services.htm

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**Career Pathways**

- **Consumer Services**
- **Counseling & Mental Health Services**
- **Early Childhood Development & Services**
- **Family & Community Services**
- **Personal Care Services**

**Sample Careers**

- **Consumer Services**
  - Advertising & Promotions Managers
  - Insurance Sales Agents
  - Loan Counselors
  - Market Research Analysts
  - Pers. Financial Advisors
  - Recreation Workers
  - Sales Managers
  - Wholesale & Retail Buyers

- **Counseling & Mental Health Services**
  - Dietitians & Nutritionists
  - Educational, Vocational, & School Counselors
  - Industrial-Organizational Psychologists
  - Mental Health Counselors
  - Sociologists
  - Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors

- **Early Childhood Development & Services**
  - Child Care Workers
  - Education Administrators, Preschool & Child Care Center/Program
  - Preschool Teachers
  - Self-Enrichment Education Teachers
  - Special Education Teachers, Pre-K, Elementary School
  - Teacher Assistants

- **Family & Community Services**
  - Child, Family, & School Social Workers
  - Clergy
  - Directors, Religious Activities & Education
  - Educational, Vocational, & School Counselors
  - Food Servers
  - Medical & Public Health Social Workers
  - Recreation Workers

- **Personal Care Services**
  - Amusement & Recreation Attendants
  - Barbers
  - Embalmers
  - Fitness Trainers
  - Funeral Attendants
  - Funeral Directors
  - Hairdressers, Hairstylists, & Cosmetologists
  - Manicurists & Pedicurists

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**Call the Career Information Hotline: 1•800•822•PLAN for information on any career of your choice.**
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in design, development, support and management of hardware, software, multimedia, and systems integration services.

Sample Career
Computer Systems Analyst
$70,757 / yr
1,980 Job Openings / yr
Bachelor’s degree required.

Sample Career
Network Systems & Data Communications Analyst
$64,361 / yr
945 Job Openings / yr
Bachelor’s degree required.

Sample Career
Computer & Information Systems Manager
$106,412 / yr
690 Job Openings / yr
Bachelor’s or higher degree, plus work experience required.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Information.htm
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing, and providing legal, public safety, protective services and homeland security, including professional and technical support services.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Law.htm

Sample Career
Animal Control Worker
$27,042 / yr
125 Job Openings / yr
Moderate-term on-the-job training required.

Sample Career
Lifeguard
$16,092 / yr
60 Job Openings / yr
Moderate-term on-the-job training required.

Sample Career
Security Guard
$23,130 / yr
1,700 Job Openings / yr
Short-term on-the-job training required.

Call the Career Information Hotline: 1•800•822•PLAN for information on any career of your choice.
What's This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing and performing the processing of materials into intermediate or final products and related professional and technical support activities such as production planning and control, maintenance and manufacturing/process engineering.

**Manufacturing Cluster**

- **Health, Safety and Environmental Assurance**
  - Environmental Compliance Inspectors
  - Ergonomists
  - Health Safety Coordinators
  - Health Safety Managers
  - Industrial Waste Inspectors
  - Nuclear Monitoring Techs
  - Occupational Safety Techs
  - Pollution Control Techs

- **Logistics and Inventory Control**
  - Expeditors
  - Import-Export Clerks
  - Inventory Control Specialists
  - Logisticians
  - Material Handlers
  - Packaging and Filling Machine Operators
  - Production, Planning and Expediting Clerks
  - Supply Chain Specialists

- **Maintenance, Installation and Repair**
  - Field Service Technicians
  - Industrial Electronics Technicians
  - Industrial Machinery Mechanics
  - Machine Set-Up Operators
  - Millwrights
  - Plant Electricians
  - Precision System Repairers
  - Robotics Technicians

- ** Manufacturing Production Process Dev.**
  - Automation Engineers
  - CAD-CAM Designers
  - Industrial Design Engineers
  - Mechanical Engineering Technicians
  - Process Design Engineers
  - Purchasing Agents
  - Robotics Technologists

- **Production**
  - Chemical Plant Equipment Operators
  - Industrial Production Managers
  - Machine Tool Setters
  - Machinists
  - Nuclear Power Reactor Operators
  - Numerical Control Tool Programmers
  - Semiconductor Processing Techs

- **Quality Assurance**
  - Cost Controllers
  - Environmental Techs
  - Inspector, Tester, Sorter and Weighers
  - Laser Test Techs
  - Quality Assurance Managers
  - Quality Control Techs
  - Quality Process Engineers
  - Sales Engineers

**Sample Careers**

- **Maintenance & Repair Worker**
  - $27,951 / yr
  - 4,135 Job Openings / yr
  - Moderate-term on-the-job training required.

