Career Fair Preparation Activities
for high school

created by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for participating schools
funded in part by VT State GEAR UP, a federal college access program
After the event

Follow up with students to deepen their understanding of what they learned.

1. Have each student write him/herself a letter (lesson plan included).
2. Have students write thank-you notes to presenters.
4. Have your students make collages, posters, or Web pages for younger students, to introduce particular careers that interested them.
5. Have students write a short article about the career fair for the school newspaper or a local newspaper.
6. In a “my story” assignment, ask students to discuss who they are, what inspires them, whom they admire, how they want to influence their communities, etc. Encourage them to present their stories in any format that appeals to them: short essay, film, audio interview, Web page, etc.
Ask a family member to answer the following questions about his or her career. Write down his/her answers. Be as specific as possible.

1. What is your job title?

2. How did you find your job (newspaper ad, employment agency, personal contact, etc.)?

3. What made you decide to work in this career area (chance, parental influence, personal interest, salary, first available job, etc.)?

4. Is this a traditional job for a person of your gender?

5. What qualifications did you need for this job? How much education or training?

6. What duties do you have during a typical day?

7. What do you like best about your work?

8. What do you like least about your work?

9. When you were in school, what career dreams did you have?

10. Did your dreams come true? Why? Why not?

11. If you could have your dream career today, what would it be?
work values clarification
What do I want from a job?

The following list describes a number of work values. Based on the definition provided, rate how important each value would be to you in an ideal job, using the following scale:

1 not important at all  2 minimally important  3 important  4 very important

___ Self-direction: I will work on my own with minimal supervision, and will have the independence to complete tasks the way I want to.

___ Prosperity: One of my main goals will be to earn money and perhaps become quite wealthy.

___ Respect and recognition: My work will be respected and recognized by other people.

___ Creativity: I will use my imagination and creativity in my job.

___ Leadership: In my position, I will be a role model and/or leader.

___ Risk taking: I will have many opportunities to take risks and confront challenges in my job.

___ Expertise: I will be considered an expert in my field and will be recognized for my knowledge.

___ Responsibility: I will have a great deal of responsibility.

___ Making a difference: My work will have a visible impact on people’s lives and/or on society.

___ Producing a result: My work will involve projects with specific, visible results.

___ Supervision: I will be responsible for the work of others.

___ Aesthetics: I will add physical beauty to the world.

___ Time freedom: I will have time outside of work to do the things I want to do.

___ Self-expression: I will be able to express myself fully through my work.

___ Affiliation: I will be recognized as a member of a particular organization.

___ Friendship: I will have an opportunity to make friends with my coworkers.

___ Structure: I will have a lot of direction on how to do my job.

___ Security: The organization I work for will provide me with steady employment.

___ Moral fulfillment: My work will be consistent with my moral standards and values.
____ **Location:** I will live in an area or community with many opportunities to do the things I like to do.

____ **Authority:** I will have authority over others and be able to influence people.

____ **Recreation:** I will contribute to other’s enjoyment of and pleasures in life.

____ **Social status:** I will enjoy a high degree of social status because of the job I hold.

____ **Ability utilization:** My work will use my skills and talents to their fullest potential.

____ **Organizational structure:** The organization I work for will have clearly defined goals, policies, and procedures.

____ **Working conditions:** I will work in an environment that supports my ability to get my work done.

List the ten values that are most important to you, from most to least important:

1. ____________________________________
2. ____________________________________
3. ____________________________________
4. ____________________________________
5. ____________________________________
6. ____________________________________
7. ____________________________________
8. ____________________________________
9. ____________________________________
10. ____________________________________
Objective: Students will be able to identify their values and the ways those values relate to career choices.

Grade level: grades 7–12

Expectations of students upon completion of activity
• Students will determine their values and decide what’s important in a future career choice.
• Based on their worksheet results, students will develop three questions to ask presenters/business people at a career fair.

Teacher prep time: 10–15 minutes

Class time: 30 minutes

Materials
• worksheets
• pens and pencils

Format: Group setting within the classroom

Procedure
• Prior to class, look over the worksheet “What do you look for in a job?” (see attached) to become familiar with the activity and what it entails.
• Have students complete the worksheet.
• Have the students discuss what’s important and not important to them in a job.

Related Web sites
• www.vsac.org
• www.acrnetwork.org/
• www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step1.asp

NCDA guidelines for personal social development
• develop an understanding of yourself to build and maintain a positive self-image
• begin the first steps in career management
• use a process of decision-making as one component of career development
• use accurate, current, and unbiased career information during career planning

Vermont’s Framework of Standards vital results
Section 3 Personal Development Standards — Making Decisions
3.7 Informed decisions — Students make informed decisions in the workplace.
3.15 Career choices — Students know about various careers.

VTSCA career standards
Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self, and to make informed career decisions.
What do you look for in a job?

Look through the following list.

