Doug’s passion was discussing politics. He loved to talk. The conversation might be about a presidential election or the political correctness of the school mascot. When Doug wrote about his passions in his Career Portfolio Builder, he discussed his love of politics. He liked talking about politics, but that did not mean that he wanted to be a career politician. How would Doug be able to fulfill his strong passion for politics without running for office?

Mrs. Garden was Doug’s journalism adviser. She showed Doug that by writing for the school paper, he investigated problems, interviewed people, and wrote his opinions. In other words, wasn’t he really discussing politics? Mrs. Garden also reminded Doug of his excellent English and social studies grades. His classes in those subjects gave him a solid basis for a career as a political reporter.

Mrs. Garden suggested that Doug work as a summer intern for the weekly newspaper. The experience would help him explore journalism as a career. Doug followed his teacher’s suggestion. He is now reporting on local politics for the Forestville Reporter. Doug found that writing about local politics is a great starting point for pursuing his career.

Doug is finishing his bachelor's degree in journalism while working for the newspaper. When he graduates, he will apply to city newspapers on the East Coast. His dream is to be part of a major newspaper in Washington D.C. or New York City. And Ms. Garden is encouraging Doug to live his dream.
Influence

Everything and everyone around you influence you every day. Influence means the power of someone or something to affect you directly or indirectly. You may not think about how people, places, ideas, experiences, or things influence you. However, the choices you make, which are a result of those influences, will affect your life.

Influences may be positive or negative. For example, if you are allergic to cats and you work as a veterinary technician in an animal clinic, your environment probably has a negative influence on you.

Some influences may be stronger and have a greater effect on your behavior and decisions. For example, when you respect and admire someone, the advice and opinions of that person are likely to have a strong impact on you.

Influence is not usually manipulation or direct persuasion. However, influence still affects you and your decisions. This chapter will help you determine what influences have some impact on your career decisions—in other words, who or what influences you. As you travel along your career path, you can decide what advice or experiences you want as influences on your career decisions.

To help you understand your personal career influences, do Activity 2-1, "Things I Love to Do."

Parents and Other Family Members

According to the Ohio Career Development Systems study, your family is the greatest influence on your career decision making. Your parents and/or other family members provide the starting place for your initial ideas about various careers. The way they react to their work situations can influence how you will feel about your working life.

Constanza enjoys her career as a cosmetologist. Her knowledge of color and her skill help her create new hair and makeup designs to flatters a client’s appearance. She has a knack for bringing out her customers’ beauty. She delights in how people’s faces light up with pleasure after she completes her work on their hair or face. Constanza is one of the most popular cosmetologists in town.

Working with people and beauty is her passion. However, Constanza never reveals her love of her career at home. In fact, Constanza comes home from work every day complaining. She grumbles

Observing how work affects people can give you information that may be positive or negative. Sometimes when you talk with people about their careers, you can tell that they enjoy waking up each morning and heading off to work. On the other hand, people who come home at the end of the workday exhausted and grouchy may not enjoy their careers.

Learning why people work at a particular job and finding out what makes them happy or unhappy with their careers can help you in your career discovery process. Listening to others talk about their workday and watching their interactions on the job are two ways you can research careers. Your observations can provide information that may help you make decisions about your own career.

"A closed mind is a good thing to lose."
—Anonymous
about her customers, her aching feet, the long hours, and the shop owner. On the other hand, she spends several hours of her free time each week researching new products. Constanza also volunteers monthly at the local career center and gives talks at area high schools about her work.

Constanza’s daughter, Donna, hears her mother’s daily complaints. However, she also sees her mother’s dedication to her profession.

Because of her mother’s behavior, Donna has mixed feelings about training for a cosmetology career. Does her mother really hate her work, or is she just complaining all of the time? How can Donna get a clear understanding of the profession?

Expectations

Your family may have expectations for you. They may have hopes and dreams for your future. Those expectations can influence your personality, passions, interests, and talents. They also can affect your choice of careers. Sometimes someone in your family has a career dream that you are expected to follow. That career may not express your own interests, talents, and passions. Or you may be expected to join the family business. Your family may caution you against pursuing a particular career.

