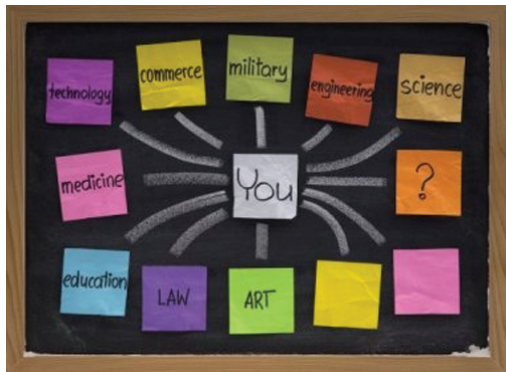


# Career Skills Activity Supplement

by Gina Halpin

For young people making a decision about a future career choice, college or training course is one of the most important they will make during their teenage years. This activity supplement is aimed at helping young people look at their interests and talents and see how best they can fit into a future career, education or training choice.



## Jobs Name Game

**Aim:** This fast paced icebreaker encourages young people to think about the wide range of jobs that people do.

- Ask the young people to sit in a circle and ask everyone to think of a job starting with the first letter of their first name.
- Move around the circle with each young person saying their name plus the job e.g. Doctor David, Architect Amy etc.
- The only rule is that there can be no duplicates, no matter how many people there are in the group with the same name.
- If someone can't think of a job they miss a turn on that round. Keep going until everyone has run out of ideas.

Source: Youth Work Now October 2010

## Options After School

Many of our life choices are influenced by our own experiences at school, the expectations of our family, teachers, peers and finances. These choices include decisions about leaving school, what exams to take and what courses or jobs to apply for.

**Aim:** This activity examines the options open to young people after school and to increase their understanding as to what influences their decisions and options.

**Materials:** Flipchart paper, markers, magazines, pens, glue, scissors and newspapers.

- Leave newspapers, magazines, photos, scissors, glue and markers in the middle of the floor.
- Ask everyone to make a collage of what they would like to do over the next 5 years – e.g. travel, study, or work – using the materials provided.
- Bring the group together and encourage a discussion on their collage, aspirations and ambitions at a level comfortable to the group.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What do you think has influenced you in your choice and options?
2. What can people do to achieve their goals?
3. Do all young people have the same choices open to them?
4. How are our choices influenced by where we come from?
5. If you had to complete this collage 5 years ago would it have looked different?

Source: Spiced Up



## Career Path

Some people know what job they want to do from an early age. For others it is not so simple. Choosing a career is a big decision, to choose a career that fits your goals, expectations and dreams you will need to ask yourself – What kind of career have I always wanted and why? What is it you would love to do – what kind of career is available in that field. This activity aims at getting young people to narrow down the things they are good at and enjoy.

**Materials:** Make a larger copy of the listing below and hand it out to the young people.

Ask them to read the choices and circle the choice that they either enjoy doing or are good at – they can circle more than one choice.

**Building things**  
**Designing things**  
**Helping people**

**Being active & outdoors**  
**Being on t.v.**  
**Sorting out arguments**

**Making & fixing things**  
**Writing a book**  
**Showing people what to do**

**Using tools & machines**  
**Playing in a band**  
**Looking after people**

**Solving problems**  
**Doing a makeover**  
**Doing voluntary work**

**Finding out how things work**

**Organising events**

**Making plans**

**Doing experiments**

**Buying & selling things**

**Using a computer and calculator**

**Researching and testing things**

**Running a business**

**Arranging things over the phone**

**Designing a new computer game**

**Entering competitions**

**Putting CDs/ DVDs into the right order**

**Doing calculations**

**Campaigning for change**

**Organising your money**

### Check the Answers

Get the young people to count how many of each color they have circled. As most people have more than one interest they will have more than one choice of each color circled, so ask them to check out any score of 3 or more.

#### **Mostly Red**

You like practical work, look for options where you can use practical skills, do something active and work on different types of projects

**Career Ideas:** Construction, building, design and technology, hair/beauty, manufacturing, physical education, public service and sport & leisure.

#### **Mostly Purple**

You sound creative, look for options where you can express yourself and work on new ideas.

