

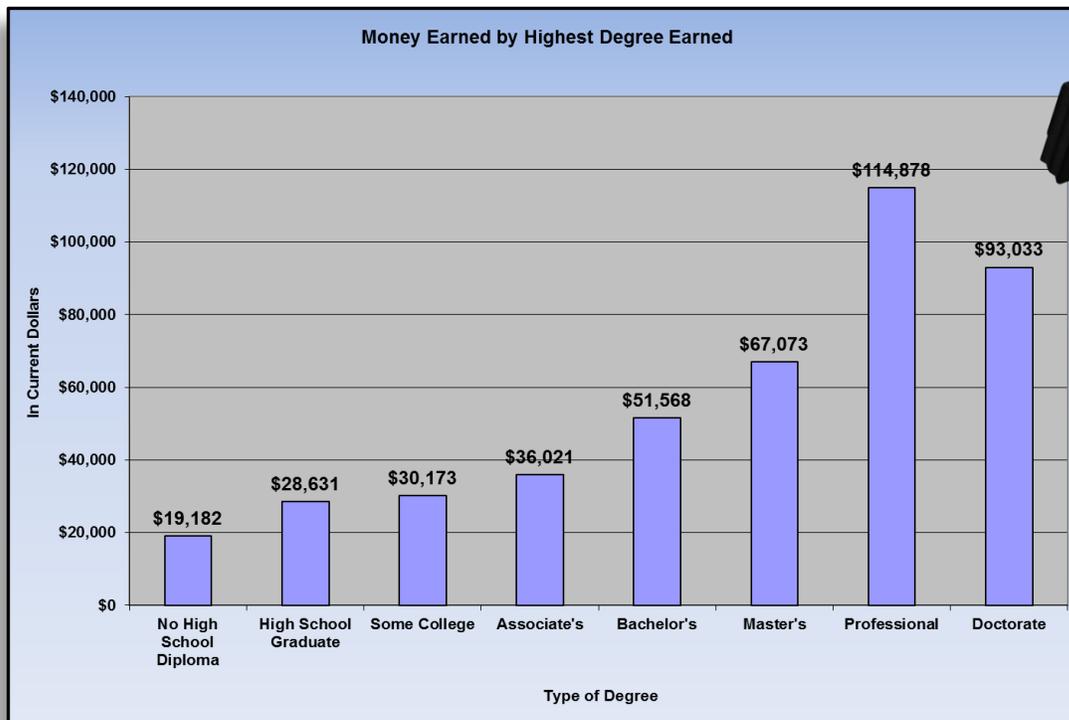
CHOOSING A CAREER

WITH SO MANY CAREER OPTIONS FOR US TO CHOOSE FROM, THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING ONE CAN BE A DIFFICULT, CONFUSING, OVERWHELMING AND SOMETIMES AN EVEN DOWNRIGHT SCARY PROCESS FOR SOME OF US. WHILE MANY OF US KNOW EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT TO DO OR STRIVE TO BECOME OTHERS HAVE NOT QUITE FIGURED IT OUT YET. THESE STEPS WILL HELP YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING A CAREER AND PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME USEFUL RESOURCES.



CERTAIN CAREER PATHS REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO MEET CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS SUCH AS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, OR COLLEGE DEGREE.

PEOPLE WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE OR OTHER FORM OF CERTIFICATION, EARN \$1 MILLION DOLLARS MORE ON AVERAGE OVER THE COURSE OF THEIR LIFETIME THAN SOMEONE WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, GED OR DROP OUT!



Source: US Department of Education

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONS IN THE U.S.?

**BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERS
HOME HEALTH AIDS
DENTAL HYGIENISTS
PHARMACY TECHNICIANS
COMPUTER SOFTWARE ENGINEERS
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERS**

Source: Employment Projections Program, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



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STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT CAREER YOU WANT TO PURSUE? HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL STEPS THAT WILL GET YOU ON YOUR WAY.



STEP 1 ASSESS YOURSELF - THINK OF YOUR **STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, INTERESTS AND VALUES** AND APPLY THESE TO A CAREER ASSESSMENT TEST. THERE ARE MANY CAREER ASSESSMENT TESTS FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM. THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - MASSACHUSETTS CAREER INFORMATION SYSTEMS HAS A GREAT ONLINE CAREER ASSESSMENT TOOL THAT CAN BE ADMINISTERED BY YOUR SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR.



STEP 2 MAKE A LIST OF POTENTIAL OCCUPATIONS - AFTER ASSESSING YOURSELF, YOU SHOULD HAVE GENERATED A LIST OF POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS. TO NARROW DOWN THIS LIST, PICK OUT THE TOP 5 THAT APPEAL TO YOU AND WRITE THEM DOWN ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER.



STEP 3 EXPLORE THE OPTIONS - NOW THAT YOUR LIST IS DOWN TO A MORE MANAGEABLE SIZE TAKE THE TIME TO READ UP ON EACH PROFESSION. LOOK AT THE TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS, THE JOB DESCRIPTION, EARNINGS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT. THE INTERNET HAS A WEALTH OF INFORMATION ON MANY CAREER OPTIONS.



STEP 4 NARROW DOWN YOUR LIST - AS YOU EXPLORE THE OPTIONS ON YOUR LIST YOU SHOULD START TO BE ABLE TO ELIMINATE JOBS THAT DO NOT SEEM LIKE A GOOD FIT AND IDENTIFY THE CAREER OPTIONS THAT WILL BE THE BEST FIT FOR YOU.



STEP 5 CREATE A CAREER ACTION PLAN - WITH A CAREER OPTION IDENTIFIED IT IS NOW TIME TO CREATE A **CAREER ACTION PLAN**. THROUGH RESEARCH YOU CAN DETERMINE AND PLAN THE STEPS THAT YOU NEED TO TAKE TO GET YOU TO YOUR CAREER. DETERMINE WHAT TRAINING, EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE YOU NEED AND THEN MAP YOUR COURSE. ESSENTIALLY THIS PLAN SERVES AS YOUR ROAD MAP FOR HOW TO GET FROM POINT A, CHOOSING YOUR CAREER TO POINT B, GAINING EMPLOYMENT IN THAT CAREER.

WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER ACTION PLAN MAKE SURE YOUR CAREER GOALS ARE **S.M.A.R.T.**

- **SPECIFIC**- DON'T BE VAGUE ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH. EMPHASIZE AND CLEARLY DEFINE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO.
- **MEASURABLE**- HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE REACHED YOUR GOAL?
- **ATTAINABLE**- WHEN SOMETHING IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, YOU WILL FIGURE OUT A WAY TO GET IT DONE. IF SOMETHING IS NOT IMPORTANT TO YOU IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO COMMIT TO ACCOMPLISHING IT.
- **REALISTIC**- IS YOUR GOAL REACHABLE? ARE YOU WILLING TO COMMIT TO YOUR GOAL? DON'T SET THE BAR SO HIGH THAT YOU CAN'T REACH IT.
- **TIMELY**-SET A TIME LIMIT WITH AN END POINT FOR YOUR GOAL. WITHOUT A TIME LIMIT THERE IS NO URGENCY TO COMPLETING IT.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU ON YOUR CAREER SEARCH:

- ✓ **ADOLESCENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT - BY JORGE DEL VALLE**
- ✓ **MORE THAN A JOB! HELPING YOUR TEENAGER FIND SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION IN THEIR CAREERS - BY RICHARD LAPIN**
- ✓ **HOW TO HELP YOUR TEENAGER FIND THE RIGHT CAREER - BY CHARLES SHIELDS**
- ✓ **WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE? FOR TEENS - BY RICHARD BOLLES**



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