Michael’s dad, Lou, has a small successful dental practice. Michael has helped his dad in the office since he was 12 years old. He has helped sterilize instruments, clean equipment, and run errands. Lou always hoped to work with his son and eventually turn the business over to him.

Michael closely watched his father’s work as a dentist. However, his experiences helped him decide that he did not want to become a dentist. Although Michael likes working with people, he is more interested in working as a stockbroker.

Lou had a difficult time accepting his son’s decision. He wondered what would happen to the dental practice that he worked so hard to build. When Michael talked to his father about his decision, he explained how he wanted to follow his father’s example—to build a career of his own. He wanted to work with people in the business world. Later he would like to become a financial adviser. Lou listened carefully. He saw more clearly how he and Michael were alike in their passion for their work but different in their interests.
Perhaps your family expects you to follow a career path that does not really suit you. If so, take the lead and show them the successes you have had in your courses, extracurricular activities, and part-time jobs. Use your successes as a starting point for introducing your family to a career path you would like to explore. That conversation can help your family listen to you and support your dreams.

Encouragement
By supporting and guiding you, members of your family can help you develop and pursue your career focus. Your family can support your search. They can encourage you to take courses related to the field you are interested in so you can explore your career path. In those ways, your family can help you create plans and goals for the future. Your family’s assistance in developing your talents and supporting your passions will help you find your P*A*T*H to Success.

Discuss your talents and passions with your parents and with other family members. Talk openly about what you enjoy now and what your plans are. Tell them how you want to research possible careers. They may be able to introduce you to someone in your career and help you with job shadowing. Doing something you like and doing it well—that is your passion. Your family’s encouragement can give you confidence and help guide your education and training.

Culinary Career
As a little girl, Cheryl Janz loved to help her mother cook, especially at holidays. Cheryl’s mother would let Cheryl help in the kitchen but would say to her, “You have to get a real job.” Cheryl knew, though, that she wanted to create meals that would make people—and herself—happy.

When Cheryl was deciding her career path, she listened to her mother. Cheryl became an architect and designed buildings. Her passion for food became a weekend hobby. She would cook and cater parties with her friends. After a career in architecture, Cheryl retired—but was soon bored. That is when she decided to enroll in culinary school, fulfilling her lifelong passion.

Today cooking is considered to be a real career. The popularity of television food shows has made frequent viewers “foodies.” The shows create enthusiasm not only in becoming a chef, but also in choosing other careers in food, hospitality, and tourism.

Like those who love the food industry, Cheryl has a high level of career satisfaction. She often spends long hours in hot kitchens. But she goes home happy every day.

Does this description sound like your taste in careers? For more information about:

- types of culinary careers
- culinary schools
- the American Culinary Federation

access www.thomsonedu.com/school/iyc and click the appropriate links.
Teachers

As a student, you are in contact with classroom teachers every school day. You can discuss your future with teachers, coaches, and advisers. This talk is especially important if you are interested in a career related to a teacher’s class. Suppose you are taking Spanish and believe you have a talent for foreign languages. In this situation, your Spanish teacher would be a natural resource for information about career opportunities for Spanish majors.

Teachers influence your career decisions almost as much as your family does. Your English teacher can have a major influence on many career choices. You may think English classes relate to only a few occupations, such as being an author, a journalist, or an editor. However, every career requires workers to have effective communication skills—the very skills developed in English classes. Helpful communication skills include the ability to give and follow instructions accurately and to persuade people to a particular point of view. Useful English skills also include writing in an organized style using correct spelling and grammar. Workers in every career must read material related to job skills. Every employee needs to be able to explain problems to supervisors, other workers, and customers. To keep current in your field, you must be able to understand and use up-to-date information. That is a big task because the amount of the world’s information doubles about every 18 months.

