

# WEnav

## Career Navigation for Youth

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### Section 2: Self-Awareness



## What is Self-Awareness?

- What you know about yourself
- Importance:  
You cannot decide the right career if you do not know your work preferences, environment, and skills



## Gerry's Example

Gerry was going to university for business because his mom was a Business Analyst and she made a lot of money. His mom suggested that he take some time to think about how that career would fit with what he knew about himself.

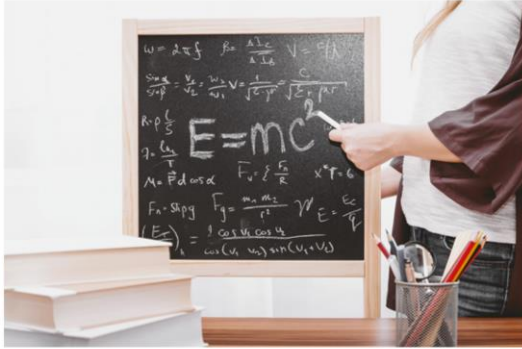
Gerry thought about **HOW** he liked to work. He did best when he could work on one thing at a time and work steadily. He knew that his mom's career would not be good for him. Then he thought about **WHAT** he liked.

The courses that he enjoyed most were biology and computer science and he spent his free time on the computer. Gerry did some research and found that he may enjoy a career in bioinformatics (using computer programming to analyze biological information). This would fit with **HOW** Gerry liked to work and **WHAT** Gerry liked to do.



The purpose of the following examples is to illustrate for youth why it is important to know themselves when engaging in career navigation. Youth are constantly growing, discovering more about themselves, and changing as they experience new things. They will learn how to identify this self-knowledge, recognize changes, and revise their career plans accordingly.

## Janelle's Example



"I have always been good at math, so I went to college for accounting. I now work at a large tax and accounting firm. I don't like it! I hate sitting at a desk inside all day. My desk feels like a prison sometimes! I hate working under a supervisor that is watching my every move. I find my work to be boring and I dislike the routine. I am so unhappy at work, and this is starting to make me less happy in my personal life, too. I wish I could start all over, but I still have student debt to pay off, so I probably will stick with this job for now."

Prompting Questions: Why is Janelle unhappy? What parts of her job are the hardest for her? How has this affected her personal life? How could her dilemma have been avoided? With the little information that you know about Janelle, what career changes should she consider making?

## All About Me Chart

Self-Knowledge	Do I know this?	What is this information?
Likes/Interests	Yes/No/Some	
Dislikes		
Skills		
What am I Good at?		
Transferable Skills		
Motivations		
Work Conditions		
Values		
Learning Styles		
Weaknesses		
Success		

The All about Me handout serves as a means of keeping track of the self-knowledge relevant to career navigation. Youth will refer to and modify this chart throughout the program. The chart highlights the information that is necessary for effective career navigation.

## How do I find this information?



You know yourself best, and you likely already know this information. You just have to know where to look and what to pay attention to. These are only some of the things you can do to help you discover this information.

1. Looking at past experiences
2. Assessments
3. Asking other people
4. Trying things
5. Visualizing

Let's look at these methods more closely.

There are many methods for “discovering” this self-knowledge. Youth already know much of the information that they need, they may just not know how to recognize it, organize it, or know where to look. As well, many youth may not have had the opportunity to discover this information for a lack of experience (if I had never painted before, then I would not have discovered that I love painting). The following are ways that youth can find this information. The purpose of reviewing these methods is to make youth more aware of their self-knowledge.

## Looking at Past Experiences



You can learn so much about yourself simply by looking at your past experiences.

For example, Shaylynn looked back at her high school experience and realized she did best in the classes that allowed her to use her hands (such as woodworking and art). She learned that she may benefit from a career that is hands-on.

Prompting Questions: Why may Shaylynn benefit from a career that is hands-on?

Does this mean that Shaylynn should only consider a career that is hands-on? Could she do well in a career that is not hands-on?

Shaylynn has enjoyed hands-on activities in the past, suggesting that she enjoys

and does well with these activities. This does not mean that she cannot do well in and enjoy a career that is not hands-on. She can explore all careers and use hands-on careers as a preliminary guide to her search.

Transition Prompt: We are going to now look at different activities and tools that will help you with learning from your past experiences.

## Damon's Examples

1

### Activity/Event

When his friend was upset, Damon did a good job making her feel better.

- What did you learn about Damon?
- How can this information relate to Damon's career?

2

### Activity/Event

Damon got very frustrated when his teacher told him what to do.

- What did you learn about Damon?
- How can this information relate to Damon's career?





## Valuable Experiences

Which of the following are experiences that can be valuable to your future career?

- a) Paid work experience
- b) Unpaid volunteer experience
- c) Extracurricular activities (such as being on a sports team or a drama club)
- d) Hobbies (such as gaming, hiking, collecting, drawing, etc.)
- e) Classes you have taken
- f) All of the above

The answer is e: all of the above. Emphasize that all experiences where youth gained skills or knowledge or self-knowledge can be valuable for their future careers.

The Valuable Experiences chart can help youth to organize their previous work/volunteer/other experiences that may be helpful in looking ahead to the future and may be helpful in examining their self-knowledge. Youth will list any valuable experience they have had. If they have trouble identifying which experiences are valuable, they can look at experiences where they have learned something.

For each valuable experience, youth list the activities done, skills learned, aspects about the experience they liked, and aspects they disliked. Youth may have trouble identifying the skills learned. To help them with this, have them consider the activities they did and what they needed to learn to do those activities better.

# Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are skills that are useful in more than one job.

- 1 Teachers need to be able to present information clearly and make it interesting so that everyone understands and is interested.
- 2 Sales presenters need to be able to present information clearly and make it interesting so that everyone understands and is interested.