- **Machinist**
  - $32,458 / yr
  - 1,135 Job Openings / yr
  - Long-term on-the-job training required.

- **Avionics Technician**
  - $48,196 / yr
  - 135 Job Openings / yr
  - Postsecondary technical training required.

**Call the Career Information Hotline: 1-800-822-PLAN** for information on any career of your choice.
Marketing, Sales & Service Cluster

What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing, and performing marketing activities to reach organizational objectives.

Sample Career
Funeral Director
$44,018 / yr
85 Job Openings / yr
Associate’s degree required.

Sample Career
Hairdresser
$23,407 / yr
1,420 Job Openings / yr
Postsecondary technical training required.

Sample Career
Sales Representative
$56,057 / yr
4,990 Job Openings / yr
Moderate-term on-the-job training required.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Marketing.htm

CALL THE CAREER INFORMATION HOTLINE: 1•800•822•PLAN FOR INFORMATION ON ANY CAREER OF YOUR CHOICE.
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, managing, and providing scientific research and professional and technical services (e.g., physical science, social science, engineering) including laboratory and testing services, and research and development services.

Sample Career
Environmental Science & Protection Tech
$39,256 / yr
175 Job Openings / yr
Associate’s degree required.

Sample Career
Chemical Engineer
$84,423 / yr
160 Job Openings / yr
Bachelor’s degree required.

Sample Career
Forensic Science Tech
$39,797 / yr
40 Job Openings / yr
Associate’s degree required.

Call the Career Information Hotline: 1-800-822-PLAN for information on any career of your choice.

Get more information on this cluster at www.AchieveTexas.org/Sciences.htm
What’s This?
This cluster encompasses careers in planning, management, and movement of people, materials, and goods by road, pipeline, air, rail, and water and related professional and technical support services such as transportation infrastructure planning and management, logistics services, mobile equipment and facility maintenance.
Step 4: Evaluate
Review Your Options

We are now on Step 4 of the Career Decision-Making Model Tool. So far you have engaged in thinking about a career direction. You have identified your interests and abilities. You have even explored different career directions by looking at the different career clusters. Now it is time to review your options.

As you went through the sixteen career clusters and the other options, did any of them sound interesting to you? Did any of the sample careers catch your attention? If you found some favorites, great. If you didn’t, then you will want to start the process over.

In this section you will learn some additional things to consider when selecting a career direction. Do you plan to work in Texas? Then you will want to know what career clusters will provide the most jobs. In addition, you will want to know about future career trends and see if they will affect your career direction.

Work Using New Technologies

If you want to work in emerging occupations in Texas you will want to know about new technologies and how to effectively take advantage of them in your chosen career.

New technology revolutionizes the way we live. But, not only is technology improving your video iPod™ and interactive gaming, it’s also changing the way we work. Jobs are being created or transformed all the time, because of technology.

Take really small stuff, like nanotechnology. That’s dealing with things that are 1/1,000,000,000th of a meter in size! Did you know that Texas is one of the leading places for nanoscience research in the world? And, information technology companies are continuously making faster and smaller microprocessing chips.

Then, there’s biotechnology for creating tools and materials from living, organic matter, and there’s also commercial spaceports— all in Texas! Watch out for new forms of renewable energy from wind and hydrogen-based sources, because they are on the way, too.

