



## CAREER CONNECTIONS CENTER

# I need a Career! Where do I start...?

## Checklist for exploring and deciding on careers

### EXPLORE YOURSELF + EXPLORE CAREER OPTIONS = MAKE BETTER CAREER DECISIONS

#### Explore yourself:

Identify what you like to do when you're not in school (e.g., extracurricular activities you have been involved in) The Career Center (CCC) offers self-assessment tools to help you reflect on, assess, and articulate your interests, personality, skills, and values to make meaning of your academic experience and shape your professional identity:

- WLAC Career Assessment (online career assessment)
- 16 personalities (online personality assessment)
- & more

#### OTHER STEPS

- Create a list of accomplishments and strengths and a list of weaknesses and areas of possible improvement
- Identify classes you've really enjoyed
- Identify what you like to do when you're not in school (e.g., extracurricular activities you have been involved in)

#### ANSWER LOGISTICAL QUESTIONS

- Will I need an income right away after graduation? Will I have student loan debt to repay?
- Will I need to live with my family? (i.e. will I need to work where my family lives?)
- Do I have other commitments I need to consider? (e.g., significant other's career/educational plans)
- Are there particular geographical areas I want to be in/be away from?

#### Explore Career and Majors

##### READ

- Navigate WLAC Career & Programs
- Browse California Community Colleges Careers and Programs
- US Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook ([www.bls.gov/ooh/](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/)) – For thousands of jobs, learn what preparation is needed; whether the field is growing, shrinking, or stable; earnings potential; tasks and responsibilities; etc.
- Google – Try researching fields that interest you; just type in keywords such as "healthcare jobs"

##### TALK TO REAL PEOPLE

- Ask your family members, friends' family members, friends already working, and anyone you meet what they do and how they got there
- Use contacts from WLAC, LinkedIn and College Central Network (e.g., alumni and employers, etc.)
- Conduct informational interviews (i.e., "interview" your contact about their occupation) – see CCC Informational Interviewing handout
- Attend CCC events (e.g., Career Connections)
- Attend job fairs to network and learn more about different companies

##### TEST THE WATERS

- Job shadow – Arrange to shadow someone whose profession interests you. School breaks are good times to do so.
- Volunteer – It's easier to convince someone to let you get experience at no cost to them than to demand pay.
- Intern – Some organizations offer structured internship programs. For others, you can contact them and pitch the idea. Some companies look to their intern pools when hiring for full-time positions.
- Work – You may just have to take the plunge and try out a career field in one of your interest areas to see if you really like it. If not, you can always change.