

Undecided??

Feeling unsettled about your future? Find yourself dodging relatives at family functions because you don't want to be confronted with the, "whaddya want to be" question? Do you sigh deeply every time you think about answering the college application question (gulp)... *intended major*. Being unclear about a major or career path is commonplace for many college-bound students. In fact, it's not unusual to overhear adults still saying, "I wonder what I want to be when I grow up."

Take comfort... undecided remains the most popular "major" on most college campuses. Thankfully, there will be a variety of courses, experiences and people to which you'll be exposed in college that will help you on this common and shared journey, but you might want to start pondering this decision sooner versus later. There are two versions of being undecided... passive and active. If you're the passive type, stop reading now. However, being proactive and investing yourself in the process of exploration and discovery will enable you to learn more about yourself, in addition to moving you closer to finding a direction. If the latter sounds good, read on.

Career Planning Overview

Career planning is an ongoing process and the equation for success is relatively simple:

Learn about self (likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses, etc.)
+ Learn about the world-of-work (jobs, education, earnings, industry projections, etc.)
= Combine and analyze the two to find the best "fits" for you.

How do I start?

Begin with introspection. Point the spotlight inward and focus the microscope on yourself rather than potential careers. Self-exploration provides you with information and insight relative to your:

- Skills and abilities
- Interests
- Personal priorities
- Training and education
- Life experiences

Then what?

Try some of these strategies and activities that promote self-awareness and career exploration:

- Expose yourself to a variety of classes to learn subject matter and strengths & interests.
- Develop skills and learn new ones through clubs, volunteering, part-time work, etc.
- Talk to educators, family and friends about careers.
- Investigate options via the Career Exploration Opportunities (CEO) Program at SHS. See what our Business Liaison, Mrs. Willock (dwilllock@d125.org) offers: <http://www.d125.org/careerexploration/>
- Participate in one or more Career Shadowing experiences.
- Take an SHS summer *Careers In...* (*Engineering, Law, Medicine, etc.*) class.
- Attend the SHS Career Exploration Fair on November 5, 2014
- Use Naviance to learn about yourself and to research careers.

Naviance: A Career Planning Tool

In addition to assisting students in the college search & selection process, Naviance serves as a resource for career planning. The following Naviance career assessments endeavor to match users with careers. Please know they're not meant to tell you what to be... no assessment can; however, they are proven tools that can help you narrow and focus your search.

Career Interest Profiler:

This tool enables you to determine types of work activities and careers that match your interests. The interest profiler has 180 questions about work activities that people do at their jobs. How you respond to those questions (like-dislike-unsure) will provide some career direction.

Personality Type Assessment:

The *Do What You Are* Self Discovery Personality Type Assessment will generate a report that will provide you with important information about your personal characteristics. You will learn about careers that are matched to you, your personal strengths and blind spots, how you negotiate your daily life, and a host of other useful information.

Cluster Finder:

Cluster Finder will help you learn what general career categories (ex. health care) may be a good match for you based on activities that interest you, personal qualities that you possess and school subjects that you enjoy studying.

Career Path Game Plan

- **Assess Yourself**
Identify your interests and assess your personality.
- **Generate Options**
Research careers & clusters that relate to those interests and strengths.
- **Gather Information**
Learn about the personal and academic requirements related to the careers you identified. Research job descriptions, salary, and their potential for the future, etc. on Naviance.
- **Make a Decision**
Review the information you collected and make decisions about career possibilities and college-related majors (Chances are these are not etched-in-stone life-long decisions. Most people change jobs & careers multiple times throughout life as they grow & evolve.)
- **Identify Next Steps**
- Discuss your ideas with the trusted people in your life. Put your plans in motion.

Accessing Naviance:

- Go to www.d125.org/college
- Click **Link to Naviance** (in the left rail).
- To log-on, enter your Stevenson e-mail address...
- That is, the first initial of your first name + the first six letters of last name + the last # of your graduation year. (For example, Steven Patriot (Class of 2015) would type: spatrio5@students.d125.org)
- Your Naviance password is your 8-digit SHS network password.

DISCOVER YOURSELF....EXPLORE CAREERS....SET GOALS