If you decide to explore one of these emerging careers you will also want to know if you will be able to find job openings here in Texas. Although predicting the future is not an exact science, the Texas Legislature and the Governor have identified the following six industry clusters as having unlimited potential for the state’s future:

• Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing
• Aerospace and Defense
• Biotechnology and Life Sciences
• Information and Computer Technology
• Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products
• Energy

These are some of the exciting new sectors that are likely to drive Texas economic growth and future job creation. Many of these sectors involve new technologies that cut across fields and are “multi-disciplinary.” For example, if you want to be a video game developer you must take courses in computer programming but also in graphics design. So, you can combine more than one career interest.

To keep your options open, pay attention to the courses you take now in high school. Each year make sure you take at least one class in subjects that fall within your chosen career options. Try to find summer internships in the kinds of businesses that have jobs that interest you. This will help you prepare for your dream job later.

Maybe your “final frontier” isn’t designing a rocket-fired shuttle or a space station. But, it may mean using the latest technology to make people’s lives on earth healthier, safer, or better. Professions in health care, legal, security, financial and global information services are all making use of advanced technology. So, get started on planning your career path today!

Rate This Plan

Why?

Hi, my name is Janice and my plan is to become a chef. My uncle has his own restaurant and during the summer I work at his place. I have learned it’s a lot of fun, but also a lot of work. I did some research and in order to become a successful chef I will have to go to school for two years and then hopefully become an apprentice at a nice restaurant. One thing about being a chef is that there will always be work. People have to eat. My opportunities are endless. I could become the White House chef or host my own cooking show or open up my own restaurant.

Hi, my name is Janice and my plan is to become a chef. My uncle has his own restaurant and during the summer I work at his place. I have learned it’s a lot of fun, but also a lot of work. I did some research and in order to become a successful chef I will have to go to school for two years and then hopefully become an apprentice at a nice restaurant. One thing about being a chef is that there will always be work. People have to eat. My opportunities are endless. I could become the White House chef or host my own cooking show or open up my own restaurant.
Future Things to Consider

You will want to choose a satisfying career but it should also be one that will pay a salary that matches your lifestyle expectations and has good job opportunities. For example, working at a retail clothing store may be fun but you’ll have a harder time paying all the bills. Similarly, archeology is a very cool field but there just aren’t that many paying jobs. You do not want to spend several years getting an education for a job that may not be in demand in the future.

Changes in technology can make a job, or a skill set, obsolete. Some workers used to make a good living as a grocery store check out clerk or a typist, but bar code scanning and computers changed that. Many of these jobs aren’t that many paying jobs. You do not want to spend several years getting an education for a job that may not be in demand in the future.

Let’s look into the future to show the careers that are projected to have high demand and some that probably won’t.

Some jobs that require only unskilled labor or repetitive tasks can now be done anywhere in the world. Many of these jobs are moving to other countries where workers are paid less, saving companies a lot of money. Many manufacturing assembler jobs and technical assistance call center jobs fall into this category.

The manufacturing industry still has many high-paying job opportunities, but they need workers skilled in robotics, computer-controlled machining and those who can maintain and repair complex manufacturing machinery.

If you think about it, many jobs in computer programming, tech support, data entry and basic accounting can be performed by workers anywhere in the world using the same software that we use in America. Yes, there is a version of Microsoft Word written in Chinese!

You have infinite career options, but there are two conditions you might want to consider to improve your chances of getting, and keeping, a job. First, you might look for a career that requires a very high level of skill or creativity such as a writer, designer, inventor, market strategist or financial planner. Most of these jobs require a college education. Employers are always looking for creative workers who can use their talents and technology to solve business problems and create opportunities.

You might also learn a skilled trade such as a carpenter, nurse, physicians assistant, dental hygienist or hair stylist. These careers require your physical presence and cannot easily be done remotely. Combining proximity with creativity in a career gives you added security.

The good news is that the traditional skilled trades such as carpentry, plumbing, electrician, auto mechanics and many health technician occupations look very good in terms of high demand and being secure from moving offshore. Since you can’t have an auto mechanic who is located in India tune-up your car in Texas, these types of jobs will be more secure from low cost foreign competition.

Many of the skilled health care, construction trades and manufacturing technician jobs are well-paying and require no more than an Associate’s Degree. Whatever career you choose, make sure you pick the one that is right for you and one that will be in demand in the future.

