



EXPLORING TYPES OF CAREERS

Finding the right career can be hugely rewarding, so it's worth putting some effort into career planning. Start by thinking about what motivates you as a person, then identify careers that match your skills and interests.

Once you've got an idea of areas you might want to work in, the next step is to check out some career profiles. These will give you information about the opportunities available in a particular line of work - and what skills and qualifications you're likely to need.

You can also get information about careers in particular industries from Sector Skills Councils. Find the council for the industry you're interested in through the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils.

HELP WITH CAREER PLANNING

Talking to a careers adviser may help you focus on what you are looking for from a career - and work out how to get where you want to be.

Careers advice by phone or email
Call learndirect Careers Advice on 0800 100 900. You can also book a free call back from an adviser, or send a question by email.

Some people know what job they want to do from an early age – for others it's not so simple. Choosing a career is a big decision, but don't be intimidated. There's plenty of help available to help you find the career that's right for you.

WHAT TYPE OF CAREER WOULD SUIT YOU?

A good way to start your planning is to think about what motivates you as a person. Make a list of activities you've enjoyed - both inside and outside school, college or work. What was it about them you liked? There are no right or wrong answers – but, for example, you might find that you enjoyed:

- getting to know more about a particular subject
- solving challenging problems
- working as part of a team
- meeting new people

Once you've got a clear idea of your interests, the next step is to start looking for a career that matches up with them. Connexions Direct's Jobs4U database has information on a huge range of careers, organised into 'job families'.

PLANNING YOUR CAREER

Finding a rewarding career is important to most people - and it takes a little planning. There's always room to change your mind, but having a plan will:

- make sure you're aware of all the routes into your dream career
- help you avoid ending up in a job you don't like
- make sure you know what you need to do at different stages in your life

There's plenty to consider before you're ready to put your plans into action – including how to get the skills and qualifications you'll need.

HELP PLANNING YOUR CAREER

Advice is vital to give you the best possible chance of getting into the career you want.

ADVICE THROUGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

Teachers and lecturers will have a good idea of what you can do with the subjects you're studying. But they only see what you're like at school or college, and this might not be the whole story.

For example, you may be quiet in the classroom but spend your spare time producing podcasts or working on hospital radio. If this is the case, there's nothing to stop you pursuing a career in radio. It's worth getting advice from other sources as well: most schools and colleges offer careers lessons and/or a careers service.

ADVICE FROM CONNEXIONS

Connexions offers free, confidential advice on careers.

Connexions Direct helpline:
080 800 13 2 19

You can also get in touch with a Connexions Direct aAdviser by email, webchat or text message.

IF YOU'RE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

You can get advice on your options after graduation from your university or college careers office, and there's plenty of information available through the Prospects service.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN RESEARCHING CAREERS

