CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



Kirkwood

CAREER SERVICES

CAREER SERVICES

3rd floor Iowa Hall, main campus, Cedar Rapids

Welcome to the beginning of your career development journey! This guide will help you choose a career path. Career Development also includes preparing for a professional job and expanding your workplace skills. Check out our Job Search Success Guide for help with these.

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Please visit **kirkwood.edu/careercoaching** to make an appointment.

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Self-Discovery
Explore Options
Make Choices
Take Action



4. Take Action
Develop a career action plan.

3. Make Choices
Talk with your advisor or a career coach who can help you navigate the decision making process.

2. Explore Options
Gather information and explore majors and career options. Research the type of work, tasks, education, and salary for each job.

1. Self-Discovery
Discover your interests, skills, values and personality. The more you understand about yourself, the clearer your life goals and the way to reach them will become.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Career development is a process that happens across the lifespan. It is a 4 step process that often repeats itself as we constantly assess ourselves then make changes and adjustments based on our own self-assessment.

STEP 1: SELF-DISCOVERY

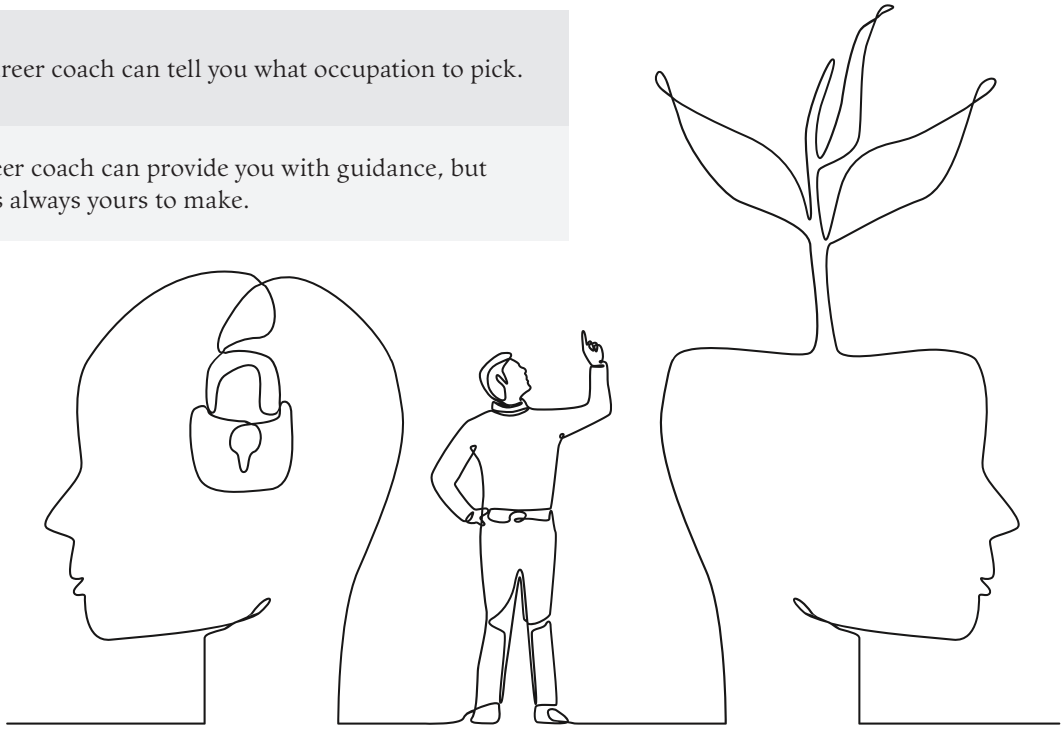
Discover your interests, skills, values and personality. The more you understand about yourself, the clearer your goals and the way to reach them will become.

Keep an Open Mind

In order to truly explore different pathways, utilizing a growth mindset will be key. As you explore your options, try to notice fixed mindset moments and re-consider those with a growth mindset instead.

MYTH: A career coach can tell you what occupation to pick.

FACT: A career coach can provide you with guidance, but the decision is always yours to make.



Fixed Mindset

My skills and abilities are innate gifts.