Math teachers also can have a direct influence on your career success. Some people use math in their careers daily, such as engineers, web designers, and X-ray technicians. However, do you realize that mathematics plays an important part in the careers of funeral directors, electricians, broadcast technicians, and musicians? Musicians, especially, must know math. For example, standards, frequencies, and ratios are the basis for a music scale. Few people would enjoy listening to a melody that lacks musical “math.”

Many behaviors used in the workforce are the same as those used in activities and courses in school. So teachers can be excellent sources for learning about your skills and behaviors. Teachers know, for instance, if you are flexible and able to adapt to change. Observing you shows them whether you can cooperate in team situations and whether you have leadership skills. Teachers know if you are organized, punctual, and dependable. Teachers can be impartial and truthful with you when discussing your work qualities. The comments your teachers make can help you identify behaviors that you may need to change.

To get this kind of information and to get the most help, choose teachers who know you well. First approach teachers who have been pleased with your work. Begin by talking with them about what you have enjoyed in their classes. Ask for suggestions about how skills you have learned from them can help you develop your career focus. Teachers enjoy offering insight and information about their own experiences to students. These discussions can help give you confidence to take charge of your future and can provide you with a wealth of information.

career fact

The number one skill employers want from their employees is the ability to listen, write, and speak effectively. The next most important skills are analytical and computer literacy skills, according to QuintCareers.com.

Peers

You and your friends and classmates influence each other every day in many ways. That influence may include what clothes to
wear, what movies to see, what classes to take, and what music to download. Yet how much influence should your friends have on your future life and career? You may want to continue hanging out with your friends after you finish school, but do you want to build your future around their choices?

Kita’s classmates admired her creative way of dressing. She used the most unusual combinations of accessories in her outfits and received many compliments on her style. Kita’s talents included a unique way with color and design that helped her create eye-catching displays. With those qualities, Kita seemed to be perfect for a career in fashion design or interior decorating.

Shauna, Kita’s best friend, wanted to move to Chicago and work as a receptionist after graduation. Because Chicago has been home to many famous designers and decorators, Shauna asked Kita to share an apartment with her there. Shauna’s plan was tempting to Kita. However, Kita’s move to Chicago would mean postponing her plans for fashion design school.

Kita called her close friend Carlton to discuss Shauna’s plans for Chicago. Carlton asked Kita if fashion design was still her career goal. Kita quickly said yes. Carlton suggested that Kita share an apartment with Shauna during the summer. She could explore the fashion industry through a summer job, but still start school in the fall. Otherwise, Carlton advised Kita that she might resent Shauna for encouraging her to put her education and career plans on hold.

After talking with Carlton, Kita was confused. Living in Chicago with Shauna sounded so exciting. Was delaying her career dream what she wanted to do? No, fashion design was Kita’s passion. She was eager to begin her education. Kita informed Shauna of her decision. Kita also promised to help Shauna find a roommate before leaving for school in the fall.

Talking to your friends allows you to consider other people’s viewpoints. Their advice may help you consider new possibilities when making decisions. Keep in mind that your friends’ influences can be either positive or negative. Use your judgment when considering your friends’ advice about your career decisions. Your friends may have good intentions. However, they may not understand what is best for your future. While your friends’ opinions are important to you, analyze their advice in terms of your interests. Remember, these are your goals and passions.

Employers
Parents, other family members, teachers, and peers are not the only people who can influence your career choice. A part-time job also can influence your career decisions.

Manuel was eager to decide if firefighting was the career for him. So he wisely decided to join an Explorer firefighting post. Manuel works at the Anderson Fire Department, where he can watch the daily work of a firefighter. His Explorer training offers experience in various aspects of a career in firefighting, and his work helps the fire department. Manuel likes working with the equipment and teaching children about fire safety. On weekends, he cleans the station. He cannot go on fire calls because he is not 18,
but he participates in Explorer fire training and competitions.

During his interview with the fire department, Manuel spoke with Ms. Farrell, the supervisor. He told her that since he was little, whenever he heard a fire truck, he would stop whatever he was doing and watch the truck pass. Manuel wanted Ms. Farrell to know that he was seriously considering a firefighting career. So to help Manuel with his career decision, Ms. Farrell is teaching him scheduling and other routine station work. Manuel is a good employee, and Ms. Farrell hopes he will continue to work at the station while he is in school.

