

Career & Employment Center

How to Use the Career Center

Welcome! This place is for you -- to explore, research, and make decisions that will have an important impact on the course of your future. Our experienced staff is available to help you find and make use of the resources you need.

Step One: Find Out Who You Are and What You Like to Do

A critical part of your career or job satisfaction depends upon the extent of your self knowledge; the skills you possess, your values and interests. Discovering what you enjoy will help you identify possible occupations of interest. Whether you are just beginning your education, career exploration, or want to identify a major and a career, taking self-assessment tests will guide you to the next step.

Computerized Software Available to Assist You:

Our computerized software provides free self-assessments. These websites and programs are accessible from any computer in the world. All you need are the pass codes. Visit the front desk for a list of programs, websites and passwords, or call our office for this information at (707) 527-4941.

DISCOVER – Discover has a comprehensive computerized assessment which we highly recommend. It will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete. The tests, called “inventories,” include questions about your interests, abilities and values. When you have completed the assessment you will get a list of possible occupations that match your interests. You can then explore how much training is required for specific fields, and be directed to locations where you can receive the education or training you need. Discover provides a comprehensive overview of occupations, including wage and salary information. **Unique feature:** Discover allows you to search occupations by keywords or characteristics.

EUREKA – There are two versions of EUREKA. One is on the server in the Career Center and the other is accessible online. Like Discover, EUREKA provides some self assessment tools which include a self-assessment test called True Colors (available on the on-line version only), a database of over 1,100 careers, college and financial aid information, job openings in your field of interest, job search assistance, monthly wage data, educational programs, and employment trends in your field to 2012. The assessments in EUREKA are called Microskills and Occu-Sort, and take about half an hour to complete. However, we don’t highly recommend these, as they are not nearly as comprehensive as the Discover assessment. If you’d like to do an assessment in EUREKA, we recommend “True Colors,” available on the online

version only. **Unique feature:** Local salary information and job outlook is provided. You can also select up to three schools and compare them side by side.

CAREER CRUISING – Career Cruising has a simple, but effective computerized career assessment called “Matchmaker.” It will take about 15 minutes to complete. You will receive a list of occupations that match your interests. You can then explore comprehensive information about the occupations. You can also narrow the list of occupations by answering questions about your skills. Like EUREKA and Discover, Career Cruising offers information about colleges and vocational schools. **Unique feature:** this website features interviews with people in the workforce.

CALIFORNIA CAREER ZONE: We highly recommend this free website. (www.cacareerzone.org). Here you can do a self-assessment test, explore occupational and industry information as well as many other related areas. **Unique feature:** this site provides many videos of people in the occupation and also links to current job openings in California.

For more guidance: It is often helpful to make an appointment with a career counselor. A counselor can refer written tests which are sent to a computer lab for scoring, the results of which are sent back to the counselor who will meet with you a second time to go over your test results. We also recommend taking a Career Guidance class where you will use these tools and get additional career assessment. See Counseling 61 classes in the SRJC schedule. These classes range from short courses, or two Saturdays, to full semester-length courses.

Step Two: What Do You Want to Do With Your Time?

Knowing what you like will point the way to possibilities and offerings where you can do what you enjoy. If you have been provided with a list of potential jobs or careers that might suit you in Step One, it is time to research those careers and weed out the ones that don't appeal to you. We invite you to make use of our extensive library of books and DVD/video collection. Our DVDs and videos provide a valuable visual learning experience. With over 200 topics available, they can range anywhere from 10 minutes to several hours long. Categories include career planning, educational planning, job hunting, self employment, health and fitness, the arts, and more.

The O*NET Files: The O*NET stands for “Occupational Information Network,” and is a dictionary of occupational titles compiled by the government. The Career Center contains information in file drawers that correspond to each job title in the O*NET. These files contain brochures, job descriptions, interviews with people in the position you are researching, articles, salary information, interview guidelines, and past job announcements in the field.