- I don't have time to do this.
- I don't have the skills for this career.
- I should only pursue careers with high salaries.
- It's too late to change careers.
- I don't know anyone who works in the area in which I am interested.

Growth Mindset

I can learn and develop new skills.

- This may take time and effort.
- I am capable of learning new skills and enhancing current ones.
- I can explore to learn about careers that suit my values and interests.
- Starting a new career is an opportunity for growth.
- I can create connections in new fields.

SELF-DISCOVERY

Getting to Know Yourself

Read the prompts below and think about the first thing that comes to mind. Use this space to reflect on who you are, how you know, how you want to grow.

I am energized by ...

I am proud of ...

I am looking forward to ...

I have concerns about ...

I would like to accomplish ...

Did you know that self-awareness helps us become better decision makers?

SELF-DISCOVERY

Career Assessments

What are Career Assessments?

Career assessments are tools to learn about your true self and about possible career paths. You will see recommendations of careers that could be a good match for you. However, career assessment results do not determine your future — that choice is up to you!

Kirkwood students have free access to **Focus 2** and **YouScience**.

Based on the following descriptions, select an assessment that meets your needs.

Available on all electronic devices

FOCUS 2

Self-assessment to determine: work interests, skills, career values, personality, and leisure interests.

- Access code: **eagles**
- Create your account at **www.kirkwood.edu/focus2**

Proceed to page 6.

Available only on desktop

YOUSCIENCE

Brain games to measure your natural aptitudes and connect them to personalized relevant career pathways.

- Request an account at **www.kirkwood.edu/youscienceregistration**

Proceed to page 8.

Aptitude | Natural ability to learn or perform in given areas

Self-Assessment | To recognize and reflect on personal abilities, skills, strengths, and opportunities for improvement.



Aptitude Definition courtesy of YouScience:
https://www.youscience.com/what-is-an-interest-inventory



FOCUS 2

Focus 2: Occupation Recommendations

Job Family Themes

Once you have completed each section, use the filters to sort your results by "Job Family." This will help you identify recurring themes. List the job family you saw the most in each assessment.



Work Interest



Personality



Values



Skills



Leisure

On the home page, choose the "Combine Assessments" option. Select all sections and sort by "Job Family" again. Which occupations are most interesting to you?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

FOCUS 2

Focus 2: Thoughts & Reflections

Thoughts & Reflections to Consider

What did you learn about yourself that will help you make a better future career decision? (e.g., academic strengths, career values, career interests)

Which occupations surprised you? Why?

Which occupations didn't surprise you? Why?

What information do you still need in order to make an informed decision?

What are some questions to ask your career coach?

