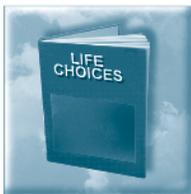
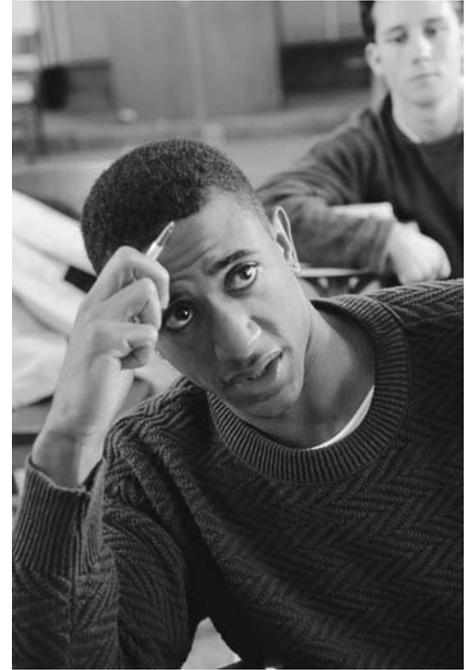


Lesson 2: Developing Your Plan

How do you plan for a career? Believe it or not, you have already begun to develop your career plan! First you used some self-assessment tools to identify your abilities, interests, values, and skills. You placed this information in your personal profile. Next you became familiar with the career you have chosen. You found out what it requires in terms of education, skills, and personal attributes. Then you compared the career requirements with the skills, abilities, knowledge, and training you have now.



How do you plan a career? Read “Every Decision Is a Career Decision” on pages 51 and 52 of *Careers* to help you answer this question. This article emphasizes the ongoing and interwoven nature of career decision making.

What Should I Be Doing Now?



Before you begin making career decisions, revisit these questions:

- What personal skills and abilities do I need to improve to be successful in the career I've chosen?
- What further training or education do I need to acquire?

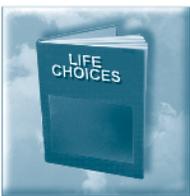
Short-term Action Plans

Your next step is to set short-term action plans that take advantage of everything that can help you right now with your career planning. Your short-term actions can include any of the following:

- Take advantage of the large number of high school courses and programs that can give you the education you need for your chosen career.
- Talk to your school counsellor. School counsellors can advise you on the courses you need to take to prepare for post-secondary education, for apprenticeships, or to enter the job market. They can also provide information about scholarships and bursaries and other programs to help you financially as you study.
- You can **job shadow**. Job shadowing gives you the opportunity to spend time with someone working at a job that interests you. You can record personal impressions about the job. You might also interview the employer to gather more information about the job. You can see first hand the skills required in the job and what you need to do to develop those skills.
- You can begin **networking**. Networking involves getting to know, and getting known by, people who can help you pursue your career path. Networks can include family and family friends, teachers, coaches, and co-workers. All people you have contact with, such as your doctor, bank personnel, or casual acquaintances, are part of your network.
- Get involved in work experience or co-operative education so you have the chance to explore careers to see if you really would like them. You can also build valuable networks with people in those careers. See “FAQ: Co-op Education” on page 115 of *Careers* for a brief description of co-operative education.
- Try out part-time work. You can develop skills in those career areas. It also allows you to see people at work and to see the role attitude plays in the world of work.
- Volunteer. This helps you develop transferable skills and build valuable networks.
- Find a **mentor**. An experienced, knowledgeable, worker can share wisdom with students or beginning workers.

job shadow:
learn about an occupation by spending time with someone as he or she works

networking:
maintaining a group of people connected to you by friendship, professional contact, or social association

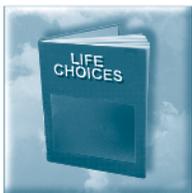


mentor: a trusted advisor knowledgeable in a particular field



Volunteerism

Did you know Alberta has one of the highest rates of volunteerism in the country? Part of our worldview says that people should give back to their community. When you volunteer, you have the chance to work and gain experience, as well as to contribute to society. You can learn new skills that may be very specific, such as how to use a power drill, or transferable, such as how to organize an event or work with a team. You don't receive money, but you do get experience, satisfaction, and a connection with other people. Volunteerism is something that you can do right now to develop transferable skills and to add to your career network.



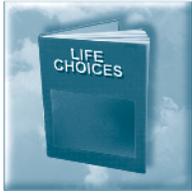
To learn more about volunteerism, read “Volunteering Wave” on pages 124 and 125 of *Careers*, which gives examples of volunteerism and reasons for volunteering. The article describes how to go about finding an appropriate volunteer job.