Will Your Career Be Globalized?

The Impacts of a Global Economy: Some jobs are more likely than others to be moved offshore. Here are some reasons why some jobs are more or less likely to go offshore and some examples of most affected careers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jobs most likely to be moved offshore have these characteristics:</th>
<th>Jobs that are unlikely to move offshore have these characteristics:</th>
<th>What can you do to protect and safeguard your Job?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Work is highly repetitive</td>
<td>• Involves problem-solving</td>
<td>• Be the best in your field. Be much better than the next person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be broken down into small projects or tasks that can be done offshore</td>
<td>• Unpredictable situations (hands-on technical troubleshooting)</td>
<td>• Be creative and imaginative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Face to face customer contact is not important</td>
<td>• Understanding the American culture is critical (marketing, authoring books, comedy)</td>
<td>• Market yourself to your manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most major customers have already moved offshore so work follows the customer base</td>
<td>• Requires a high degree of collaboration (making a movie)</td>
<td>• Get out of any highly repetitive jobs that do not require being close to the customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Any work that can be digitized and replicated by lower skill workers using the same automation software</td>
<td>• Timely delivery is critical</td>
<td>• Choose a career where the demand will be greater than can be filled, even by workers overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Requires being close to the customer</td>
<td>• If job security is a big issue (or important work value), consider choosing a career from the “Relatively Safe” list below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Requires a high degree of creativity and imagination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High Risk: Many of these jobs, or parts of these jobs, have already moved offshore:

- Bookkeeping Accountant
- Accounting Clerk
- Assembly Line Worker
- Sewing Machine Operator
- Machine Operator
- Computer Programmer
- Purchasing Agent
- Customer Service Agent
- Medical Transcriptionist
- Mechanical Drafter
- Architect
- Computer Software Engineer
- Software Developer
- Insurance Claims Processor

Relatively Safe or No Risk: These jobs are not likely to move offshore:

- Dental Hygienist
- Advertising Manager
- Fire Fighter
- Dry Cleaner
- Policeman
- Interior Designer
- Medical Assistant
- Security Guard
- Registered Nurse
- Chiropractor
- Chef
- Truck or Taxi Driver
- Teacher
- Veterinarian

Employment Demand Decreasing as a Result of Automation/Technology:

- Computer Operator
- Word Processing Typist
- Travel Agent
- Telephone Operator
- Tax Preparer
- Legal Assistant
- Insurance Processor
- Production Assembler
- Meter Reader
- Grocery Store Checkers
- Airline Ticket Agents

Step 4: Evaluate
The next step is to to pursue an educational plan. In Step 5 you must take action. Here you will select your favorite careers and then rank each of your selected occupations according to your level of interest, your abilities, and the extent to which it meets what you need and want in a career. Based on that ranking, you will create initial educational plans for the occupations.

Let’s get started. The first thing to do is get a sheet of paper and simply list the top 5-10 careers that interest you the most. A sample career listing is provided for you on the right. You can refer back to the occupations on the career cluster pages for more ideas.

The next step is to rank your chosen careers. Again a sample career ranking list is provided on the right. Simply place the career that you think fits you the best in the number one spot. Then place your second choice in the second spot and so on.
Are you the first in your family to go to college? How about the first to enlist in the military or become an apprentice? Selecting a career or training that no one in your family is familiar with will require you to take charge and make a plan. You will need help navigating the application process, searching for financial aid and dealing with life once you enter your program.

Get Your Parents Involved.
The better your parents understand what you’re experiencing, the more able they’ll be to give you support.

Check out the “Applying For College” checklist at www.CollegeForTexans.com

Enroll in a “Bridge” Program.
“Bridge” programs combine academic preparation with life-skills seminars to familiarize students with campus culture.

Know Your Counselors. During high school, your counselor can help you with the application process and selecting a college. At college, tutoring centers, mentoring programs and academic advisors help students adjust to college more easily.

Get Involved on Campus. Get involved with campus activities and form a support network of friends and professors. A network makes the college experience smaller, more manageable and gives you a place to go for advice.

