



## *Career Planning & Development*

Many college students are undecided concerning their career choice. Approximately six percent of USF undergraduates have an "undeclared" major during the academic year. Many other students who have selected a major, will find it unsuitable and seek a new career direction.

A career decision is one of the toughest questions facing college students today. How do you make this important decision? Flip a coin? Follow your friends' or parents' wishes? Ideally, the occupation you choose should interest you, challenge you and coincide with your values and goals. Since the average worker spends over one-third of his/her life on the job, it's important you choose an occupation you'll enjoy.

Effective Career Planning is a developmental process:

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## *Career Development*

*What am I going to major in? What can I do with a degree in that? I can't get into the major I want. What do I do? What kind of jobs are out there? I don't know what I want to do!!!*

Deciding on a major and finding a satisfying career are important steps. Being uncertain and not knowing what you want to do is uncomfortable. Surprisingly though, many people are unsure of what they want to major in or what career to pursue. Luckily there are steps you can take and resources available to you to help you discover what you want to do. Following is a description of the career development process, steps you can take to help you find what you want to do, and USF resources that can help you in your exploration.

It's important to remember that career development is a process and can take time. Feel free to utilize the many resources available to you on campus as you do your exploring. Career specialists in the [Career Center](#) (SVC 2088) and professional counselors in the Counseling Center for Human Development (SVC 2124) are eager to help you.

The Career Development Process includes the following four steps: *NOTE: Click the step below to view*

- 1. Self Assessment*
- 2. Occupational Exploration*
- 3. Career Decision Making and Choice*
- 4. Career Implementation*

Remember, in each of these steps, there are things you can do to enhance your ability to make effective decisions. Gaining more information about the career development process can help you make more effective and informed decisions. The following information explains steps you can take to help with your career development.

*For more information or assistance:*

*USF students may call 974-2831;*

*Faculty and staff may call 974-5469*



## *Step 1: Self Assessment*

**This step involves learning about your:**

1. Interests - things you enjoy, including subjects and activities
2. Skills - things you can do, including natural abilities or acquired training.
3. Values - Things that are important to you, including work-related factors and life-style desires.
4. Personality - your unique characteristics and preferences.

**How do I do this?**

- Talk with a professional counselor in the Counseling Center for Human Development (SVC 2124). Call 974-9403 to make an appointment.
- Talk with a career specialist in the Career Center (SVC 2088). Call 974-2171 to make an appointment.

**MYTH:** My career can or must meet all of my needs and utilize all of my abilities.

**REALITY:** My career will satisfy some of my needs and abilities and may be adapted to fulfill some other needs while the balance of my needs can be met elsewhere--family, hobbies, community activities, friendships, etc.

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## *Step 2: Occupational Exploration*

**This step involves learning specific information about careers, including:**

1. Nature of work involved.
2. Working conditions.
3. Training and other qualifications needed.
4. Job outlook.
5. Expected earnings.
6. Advantages and disadvantages.
7. Related occupations.

**How do I do this?**

- Conduct an informational interview.
- Gain work experience through jobs, internships, co-ops, or volunteer work.
- Talk with a career specialist in the Career Center (SVC 2088). Call 974-2171 to make an appointment.
- Talk with appropriate faculty members and academic advisors.

**MYTH:** There is one and only one right job for me and I will not be happy until I find it.

**REALITY:** There are over 10,000 jobs in the workforce and more than one of these will be satisfying for me.

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### *Step 3: Career Decision Making and Choice*

**This step involves determining career goals and alternatives in the following stages:**

1. Identify occupational clusters of interest.
2. Create a list of potential career choices that includes the greatest number of alternatives.
3. Narrow the list by identifying two to five "most desirable" alternatives.
4. Gather detailed information about each "most desirable" alternative.
5. Evaluate and choose the best alternative based on information about the career and self-information.

#### **How do I do this?**

- Give careful consideration to the information you have gathered about yourself, occupations, and your decision making style.
- Talk with career specialists in the Career Center (SVC 2088). Call 974-2171 to make an appointment.
- Talk with faculty members and academic advisors.
- Talk with employers, family members, and friends.

**MYTH:** If I really 'had my head together', I would know exactly 'what I want to be when I grow up'.

**REALITY:** People make career decisions throughout their lives and it is okay to be temporarily undecided about my next career decision.

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## *Step 4: Career Implementation*

**This step involves engaging in a planned process to obtain a position in a chosen career-field including:**

1. Networking
2. Resume Writing
3. Interviewing
4. Applying to graduate and professional schools

### **How do I do this?**

- Talk with career specialists in the [Career Center](#) (SVC 2088). Call 974-2171 to make an appointment.
- Talk with faculty members and academic advisors.
- Talk with employers, friends, and family members.

**MYTH:** I must find the career I will have for the rest of my life.

**REALITY:** On average, people change careers 3-5 times throughout their lifetime. People change, social and economic factors change, and we revise our decisions based on this new information.

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