There are many agencies and organizations in communities that welcome volunteers. Some communities have Volunteer Action Centres that coordinate all available volunteer positions. Search the Internet for websites related to volunteerism. Start with the following sites:

- Volunteer Canada: <http://www.volunteer.ca>
- Charity Village: <http://charityvillage.com>

1. What volunteer opportunities exist in your community? Do some research to find what volunteer organizations and positions are available. (Your community may have its own volunteer website.) List your findings and provide a brief description of the types of volunteer positions available.

2. Which volunteer positions within your community appeal to you and fit with your skills and abilities? Which would provide you with transferable skills for your chosen career? Which might you seriously consider pursuing, allowing for time commitments and other factors?



Are there drawbacks to volunteering? Read the following articles in *Careers* to find the answer.

- “Free for the Hire” on pages 14 to 17 questions the fairness of using volunteers instead of paid employees.
 - “Internship: Big Break or Bad Move?” on pages 18 and 19 explores the advantages and disadvantages of being an intern.
3. The articles present different perspectives on volunteering and internships. What personal guidelines could you set up so that it would be easy to tell whether you are getting what is needed from a volunteer or intern experience?

Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

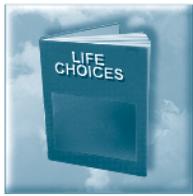
Planning for Post-secondary Education

Following are some actions you can take that can help you identify options and choices in realizing your goals.

- Talk to a school or employment centre counsellor about scholarships, bursaries, and other funding for post-secondary education.
- Ask former students who have been working or attending a post-secondary institution about their lives now, and how they got to where they are now.
- Talk to a counsellor at a post-secondary institution about registration procedures, admission requirements, and what to expect as a student.



Gathering this type of information helps you to solidify your goals and design a plan to achieve those goals.



To gain some useful ideas for developing your career plan, turn to your *Careers* textbook and read the following articles.

- “The Great Training Riddle” on pages 3 and 4 responds to the question “What do I train for when there are no jobs?” The ideas presented also apply when there are jobs available, but you are having a hard time deciding on a career path.
- “FAQ: Career Fairs” on page 19 presents a description of career fairs and some guidelines for attending one.
- “Web Spinners Can Pounce on New Jobs” on pages 34 and 35 encourages you to learn as many skills as possible in the job market to allow for flexibility.



4.
 - a. Consider what you have been doing up to this point to develop a career path. What are you already doing that will help you reach your career goals?
 - b. What are some short-term actions to take to reach your career goals?

Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

Go to page 3 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 2 of Section 3.

Looking Back; Looking Ahead

Hopefully you are satisfied with your career path thus far and can see the immediate and short-term actions you can put into place. Take some time to re-evaluate your goals and plans and make changes as needed. The next lesson will help you develop long-term career goals.

Glossary

job shadow: learn about an occupation by spending time with someone as he or she works

networking: maintaining a group of people connected to you by friendship, professional contact, or social association

mentor: a trusted advisor knowledgeable in a particular field

Suggested Answers

1. The volunteer positions you find in your community will vary. They may range from helping with spring cleanup to coaching a sport to visiting a seniors' lodge to helping at the food bank. What are the types of skills and abilities each position requires? What careers would each volunteer position develop skills for? For example, if you volunteer to coach a little league soccer team, you will not only need to understand the rules of the game, you will need communication, organizational, and time management skills. These skills will readily transfer to most careers.
2. Your list of volunteer positions will vary, depending on your interests and skills. Check that your list of positions is consistent with those interests and skills you have identified. Your list may include positions that involve tasks such as the following:
 - mailing
 - telephoning
 - co-ordinating
 - writing
 - visiting
 - delivering
 - organizing
 - entering data
3. Your personal guidelines will vary, but they may include these ideas:
 - Does the experience provide an opportunity to share your personal resources with others?
 - Does the experience allow you to learn and practise transferable skills?
 - Does the experience allow you to explore a job or occupation that is of interest to you?
 - Does the experience increase your chances of being hired in the area or with the organization?
 - Does the experience enhance your personal network?
4. **a. and b.** The skills and experiences you list will vary, depending on your goal and personal background. Consider transferable skills you have developed or experiences you have had in areas such as the following: academic, technical, communication, and social.

Image Credits

All images in this lesson were created by or for Alberta Education with the following noted exceptions:

Page

82 **top:** Photodisc/Getty Images

bottom: Kevin Peterson/Photodisc/Getty Images

83 Photodisc/Getty Images

84 Abraham Menashe/Digital Vision/Getty Images

85 Photodisc/Getty Images

86 Kevin Peterson/Photodisc/Getty Images