Put a **“J”** next to things you hope to find in a job.

Put a **“T”** next to the things you could tolerate in a job.

Put an **“R”** next to the things you would have to reject in a job.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Working long, productive hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Being your own boss</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Making a lot of money</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Working with and around other people</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Performing similar duties every day</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Working alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Being respected by other people</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Using your imagination</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Making important decisions</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Selling things</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Traveling</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Being a leader</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Solving mechanical problems</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Talking to many people</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Solving challenging issues/problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Helping other people</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Taking risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Doing a lot of writing</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Being inside all day</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Being outside all day</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Using a lot of math</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Reading many things</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Working with your hands</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Having authority over others</td>
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<td>_____</td>
<td>Having friendly colleagues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adding beauty to the world</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Doing many different things</td>
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<td>Having a good place to work</td>
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<td>Having freedom to choose what you do every day</td>
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<td>Being allowed to be yourself</td>
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<td>Having to think for yourself</td>
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<td>Working under pressure</td>
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<td>Having your own office</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Being physically active</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Working with animals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Living in the city</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Working at a slow pace</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working at a fast pace</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting dressed up for work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working different shifts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 things I would look for: 5 things I would reject:

1. _________________________________ 1. _________________________________
2. _________________________________
3. _________________________________
4. _________________________________
5. _________________________________

Looking at the things you want in a job and the things you don’t, think of three related questions to ask a presenter/business person at the career fair.

1. »»

2. »»

3. »»
# Activity 1:  

**coding interests**

**Name:** ___________________________  

**Period:** __________  

**Date:** __________  

**Instructions**

1. In the table provided, circle any activities that interest you.
2. Count the number of circled activities in each column and write the totals in the spaces provided on page 2.
3. If there are not two main areas that interest you, ask yourself if the non-chosen activities are “interesting” or “very interesting.”
4. Keep going until the top two areas of interest have been identified.
5. Compare your code to the definitions on page 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Fix mechanical things</td>
<td>Work on a scientific project</td>
<td>Sketch, draw, or paint</td>
<td>Work as a volunteer for a charity</td>
<td>Operate your own business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Take a wood-working class</td>
<td>Study the stars through a telescope</td>
<td>Play in a band or orchestra</td>
<td>Help others with their personal problems</td>
<td>Serve as an officer of a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Take an auto mechanics class</td>
<td>Solve a mathematical problem</td>
<td>Create photographs</td>
<td>Work as a speech therapist</td>
<td>Supervise the work of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Work outdoors</td>
<td>Investigate a crime scene</td>
<td>Take an art class</td>
<td>Work as a nurse</td>
<td>Lead a group to accomplish a goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Operate motorized machines or equipment</td>
<td>Read scientific books or magazines</td>
<td>Act in a play</td>
<td>Teach children</td>
<td>Work in an office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Build things</td>
<td>Do a lot of thinking</td>
<td>Design fashions</td>
<td>Teach or train others</td>
<td>Meet important people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Work alone</td>
<td>Use a microscope</td>
<td>Design interior spaces</td>
<td>Lead a group discussion</td>
<td>Give a talk or speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Tend/train animals</td>
<td>Do complicated calculations</td>
<td>Read fiction, plays, or poetry</td>
<td>Play a team sport</td>
<td>Sell things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Pitch a tent</td>
<td>Understand physics laws and theories</td>
<td>Attend concerts, the theater, or an art exhibit</td>
<td>Help others resolve a dispute</td>
<td>Promote or spread an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Solve mechanical puzzles</td>
<td>Interpret formulas</td>
<td>Work on crafts</td>
<td>Participate in a meeting</td>
<td>Win a leadership or sales award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Plant a garden</td>
<td>Learn about a new subject</td>
<td>Work according to your own rules</td>
<td>Become good with words and talking to people</td>
<td>Take on a lot of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Read a blueprint</td>
<td>Use computers</td>
<td>Use your imagination to do something original</td>
<td>Work with young people</td>
<td>Participate in a political campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Play a sport</td>
<td>Perform lab experiments</td>
<td>Write stories and poetry</td>
<td>Plan and supervise an activity</td>
<td>Convince people to do things your way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| R |   | I |   | A |   | S |   | E |   | C |   |

...
**R = realistic**

You have mechanical and athletic abilities. You like working outdoors with tools and objects, and you prefer dealing with things rather than people.

- Auto mechanics
- Building things
- Carpentry
- Driving a truck
- Farming
- Fixing electrical things
- Setting type for a printed piece
- Wildlife biology

**I = investigative**

You have math and science abilities. You like working alone and solving complex problems. You also like dealing with ideas rather than people or things.

- Advanced math
- Astronomy
- Being in a science fair
- Building rocket models
- Doing puzzles
- Physics
- Using a chemistry set
- Working in a science lab

**A = artistic**

You have artistic ability and imagination. You enjoy creating original work, and you prefer to deal with ideas rather than things.

