

CAREERS

THERE IS A CAREER PATH FOR YOU!



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Today, teenagers are growing up in a competitive world where jobs depend on knowledge, creativity and determination. In this new economy, post-secondary education is a necessity. One example of the advantages of continuing education can be measured financially. The Wall Street Journal reports the difference in average annual compensation between a high school diploma and a degree is about \$24,000. That's over \$1,000,000 in a lifetime!

Young people can acquire an advantage in achieving a certificate or degree by exploring a wide variety of occupations and career pathways, then matching them to their personal interests, talents and goals. Research shows students who can envision their future career path are more confident, motivated and successful. Simply stated, the more you know about yourself, your options and what you want to be, the more likely you are to achieve it. Starting this process early saves both money and time after graduation.

To help West Michigan's middle and high school students prepare for their future careers, The Grand Rapids Press, Kent Intermediate School District, Grand Rapids Community College and Ferris State University have partnered to create this career planning and development guide. We hope it provides you a path to rewarding careers and lives.

Donald Green

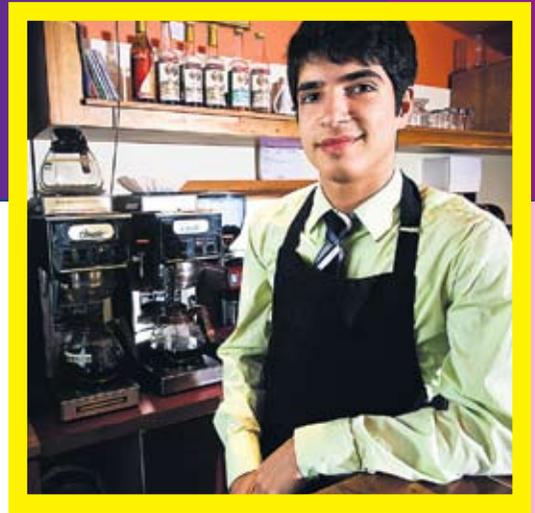
Ferris State University

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WHAT CAN I DO?



- **Get involved in your school work.** This is your “work” and it is important. Make connections between what you are learning and the world of work. What are ways you could get paid for your knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics?
- **Pay attention to your school test scores.** Knowing your achievement strengths will provide career direction. Interests, abilities and values combine together toward career satisfaction. What seems to come naturally to you?
- **Read the news paper with your class or in small groups; talk about articles that showcase career areas,** or labor market trends like companies opening, closing or expanding their work.
- **Write as much as possible.** This builds your communication skills.
- **Calculate your monthly bills and budget.** Learn about income and budgeting.
- **Ask questions,** “What kinds of careers should I consider?” Allow yourself to consider all possible career choices, even if some seem questionable. Try to pinpoint what you enjoy about the careers you are choosing and build on that. Knowing what you like or don’t like is part of the career exploration journey.
- Many times you mainly know what you see, for example athletic events. **Help yourself to expand your option awareness by exploring all the career areas associated with the athletic event.** For example: sports announcers, athletic trainers, sports medicine.
- **Participate in a wide range of the arts, sports and hobbies.** Broadening experiences and interests provides more opportunities for creativity and team building success.
- **Help yourself see beyond stereotypes.** Listen for whether you consider certain types of work “masculine” or “feminine.” Look closely at your own expectations. Try not to limit career options. The world in which we work is not gender specific.
- **Approach jobs at home positively and complete them in a timely manner.** Employers know the relationship between completing home chores, school work and careers require the same skills. Poor habits are hard to break!
- **Go to work with an adult you know.** Ask them and their co-workers what they like and dislike about their job. Talk about the education and training that prepared them for these jobs.

S

Self Awareness:

Understanding and knowing yourself based on interest, abilities, values and achievement test results.

O

Option Awareness:

Understanding, realizing and exploring all of the career, education, employment and training opportunities from which to choose.