Manuel finds firefighting work enjoyable and challenging, but he is not sure he is ready to face the hazards of such a career. If he decides to pursue it, however, he hopes to work full-time for the Anderson Fire Department after his training and Emergency Medical certification.

An employer can influence your career choice and help you make career decisions in several ways. Part-time jobs provide you with experience. You can observe employees at your workplace to see if you like a certain type of career. On a break or before or after work, you can interview someone who works in the career field you are exploring.

Working as a volunteer can help you understand the skills that are necessary for a successful career. Chapter 3 discusses those options in detail.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

Human Rights Activist and First Lady

Counselors

School counselors have several responsibilities. One is to help you work through the process of developing your career. Counselors can provide information to guide you as you make decisions about your future. They can suggest courses that relate to your activities, talents, grades, and abilities. They can suggest resources, such as web sites, for researching educational options. They can provide business contacts for gaining career experiences.

What a counselor does best is help you discover your options. For example, suppose you go to the counselor’s office to learn about a career in medicine. Your counselor may ask what particular career you are thinking about—for example, working as a doctor, nurse, dental hygienist, pharmacist, or physical therapist. The two of you then might talk about the courses you should take in high school to prepare for that career. You and your counselor also might discuss other careers in medicine you had not considered—perhaps music therapy, sports medicine, or nutrition.

After you narrow your career focus to where you can choose your education and training pathway, counselors can help you toward your goal. Counselors can provide planning checklists, information on courses, suggestions for getting career experience, and tips for taking control of your homework. In short, counselors are invaluable resources who have many ways to help you on your P*A*T*H to Success. Make an appointment with your school counselor soon.
Environmental Influences on Career Decisions

Environment has an impact on your career decisions in many ways. The following questions are related to your environment—either your work environment or your social environment. Your work environment is the surroundings and conditions of your workplace. Your social environment includes the community where you live and work and your lifestyle choices.

- Do you want to stay where you live now?
- Do you prefer a rural, urban, or suburban setting?
- How important is the outdoors in influencing your choice of career? For example, is being able to go mountain biking important to you? Or are you an avid surfer?
- Do you want to be close to a place where you can continue your education?
- Is climate important to you? Do you prefer a change of seasons or a consistent climate?
- Will there be a future for people in your career field in the community where you want to live?
- Do you want to work around people or by yourself?

Some of those questions may seem strange to you. For example, why would climate influence your career path? Climate can be a factor in making a career choice because some people focus on work better when they are in a climate that suits them. So if you enjoy the changing seasons, you will be happier and work more effectively when you live in a place where the weather is seasonal rather than a place where it is consistent.

Activity 2-3, "Community and Climate Preferences," determines some important environmental influences for your career choice.
Influence of Values on Career Decisions

What does career success mean to you—earning a large income? having an important title? being famous? being respected by others? being independent? being a trendsetter? providing service to others? Your values influence your answers. Your values are the qualities that are important to you. Your values also are the motivation behind your goals and decisions—why you set specific goals and make certain decisions.

You are the only one who knows your values. Only you can determine what motivates you to achieve success. If you base your career on your values, you will be happier with your life and career. Your view of success depends on your personal values, the values of your family and culture, and your economic values. Only you can define what career success means to you.

Personal and Family Values

Your family began instilling its values in you when you were born. Those values are the beliefs that your family members emphasize. Each family has its own set of values. However, the way individual family members interpret the values may vary.

Elizabeth’s family believes in the importance of serving others. Since she was a child, her parents have included her in church activities to benefit their community. In addition, Elizabeth’s mother has always volunteered at the voting booths on Election Day. One of Elizabeth’s earliest memories is helping her mother pass out the “I Voted Today” stickers. Elizabeth also has worked in a kitchen for the homeless. She set up boxes in the teacher’s lounge to save hotel soaps and shampoos for the local women’s shelter.

