

The following information is commonly required of students who are working with VR in transition programs. The VR counselor asks the student to provide information similar to that requested below to support the career goal desired prior to writing an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). The steps below serve as a guide to the type of information a student might consider when exploring career options. Websites are listed after the steps to give the student resources to obtain information easily.

Career Exploration Guide

The following steps will help you decide on a career goal that's right for you, and will provide you and your VR Counselor with the information needed to develop your Individual Plan for Employment. (Please note that even though the guide instructs you to write all information, you may use alternative means of recording the information you assemble during your career exploration activities.)

1. Write a statement about why you want this career goal, the skills, abilities, personal characteristics that you already have and need for this occupation, and another statement describing the skills/abilities you need to develop.
2. Gather the results of your Informational Interviews, using the VR forms from your counselor or other means by which you recorded your questions and the responses made by the individual you interviewed.
3. Write a description of what you learned during your job shadow experience(s) that will help you decide if this occupation is right for you. Include the name of the business, the name of the individual(s) shadowed and his or her title(s).
4. Write a statement regarding the requirements (education, experience, specific skill sets, etc) needed for employment in this occupation. What institutions provide training programs for this occupation? Where do you want to go for training?
5. What is the average starting wage for this occupation? How many job openings per year are projected for this occupation?
6. If the labor market for your chosen occupation is poor, or the required skill level/educational level is not a good fit for you, what other occupations might you investigate that are in the same general field? Example: A veterinarian must have an advanced medical degree; can you work as a veterinary assistant?

You may find lots of career exploration information using the following websites:

www.azcis.intocareers.org

Az Department of Education website

User name: rsa902A

Password: 4azcis02

This site is designed for students to use for career exploration, and has interest inventories and full information about a huge variety of potential careers. You can get much of the information you need to make a good decision about a career from this site.

<http://www.bls.gov/k12/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics: Find careers that relate to your interests and learn fun facts about the economy and jobs

<http://www.onetonline.org/>

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Taken from Work-Based Learning Resource Guide: JOB SHADOWING, EAST VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, January 2003

O*NET is a tool for career exploration and job analysis. O*NET OnLine has detailed descriptions of the world of work for use by job seekers, workforce development and HR professionals, students, researchers, and more

<http://www.gettinghired.com>

Getting Hired.com has many career tools, including a career assessment with job recommendations based on the results of the assessment, and a video presentation on job interviewing.

<http://www.azapprenticeship.com/>

<http://www.azcommerce.com/facts-and-figures/az-at-a-glance/>

Arizona Commerce Authority: information about Arizona labor market, industry reports, small business programs, apprenticeship programs, and more.

<http://www.asvabprogram.com/>

The ASVAB website has many tools for career exploration, including self assessment tools and career information resources.

<http://www.arizonaworkforceconnection.com/locations/default.asp>

Arizona Workforce Connection: One-Stop Centers provide free services including; job placement, skills assessments, job training, career counseling, resume development and more to job seekers. The website below will help you find the One Stop closest to you.

<http://www.going-to-college.org/overview/index.html>

This Web site contains information about living college life with a disability. It's designed for high school students and provides video clips, activities and additional resources that can help you get a head start in planning for college. Each module includes several activities that will help you to explore more about yourself, learn what to expect from college and equip you with important considerations and tasks to complete when planning for college.

<http://www.azed.gov/career-technical-education/arizona-school-counselors/>

This website from the Arizona Department of Education has many links to resources used by Arizona high school guidance counselors, such as the "Career and Educational Guide for Students" which has step-by-step activities for career exploration and job search.

<http://www.testprepreview.com/>

Use this site to take free online practice tests for college placement or vocational certifications (such as a sample cosmetology board exam). These practice exams give you an idea of the rigor of training or your academic skill level.

www.careerinfonet.org

This website has a wide array of tools for career exploration, including information about specific occupations & industries, labor market info by state, videos on a variety of career topics (including in Spanish), and job seeking skills instruction.

<http://todaysmilitary.com/>

Information about careers in the military.

26 POSSIBLE INFORMATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is a typical day like?
2. How did you get into this type of work?
3. What do you like most about your work?
4. What do you like least about your work?
5. What skills and/or training is needed for this job?
6. How did you acquire those skills?
7. What advice do you have for me if I were to pursue this career?
8. What types of changes are occurring in your field?
9. What type of advancement opportunities does this company offer?
10. How do salaries in this field compare with other fields?
11. Who do you suggest I talk to for further information?
12. How competitive is the job market?
13. What are the salary ranges at the entry level and higher levels?
14. What related fields are available for people with backgrounds such as yours?
15. What are the different entry level jobs in this career field?
16. What types of fringe benefits (for example, medical insurance, sick leave, paid vacation) do you receive)?
17. What are the most important (essential) duties of your job?
18. What are the minor (nonessential) duties of your job (for example, extra tasks that may or may not be included in your job description)?
19. What type of technology is used in your job? How does this company/industry tend to respond to new methods and technological advances?
20. Do you share job tasks with other employees informally or as part of an organized work team?
21. How much flexibility do you have in your job, for example, scheduling your work hours or in the way tasks are completed?
22. Does this company support injury prevention, workplace safety, ergonomics, smoking policies, etc.
23. How supportive/competitive are employees towards each other?

24. What type of after hours obligations are there (for example, social activities with coworkers and customers, work taken home).
25. Is it possible to arrange a tour of the facility?
26. What are the physical requirements of your job?

Note: Items 16-26 are questions that may be helpful to ask if you have a disability and need job accommodations.

Sources: Career Center, University of Missouri-Columbia (1994); Figler, H, Ruffin, W., & Gardner, B. The Liberal View: A Career Guide for Dickinson College 1979-80.

Sources: Tough Interview Questions and How to Handle Them prepared by the Career Opportunities News, Garret Park Press, Garrett Park, MD 20896 Tips to People with Disabilities on how to Disclose Your Disability adapted from handout developed by: Training and Placement Service, Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota.

Job Shadowing Questionnaire

Name of Student: _____ Date: _____ Time/From: _____ To: _____

Name of Job Site: _____ Manager or Contact Person: _____

Area/Job shadowed: _____ Person shadowed: _____

Student Interview Questions:

✓ "Is your job a full time position?" _____

✓ "What are your hours/days of work?" _____

✓ "Is there a dress code?" _____

✓ "What type of technical training did you need to have to apply for this job?" _____

✓ "Describe your duties on the job?" _____

✓ "How is this job satisfying or meaningful for you?" _____

✓ "Do you supply any of your own equipment or tools?" _____

✓ "What types of employment benefits do you receive through this employer":

___ health insurance ___ vacation time ___ sick leave ___ retirement benefits

___ dental insurance ___ profit sharing ___ vision insurance ___ 401K

- ✓ “Which benefits are the most important to you?” _____
 - ✓ “Do you have any recommendations for me?” _____
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Student’s reflection after shadowing:

- ✓ Was the job what you expected?
 - ◆ If yes, why? _____
 - ◆ If no, why not? _____
 - ✓ Is this a job you would like to do full time? _____
 - ✓ Note three things you learned from this shadowing?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 - ✓ What did you like best about the job?

 - ✓ What did you like least about the job?

 - ✓ List the occupational terms you heard or read while at the job site?

 - ✓ Your final thoughts:

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