D

Decision Making:

Determining the match between yourself and your opportunities. What is the best fit for you?

A

Action/Planning:

Identifying and recording the steps toward your career options and goals on your Educational Development Plan (EDP).



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Self Awareness:

Work on understanding yourself based on interest, abilities, values and achievement test results. Ask questions like:

- Who are you?
- What do you love to do?
- What do you dislike doing?
- What excites you?
- What is boring to you?
- What don't you want anything to do with?
- What kind of training and education are you willing to pursue?
- What are your favorite classes? Why?
- Do you feel like you have a special purpose in life? What is it?
- What makes you unique?



What are other ways you can help yourself understand your interests, abilities and values?

Pay attention to the activities you like, dislike, books read, shows watched, or how you spend free time. Talk about your observations.

When you say, "I want to be a _____ when I graduate," ask yourself to describe why that career sounds interesting. Think about what might be some duties related to that career.

Search for opportunities, materials and resources that can help you learn more about your interests. For example: Do your family's meal planning for a week and measure their and your enthusiasm of helping with this task.

Discuss what activities you like or dislike doing and why.

Watch for areas of natural ability. For example are you good at analyzing? Writing? Creativity? Putting thoughts into words? Helping others? Doing research?

Pay attention to your school test results and paperwork. What abilities are being reflected? What areas show strength? What areas are more challenging? Why?

Start a discussion with the statement, "Would I rather . . . ?" and pick two opposites. For example: Would I rather work indoors or out? Work alone or with a team? Help people or build projects? Have flexibility or follow a routine?

WHAT DO I KNOW?

What Do I Know about the type of employee that employers want?

Employers are looking for employees with these abilities and attributes. Do you have them? If not, determine ways to develop them. Put yourself in their shoes. If you were hiring an employee what kind of person would you want to hire? Circle the skills you currently have. Think about how to understand and be able to do the other skills.

Foundation Skills	Workplace Skills
Speaking	Understand Systems
Reading Comprehension (in English)	Information Skills
Writing in English (grammar, spelling, etc.)	Technology Skills
Listening	Negotiation
Arithmetic/Mathematics	Diversity/Cross Cultural Competencies
Creative Thinking	Manage Resources
Problem Solving	Teamwork
Reasoning	Teach Others
Decision Making	Serve Customers
Knowing How to Learn	Leadership
Responsibility	
Self Esteem	
Minds Eye (visualizing your work)	
Sociability	
Honesty/Integrity	
Self-Management	

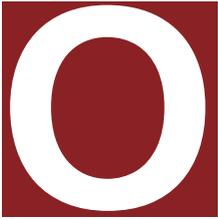
Starting the plan!

List below your interests, abilities/applied skills and values. Review these each year as they may change over time with new learning and experiences.

Interests	Abilities/Applied Skills	Values
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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Option Awareness:

Understanding and realizing all of the career, education, employment and training opportunities from which to choose. Ask yourself questions like:

- What careers have you already explored?
- Which careers did you like?
- What education/training options are available to you?
- What other career areas are related, or unrelated to what you've already explored?

■ Learn about and investigate the six career pathways in order to help determine your own area of career interest. All jobs fit into one of the six Career Pathways listed below. Most people find their interests fall into one or two career pathways. Knowing and exploring how your interests, abilities, and values fit each pathway will help you feel satisfaction and success in the world of work.

■ Even though most people will change jobs 15-18 times in their lifetime, the jobs usually only fall within one or two pathway areas.

Career Pathway	Researched?		Interested?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Natural Resources and Agriscience	Yes	No	Yes	No
2. Arts & Communication	Yes	No	Yes	No
3. Business Management, Marketing & Technology	Yes	No	Yes	No
4. Engineering/Manufacturing & Industrial Technology	Yes	No	Yes	No
5. Health Sciences	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. Human Services	Yes	No	Yes	No



ACTION/PLANNING



Action/Planning:
Identifying and recording the steps toward your goal on your Educational Development Plan (EDP): How would you answer these questions?