The result of all of these family activities is that Elizabeth believes that helping others should be part of her life.

She is exploring careers in teaching, social work, and health care.

Zoltan believes in his work. He prides himself on being different. He applies his creativity to produce award-winning web sites. His use of stimulating colors, bold graphics, and unique photos result in eye-catching sites. Customer e-mails prove that he does well.

Zoltan knows that he has his family to thank for his values. Zoltan’s family taught him honesty, so his designs do not attempt to deceive those who view them.
His mother’s artistic sense is part of Zoltan’s character. His father’s thoroughness guides him in studying computer language. His grandparents taught him about honor. Zoltan will not give up his standards of what he believes is right and true. In his work, Zoltan preserves the values of his family.

"Some people are your relatives, but others are your ancestors. And you choose the ones you want to have as ancestors. You create yourself out of those values."
—Ralph Ellison
Writer

Cultural Expectations and Values
The expectations and values of your culture may influence your work values. Your culture—your social, ethnic, or religious background and perhaps the community where you live—has certain beliefs and behaviors. Your answers to the questions below will help you begin to identify your cultural values and expectations. You also may learn whether these values can affect your work values.

- Is helping others important in your culture?
- Do your traditions consider religion the most important part of your life?
- Is caring for the environment something that is important to you and your culture?
- How is money viewed in your culture?
- In your culture, do people avoid working outside the community, as, for example, the Amish people do?
- Will the businesses and other cultures you interact with affect your choice of careers?

The Navajo nation has expectations for Chenoa and the other members of her tribe. Her Native American upbringing has helped form her values. Whether she continues to live on the reservation or leaves to work in the big city nearby, Chenoa will have the core values that her family and tribe have instilled in her. One of those values is respect for her elders.

Cultural traditions also affect Chenoa’s career choice. She knows that working in front of a television or still camera is discouraged in her culture. Therefore, Chenoa will avoid careers that involve film and photographs of her. Chenoa’s heritage is important to her. She always will respect the Navajo customs and will never abandon her beliefs.

You may be unaware of all of the cultural expectations that can influence your career decisions. Their influence may not be obvious. Analyze the issues that are important in your culture. You can identify how your culture influences your decision.

Think Critically
How does your cultural heritage impose expectations that influence your decisions?
Economic Values

What kind of lifestyle do you want? Do you want to acquire the latest technology, a luxury car, and designer clothes? Do you want to buy a home, marry, and raise a family? No matter what your answers, all lifestyles involve money. For most people, having money means they must earn an income.

Your values relate to your economic goals. In making career decisions, you need to determine how important money is to you. How would you rank the following statements in importance when you imagine your future?

- A career that fulfills your passions and talents
- A career that allows you to pay the bills and have money for extras and savings
- A career that provides you with a large income
- A career that provides you with status
- A career that helps others but does not have a large paycheck
- A career that requires you to live in a foreign country under primitive conditions

Some careers have intrinsic, or built-in, rewards. The feelings those careers provide are more important than the money you receive. Other careers offer extrinsic, or external, rewards. The money and benefits mean more to you than the work you do.

You may choose to work at a nursing home for the extrinsic rewards you receive. With the paycheck you receive, you can buy concert tickets, music downloads, clothes, food—whatever way you choose to spend your money. Or you may choose to volunteer at a nursing home for the intrinsic rewards that activity offers. You receive no pay for your efforts, but you enjoy making elderly people’s lives less lonely.

**Career Fact**

Income has an effect on people’s health. Studies have shown that the more money people make, the healthier they are.

Another factor influencing income is education. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that the more you learn, the more you earn—and the less likely you are to be unemployed. That fact does not mean that you need to have a bachelor’s degree to earn a high wage. However, you must continue to improve your education over your lifetime to earn a high wage. In reality, more years of education often pay off because employers believe that educated workers learn tasks more easily. That belief may not be true, but many people assume it anyway. Anyone with a college degree can enter a career that requires less education if he or she meets the other job requirements.

