

Module 1 Career Planning video 3: Decision Making and Implementation

Module 1: managing your career strategies for graduates with disabilities
Career Planning video 3: decision-making and implementation

Welcome back to our career in disability series, brought to you by the UTSC AccessAbility Services and the Academic Advising and Career Centre.

In this third video, we will focus on evaluation and decision making, as well as implementation. Before we begin please download the activity worksheets at uoft.me/careeranddisability and find the Career Planning and self-assessment activity.

Evaluation and decision making involves synthesizing the personal insight you gained, through self-assessment and the job focused information. Through research and experience, these inward and outward focused activities are the foundation for helping you to identify your short and long-term goals.

There are many ways to make a decision, some people find it helpful to use resources like Word or Excel to make a chart or table, to help them organize and reflect on the information they have gained. For example, with a chart or table you can clearly lay out details such as pros and cons of the occupations that you've chosen. If you create a chart or table remember to include things like labour market trends, education, experience requirements and what you have learned about working conditions.

Working conditions may be very important when you consider your accommodation needs which we will discuss in future videos. When the chart is finished you can compare the pros and cons for each occupation and consider factors such as, labour market trends and educational requirements to identify options that are best for you.

Also, pay attention to how each option feels when you reflect on it this information can be very useful when making a final decision. Remember that if you realize you don't like the results of the decision you made you can always make a new decision; we will talk about that again in the next module on reevaluation.

The next phase of the career planning process is implementation. In this phase, you are taking steps towards your goals by gaining experience, pursuing additional education, or training or actively networking and applying for opportunities. One of the best tools you can use to move your career forward is networking. Networking is a process of connecting with people you know and building relationships with people you should get to know. In order to research the world of work and move your career forward, conducting information interviews can help you to develop networks while gathering career and industry specific information. Remember that you already have a network of friends, classmates, professors, teaching assistants, family and neighbours. Many students find the process of networking to be intimidating. It is important to understand that you already have a network and that you should share your career goals with them. Even individuals working outside of your field of interest may have connections with relevant professionals. When speaking with individuals in your network, it is important to explore what they know if they can suggest additional resources and whether they are able to connect you to people in your area of interest.

Remember casual informal networking also occurs in daily life in places like coffee shops, grocery stores, on the subway so, be sure to let others know that you are job searching and let them know about your career goals.

You always want to be open, curious and courteous to everyone you meet and leave a good impression wherever you go you should. Also be looking for ways that you can assist others in achieving their career goals. Sometimes we are in a position where we need support and other times we might be in a position where we can provide support to others.

Mentoring relationships can serve as a key component to long-term career success. Connecting with experienced professionals in your field of interest provides you with tips, strategies, insider information support and guidance. UTSC has a mentoring program for senior students called Partnerships in Leadership which aims to support students' transition from university to work. You may also want to consider other mentoring programs specifically for students and recent graduates with disabilities. There are also organizations that specialize in assisting individuals who identify as having a disability to find work. See our resources guide for more information and remember you don't have to launch your career alone, UTSC's Academic Advising & Career Centre and these helpful organizations want to help you get your career started.

Let's spend a few minutes mapping your network of family, friends and acquaintances and figure out what supports you already have so you know what supports you may want to gather for yourself. Take out your worksheets and find the networking circle activity.

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