

Career Action Plan: What is it?



Your "road map" to . . .

Who am I?

Where am I going?

How will I get there?

- **Why create a Career Action Plan?**

Sometimes when people are confused about what to do, they do nothing. They decide to just wait and see what "comes along." These people later realize that doing nothing is in itself a choice, and that very seldom does anything worthwhile just "come along." Things happen for people who make them happen. Take control of your life, make a plan, and work hard. You are sure to find both happiness and success!

"A road to success is always under construction." Unknown

- **Statistics about education and careers in the U.S. reveal why it's important to have a plan for life after high school.**

- People who don't have post-high school training are three times more likely to be unemployed than those who do.
- People who have some training after high school make more money and have better opportunities for career advancement than those who have only a high school diploma.
- Freshmen who don't have a career goal or academic major when they enter college are more likely to drop out.
- If you have a solid plan before graduating, your chances for success in post-secondary education increase.

- A **Career Action Plan** is an opportunity to outline the progression of steps required to achieve your career goals. It is your "road map" to follow so that you can see the necessary steps to get where you eventually want to be. The purpose of this activity is to actually **show** you the steps involved. It will hopefully assist you in making the commitment to your future.

- Therefore, you will first need to identify your future career. If you are not sure which career, you will need to select your greatest career area of interest and research the specifics of this career (such as education required, college or school that offers this program, time frame involved, etc.)

- **After High School, What Next?**

Do you currently have a job? If so, is that the job you would like to be doing five years from now? Do you know how many different jobs you could be trained for in the military? If you are planning to attend college after high school, do you imagine yourself on a small campus or at a large, major university? How much money would you like to be making in ten years?

Now is the time to be thinking about these kinds of questions. You will never again in your lifetime have so many opportunities to choose from. NOW, while you are still in high school, you will have easy access to information about your opportunities/information that may not be simple to find once you leave school.

High school graduates have many choices to consider when deciding what to do for the next few years of their life.

Possible options after high school are:

- Work
- On-the job training
- Apprenticeship
- Join the military
- Volunteer

Attend postsecondary school:

- Vocational schools
- Technical schools
- Two-year colleges
- Four-year colleges and universities

Students can work toward earning:

- Certificates
 - Diplomas
 - Associate degrees
 - Bachelor degrees
 - Advanced degrees
- Remember, just as with any other goal, establish attainable goals within a realistic timeframe. For example, if your career goal requires a bachelor's degree, plan on attending college for a minimum of four years.
 - Make an attempt to be as complete as possible, and be sure to pay attention to all of the detailed steps that are required for achieving your career goal. Some of your steps may require further education and some of your steps may not. You may need to research information on your future career in order to map out the steps for attaining it. Identify the college or school that you plan on attending in order to complete your education, as well as any testing or certification. Identify when you plan to enroll and when you plan to graduate. Be as specific as possible.

- When completing a **Career Action Plan**, you should have short and long-term goals. When selecting your short and long-term goals, it's recommended your goals be:
 - ✓ Achievable: you have the skills, energy, and time to accomplish it
 - ✓ Believable: you believe in it
 - ✓ Attainable: you can state how long it will take to reach it
 - ✓ Flexible: you are willing to modify it as necessary
- Short-term goals can be reached in one to three years. Long-term goals can take about three to five years. Using these time frames to set your goals will make following your plan easier.
- Your listed short and long-term goals will give you the starting point on where to move next. Examples: you may need to enroll in school, apply for scholarships, take college entrance exams, apply for employment, or start a trade program in your area of interest. A well thought out **Career Action Plan** will prove to be a very useful tool to complete, revisit, and revise if necessary.

DIRECTIONS FOR GETTING STARTED

1. To get started, complete the *"What Is Your Ideal Job?"* form located at the back of the packet.
2. After you decide on your career goal, you will now have to research your selected career goal using information in your classroom or by using on-line sites.
3. Use the *"What Skills/Education Do You Need?"* form to record the information you have researched about your chosen career goal. This form is located at the back of the packet.
4. Complete your **Career Action Plan** worksheet.
5. Type your final **Career Action Plan**.

Career Action Plan

Basic Information

Listed below are some important steps to follow when preparing your **Career Action Plan**. Use the attached "Worksheet" to begin preparing your **Career Action Plan**. See the page entitled **Career Action Plan Formatting Checklist** for instructions on how to format your plan.

Step 1: Identify your future career.

Simply state the title of your chosen occupation.

Step 2: List the first step toward achieving this goal.

For most occupations, it is required that you possess a high school education. Therefore, your graduation from high school is probably going to be the first step.

Step 3: List the location, date of attendance, and "major" for any required post secondary schools.

Example:

- Graduate from Atwater High School in June 20__
- Enroll at Merced College for the fall semester of 20__.
- Declare my major of _____ at Merced College.
- Transfer to California State University, Stanislaus, in the fall of 20__, with a major in _____.