The amount of income you earn is only one factor in your career choice. Although everyone needs money, few people choose a career based solely on income. Other work environment factors include the possibility of career advancement and working conditions. But what is most important is that you base your career on your values. Only you can determine which factors will have the most influence on your career choice.

**Activity 2-4, “Values That Motivate You,” helps you pinpoint those values that motivate you.**

**The Case Challenges give you the opportunity to analyze some of the influences on career decisions.**
Summary

- I can describe how the power of influences affects my career decisions.
  Everything and everyone around me influences my decisions and me. These influences may be positive or negative. Some influences are stronger than others. The strong influences are likely to have an impact on my career decisions. If I can determine who and what influences me, I can explore the advice and experiences that will affect my career decisions.

- I have analyzed how people influence my decisions and me.
  My family is the basis for my initial ideas and beliefs about work. Teachers also may have a strong influence on my career decisions. My peers’ opinions are important to me, but I must analyze their advice in terms of my interests and passions. An employer can help me make career decisions by allowing me to observe an employee or by providing me with experience in a field that interests me. My counselor can provide information and options that help me make my career decisions.

- I have determined my work and social environment preferences.
  My work environment consists of the surroundings and conditions of my workplace. Work environment includes the atmosphere of my workplace and my interactions with others, as well as the geographic area where I work and its climate. My social environment includes the community where I live and work and my lifestyle choices.

- I have identified the values that influence me.
  My values are the things that are important to me. They are the motivation behind my goals and decisions. The values from my family will influence my choice of career and will affect my personal value system. My cultural heritage also may create expectations and values that influence my work values and career choices. My economic values will determine the balance of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards I choose for my career.
Vocabulary Builder

Choose the term that best fits the definition.

- a. culture
- b. extrinsic
- c. influence
- d. intrinsic
- e. motivation
- f. social environment
- g. values
- h. work environment

1. Built-in career rewards
2. External career rewards
3. The community where you live and work, along with your lifestyle choices

Review What You Have Learned

1. Why do the influences in your life have so much effect on your P*A*T*H to Success?
2. How do your parents and family members influence your career decision?
3. What effect do teachers have on your career choice?
4. What do math and English classes have to do with your career success?
5. What are two ways that an employer can help you with your career decision?
6. What are some ways your school counselor can help you with your career planning?
7. What environmental influences have an effect on your career decision making?
8. How do your values, including those of your family, influence your career decisions?
9. Discuss how cultural expectations affect career decisions. Give an example.
10. What is the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in a career?
11. Why should intrinsic and extrinsic rewards have an impact on your career decision?
Activities

Activity 2-1  Things I Love to Do

Analyze the things you like to do. This activity will help you begin to understand some things that may influence your career decisions.

1. On a separate sheet of paper, list 20 things you love to do.

2. Code your responses using the following symbols. (An item may have more than one symbol.)
   - Place a $ before any item that costs money to do.
   - Put an R in front of any item that involves some risk. (Risk may be physical, intellectual, or emotional.)
   - Place an F before the items you think a family member might have had on a list at your age.
   - Place a P before items you prefer doing with people.
   - Put an A before items you prefer doing alone.
   - Place a 5 by the items that would probably not be on your list in five years.

3. Which of the categories in Item 2 influences you most? Why?

Activity 2-2  Learning from Others

How much do you know about the careers of people who influence you? Interview one of your parents or a relative about his or her current career. Use the following questions as interview guidelines.

1. Where do you work now?
2. How long have you been with your current employer?
3. What is your specific job title? What is your job description?
4. What products or services does your employer provide? Who are the customers?
5. What specific education or training does this career require?
6. What communication skills does this career require? What math skills are needed? What technology skills are needed?
7. How has this career changed over the years? How has technology affected it?
8. What is the best thing about this career? Why?
9. What is the worst thing about this career? Why?
10. What was your first paying job? How did it help with your current career?
11. Why did you choose your current career?
12. What is your advice for preparing for career success?

How did the results of the interview influence your thinking about career choices?

