

LESSON PLAN

A Perfect Fit: Finding the Right Career for You

Learning Objective(s):

- Explore a career goal and create a plan for reaching it
- Discover different career and income options
- Understand how entrepreneurship impacts a career path

Target Group:

- **Grade 9 – Grade 11**

Lesson Excerpt:

When thinking about their futures, young adults often envision great wealth and success. Turning dreams into reality, however, is no easy feat. In this lesson, students will research job openings, career descriptions and skills needed to enter their dream professions. They will examine concepts of passion and profit by reading success stories from experienced self-starters, and consider their own true calling. Finally, students will analyze qualifications, salaries and education linked to career goals, and then write realistic resumes to demonstrate their understanding.

Essential Question “How do I determine the right career path for me?”

Investigate: Exploring Career Goals

[Time Required: 15 minutes]

1. Begin by asking students to consider what kind of career they might like to have someday. What do they enjoy doing and how might they make a living in relation to their interests? What kinds of jobs do the people in their lives have, and are the students interested in following similar career paths? Then, ask students to complete the sentence, “My ideal career is... because...” in their notebooks. Invite them to talk with a partner about their dream jobs. Explain that each pair will share his or her partner’s ideal career with the class.
2. Record students’ ideal careers, and then ask them to divide themselves into small groups (3–4 students) based on their career interests (e.g., business, education, science, etc.).
3. Ask students to think about what they would need to do in order to get their dream jobs (e.g. a college degree or specific work experiences), and then have the groups brainstorm a list of possible sources for information on what employers want.

Student Preparation: Understanding Career Choices

[Time Required: 30 minutes]

4. Challenge students to research the ideal career for each member of their small group by searching job openings and descriptions using newspaper ads.
5. Share sample resumes with students, and discuss the basic information, structure and purpose of a resume as a class. Help students see that different jobs may require different information on a resume, and talk about how employers use resumes to evaluate potential candidates for a job. Explain that employers will look at more than resumes; they will often conduct Internet searches, and explore social media pages to observe potential candidates’ online interactions. Help students understand that their online presence is equally as important as writing a professional resume.
6. Distribute the activity sheet. Ask students to use their research to create a sample resume for each group member by assessing optimal qualifications, education and skills.
7. Invite volunteers from each group to share their resumes with the class and discuss the similarities and differences between careers. Engage students in a discussion about different job responsibilities, salaries, experience, education and skills. Encourage them to analyze how they can find a career path they love while also maintaining financial security. How can students balance passion and profit? What advantages or disadvantages does starting a business offer? Do they see entrepreneurship being a part of their career plans? Why or why not?

Challenge: Learning From Self-Starters

[Time Required: 20 minutes]

8. Divide the class in half and ask one group to read the article “*Stephen, King of Business*” at success.com/article/stephen-king-of-business and the other group to read “*Lovin’ It with McDonald’s President Jan Fields*” at forbes.com/sites/85broads/2011/06/10/lovin-it-with-mcdonaldspresident-jan-fields/#21753a4b2394. Then, ask each group to share with the class what its article was about.

9. As a class, discuss the differences in career paths between the people featured in the two articles. What is similar and what is different? Analyze the merits of what it takes to be a self-starter and what it means to be entrepreneurial. For example, what led to King’s and Fields’ success? What skills are needed to be a self-starter? How can students take what they love and shape it into a career?

Reflection

[Time Required: 5 minutes]

Ask students to write in their notebooks about how they can balance profit with passion when choosing their careers. What did they learn from King’s and Fields’ experiences and how does it apply to their own goals? Encourage students to evaluate the qualifications on their sample resumes, explaining how their interests and experiences could turn into future careers.

Student Activity Sheet

Knowing what to put on a resume can be tricky. The key is to think about the skills, education and experience that are required for your desired job, and to cater your resume to that job. In researching your dream career, what skills, education and experience did you discover are necessary? Use that information to create a “perfect” resume for that job on the next page, relying on the sample resume and information below as a guide.

<p style="text-align: center;">John Smith jsmith@ucdavis.edu 100 Alvarado Avenue Georgetown, Guyana 592 600.0000</p> <p>OBJECTIVE A laboratory research internship with ABC Company.</p> <p>EXPERIENCE Shift Leader, In-N-Out Burger, Davis Street, Georgetown – (10/13 – present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided outstanding customer service and handled customer complaints• Acted as cashier; recorded and delivered bank deposits• Trained and supervised ten personnel• Maintained inventory count of all products• Ensured proper food sanitation procedures were followed <p>EDUCATION Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences – (June 2013) University of Guyana, Guyana Related Course Work: General Chemistry (Lab), Microbiology (Lab), Organic Chemistry (Lab), Zoology (Lab), Biology</p> <p>SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiar with buffer preparation, titrations, pipetting, pH meter, and analytical balances• Ability to keep accurate laboratory records• Experience using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access in both PC and Mac platforms

Contact information allows potential employers to reach you. Just make sure to use a professional email address that includes your name.

The **objective** succinctly states your career goals and employment focus by articulating a target industry or job category.

The **experience** section highlights your work history, including specific job titles, start and end dates and a brief description of responsibilities held. If you do not yet have employment experience, volunteer work and internships can be included.

List your **education** level and degrees obtained beginning with the most recent. Include the name of the school, dates attended and education level completed.

Skills define the talents that make you a desirable candidate for the position. Make sure to align your skill sets to the target job.

Name:

email:

address/phone:

OBJECTIVE

EXPERIENCE

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EDUCATION

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SKILLS

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Stephen, King of Business

This prolific best-selling author has a few secrets.