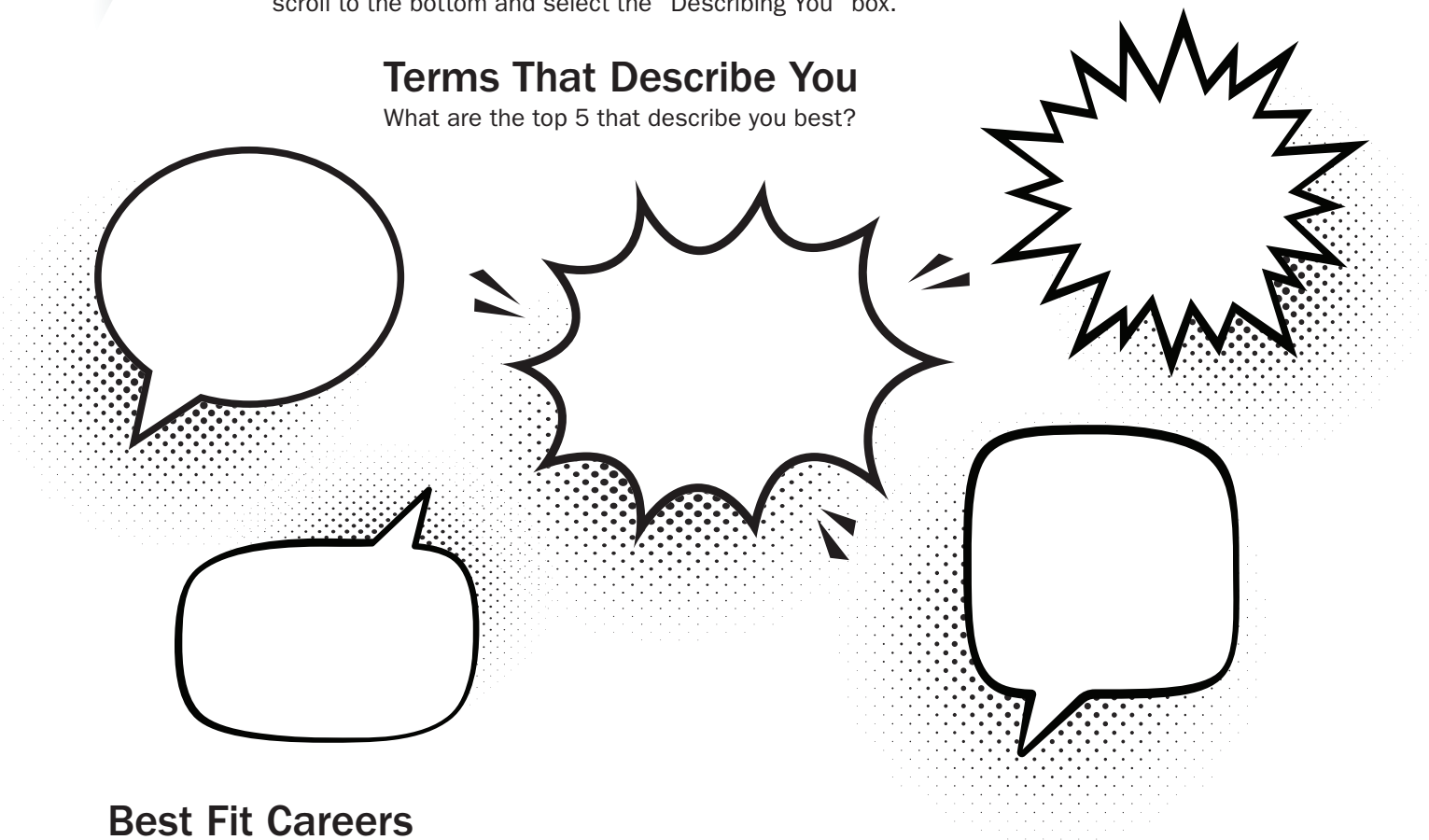
YOUSCIENCE

YouScience: Descriptions & Occupation Recommendations

You will receive your results from YouScience within 24 hours through email. On the Home page, scroll to the bottom and select the “Describing You” box.

Terms That Describe You

What are the top 5 that describe you best?



Best Fit Careers

From the Home page, select the Best Fit Careers box. Which occupations are most interesting to you?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

YOUSCIENCE

YouScience: Thoughts & Reflections

What did you learn about yourself that will help you make a better future career decision?

Did you notice any recurring themes?

Which occupations surprised you? Why?

Which occupations didn't surprise you? Why?

What information do you still need in order to make an informed decision?

What are some questions to ask your career coach?

Thoughts and Reflections:



STEP 2: EXPLORE OPTIONS

Gather information and explore programs and career options. Learn more about the type of work, tasks, education, and salary for each job.

Some programs at Kirkwood lead right into the workforce after graduation, while others are designed to transfer to a 4-year college/university. Typically, they are divided as follows:

Certificate, Diploma, and A.A.S. Programs → Workforce

A.A. and A.S. Programs → Transfer to 4-year Institution

Guided Pathway Areas/Programs at Kirkwood

- **ANIMALS, FOOD, & LAND**
- **ARTS AND DESIGN**
- **BUSINESS**
- **CULTURE, COMMUNICATION, & HUMAN BEHAVIOR**
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**
- **MANUFACTURING, TRADES, & TRANSPORTATION**
- **SOCIAL SERVICES, SAFETY, & EDUCATION**
- **STEM & IT**

Scan to further explore Kirkwood's different program areas and see a full list of available programs.

2 EXPLORE OPTIONS

Online Exploration Resources

The following are some resources to help you learn more about careers of interest.



What Can I Do With This Major?