- Being in a play
- Creating fashion designs
- Creative writing
- Drawing or painting
- Going to concerts
- Learning foreign languages
- Playing with musicians
- Reading about art or music
coding interest explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>realistic</td>
<td>investigative</td>
<td>artistic</td>
<td>social</td>
<td>enterprising</td>
<td>conventional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**S = social**

You have social skills. You're interested in social relationships and helping others solve problems. You like dealing with people rather than things.

- Attending sports events
- Belonging to a club
- Doing volunteer work
- Helping people
- Making new friends
- Studying foreign people
- Teaching children
- Working with elderly people

**E = enterprising**

You have leadership and speaking abilities. You like to be influential, and you're interested in politics and business. You also prefer to deal with people and ideas, not things.

- Being elected class president
- Being with leaders
- Buying materials for a store
- Giving speeches
- Selling a product
- Talking to salespeople
- Talking with people at a party
- Working on a sales campaign

**C = conventional**

You have clerical and math abilities. You prefer working indoors and organizing things, and you like dealing with words and numbers rather than people or ideas.

- Filing letters and reports
- Following a budget
- Keeping detailed reports
- Typing reports
- Using a cash register
- Using business machines
- Word processing on computer
- Working nine-to-five
career fair interview questions

1. Would you please describe a typical day or typical tasks in your job?

2. Do you work primarily alone or with others? What are the best and worst things about your work with other people?

3. What do you like best about your work? What do you like least?

4. What are some typical kinds of decisions you have to make at work?

5. What is the salary range for this type of work? What other benefits (health insurance, vacation time, discounts at local businesses, etc.) come with this job?

6. How does your job affect the rest of your daily life?
7. What kind of training or education does a person need for this job? What are the skills needed for this job?

8. What personal qualities (emotional, physical, and mental) does a person need in order to do well and be happy in your job?

9. What things did you learn in school that help you most in this work? What hobbies or activities outside of school have important lessons for this work?

10. What can I do now to help prepare me for this career?

11. Would you allow me to arrange a job shadow if I wanted to learn more about this career?
career fair scavenger hunt

Name and school

Career Clusters
For three of the eight career clusters listed below, find one job. List each job and the career cluster to which it belongs.
1. Business, office, and sales
2. Engineering, science, and computers
3. Health
4. Social science and education (including counselors, religious workers, teachers)
5. Art, design, and communication (including entertainers and news reporters)
6. Personal and consumer services (including food, personal care, and protective services)
7. Agriculture, forestry, and natural resources
8. Mechanics, construction, industry, and transportation

Job found: ______________________________________________________

Career cluster it belongs to: _______________________________________

Tools of the Trade
Find a job in which a person uses:
a knife _____________________________
“scrubs” ____________________________
a tool box __________________________
a microphone _______________________
a computer _________________________

People, Data, Things
Find a job for each of the following three interest categories:
People — jobs that involve working with the public ____________________________
Data — jobs that involve using facts and numbers _____________________________
Things — jobs that involve working with animals and/or machinery ____________________________
**Skills**

Find three jobs that require computer skills:
1. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Find two jobs in which a worker must be creative:
1. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Find two jobs that require math:
1. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Find two jobs that involve science:
1. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Find two jobs in which it is important to be physically fit:
1. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

**Interests**

Which of the jobs represented at this career fair is most interesting to you?

Why?
Objective: Students begin to learn to set goals and follow through to achieve them.

Grade level: any age

Materials
- Cards or paper and envelopes
- stamps
- pens or pencils

Time required: 15–20 minutes

Framing the activity
One good way to achieve goals is to write them down and look at them later to check on progress. We all love to get mail, especially letters from people who care about us. What better way to check progress toward our goals and to receive mail than to write letters to ourselves!

Procedure
- Give each student paper, a stamped envelope, and a pen.
- Have each student write a letter that addresses a couple of academic goals that he or she would like to accomplish for the year and that you both determine are reasonable. In the letter, each student should outline his or her goals and ways those goals can be achieved. Encourage each student to:
  1) state a goal
  2) list specific actions he or she can take to reach that goal
  3) consider obstacles that might prevent reaching the goal
  4) brainstorm ways to deal with these obstacles
  5) think of people who can help him or her reach the goal
  6) set a new goal once the original goal has been achieved
- Have each student address an envelope to him/herself and put the letter inside.*
- Have counselors collect and photocopy the letters. Send out the letters one month later. Encourage students to save the letters and refer back to them as motivation.

* Check to make sure students have written the correct address.

Follow-up
- Shortly after mailing the letters to students, give each student the photocopy of his/her letter and ask the students to write a reflection on the goals they set for themselves. What do they think of these goals one month later? How far have they progressed? What do they need to do next to meet their goals?
- Repeat this reflection later in the semester.

Technology modification: Have students write e-mails rather than letters.