




Share this email:   

Follow The Process | Career Planning

Whether you've already been in the workforce for a while or are just entering it, you can discover what's next for your career with this easy-to-follow process.

Recent estimates tell us the average person who works 40 hours a week from the age 20 to 65, with two weeks off each year for vacation, will spend over 90,000 hours at work in their lifetime. This could be a hard statistic to swallow if you're unhappy with your job and wish you were doing something else.

Or it could be a clear signal to pursue a career that is rewarding, fulfilling, and a good fit for who you are and what you want in life from the get-go. The career planning process can help you find just that.

Self-Assessment

Knowing yourself is the first step to finding a career path that will best suite your interests, skills, and strengths. If you're preparing to leave college, there are often many career options that match your degree; this is a way to narrow the field. If you've been in the workforce for any time, you may have developed new skills, strengths, and interests and need to reassess what the next step is for you.

In either case, here's what you need to learn or better understand about yourself:

- **Interests:** Use an interest inventory—a list of your natural likes and preferences when it comes to how you spend your time. Many professionals in the same job share similar interests, so this can help point you in the right direction when looking for a compatible career. The Strong Interest Inventory (SII) can be administered by a career counseling office, or you can find other, similar interest inventories online.
- **Work-Related Values:** Values are beliefs and ideas that guide your decisions. Think about what your intrinsic values are, i.e. helping others, doing challenging work, being a leader, being an expert, influencing others, taking risks, competing with others, etc., and identify which are most important to you. Next, examine your extrinsic values, i.e. traveling often, working as a team, being an entrepreneur, having prestige or social status, gaining wealth, having work flexibility/autonomy,

earning awards, etc.

- **Personality Type:** Career personality tests (which are really more like suggested categorizations as there are no right and wrong answers) give insight into your natural social traits, motivations, strengths and weaknesses, and attitudes. While no one “test” is absolute or exhaustive, there are several that are widely used: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Clifton Strengths Test, and NEO Personality Inventory. You can find others online for free or for a fee.
- **Aptitudes:** An aptitude is a natural ability, a proclivity for a field of study (science, math, language arts, visual art, etc.), an acquired skill through study or training, or an ability to acquire a skill. As with career personality tests, there are an array of aptitude tests you can take, for example the DAT (Differential Aptitude Test) or the GATB (General Aptitude Test Battery).
- **Work Environment:** Consider where you perform best and feel the most confident and comfortable. A quiet indoor work space you can call your own? An open, communal space? Remote? Outdoors?
- **Lifestyle:** Work-life balance is important. Consider the hours it will take to earn an advanced degree for a job, the typical hours on the job (40-hr work week, irregular work hours, or more days off a week with longer shifts on workdays), how much travel or commuting is required, if remote work is a possibility, if you’ll have “on-call” hours, and if the monetary compensation will be adequate for the hours away from family, friends, and other interests.

Career Exploration

Based on what you learn during self-assessment, research the suggested careers that fit your interests, values, personality, and desired lifestyle. See if you can shadow people at their job, sign up for a short-term internship, or volunteer in the field.

When you’re actively exploring a job, keep a handy list of what’s most important to you (type of work space/culture, work hours, paths for advancement, etc.) so you leave with all the answers you’ll need to make a decision. Don’t forget to gather labor market information for each position, including median salaries and job outlooks for the future.

At the end of your exploration, rank the jobs you’re most interested in and eliminate those that don’t make the cut.

Decisions and Goals

With your list of top careers, find out what it takes to enter each career path and the costs of any necessary education or training. Lay out what your future career goals and promotions might be for each job—you’ll want to make sure there’s room for growth and advancement, whatever you choose!

Action

When you have picked the ideal career for you, create an action plan to get yourself into an interview with the best chances for success. This may include pursuing additional education or training programs. Next, develop a job search strategy by identifying potential employers. Write your resume and cover letters, highlighting some of the correlating skills and strengths you’ve discovered in yourself for the job in steps one and two. Begin job interviews!

In reality, the career planning process never ends. You can go back to any part of the process at any time to refine your goals for advancement or change direction entirely. It’s a flexible and personal process. With people changing job fields more frequently these days, it’s a helpful process to know.

Our All About Me program can help you navigate the waters regardless of where you are in life or what your greatest challenges happen to be.

Beach Municipal FCU is not responsible for decisions made based on this content. This information is for reference only.

As always, we thank you for your membership and the opportunity to serve you!



beachmunicipal.org | [757.333.7787](tel:757.333.7787)

4164 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Follow Us: [!\[\]\(a03a7eb2f4046e1d3c76772003e549ea_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(844169987a590ed8c7e31d5d18950e8d_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(2af34e678d9364b2f32b7174f4964d2c_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(70453908cab6780413d48bd2b8b15c53_img.jpg\)](#)

Copyright © [--CurrentYear--] Beach Municipal FCU. All Rights Reserved. This email was sent to you by Beach Municipal FCU located at 4164 Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

If you no longer wish to receive emails from us please go [here](#).