Take a Light Load Your First Semester. Even if you excelled academically in high school, consider taking a lighter load during your first semester at college. College-level coursework is more challenging than what you’re used to in high school and the demands of campus life may take some getting used to. Make time to settle in and get into the college routine before you jump into a heavy academic load.
Hi, my name is Carlos and my plan is to become a video game designer. I’ve done some research and found out there are over 85 companies in Texas alone that produce video games. Right now I have to decide between a 4 year or 2 year college. Obviously the 4 year school will cost more and take longer. Since this is an emerging occupation I want to make sure I pick the right school. I have an appointment to talk with my guidance counselor and hopefully she will point me in the right direction.

After you chose a career direction and know what education or training is required the next step is to pick how and where you’ll acquire the education necessary (school, college or branch of the military). Here are some of the things you will want to consider as you pick your training.

Rank the Programs. You will want to rank the different education and training programs and find out if the curriculum will be related to the career field you want to pursue after you complete your studies. Is one program better than another? Do any of the programs help you secure a job after training?

Admissions Requirements. After ranking the school or education option you have to be realistic about your chances of being admitted. Strong programs will have steep admissions requirements. A private college or university, for example, may have a particularly strong program in the major you want; however, such a school may also require more for admissions than simply a high school diploma and may require personal references, essays or interviews. What kind of GPA do you need to get into the program? What kind of scores do you need on the SAT or ACT? What are the admissions deadlines?

After doing your homework on specific admissions requirements, compare those requirements to your qualifications. Eliminate those schools where you don’t have a realistic chance of getting into the program you want. Information on entrance requirements and application submission timelines for all Texas Colleges and Universities, and most other Universities nationwide, is available in most automated career information delivery systems such as Texas CARES. Most colleges have their own websites with even more detailed information.

Cost. Cost is a big deal but there are lots of options for financing your education after high school. You should consider all the alternatives before giving up on any program because you think you can’t afford it. More information on how to pay for your education is provided on page 35.

Location. If you choose a school far from home, your costs will increase. Having recently graduated from high school, most teens are eager to take off. While it may feel great to move out of your parents’ house and to “be on your own,” there is a price to pay.

Campus Life. Campus life and the perks off campus are important but they also can be a distraction.

It’s important to be happy, because it will help you stick around, complete your studies and graduate. In addition, you can make friends that will last many years after graduation.

On the other hand, if overdone, you cut into your studies. It’s important to be happy, but if overdone, you can hurt your grades, increase the likelihood that you will drop out, and extend the length of time it takes you to finish school and, perhaps, have a serious impact on your future job prospects.

Friends. Follow your dreams not your friends. It is understandable that your friends’ choices can affect your choices. You may have gone to school with a close group of friends since kindergarten. Nonetheless, you and your friends may want to achieve very different things in your adult lives. Your friends’ choices may lead them to choose schools that will do little to help you toward your adult goals and objectives.
If you opt for the military or an apprenticeship program you will not have to worry about paying for training—you will be paid as you learn. However, if you decide to go to college you will have to pay for your education. But just because you and your parents don’t have money for college should not stop you from going.

Regardless of the college, university, vocational or technical institute you choose you will find that there is grant, loan and scholarship money available to pay for your education. Most students receive a combination of many different sources of financial aid to meet their total amount needed. Some students think they can’t afford college because the one scholarship they were offered doesn’t meet the total amount needed to pay for school. A FREE website that offers information on millions of scholarships worth billions of dollars is www.FastWeb.com.

Money is usually available on a first-come-first-served basis to those who apply. Financial assistance for college may be in the following forms:

**Scholarships.** These are generally awarded based on academic ability; e.g., results of standardized tests (I.Q., SAT, ACT, National Merit, etc.). These do not have to be repaid, and a student does not necessarily have to be a straight "A" student to qualify. Unless you look into the different scholarships you will not know if you qualify. For a free scholarship search go to www.CollegeAnswer.com.

**Awards/Grants.** These are awarded for specific reasons (minority student, winning a photography contest, speech contest, etc.). These do not have to be repaid. To search for these go to www.BrokeScholar.com.

