

Module 1 Career Planning video 2: Research and Exploration

Module 1: managing your career strategies for graduates with disabilities
Career Planning video 2: research and exploration

Welcome to the research and exploration module 1 of our Career and Disability series, brought to you by the UTSC AccessAbility Services and the Academic Advising and Career Centre.

Before we begin please download the activity worksheets at UoT.me/careeranddisability.ca and find the career planning and exploration activity.

In the previous video, we reviewed the career planning process and focused on self-assessment. In this video, we will focus on the second phase of the career planning process research and exploration. Research and exploration involves looking outward toward the world of work. To gain a better understanding of the wide range of career options that exist, students and recent graduates are often most familiar with occupations such as doctor, lawyer, nurse, teacher and engineer. However, the world of work is so much more diverse. Researching the specific details of various occupations helps you become informed and assess how well an occupation aligns with your values and goals.

Let's start with asking questions about your interests in people, tasks and places. Are there specific groups of people that you want to work with? Consider populations such as children, youth, women, older adults, LGBTQ, ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities and other specific populations.

Do your interests involve working with people at all? Maybe you prefer to work independently and focus on projects and tasks. This would be a valuable interest in occupations focused on creating products and supporting services work.

Environments are also important to think about, do you want to work indoors or outdoors for a private company or in the business sector for a large firm or a small company. Consider industries you might be interested to work in such as, for-profit or non-profit, for example, schools, hospitals or community centres. There are also government business and professional services such as marketing.

You may also want to consider the geographic location of the industries of interest for you. For example, many of the pharmaceutical companies in the Greater Toronto Area are in the West End of the city. Also, consider access to transportation and likely commuting time for perspective. The average commute in Toronto is the longest in Canada at forty to forty-five minutes according to various surveys.

Career cruising is a helpful tool that can assist you in conducting occupational research. U of T students and recent alumni have access to career cruising through the resources section of the career and co-curricular learning network often refer to as CLNx. For each occupation it provides information about

a day in the life, average salaries, working conditions and educational requirements. You can browse occupations under careers by school subjects or using a tool called career selector which asks for your preferred core tasks or you could say by your strengths and skills.

You can also complete the Career Matchmaker assessment which compiles your interests in 116 workplace tasks and matches them with the interests of satisfied workers. This assessment only considers your interests not your strengths or personal characteristics. When identifying occupations, another resource for occupational research is the National Occupational Classification, otherwise known as the NOC. It gathers more than 30,000 occupational titles into 500-unit groups organized according to skill levels and skill types. For more information visit the employment and Social Development Canada website. See the resources section for links to this and other relevant websites like the American equivalent O*NET.

Getting engaged is another great way to explore career options and test out a particular career. Consider taking classes with experiential learning built-in to gain insight into one of the associated fields of work are a good fit for you. UTSC students and recent alumni have access to a variety of career exploration programs events and resources including in the field company tours and the job shadowing program, both of these programs allow you to meet professionals, visit specific workplaces and learn more about particular occupations. Employers and graduate professional schools also come to campus throughout the school year. You can access a full list of these sessions and events on CLNx.

Have you ever talked with someone about their job over a cup of coffee? If you have, then you have participated in an information interview. An information interview is a meeting with a professional who does a job or works for a company that you think might be a good fit for you.

Additionally, CLNx has a job board that posts on and off campus volunteer work and internship opportunities for U of T students and recent graduates. There is more information about how to go about this activity in the next module but UofT is making it easier to connect with UofT alumni through CLNx. You can access the online networking platform 10,000 coffees and connect to the U of T hub. You can also reach out on your own to alumni who have profiles on LinkedIn, a professional social media platform.

By paying attention to your local and national news you can learn a lot about trends in the labour market and industry sectors of interest to you. See our review on the news activity for a guide.

If you would like to provide feedback on these videos or if you have questions or concerns. Please contact the Academic Advising and Career Centre at aacc.utsc@utoronto.ca or the AccessAbility Services at ability.utsc@utoronto.ca