



Tips to help your students with **career exploration**

Higher Education faces steep challenges in meeting the needs of students and supporting persistence and completion. Today's students are often faced with hundreds of choices of majors or programs to pursue, which can often be overwhelming. Guidance is necessary to help students explore the academic and career paths they wish to pursue, and understand what success will require.

From career assessments to research projects, the following will cover a few tips to help your students with career exploration.

It's never too early for career exploration

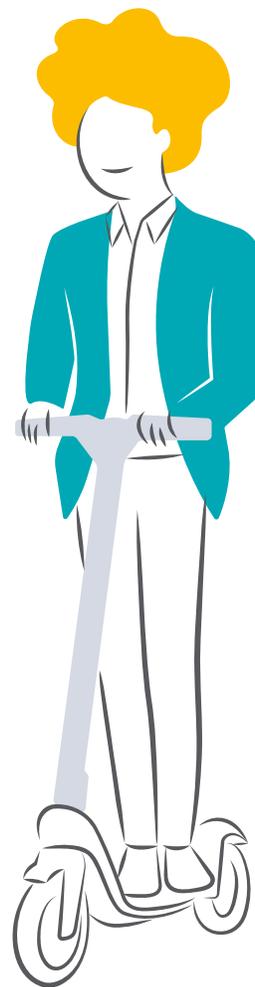
Many school districts now require career readiness to be incorporated as part of the curriculum, but why is career exploration in the classroom important?

- **Early career exploration** decreases the high school dropout rate
- Provide your students with a **realistic perspective** of where their talents or aspirations fit in the professional world
- Finding a career that **aligns with a student's goals, skills, and interests** will make your students excited about their future
- Career alignment is **joyful** and increases career success rate
- Selecting a major with a **growing career outlook**
- **Increasing the chance** of getting a job after graduation
- Many transfer students change their major two, three or even four times during their college career, which **can be costly and delay graduation**
- 20% of freshmen enroll as **undecided**, making this one of the most popular "majors"
- In 2014, the percentage of US adults with a postsecondary degree or certificate was 45%. **65% of US jobs** will require a postsecondary education by 2020.

Additionally, career exploration in the classroom has become a necessity because of the disproportionate student to counselor ratio.

The ideal student to counselor ratio should be 250 students to 1 counselor, but the national reality shows that the actual student to counselor ratio is 600:1.

As an educator, the ultimate goal is student success, and your support provided in the classroom is where career exploration begins. But, where do we start? Read on to explore a variety of tips to help your students with career exploration.



Career assessments: finding the pathway from interests to success

Career assessments are an essential tool for career exploration. Today's students are often faced with hundreds of choices of majors or programs to choose from. As a result, students often fail to pursue an academic specialization and career path that is both personally meaningful and self-fulfilling.

Career assessments can help your students with early major and career exploration, leading to informed decisions when selecting a path that's fitting for them. Consequently, this results in timely graduation and committing to a career that aligns with your students' interests, skills, and goals.

There are hundreds of career assessment tools, but it's important to choose a tool designed to analyze interests and personality. Based on research by UC Berkeley, individuals who work within their field of interest are more likely to develop the skills required to successfully perform their job. Interest fit also directly correlates to job satisfaction and income.

The match between a person's personality and their work environment also influences their job performance, satisfaction, and stability.

Additionally, defining the students' interests also leads to an increase in student engagement at school. Students who take specific courses based on their interest will be more engaged as opposed to taking general courses.

Skills matter

Because careers are organized around skills, it is also crucial to help your students identify not only their interests but also what they're good at.

Based on research by the Conference Board, 53% of Americans are unhappy at work. Lack of skills in the workplace can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. This is also why many individuals choose to go back to school later in their lives to explore and prepare for new career options.

Internships

Exploring by experiencing

Internships are another great way to help guide your students in selecting a career suitable for them. Several students begin their college journey in a field they always thought would be the one for them and come to realize that wasn't the case after starting an internship in the field.

Research by NACADA indicates that about 75% of freshmen in college are undecided about their educational and vocational goals. Internships and mentorships can provide insight into the field and answer industry-specific questions, which aren't part of a curriculum.

Involvement in an internship before committing to a major is also an opportunity to explore different areas if students are trying to decide between a couple of career paths.

Experiencing the field as early as possible can save students and parents both time and money in the long run.

If you know professionals in the area, something as simple as a quick introduction to arrange an informational interview could go a long way. Job fairs and professional organizations are also excellent sources to find internship opportunities.

Mentorships

Valuable sources of knowledge

Mentors are another valuable source to help students understand the professional world. Not only are students able to learn about the career of their interest by talking to a professional in the field, but a mentor can also serve as a guide, coach, and motivator.

Mentors could also lead to networking opportunities to build relationships with other professionals in the field.



Volunteering

Discovering career goals

Last but not least, for those students with a busier schedule, volunteering on the weekends or during the summer in a field of their interest will provide them with the opportunity of building their resume, obtain experience, as well as establishing professional relationships.

Through volunteering, students can also explore different companies of all sizes, and experience a variety of work environments and company cultures.

Many scholarship foundations and organizations also now require completing volunteer hours.

A taste of reality through a research project

Career planning shouldn't be a mystery, which is why many teachers now include career planning projects as part of their curriculum. A great project to consider is one that provides students with an insight into what their life would actually be like after choosing a specific field. This practical project can teach students the qualifications and credentials they would need to pursue their career of choice, job demand, salary, and how much money they would actually take home after paying bills and taxes. Here are the elements that make up this project:

- Profession along with job description and skills and education necessary to get the job
- Annual income and gross monthly income
- Tax rate and monthly income after taxes
- Housing: rent amount, renters insurance, and utilities
- Transportation: vehicle type, gas expenses, car payments, and car insurance quote
- Entertainment and traveling expenses
- Monthly budget for groceries and household items
- Student loans for those choosing an occupation that requires a college degree
- Health insurance
- Savings

This might sound like an intimidating project, but your students will be secretly thankful for this career insight. Some of your students might already have an idea of what they would like to do for a living, and this could provide them with a mini-trial. For those students who are undecided or trying to decide between a couple of careers, this could also be a way to help them make a decision or at least discard a few choices out.

Occupational outlook handbook

A great tool to use along with a career assessment is *The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook*. This website offers career information on duties, education, and training, pay, and an outlook for hundreds of occupations.

Professions are organized by groups and can be filtered by median pay, entry-level education, on-the-job training, number of new jobs projected, and projected growth rate.

Click [here](#) for more tips to help your students with career exploration, education resources, and industry news.



www.themyersbriggs.com

 The Myers-Briggs
Company

Certified

Corporation

© Copyright 2022 The Myers-Briggs Company. MBTI, Myers-Briggs, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the MBTI logo and The Myers-Briggs Company logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Myers & Briggs Foundation, Inc. in the United States and other countries. VitaNavis and SuperStrong are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Myers-Briggs Company in the United States and other countries.