- Have you created, reviewed and/or updated your EDP?
- Is your EDP still accurate?
- From new learning and experiences this year, what do you need to change on your EDP?

In creating an EDP, move through the **SODA** career planning steps: **S**elf Awareness, **O**ption Awareness, **D**ecision Making and **A**ction/Planning. Cycling through these steps each year as you learn new information about yourself and the world of work will help you match yourself to career options and opportunities.

Create a SMART Goal which is goal-specific, measurable, attainable, results-orientated and timebound.

Charting a Path to Success

Use the charts below to help you set career goals. Write the career pathway(s) you have expressed an interest in. Set goals to learn more about their fit in this career pathway. Make each goal **S.M.A.R.T.** - **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime to complete.

Career Pathway:	Ways to Improve Abilities & Attributes
Smart Goal 1.	Smart Goal 1.
Smart Goal 2.	Smart Goal 2.
Smart Goal 3.	Smart Goal 3.

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Think about the steps you can take to reach the goals set on the previous page. What can you do? Who else might help? Record your action steps on the chart below.

Plan Steps to Reach the Goals You Have Set

Smart Goal	What will you do?	How can your teachers help?	Who else can help?
Example	Find out about volunteer activities in the community. Decide how much time can be spent volunteering.	Ask your teacher about your interests in volunteer opportunities.	School counselors, community leaders, friends who volunteer in the community.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			

WHAT DO I BELIEVE?

Myth:	Reality:
A college degree is necessary for career success.	A majority of tomorrow's jobs will require more than a high school education, but not necessarily a four year degree. Most jobs will require some sort of technical training.
You will change jobs often during your lifetime.	Research shows that today's students may change jobs 12-15 times, but usually stay within the same career pathway. Example: Student becomes a lab technician; changes jobs to become a phlebotomist; changes to become an athletic trainer; and changes again to become a physical therapist. All careers fall in the Health Sciences Career Pathway.
You must understand that you can never stop learning new skills and information.	Lifelong learning is a must for success in tomorrow's workplace.
As long as your grades are ok, your attendance record will not matter.	Poor habits are hard to break. Employers want to hire people who are responsible and reliable. School attendance is an important measure of these attributes.
You can't "work" successfully at something you enjoy.	<p>The hobbies people enjoy indicate areas of career interest. Employees who like their work feel less stress and more satisfaction on the job.</p> <p>"I never did a day's work in my life. It was all fun." Thomas A. Edison</p> <p>"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Confucius</p>
I am too young to pick a career.	Investigating interests by Career Pathways helps you understand that there are many types of career options available, not just one single type of job.

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Understanding and realizing all of the career, education, employment and training opportunities from which to choose. Ask questions like:

- What careers have you already explored?
- Which careers did you like?
- What are other career areas related or unrelated to what you've already explored?
- What education/training options are available to you?
- What kind of training and education are you willing to pursue?

D

Decision Making:

Determining the match between yourself and your opportunities.

What is the best fit for you? Ask questions like:

- When you predict where you want to be after high school, what is it that are you are doing?
- What steps do you need to take to get there? What kind of education/training do you need?
- How are you making money to support yourself--housing, food, entertainment, etc.?
- Which courses should you take to help you gain the proper skills, knowledge and training?
- What kind of experiences will help you grow closer to your goals?

A

Action/Planning:

Identifying and recording the steps toward your goal on your Educational Development Plan (EDP). Ask your student:

- Have you created, reviewed and/or updated your EDP?
- Is your EDP still accurate?