**Educational Loans.** Educational loans are from various sources; state, federal and private organizations. Banks, foundations, unions, etc., also have loan programs. These loans usually have a lower rate of interest, and must be repaid. Some loans will not require repayment until after you have completed your education. REMEMBER: Borrowing for educational expenses may be a necessity, but it may very well be the best investment you will ever make in your life!

**Jobs/Work-Study.** A final way to pay for college is to work part-time, full-time, summer job, etc. You can find more information on how to find, get and keep a job on pages 36 and 37.

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**PLACES TO LOOK FOR MONEY**

Here are some places to look for money to pay for college. Remember that scholarships and grants do not have to be paid back. So you will want to search the Internet to find and apply for this type of financial aid. A good place to start is the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Go to www.tgslc.org.

**Advanced Placement and Credit**
Save money and time through your high school and/or college by taking advanced placement classes and tests and dual credit courses. The more college credits you get in high school the fewer you’ll have to pay for!

**College/University Financial Aid Officer**
This person controls about ninety percent (90%) of all student financial aid available. Contact the Financial Aid Office of the college/university or career college you wish to attend early, about ten months prior to entrance.

**Institutional Scholarships**
Various departments at a college (Art, English, History, Math...) may offer scholarships to students enrolled in specific majors. Contact your major department at your choice of college.

**Special Programs/Grants**
Various colleges have special programs or awards for specific groups of students (i.e., special assistance programs for minority students, church-related awards for members of a certain religious affiliation, etc.).

**Community Organizations**
Many local organizations offer scholarships, grants, awards, loans, etc.; check with your local organizations such as your church, community center or Chamber of Commerce.

**Business firms/Unions/Ex-Military**
Various businesses, especially large companies, have scholarships, grants, or awards for dependents of their employees, or in some cases, for anybody. The same holds true for some unions. Military or ex-military organizations are also in this category.

**Military**
Different programs exist, such as the G.I Bill which pays you $39,636 - $72,000 after you complete your military enlistment period to pay for your education. The Army College Fund will help you pay off your student loans if you enlist after attending college. You can get $65,000 in loan repayment, or up to $24,000 for Reserves. Ask your recruiter for details on these or any other programs that may exist.

**Educational Loans**
Loans are sometimes available at lower interest (in comparison to a regular "personal loan") from credit unions, commercial banks, savings and loan associations, etc. Go to www.teslc.org to learn about the Federal Family Education Loan Program.
In order to be considered for a job you will most likely have to fill out a job application. A job application will ask that you provide your social security number, driver's license or driver's permit number, a list of personal references, emergency numbers, and information on your prior work experiences. If you don’t have this information when you apply you will delay the process and perhaps lose out on the job.

**Social Security Card.** Make sure you take it with you when applying. Employers will need to see the actual card. If you don’t have one you will need to order a replacement card which could take up to 3 to 4 weeks. Apply for a new or duplicate card online at: www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html

**Driver’s License or State ID card.** Employers will ask for a copy of a current driver’s license. If you don’t drive get a state identification card, also available at any Texas Department of Public Safety office.

**Work Experience.** Just because you have never had a “real” job before doesn’t mean you don’t have work experience. You can include long term law mowing or baby sitting customers, service projects, coaching, mentoring younger students, 4-H or Scouting participation, tutoring, and other volunteer activities.

**Personal References.** Personal references are adult non-relatives who know you personally. School teachers, piano teachers, scout leaders, neighbors, and parents of friends are the types of personal references an employer is searching for. Before listing their names call and ask for permission to use them as a reference.

**Emergency Numbers.** Most applications call for two emergency numbers. These should include your parent’s number and that of a close relative.

**Practice Application.** Before filling out the actual application, fill out a practice application first. Applications aren’t always clear and don’t provide much room for filling out answers, and you don’t want to make a mess on the actual application. The application may be the only thing a new employer sees before deciding whether to hire you or not. Many companies are moving away from paper applications and moving to in house computer applications.

Applying for your first job is an exciting, but anxious event. By being prepared you can reduce the stress associated with filling out a job application.