Mike Zimmerman

January 10, 2012

Stephen King is, first and foremost, a writer. Everyone has a favorite Stephen King book or story: maybe it's [The Shining](#) or [It](#) or the novella [Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption](#). As readers, we have hundreds of his works to choose from. Now in his 60s, King's still massively prolific—the 1,000-page [11/22/63](#) came out last November and another Dark Tower novel, [The Wind Through the Keyhole](#), arrives this spring.

An interesting fact gets lost in all of that, however. The guy is a terrific businessman who leverages his success to broker creative and unusual deals in an industry not known for its flexibility, speed or inventiveness. The ebook revolution, currently in full swing, has the entire book publishing world scrambling to figure out new business models and how, if possible, to preserve the now-ancient art of printing words on paper. (It's interesting to note that Simon & Schuster, King's publisher, recently reported rising profits due largely to increases in ebook sales. So paper may be quickly becoming as quaint as LPs).

Over the years, King has always been forward-thinking and daring in his dealings with publishers. He experimented with an online-only ebook, [The Plant](#), way back in 2000 when Kindle was but a gleam in Jeff Bezos' hard drive. And 14 years ago, when he left Viking to go to S&S, he structured his deal in an unheard-of way, ditching the big advance for a smaller one, but splitting the profits 50/50.

Another bold move, according to [The Wall Street Journal](#), was orchestrated by King's then-agent Kirby McCauley: Instead of a publisher licensing rights to King's books for a period lasting up until 70 years beyond the author's death (the usual publishing boilerplate, assuming the books stay in print), King leases his books to the publisher for a period of 15 years. This approach guarantees one very important thing: His publisher is supremely motivated to sell as many of his books as possible, more so than with an author in a traditional deal. If his books are mishandled, he'll take them elsewhere soon enough.

King uses his success to guarantee further success. That sounds obvious, but how many creative types are that business savvy? Artists starve not because they aren't talented but because they often have no idea how to make money.

The lesson for all of us, no matter what fields we toil in? It's not just about thinking outside a given box. That's easy. But how often do we actually implement the interesting thoughts or risky ideas we have? How much do we leverage our success to motivate folks to take a gamble with us? And most important, do we know our industry well enough to know when one of those ideas could generate cash? After all, Stephen King, the writer, doesn't get to make any of these deals if he isn't Stephen King, the brand.

Lovin' It with McDonald's President Jan Fields

This is part of a "Women We Love" series by Emily Bennington.

Jan Fields calls herself a mother, a grandmother and a wife. And, of course, president of [McDonald's USA](#), where she's responsible for the bottom line results of more than 14,000 restaurants across the country.

Indeed, the woman who started out on fries in 1978 (not kidding), rose to sit in the office once occupied by McDonald's legendary founder, Ray Kroc himself. It's an extraordinary path to success and, while it would be corny to say "We're lovin' it", we *totally* are.

Below, Fields discusses her own struggles with work-life balance, the importance of taking "smart" risks and why overnight success rarely happens overnight.

You started your career with McDonald's as a crew member to help pay for college. Now look where you are. What has been your toughest challenge on the road to the top?

Balancing work and life, which I'm sure many women can relate to. I have a daughter who is grown now, but for much of her childhood I was juggling raising her and growing my career.

Over the years I learned that you can have it all – just not at the same time. I passed on some career-advancing opportunities while she was in high school so that she could complete all four years in one place -- and I don't regret a minute of it. You have to make one thing a priority and achieve balance that way, rather than trying to do everything all at once.

We all have a finite amount of energy and time to give, and must figure out the best way to have an impact on the things that matter to us most – and it's OK that each one of us will do it differently.

You and McDonald's, a 2011 Catalyst Award winner, take a personal interest in the advancement of women. Any advice for other emerging leaders trying to make their mark in a corporate environment?

Remember that your reputation is everything. You build your personal brand through everything you do, whether big actions or small decisions, and that brand will stay with you throughout your career. So choose to build it positively by dressing appropriately, taking the high road in office politics, supporting the development of others, volunteering for projects and adding value wherever you can.

What is the best lesson you've ever learned from a professional mentor?

I learned to take smart risks. A number of years ago, I was approached about applying for a job that would be a major promotion, but told my boss and mentor that I didn't think I was ready for it. He disagreed but respected my decision. A few days after our conversation, I called him to find out who had applied and when I heard the list, I said, "I'm more qualified than all of those people!" And he told me that he knew that, which was why he'd talked to me first.

Needless to say, I wound up applying for the job and got the promotion. But in the process, I learned an important lesson about not being your own obstacle because you're afraid to take a risk. The irony is that the job was one of the best I've had over my career.

If you could go back and give your 20-year-old self one piece of advice, what would it be?

Have patience -- you're building the foundation for a lifelong career. I would tell myself that the skills and lessons I was learning at that time would be invaluable in the future. I didn't realize that was what I was doing and simply wanted to hurry it all up. I know now that it's like building a house: the stronger the foundation, the higher you can go.

Emily Bennington is co-author of [Effective Immediately: How to Fit In, Stand Out, and Move Up at Your First Real Job](#) (Ten Speed Press, 2010). She is a frequent speaker to students and organizations on the topic of career success and founder of [Professional Studio 365](#), which provides onboarding programs for new grads and their employers. Emily is also a contributing writer for [Monster.com](#) and a featured blogger for [The Huffington Post](#). She can be reached at emily@professionalstudio365.com or on Twitter [@EmilyBennington](#).