- Connects majors and programs with career paths
- Types of employers that hire people studying in particular fields
- Strategies to make yourself a more marketable candidate

To access this website, visit the Resources & Support section of **www.kirkwood.edu/careerservices**.

O*NET ONLINE

www.onetonline.org

Learn more about:

- Salaries in different states
- Related occupations
- Daily job responsibilities

CAREER ONE STOP

www.careeronestop.org

Watch short videos or read about different professions and their daily responsibilities.

Thoughts & Reflections

- How well would these occupations match your desired lifestyle?
- What job duties would you enjoy for an occupation of interest?
- How much training is required?
- What information do you still need in order to make an informed decision?

2 EXPLORE OPTIONS

In-Person Exploration Resources

Another great way to gather information about careers is directly from professionals who work in those roles. It is important to prepare for these conversations. Ask yourself, *What do I already know? What do I hope to learn?*

Connect With A Faculty Member

Meet with a faculty member in the program you are considering. Which of the following questions would you like to ask?

- What are some of the most important skills and qualities needed to be successful in this program/future career?
- What sorts of assignments and projects do students engage in during this program?
- Is there an internship requirement? If so, when will I have to do that in the program? How do I find one?
- What are some of the advantages and challenges of this program/career?
- Immediately following graduation from this program, what types of jobs would I be a strong candidate for?
- How do you think this industry or career might change in the future?

Your own questions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Career Conversations

Career Conversations are 20 – 30 minute discussions with a professional currently working in a field of your interest. They are an opportunity to learn more about a specific field, a professional's role, education requirements, training, and more.

How To Identify Connections

The following are some resources to assist you with finding a professional in your area(s) of interest:

- Career Services
- Your instructors
- LinkedIn
- People you already know (Who do your friends and family know?)

2 EXPLORE OPTIONS
Building Relationships

Your Career Connections

You likely already have several connections in your network. Look at the examples below and take some time now to write down at least six of your own connections. Include their name, contact info, and how they can help.

EXAMPLE

Yasmin Baran
yas@gmail.com
Tell me about their job

Kendi Malu
398-2345
Connect me to their cousin for advice about the industry

YOU

2 EXPLORE OPTIONS
Arranging Career Conversations

New Message

Sample Career Conversation Request

To: jose.brooks@business.eg

Subject: Request for Career Conversation (Informational Interview)

Mr. Brooks,
I am a Kirkwood student and am researching the field of information technology to find out which path would be best for me. I would like to learn more about the field by talking with professionals currently working in the industry.

It would be great to meet with you and hear your expert advice. Would you be willing to meet for 15 – 30 minutes in the next couple of weeks?

I would greatly appreciate any time and guidance you might be able to share. You may contact me at 319-398-5540 or by email at dwilson25@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration,
Dylan Wilson

SEND

New Message

Sample Thank You Email

To: jose.brooks@business.eg

Subject: Thank You for Your Time

Mr. Brooks,
Thank you for taking the time to speak with me and offer your professional advice on Thursday, March 7th.

I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about your company and job. Your suggestion of looking for ways to explore with homework and projects has already been helpful. One of my assignments next week will be the perfect opportunity to take your advice.

If I have questions in the future, I hope I can continue to reach out to you occasionally.

Thank you again for your time.
Dylan Wilson

SEND

Career Conversation Tips

- **Dress professionally to make a good impression. Your new contact could one day turn into a mentor!**
- **Bring an extra copy of your resume in case it is requested.**
- **Be sure to follow up within 24 hours after your meeting with a thank you!**



2 EXPLORE OPTIONS

Questions to Ask During Career Conversations & Job Shadows

- [ ] How did you enter this field and what are common entry-level jobs?
- [ ] What are your main responsibilities and a typical day/week in your role?
- [ ] What do you like most and least about your work?
- [ ] What kinds of problems and decisions do you encounter?
- [ ] How does your position fit within the organization/industry and what career paths exist?
- [ ] What accomplishments are valued in this field and what related careers should I consider?
- [ ] What steps should I take to prepare for this field in terms of education and skills?
- [ ] How is advancing technology affecting this industry and how is your company addressing this?
- [ ] What are the salary ranges and job outlook for this role?
- [ ] If your role was eliminated, what other kinds of work could you do?
- [ ] What is the industry's attitude towards work-life balance, diversity, and staying informed?