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TexasWorkPrep.com has created three online web courses that teach you how to get and keep the job of your choice. Texas Work Prep contains: Texas Job Hunter’s Guide, Succeed at Work and Your Next Job. Each course is designed to teach you techniques of successful job hunting and excelling on the job. On page 9 we instructed you to go through the Succeed at Work course to get an idea of what is involved with work.

Now it’s time to find out how to get a job. The Job Hunter’s Guide online course will help you do this by going through an interest inventory, learning about job applications, resumes, interviewing and more. There is also a Job Hunter’s Guide publication available from LMCI. Go to: www.lmci.state.tx.us.
Ace The Interview

After you create your résumé and fill out an application, the next step is to prepare for the interview. You will want to do this way before you actually have one scheduled. Sometimes when filling out an application you might be asked to interview on the spot. Or you may be asked to come in the next day. In order to ace the interview you’ll need to be prepared.

**Teen Interview Clothes.** Pick out a set of clothes that is neat and tidy. No shorts, tank tops, crop tops, or anything especially low cut (shirt or pants), too short (skirt or blouse) or too baggy. A good choice would be, khakis, a polo shirt and moderate shoes. Or a business suit if it is a corporate job. Keep your set of clothes clean and ready.

**Appearance.** You should avoid extreme hair-styles or colors. Also, keep makeup and perfume to a minimum. If you have tattoos, it is best not to display them.

**Practice Interviewing.** Review typical interview questions and answers and practice your responses before you go. Ask a family member or friend to ask you some questions, so you can practice your answers.

**Be Prepared.** Don’t just show up for the interview. Read the job description and connect your skills and abilities. Also go to the company’s website and read as much of it as possible. Example: You have an interview at McDonald’s and before the interview you go through their website. You read the company history, the success stories and you find they offer Hamburger University. During the interview you will have knowledge of the company and be able to better answer questions such as “Why Do You Want to Work Here?”

**Be Well Mannered.** It’s essential to have good manners when interviewing. Shake your interviewer’s hand. Don’t sit until you are invited to. Don’t slouch in your chair. Speak clearly. Don’t chew gum. Don’t use slang or swear. Be polite, positive, and professional throughout the interview. This is where all those years of English class will help you out.

**Know Your Schedule.** Know what hours you can work, remember you have school, homework, extracurricular activities, sports, etc. Be prepared to be flexible, because the more time you are available, the easier it is for the employer to set a work schedule. Also know how you are going to get to and from work. Take a practice run to see how long it will take you to get there.

**Be on Time.** Arrive at the interview site a few minutes early. If you’re not sure where to go, get directions ahead of time. If you don’t have a driver’s license, make sure you have a ride.

**Go on Your Own.** Job hunting is not a team sport. Don’t take your friends with you when job hunting or interviewing. If your parents take you to an interview, don’t bring them into the interview room with you. Go by yourself. It’s important that you speak for yourself and connect with the interviewer, without someone else’s assistance. Follow these tips and you will be able to ace the interview and land the job.

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**Find A Job**

If you want to find a job you must understand what it is that employers look for in teens. Employers want motivated teens who are going to arrive to work on time, have a positive attitude, work hard, work well with others, show leadership qualities, work their full shift, and do the best job they can.

You will want to show an employer that you are a good investment, both for the current position, as well as for any potential future positions.

The first place to start looking for a job is to ask your parents, uncles, aunts, neighbors, teachers, counselors and pretty much every adult you know. They have jobs and can help you through the process of networking and finding job openings.

There are a number of places where you can find a part-time or full-time job:

- Local Merchants
- Small Businesses
- Corporate Offices
- Stores at the Mall
- Hotels and Resorts
- Tourist Attractions
- Golf & Tennis clubs
- Grocery Stores
- Fast Food & Restaurants
- Parks & Recreation Dept.
- Gov. Summer Job Programs
- Summer Camps

You can find websites that specialize in helping teens find part-time work, such as:

- www.SnagAJob.com
- www.GrooveJob.com
- www.StudentJobs.gov
- www.WorkInTexas.com

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**Career Success**

**Step 5: Act | 37**
On page thirty-two, you were asked to list and rank your ten favorite careers. Although you will want to concentrate on your top-ranked careers you will also want to keep the rest of the list around and use it should you need a backup plan. You will need a backup plan should something unforeseen happen that would prevent you from being able to pursue your number one choice.

