

# How to Find Your Future Career

## The University of South Florida St. Petersburg Career Center Terrace 200

Following are the four phases of Career Development and the steps involved in each one. Under each phase you will find a list of things to do to complete that phase, and the Career Center resources available to carry them out.

**PHASE 1-SELF-ASSESSMENT.** When deciding on a major and a career path, it helps to understand yourself. Start by exploring the following areas:

### **Interests**

Make note of activities, hobbies and academic subjects you enjoy.

### **Skills**

Identify natural talents, acquired skills and academic activities in which you excel.

### **Values**

Clarify work-related factors and life-style preferences important for your career satisfaction.

### **Personality**

Discover your unique personal characteristics, work preferences, and decision-making style.

#### **How to Implement Phase 1:**

Consult a career specialist for a comprehensive assessment of your interests, skills, values and personality style.

Participate in Career Center workshops (for workshop calendar go to [www.career.usf.edu](http://www.career.usf.edu)).

Use computerized career guidance programs in the Career Center.

Take classes related to your area of interests.

Identify and develop skills through career-related employment in student organizations

**PHASE 2- OCCUPATIONAL EXPLORATION.** This phase of career development requires you to gather specific information on occupations that interest you, including education and training needed.

### **Step 1-Research Occupations of Interest**

*Obtain the following information:*

1. Nature of work involved
2. Working conditions
3. Education & training needed
4. Job outlook & expected earnings
5. Reported advantages and disadvantages
6. Related occupations

### **Step 2-Inquire about Relevant Education**

Learn about specific majors, including the type of courses needed and what skills will be developed.

### **Step 3-Get Hands-on Experience**

Participate in Experiential Learning (Co-op or an internship), work as a volunteer, and join academic student organizations.

#### **How to Implement Phase 2:**

Consult a career specialist, use the Career Center Library, and use the internet to research occupations.

Obtain an informational interview with professionals in the career you're considering (how-to information can be found in the Career Center Employer Library and on the Career Center Videotape entitled "Networking").

Talk with faculty and academic advisors about college majors for careers that interest you.

Review Requirements for selected majors in the college catalogue.

Explore graduate & professional school options.

Obtain career-related experience via an internship or a Co-op position in the Career Center to try out your tentative career choice.

**PHASE 3-CAREER DECISION-MAKING AND CHOICE OF MAJOR.** You should now be ready to use information from Phases 1 and 2 to determine career options and goals, and decide on a major.

Step 1 Start by making a detailed plan that includes steps 2-4. Re-examine it periodically.

Step 2 Identify and create a list of several career fields and jobs within that field that interest you, based on the results of your self-assessment and occupational exploration (E.g. Field: Psychology. Related Jobs: recreation director, sales, counselor, case worker, admissions rep, program coordinator, etc.)

Step 3 Gather detailed information about each job you've listed

Step 4 Narrow the field by identifying two to five of the most appealing jobs on your list, and rank them based on information about yourself obtained from the Self-assessment and Occupational Exploration phases.

**How to Implement Phase 3:**

Create a detailed decision-making plan.

Consult with a career specialist about areas of indecision.

Talk with a career specialist about getting career-related experience

Continue with informational interviews if necessary.

Get feedback from faculty members, academic advisors, employers, family and friends about your plans.

**PHASE 4-JOB SEARCH IMPLEMENTATION.** This phase involves developing and carrying out a customized job search and campaign to obtain a professional position in your chosen career field.

**Step 1-Prepare for Your Job Search**

Determine a specific "career objective".

Create an effective resume.

Research preferred employers.

Plan strategies for contacting employers.

Practice interview skills.

**Step 2-Contact Targeted List of Employers**

Apply for interviews.

**Step 3-Participate in Interviews**

Send a thank you letter after the interview.

Continue to follow-up afterwards.

**Step 4-Accept an Offer**

Evaluate the offer.

Negotiate salary & benefits.

Send letter of acceptance or non-acceptance.

**How to Implement Phase 4:**

Put your job search plan on paper.

Attend Career & Job Search workshops in the Career Center (for workshops, calendar, go to [www.career.usf.edu](http://www.career.usf.edu))

Have your resume critiqued by Career Specialist.

Participate in a videotaped practice interview.

Register with the Career Center for on-campus interviews and resume referral.

Network and cultivate contacts with hiring employers.

Research employer profiles via their websites.

Attend campus career fairs.