CAREER OPTIONS

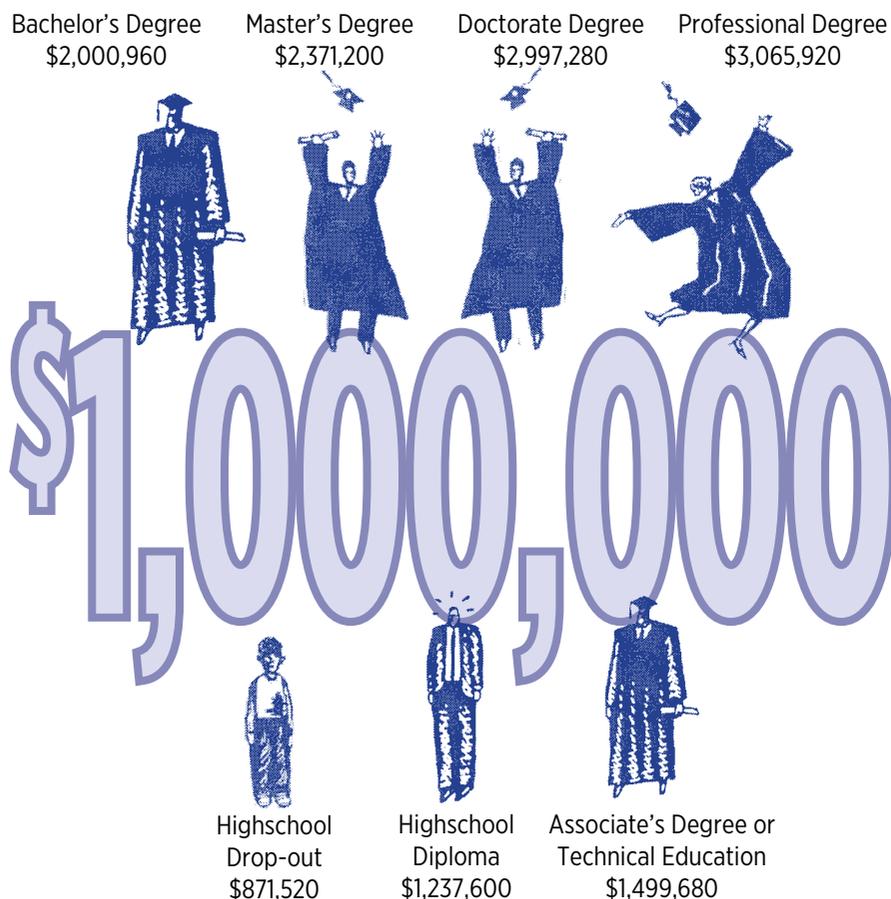


Real Students Writing About Real Careers!

Every week students from Rockford High School interview people from different careers. Read all about it and see pictures and videos from the interviews, at: www.grpress.com/nie

More than a Million!

More than a million dollars more is what you'll earn in YOUR lifetime—when you have a college degree! You're worth it!



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WEBSITES

www.kentisd.org/teachers/Career_Development/

www.careercruising.com

www.grcc.edu

www.ferris.edu

www.ferris.edu/offcampus

www.grpress.com/nie

www.youthrules.dol.gov

www.yourchildscareer.org

<http://acnetwork.org>

www.bls.gov/k12

<http://acinet.org>

www.21stcenturyskills.org/route21

www.knowhow2go.org

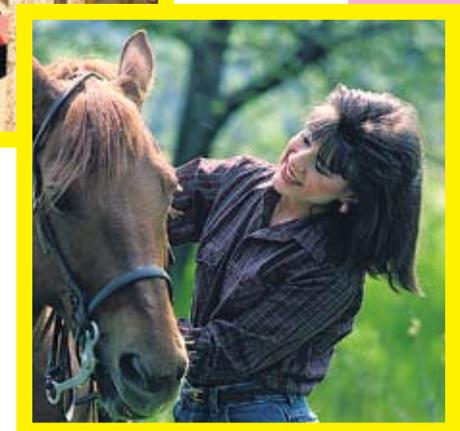
www.palmsproject.net

www.luminafoundation.org

www.bls.gov/oco

www.careervoyages.gov

Others that you have found:



Most Careers Start With A Good Education



Be Cool In School