Activity 2-3  Community and Climate Preferences

The climate, location, and type of community in which you live and work are environmental factors that affect career satisfaction. Describe where you would prefer to live in 10 to 15 years. Then list the benefits of your choices.

- Examples of climate: humid or dry and changing seasons or consistent weather
- Examples of location: small town or big city, rural or suburban area, and near hills/mountains or flat land
- Examples of benefits: close to mass transit, family oriented, health care availability, cost of living, education availability, and neighborhood safety
Activity 2-4 Values That Motivate You

From the following list, select six items that motivate you to do your best work in school. Write them on a separate sheet of paper. Remember, school is your current job—grades and knowledge are your pay, classmates are your coworkers, and so on.

1. Good pay
2. Career advancement/promotion to next grade
3. Respect of others
4. Chance to be the top performer
5. A nice work space
6. Freedom to do projects my own way
7. Bonuses or other rewards
8. Job security
9. Ability to do a good job
10. Approval of the boss
11. Nice coworkers
12. More money
13. The chance to do my own planning
14. Feelings of importance
15. Nice working conditions
16. Giving support to others
17. Recognition from others
18. Opportunity to do new things
19. The chance to talk to other people
20. Being interested in what I am doing

If you selected items: Then you may be motivated by:
1, 2, 7, 8, 12 security
5, 11, 15, 16, 19 opportunities to work with other people in nice surroundings
3, 4, 10, 14, 17 prestige and achievement
6, 9, 13, 18, 20 independence and personal satisfaction

Do you see a pattern? Which of your values influence your motivations?

Case Challenges

After reading each scenario below, discuss the case with a small group of fellow students. Use the following questions to get the conversation started. Decide what advice your group would give to the person involved.

• What is the person’s motivation in the situation?
• What personal values might motivate the career choice?
• What is the work environment choice?
• What other influences play a role in the case?

1. Charles teaches social studies and enjoys working with students. His school and his students are proud of Charles’s teaching. Stephanie, his wife, is a certified public accountant (CPA) with a large company. She works long hours, including many Saturdays. Their first baby is due in two months. Both Stephanie and Charles believe that one parent should stay home with the new baby while the other parent works. Both can take three months off from their jobs when the baby is born.

• Who in this family should stay home, and who should work?
• Should Stephanie return to her well-paying job as a CPA?
• Should they find a child care provider for their baby?

2. Alana likes her job as a carpenter. She works for a company that produces Broadway shows that tour major U.S. cities. She is in charge of the team that scouts the tour theaters. She works with the set designer to customize the shows’ sets to each location. Alana also travels to each city and stays with her team until the play begins. Looking to the future, Alana is thinking about starting her own set design company in New York City.

• Should she begin taking college courses in business management?
• Should she retrain for another position?
• Should she look for a way to cut back on her travel to prepare for her business?

3. Bobek is fascinated by how restaurant kitchens are run. He is the pastry chef at Ginseng, a trendy vegetarian restaurant in Atlanta. However, he is not entirely happy because he has not been promoted to kitchen manager, the person who makes the decisions about the menus, supplies, and kitchen staff. One of Bobek’s customers has offered him the opportunity to manage the kitchen of a new restaurant on the Pacific Ocean in Washington State.

• Should he leave the busy atmosphere of his hometown, Atlanta, to become the kitchen manager of a restaurant thousands of miles away?
• Should he wait until he finds a kitchen manager position in Atlanta?

4. Marguerite received her associate degree as a registered nurse (RN) from the local community college. She enjoys many outdoor activities, including biking and running. Because of her interests, Marguerite prefers working the flexible hours of a homecare nurse. Although she enjoys nursing, the hours for home-based nursing care are not always steady. Sometimes her pay does not cover her expenses. Marguerite’s friend told her about job openings at the post office. So Marguerite took the required test, passed it, and became a letter carrier. She now works regular hours. However, she wonders if she made the right decision. She misses medicine and her contact with patients.

• Should Marguerite go back to school to become a surgical nurse, a skilled position with regular hours?
• Should she take a job at a hospital with regular, but less flexible, hours?
• Should she continue her job as a letter carrier?