Define transferable skills:

Transferable skills are skills that are useful in more than one job.

Discuss the example of how a teacher and a sales presenter share many transferable skills.

Prompting Question: What specific skills would a teacher and a sales presenter share?

A teacher and a sales presenter share communication skills, the ability to engage an audience, the ability to present information clearly so that everyone understands it, voice projection, time management, patience, an understanding of how people interpret and are affected by information, interpersonal skills, the ability to assess understanding, etc.

## Why are transferable skills important for career navigation?



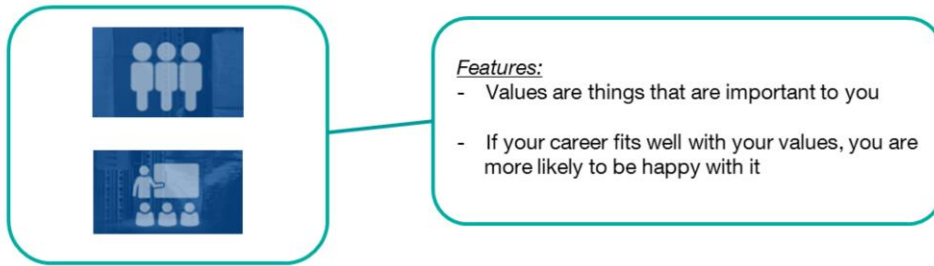
Hojae loves sculpting and decides that he wants to become a sculptor. He plans to make sculptures and sell them as art. After researching this career, Hojae's concern about being a sculptor is that finding employment is generally not stable.

Hojae looks at how his skill for sculpting could be transferable. He does some research and realizes that he could be a Clay Products Moulder in manufacturing. This career would allow him to work with his hands, do what he loves, and would generally offer more job stability than being a fine artist.

He plans to make his art sculptures on the side. Now that Hojae has found this career, he can get the appropriate training so that he can find employment as quickly as possible.

Prompting Question: Why is it important for career navigation to know how to identify your transferable skills?

# Values



Explain the importance of values to a future career: Values are extremely important to consider when developing your career pathway. You are more likely to enjoy your career if it fits with your values. You may not be able to find a career that fits perfectly with every one of your values, but you should keep your important ones in mind while researching different careers.

On the handout, youth check each value that they hold. Youth rate each value they checked between 1 (it is not very important to me) to 10 (it is extremely important to me). Youth will add and rate any other values they may hold that are not on the list.

Youth will add the highest rated values to their charts. Let youth decide for themselves what constitutes the “highest rated”. For some, this may be any value over 5.

For others, it may be those only marked with a 9 or 10. Let them decide. Youth will add their values to their All about Me charts under the “Values” section.

# Assessments



1

- Tests you can do that tell you about yourself
- You can complete them online or on paper
- You can learn much more about yourself through doing assessments

2

Should you base your career decisions only on the results of an assessment?



Assessments: Assessments are tests or tools that youth can use to learn more about themselves. Assessments can help youth consider things about themselves that they may never have considered. They can be completed online, on paper, or through a facilitator (career counsellors). Very few assessments have been tested for reliability and validity; therefore, youth should critically examine any results they get from an assessment, and keep in mind that these results may not be accurate or relevant. It is difficult to categorize all human behaviour into groups and careers as there are so many factors involved, and this should be considered while dealing with assessments. For this reason, assessments should never be used to make decisions or as a final word. They are very useful getting youth to think carefully about themselves. Some prompting questions that can help youth critically consider any assessment results:

Does the description describe me? Why or why not?

How could my results differ if I completed this assessment while I was in a different mood?

Does the assessment suggest careers? Do these careers seem interesting to me?

Why do I think the assessment suggested these careers for me?

To critically examine every assessment they look at, encourage youth to always ask:

Are these results accurate? What examples from my past can serve as evidence of these results being correct/incorrect?

## OPEN DISCUSSION

- **Asking Other People**
  - Other people know you well may notice things about you that you have never noticed about yourself
- **Visualizing**
  - Imagine yourself in a certain situation or doing certain tasks. Is this something you predict you will like?
- **Trying Things Out**
  - Where are the opportunities? Volunteering, job shadowing, taking classes, etc.

Asking Other People: Youth can learn information about themselves by asking other people questions. Other people may have insight into the youth that the youth has been unable to see. Youth should be wary, however, of making decisions based on other peoples' opinions as they can be (although well meaning) not necessarily accurate or what the youth genuinely wants. Some questions that youth can ask other people:

1. What are my strengths? Weaknesses?
2. What do you admire in me?
3. When do I seem to get irritated?
4. How do I react to conflict? New responsibilities? Change?
5. When do I seem to be the happiest? The most engaged?

Trying It: If youth are unsure how they would react in certain situations, one of the best things they can do, if they are able, is to try it out. For example, if they are unsure if they would enjoy working outside, they can volunteer for an outdoor activity. This may give them further insight into their preferences, abilities, and interests. Youth will learn more about this when learning

Visualization: If it is not possible for youth to try something, then it may be helpful for them to visualize themselves being in the situation or doing a



certain task and reflect on how they think it would be. Although this is not always reliable, it can still provide some insight and stimulate some reflection. Some questions youth can consider:

1. If I were to do this, how do I think I would react?
2. How have I reacted in similar situations in the past? Do I think this would be the same or different? Why?
3. What are some things that I cannot determine from simply visualizing this?

## Reflection Questions

1. Why is self-knowledge important to my career navigation?
2. What is one of the most important things about me to keep in mind for my future career?



WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN  
?

Have youth discuss/write/draw their responses to the two questions below. Encourage youth to share their responses with the rest of the group to stimulate further learning.