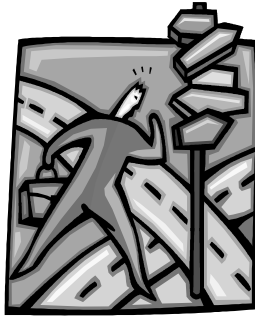


HOW DO I DECIDE ON A MAJOR?

FOR DECIDING STUDENTS

You enrolled in The University of Toledo to prepare yourself for your future...but you don't know what major to choose or you want to change your major. Don't get stressed out. Many students are in your position...being "undecided" is okay. There are steps you can take to identify the best major for you!

Come to Career Services to **speak with a career advisor**. He or she can help you **identify your values, interests, personality traits, knowledge, skills, and abilities**, and learn how to link those to possible career and major choices.



Contact professionals in occupations you are exploring and ask them about their job (**seek informational interviews and job shadow experiences**).

Get on the internet, go to a library, or come to Career Services to **research different occupations** in our career information center.

Consider your favorite subjects in school, like Art or English, and **investigate what you can do with that major(s)**.

Get a part-time job or internship in different industries to get a first-hand look at various occupations.

General Preparation

The key to success in getting the job you want is to convince employers that you have developed the attributes and skills they desire. Part of this will come from your academic accomplishments as represented by your course work and your degree. But employers will also look favorably on any leadership positions in student or community organizations you may have held. They will look for classes you have taken which are related to the field in which you wish to work, and at any experience you have through internships, co-ops, or volunteer work.

Set SMART Goals

Make sure you set short-term goals throughout your student career (i.e., job shadow professional, write a resume; find an internship, etc.). Your goals should be **specific; measurable; realistic and time-specific; relevant to your interests and values; and can be accomplished within a reasonable period of time.**

Course Work Planning

You need to find course work that will help you acquire specific skills in order to achieve your goals. Talk with an advisor in the department(s) in which you are considering in order to be clear about what UT offers and to be certain you will be able to enroll in the program. Look at the classes required for a college and major. For the most part, do they interest you?

Work Experience

Work experience can be a big help when you are looking for your first job. Employers often look for job candidates that already have some kind of experience. Employers participating in the NACE *Job Outlook* survey said that **more than half of their entry-level college hires had co-op or internship experience**. Work experience can be valuable in giving you a better idea of what kind of jobs or careers you might find satisfying and can sometimes lead to directly to a job.

COMMON CAREER MYTHS

Myth #1 *In selecting a major, you are choosing a career.*

Fact: While it is true that certain majors such as engineering and computer science prepare students for fairly specific career fields, a far greater number of majors do not have a direct correlation with given career areas. A study conducted by the College Placement Council revealed that the majority of college graduates are successfully employed in fields not directly related to their academic majors. So choose a major you enjoy and you'll do well in it.

Myth #2 *Job market demand should be the primary determinant of academic and career choices.*

Fact: Selecting a major or pursuing a career just because it's "hot" can be dangerous. You may enjoy neither the coursework nor the job you get later. The careers in demand when you are a freshman or sophomore may not be so "hot" by the time you graduate. Job market demand moves in cycles. You are on much firmer ground when you select a major or a career goal that genuinely interests you.

Myth #3 *Making a major or occupational choice is irreversible.*

Fact: Your decision making anxiety can be heightened by this belief. There may indeed be a cost involved in changing directions, but it's often worthwhile. Keep in mind that most Americans will change career paths *eight times!*