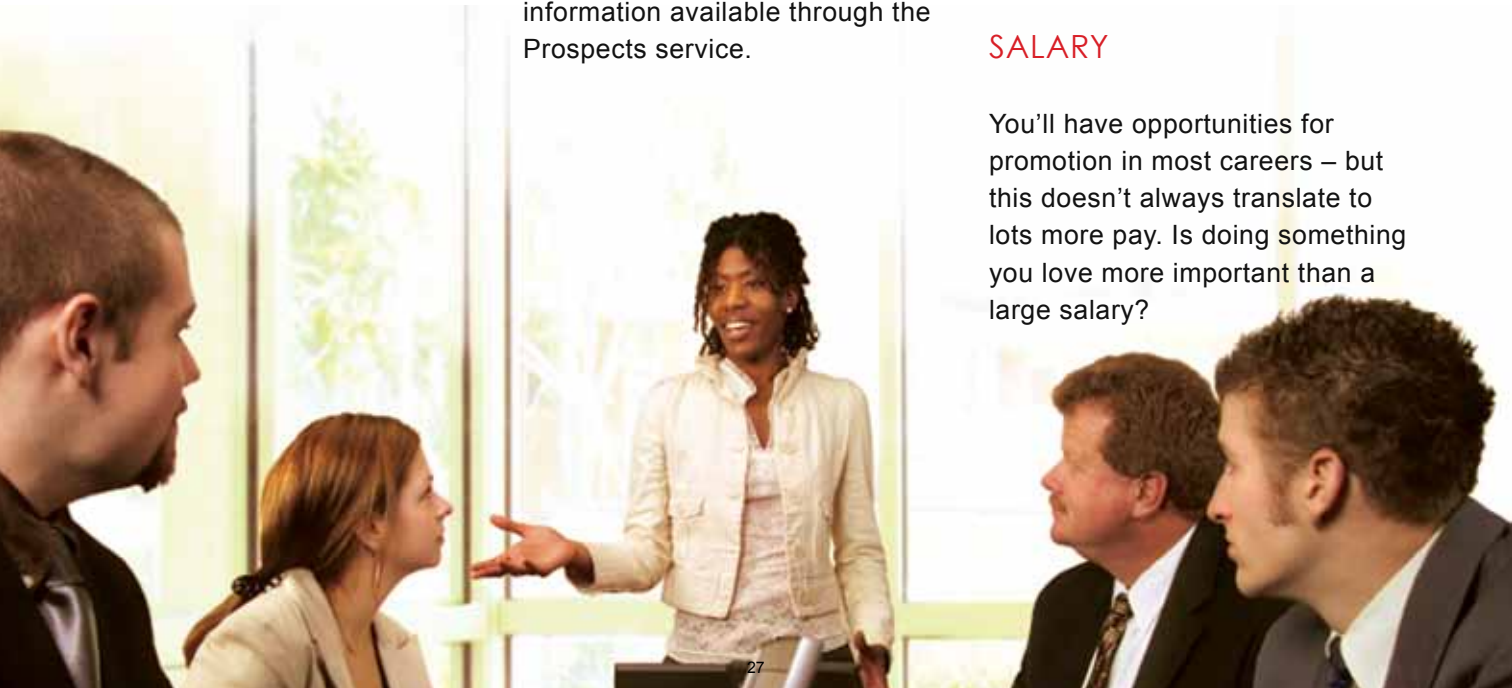
After you've drawn up a shortlist of potential careers, there are a number of issues you'll want to consider before putting your plan into action.

LOCATION

If you're not prepared to move, you'll need to consider location. While you can probably find work as a travel agent in most large towns, if you're looking to get into TV production there are likely to be more opportunities in London and other major cities.

SALARY

You'll have opportunities for promotion in most careers – but this doesn't always translate to lots more pay. Is doing something you love more important than a large salary?



THE JOB MARKET

There's competition in most careers, but some are more competitive than others. Careers that are seen as 'glamorous' can be difficult to get into without plenty of unpaid work experience, enthusiasm and a certain amount of luck. If you're attracted to a career like this, are you prepared to put in the extra effort?

CAREER PROGRESSION

What opportunities are there to progress within the careers you're looking at? Once you're in, how would you get to the next stage - either within the same line of work, or in a related field? What training is likely to be on offer?

WORKING CONDITIONS

What will doing the job actually mean day-to-day? If it involves meeting lots of people and that's not your thing, you might want to think again. Would you prefer a job indoors, or wouldn't you mind being outside in the depths of winter?

YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

Your circumstances needn't limit your career options. There may be extra support available if, for example, you're a lone parent or you have a disability. Follow the link below to find out more.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU IN A JOB?

Once you've considered the factors listed above, making a list may help focus your mind. Try listing those which are essential, and those which are 'nice to have'. An example might look like this:

ESSENTIAL

Involves dealing with people close to your current home earning at least £15,000 in your first year

'Nice to have'

In public or 'not for profit' sectors opportunities to travel abroad linked to a favourite subject you've studied

CAREER PLANNING:

Where to start

Unless you've got a clear idea of what you want to do, it can be difficult to know where to start. And if you do have a career in mind, how do you know whether you've considered all your options?

As a starting point, you could try sitting down with a piece of paper and listing:

- ✔ courses you've taken in the past, or are taking now
- ✔ any jobs you've had, including voluntary work
- ✔ interests outside work
- ✔ any other significant experiences, like travelling

THEN ASK YOURSELF:

- why you chose to do them
- which parts you really enjoyed
- which parts you found frustrating or boring
- which parts you were best at
- which parts you found a challenge
- what other people have said about your contribution
- what other people have told you're good at

You should start to see some patterns emerging: the types of skills you enjoy using, the sort of environment you perform best in and the types of people you like working with.

You can use this knowledge to help pinpoint areas of work you might enjoy.