**Career Ideas:** Art, catering, dance, media, drama, hospitality, music and photography

#### **Mostly Green**

You seem to be a sociable person, look for options where you can work with others and find out how society works.

**Career Ideas:** Public service, health and social care, hospitality, retail, business, sociology, travel and tourism

#### **Mostly Blue**

It seems like you investigating things, look for options where you can use your number and

thinking skills to find out why things are the way they are.

**Career Ideas:** Biology, laboratory work, geography, vet, science or statistics.

### Mostly Orange

You sound like an enterprising person, look for options where you can use your energy, communication, number and thinking skills to test your ideas to improve the world.

**Career Ideas:** Business studies, economics, IT, law, languages, psychology or retail.

### Mostly Black

Being well organised seems important to you, look for options where you can use your planning, communication and computer skills to find out more about the systems and structures that keep the world working.

**Career Ideas:** Business, finance, catering, economics, history, hospitality or law.

Source: Which Way Now, 2009-2010



## Experience Counts

**Aim:** This activity is designed to encourage young people to think about the skills, qualities and experience they have acquired from life experiences that could be transferable to future employment.

**Materials:** A3 paper, highlighters, pens & markers.

- Start the session by suggesting that people often sell themselves short on application forms and in interviews because they do not consider their life experiences to be relevant or transferable to the job they are interested in.

- Hand out the paper and pens and ask the young people to draw three overlapping circles on to their sheet.

These should be headed:

Work experience

Hobbies and interests

Volunteering or community projects

- Inside each circle they should put details of things they have done and the skills or qualities developed in that activity – for example, someone who has had work experience in an office environment may have acquired good timekeeping and reliable qualities and developed IT skills, anyone with a part time job in a shop would have acquired customer service experience.
- Any skills or qualities that are repeated should be noted in the overlapping sections.
- Next using the highlighter pen the young people should highlight the skills and qualities they think employers look for. These can be in any of the three circles.
- Ask the young people to share their findings and pull out some of the key attributes employers might look for, such as trustworthiness, good communication and organisation skills.
- Point out that even if a young person has never worked, they will have skills and qualities that will be transferable and beneficial to future employment – such as IT skills from surfing the Internet or research skills from completing school projects.

Source: Youth Work Now October 2010





## Career Tips

Some ideas for young people when it comes to making the right career choices:

Make use of school or university career guidance rooms and research the jobs you're interested in as much as possible. Also talk to the Career Guidance counsellor or teacher and don't be shy in telling them what really interests you.

If you've decided what job tickles your fancy then try to talk to someone who does that job. Be cheeky: call up the companies or organisations where you could potentially work and ask them to talk to you about career options.

Try to get lots of work experience in different types of jobs.

If you don't know what you'd like to work in then try to think of what your dream job would be, what you're good at in school, what you love doing and what job opportunities are available in the careers that interest you.

Think about whether you want to go to college or university, take a professional training course or go straight into work.

Think about whether you want to stay in your local area or move somewhere else (in Ireland or abroad) to study, train or work.

Don't let anyone try to tell you that you won't be able to do the job you're interested in, that you won't get the right exam results or that you aren't good enough.

Always aim for what interests you the most and have a second option in case things don't work out.

Make use of recruitment agencies. They can offer career advice as well as aptitude and interest tests.

Source: Spunout.ie

## Useful Websites

[www.youthreach.ie](http://www.youthreach.ie)

[www.careerguidance.ie](http://www.careerguidance.ie)

[www.careeradviceireland.ie](http://www.careeradviceireland.ie)

[www.career-guidanceireland.com](http://www.career-guidanceireland.com)

[www.recruitireland.com](http://www.recruitireland.com)

[www.careerbuilder.ie](http://www.careerbuilder.ie)

[www.careerdirections.ie](http://www.careerdirections.ie)

[www.mysciencecareer.ie](http://www.mysciencecareer.ie)

[www.careeradvice.loadzajobs.ie](http://www.careeradvice.loadzajobs.ie)

[www.igc.ie](http://www.igc.ie)

*Gina Halpin is Information & Resources Officer for the Irish Youth Work Centre  
Email: [ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie)*