

How to choose a career path after matric

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The time has arrived for those who have attained matric passes to make important decisions about their future.



Image source: Getty Images

“What job should I do? What should I study?” These are common questions asked by young adults deciding on their future career path.

Entering the adult world and having to make a career choice can be a daunting experience because of the awareness that decisions made today have a great impact on the future. It may be easy for some to choose a career, but overwhelming for others. There are just so many factors to consider. Take a deep breath, keep calm and follow this brief guide to assist you in your career path.

Know yourself

Before choosing your career path, you need to really know yourself. What are your values, interests, skills as well as personality traits? Each individual has a unique set of qualities with different values and priorities, interests and abilities, as well as personality traits.

Depending on these meaningful factors, some career choices are a better fit for you. For instance, if you are a financially-driven extrovert with a bent for business, your career fit will be worlds apart to someone with different qualities.



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Clearly identifying these factors will narrow your career options. If you have trouble identifying your unique set of qualities or profile, psychometric tests are offered by reputable career development websites or career counsellors.

Some psychometric tests that can assist career choices are interest questionnaires such as South African Vocational Interest Inventory, personality tests like the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, as well as aptitude tests like the Differential Aptitude Test. Through self-exploration and/or assessments, a number of potential jobs will be identified.

Do your homework

Thereafter, consider your list of potential jobs. Then research basic factors like training requirements, financial obligations, time commitment and job future. What are the training requirements? Where should you study? How much will it cost? How long will the training take? Is it internationally recognised? Is this job anticipated to experience growth in the future?

In addition to these basic factors, interview people already in jobs you are interested in and ask them relevant questions. What is an average day like? What are the best and worst aspects of the job? Does this career have the flexibility of different routes if you wish? Be inquisitive. Having a list of good specific questions answered will make your career decision easier.



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Decision time

Now you will be better-equipped to make your decision. Combine all the information based on your self-knowledge, gathered advice, job market trends and skills training prospects. Now select the top two jobs. Decide which job would be the best option for you and actively pursue it. Part of the decision-making process is to create a career development plan with specific goals.

In conclusion, these guidelines might seem like a lot of work, and it is. But it is much easier to forge a new career path when you know what you want and how to attain it. Hopefully, it will allow you to navigate the world of career choices.

Should you still feel extremely doubtful and you cannot make up your mind, you might benefit from career guidance with a trained psychologist. Wishing you luck on your journey of career choice.

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