

Career Planning Tips

Career planning has three steps that you will cycle through and repeat throughout your working life.

By following these steps, you can make career decisions that are right for you. You'll know what your options are and what it will take to reach your goals.

First, take a realistic look at your strengths, weaknesses, and interests.

Consider:

- What do you think about yourself?
- What can help you achieve your goals, and what obstacles could get in your way?
- What types of work and school courses and activities appeal to you? What interests you?
- What do you do well now, and what skills have you gained through experience?
- What values do you have regarding work?

Second, explore your options.

It's hard to know what you want to do "when you grow up" if you aren't even aware of the possibilities. Here are a just a few ways to find career information:

- If you are in school, see your counselor and talk to your parents.
- Use ACT's DISCOVER program to explore possible careers.
- Spend time with people whose activities interest you.
- Volunteer or work in a job that interests you.
- Discuss your career and educational plans with your parents, counselor, or other interested people.

Finally, consider issues that can affect your plans.

Take appropriate actions to accomplish your goals. Consider:

- What do you need to study?
- What schools offer the training you need?
- How will you pay for school?
- Are you ready to search for a job?
- How will you balance your work and going to school?
- How will you manage family or relationship commitments?