Step 4: Include any additional certifications, vocational degrees, or other requirements for your future occupation.

Example:

- National examinations
- State required board examinations
- Organizational certifications
- Internships
- Residencies
- Apprenticeships

Career Action Plan Worksheet

Career Action Plan for _____
(Your name)

Future Career: _____
(Name of your future career)

- June 201_ Receive _____ High School Diploma
- _____ _____
(Month and Year) (Description of action)
- _____ _____
(Month and Year) (Description of action)
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Career Action Plan for Joe Jones

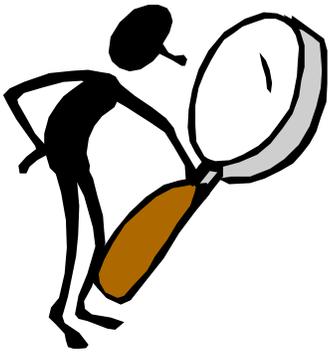
Future Career: Automotive Technician

- March 2009 Take Merced College Placement Test
- May 2009 Enroll in Merced College
- May 2009 Apply for part-time positions at automotive dealerships
- June 2009 Complete ROP Automotive Services I class
- June 2009 Receive Merced High School Diploma
- June 2009 Obtain and start part-time employment as an Auto Detailer
- August 2009 Start classes at Merced College in the Automotive Technology program to obtain a Certificate in Automotive Engines (12 units)
- May 2010 Obtain Automotive Engines Certificate from Merced College
- June 2010 Apply for and obtain a full time Automotive Mechanic position

Career Action Plan for Jane Smith

Future Career: Emergency Trauma Doctor

- March 2010 Receive Emergency Medical Technician Certification
- March 2010 Train to become an Emergency Medical Dispatcher
- June 2010 Receive Atwater High School Diploma
- June 2010 Seek Employment as an Emergency Room Technician at Mercy Medical Center Merced
- June 2010 Seek employment at Riggs Ambulance Service as an Emergency Medical Dispatcher
- September 2010 Enroll at University of California, Merced
- September 2012 Declare major of Biological Sciences with a concentration in Human Biology; complete prerequisites for medical school
- January 2014 Begin applying to medical schools
- June 2014 Graduate from UC Merced with a BS in Biological Sciences
- September 2014 Enter medical school at University of California, Davis
- June 2018 Graduate from medical school and receive my MD
- July 2018 Seek employment as an Emergency Room Trauma Doctor



Career Action Plan Formatting Checklist

Set up your document so that it is visually appealing (see examples). If you prefer to have directions, they are listed below:

- _____ Use any font that can be easily read. Please do not choose fancy styles.
- _____ Change left and right margins to 1".
- _____ If you know how to set up a table in Word, set up a two column table. This will make it easier for you to format your document.
- _____ Give your document a title "Career Action Plan for _____"
and space at least a double space before listing your sub-title,
"Future Career: _____."
- _____ Return a few times and begin listing the month and year of the action you plan to take, as well as a short description of that action.
Suggestion: Create a two column table to format this part of your Career Action Plan. Remove the lines.
- _____ Center your document on the page.
- _____ Make sure you save your work so that you will be able to go back and make changes, if necessary.
- _____ Spell check your document. Proofread your document carefully.

Name _____

What is Your Ideal Job?

Have you ever thought about what type of job you can see yourself doing in the future? Have you begun to prepare or have you set goals for yourself? Well, these questions will help you answer the following questions and more.

1. List work or jobs you have fantasized doing?

2. What really interests you?

3. What is the type of lifestyle you would like to have?

4. What are the skills you already have that you would like to use in your future career?

5. What is the kind of environment you would like to work in?

6. What are the kinds of people you would like to work with?

7. What work values would you require of your co-workers or boss?

8. What type of geographic location would you like to live and work in?

9. What type of salary would be required for your life expenses?

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe."

Anatole France

Name _____

What Skills/Education Do You Need?

You now know what your future consists of, or what you would like in your future career endeavors. Now use this information that you have learned about yourself to answer the following questions and to complete your **plan of action**.

CAREER GOAL _____

I. School subjects helpful in preparing for this occupation

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____

II. Educational/training plan

YES

NO

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------|-------|
| A. | Attend a four-year college or university | _____ | _____ |
| B. | Attend a two-year college | _____ | _____ |
| C. | Pursue technical/special career training | _____ | _____ |
| D. | Enter armed services | _____ | _____ |
| E. | Secure employment after HS graduation | _____ | _____ |

III. Skills needed to reach goal

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____

IV. Develop timeline for obtaining goal and future career

- A. (Short Term Goal) What can I do this year?
Skills _____
Education/Training _____
- B. What can I do next year?
Skills _____
Education/Training _____
- C. (Long Term Goal) What can I do after high school?
Skills _____
Education/Training _____

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