

The 5 P's of Career Planning

1. **Print:** Read up on careers that interest you. There are hundreds of websites that hold reliable up to date information about all kinds of careers. Start with www.careercruising.com. You may also want to read about careers that you don't know very much about. Maybe something will spark your interest.
2. **People:** Talk to people who are in the field that you are thinking about going into. This includes: Professors, Students and individuals working in the field.
3. **Participation:** Career planning can be a little like purchasing a car. You can read the write ups in car magazines; you can talk to people who own the car, but until you are actually behind the steering wheel yourself, you won't know if the car is a good fit for you. If you can, test drive the career that you are considering. Ask to job shadow, volunteer or maybe you can find paid employment in a related position. Take an introductory course in the area you are interested in.
4. **Perseverance:** Choosing a career is one of the most important and perhaps difficult decisions that you will make in your life time. It takes time to gather all the information you need before you can feel reasonably confident that you are heading in the right direction. Sometimes you think you've found the perfect career only to get more information the next day that maybe it isn't such a good fit after all. Don't give up. Something suitable will come along eventually.
5. **Perfect Career:** Is there a "perfect career" out there for everyone? Probably not! Look for a career or career area that fits many of your needs. Even people who enjoy their careers a great deal often indicate that they don't like certain aspects about it. If you hold out until you find the "perfect career", you may be waiting a very long time.