Informational Interviews: It's also important while researching a career to schedule some informational interviews. These are interviews with people who are in the job or position you would like to have at some point. The purpose of the interview is to see whether you'd really like working in that field, based on the information you receive from someone who has that particular career. We have a handout on informational interviewing which explains the process in detail.

Internship and Volunteering: Internship and volunteer opportunities offer a hands-on way to learn about occupations. An internship, either paid or unpaid, is temporary work that can help you explore a career field, and in some cases, to position yourself for a job offer. The Work Experience department at SRJC can direct you to internship and volunteer opportunities. Call Work Experience at (707) 527-4329, or visit Monday through Friday. Work Experience is located with the Employment Center in Bussman Hall, directly across from the Career Center.

Other Research Tools:

What to Do with a Major in...Cards – These cards are in the Career Center, and point to related jobs that one might pursue with a major in a particular subject. They are simple and fun to read. There is much more information about majors and corresponding careers on the Career Center website, however. Our “What to Do with a Major in...” page directs the seeker to other university websites that link careers and majors.

The Virtual Career Center can be accessed any time. This is a page on our website that links to career and occupational information, salary information, resume and cover letter tools and tips, self assessment test sites, job search sites where you can post your resume, and much more!

Handouts: The Career Center has a variety of free career and job-related handouts. Topics include:

- Choosing a Career
- Job Burnout
- Networking
- The Ten Commandments of Keeping Your Job
- Your First Day on the Job
- Guidelines to Help You Prepare a Resume
- Checklist for Reviewing Your Resume
- The Cover Letter: A Personal Introduction
- Interviewing
- Common Job Interview Questions
- Best and Worst Ways to Hunt for a Job
- Job Search Mistakes to Avoid
- Important Tips for Completing Your Job Application
- Finding a New Job
- Informational Interviewing
- Transferable Skills

Career Trends and the Future: In addition to our handouts, our office subscribes to many magazines and reports that focus on career trends, so that you can make sure your occupation or career of choice has a bright future in today’s changing world. Occupations gain or lose jobs. Sometimes demand for what workers produce increases the number of jobs in an occupation. At the same time, however, innovation and technology might make each worker more productive and thus

reduce the number of jobs. Here's an example: with the growth of sophisticated internet technology, our world is becoming more and more "global." As a graphic artist or website developer, you might be competing with qualified individuals in other countries for the same jobs. Consult our publications and stay on top of the trends! Ask a Career Center staff member to show you where our materials are located.

Free Seminars: Every semester, the Career & Employment Center offers free seminars on helpful topics like resume writing, interviewing, self-employment, and more. These seminars are open to the public. Pick up a list of scheduled seminars at the front desk of the Career Center, or look on our website for a schedule. Seminars are also posted in the Career Center newsletter (both online and at the front desk).

Step Three: Planning and Preparation

Many students need professional guidance when it comes to making important decisions about career choice. We encourage you to meet with a career counselor to go over your options, and develop strategies to take you in the direction you want to go. This is the fun part! If you have narrowed your search to a few different career options, the next step is to figure out how much education and training you need for each, what classes you'll need to take, and what schools are most appropriate for helping you achieve your goals. The EUREKA program can compare up to three schools at a time onscreen. You can also find financial aid and scholarship information using EUREKA. In addition to the EUREKA program, the Transfer Center, co-located with the Career Center, has information on many California schools and their programs. And of course, you are always welcome to use our computers to access the Internet to research the colleges, universities, or vocational schools in which you have an interest.

Step Four: Job Search

The Career and Employment Center has many resources to help you find employment.

For continuing students and members of the community: our website contains an online database of local job openings. Students may apply for both off-campus and on-campus jobs. Having a job on campus can give you valuable on-the-job training, and important experience to add to your resume.

For grads or anyone pursuing employment: the Career Center has a Career Developer who can look over your resume or do a mock interview to prepare you for meeting with employers. Call the office to schedule your appointment. (707) 527-4941