Here’s an example. Let’s say you want to become a professional baseball player. You join the sports team in high school, you practice and are the team’s best player. Unfortunately, during practice your senior year your knee is hit and you are unable to play the sport again. Or let’s say you are not offered a scholarship by a college.

Does this mean you have wasted your time? Absolutely not! Just because you are unable to play the sport does not mean that you cannot work in that industry.

This is where having a backup plan will help you out. You can simply look at your list and choose the second career listed; or even another career within the same career cluster. Perhaps, your second choice is to become a sports caster. Instead of playing on the field you will be reporting what is happening on the field.

A backup plan is important for everyone, not just athletes. But having a backup plan will definitely be necessary if you select a high profile career such as professional athlete, actor, fashion designer, singer and model. These are careers that sound great but in reality don’t have many jobs available. In addition most of these careers last a very short time. For example, a professional football player has an average career length of only 3.5 seasons in the NFL.

So even if you are one of the lucky ones to make it into one of these careers it will typically not last more than three to five years.

So having a backup plan is definitely recommended, not just for these careers but for all careers.

Choosing a career does not mean you get stuck with it for the rest of your life. You can always select a different career direction. The good news is that you can always transfer your skills. These are called transferable skills. Transferable skills are the skills you acquire through school, various jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, sports, or other life experiences and can be used in your next job or new career. Below you will find a list of transferable skills. Look closely and you will see that many of the skills listed are skills you have used throughout your years in school. In other words, school has been preparing you for the world of work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication: the skillful expression, transmission and interpretation of knowledge and ideas.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing concisely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening attentively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressing ideas</td>
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<td>Facilitating discussions</td>
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<td>Providing feedback</td>
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<td>Negotiating</td>
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<td>Persuading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reporting information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describing feelings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and Planning: the search for specific knowledge and the ability to conceptualize future needs and solutions for meeting those needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forecasting, predicting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imagining alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solving problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defining needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyzing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing evaluation strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Relations: the use of interpersonal skills for resolving conflict, relating to and helping people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing rapport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being Sensitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conveying feelings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharing credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delegating with respect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization, Management and Leadership: the ability to supervise, direct and guide individuals and groups in the completion of tasks and fulfillment of goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiating new ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handling details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordinating tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delegating responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selling ideas or products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Survival: the day-to-day skills that assist in promoting effective production and work satisfaction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcing policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being punctual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending to detail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enlisting help</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting/meeting deadlines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making decisions</td>
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</table>
We have gone through the first five steps of the Career Decision-Making Tool. We started the process by first having you *Engage* and start to think of selecting a career direction. We then went to the next step and had you *Understand* yourself by identifying your interests and abilities. The following step was to *Explore* and look for career options. That was followed by having you *Evaluate* and review your career options. Then it was time to *Act* and choose a career and pursue an educational plan.

Now it’s time for Step 6 and time to *Reflect*. In this step you will make a final review of the occupational choices and the educational plans you have made. How is this done? It’s simple. Are you satisfied with your career direction? Did you choose the right educational plan for yourself? If the choices you have made do not match with your original statements, you may want to go back over your decisions and reconsider the choices made at each step.

Even if you are satisfied with your choices, things might change. You might take a class in high school or college that grabs your attention. Maybe that class will be the start of a hobby or maybe a new career goal. Just remember that new career goals also mean you will need to have new education plans.

It is OK to change your mind. If you decide to pursue a career in a new field you will want to go through the Career Decision-Making Tool again. But you will have the skills to research your new career direction using everything you have learned in *Career Success*.

The goal of *Career Success* is to give you the knowledge and skills to select a career direction. Now it’s your time to work hard, follow your dreams and make informed education and career choices. There is a world of opportunities and it is waiting for you. You can do it.
Career Information

Career Information Hotline: 1•800•822•PLAN
Get Information on any Career of your Choice.