2 EXPLORE OPTIONS
Reflect On Your Career Conversation/Job Shadow

Describe the company/business you visited.

What did you learn about the industry and/or the professional's role?

What surprised or excited you the most about this experience?

Are you still interested in this career path? Why or why not?

What concerns do you have about this line of work?

Can you see yourself enjoying a job like this? Why or why not?

Does this career capitalize on your strengths and align with your values?

What skills do you need to gain or further develop to succeed in this field?

What information are you still missing?

STEP 3: MAKE CHOICES

A career coach or your advisor can help you navigate the decision making process.

Decision Making Tools

Choosing between two majors or careers? Making a decision is a process that takes time and thought. One way to break down decision making is to create a list of positives and negatives for each option. This allows space to focus on the key factors of your options.

Choice A | POSITIVES:	Choice A | NEGATIVES:

Choice B | POSITIVES:	Choice B | NEGATIVES:

Reflect

Is one option standing out to you?

Do you have all the information to make a decision? If not, what is missing?

STEP 3: MAKE CHOICES

A career coach or your advisor can help you navigate the decision making process.

Logic vs. Heart

Decision making can be both logical and emotional. Take a minute to review your positives and negatives list and then fill in the table below with thoughts on logic vs. heart.

Choice A | LOGIC:	Choice A | HEART:
What makes sense about this decision?	*What does my heart feel with this decision?*

Choice B | LOGIC:	Choice B | HEART:
What makes sense about this decision?	*What does my heart feel with this decision?*

Reflect

If you had to choose a decision right now, what would be your first instinct?

Which choice gives you the most energy?

STEP 3: MAKE CHOICES

A career coach or your advisor can help you navigate the decision making process.

Congratulation On All The Effort You Have Put In. Great Work!

Take the time to reflect on the following questions, which can help you make an informed decision about which career path to pursue.

What option(s) am I seriously considering?

What are the factors that led to my decision?

Is there anything that may prevent me from pursuing this career?
If so, what can I do about those things?

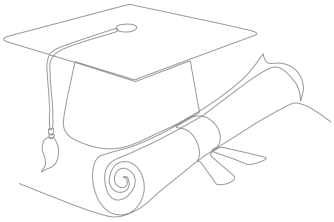
If I feel like I need more information to make an informed decision,
what is missing and how can I find it?



Want additional perspectives? *Chat with a career coach, academic advisor, instructor, or other mentors!*

STEP 3: MAKE CHOICES

Transferring after Kirkwood?



Transferring from a community college to a university is a significant step towards realizing your academic and career goals. The following are things to consider when transferring.

Start early and plan ahead

- Research potential universities with majors that interest you
  - — Starting point resource: www.kirkwood.edu/advising
- Attend a Transfer Career Fair
  - — Your academic advisor can provide more information about upcoming events
- Factors to consider: class size, faculty expertise, available research opportunities, and campus resources

Connect with your academic advisor

- Your academic advisor can help create a transfer plan, ensure prerequisites are met, and assist in choosing transferable courses
- Meet with transfer advisor at your chosen university to discuss similar questions

Research and visit potential universities

- Attending university open houses, information sessions, and campus tours can provide invaluable insight to the environment and culture of an institution
- Talk to students, meet with faculty, and ask to sit in on a lecture

Seek out transfer scholarships

- Many universities offer scholarships specifically for transfer students
- Ask your academic advisor for leads

Stay organized with application deadlines

- Create a list of all universities that interest you along with the application deadlines and required documents
- Staying organized will prevent missed deadlines and last-minute rushes

STEP 4: TAKE ACTION

Develop a Career Action Plan

Career Action Plan

Now that you have chosen a career path, it is time to make a plan for accomplishing your career goals. Consider what qualifications you will need to demonstrate in order to obtain employment. Use the next page to consider when you will complete each part of your education and career plan during your time at Kirkwood.

Extracurricular Activities To Include In Your Plan		
Career conversations	Job shadows	Volunteering
Research employers on Handshake	Join a Kirkwood club	Look into professional organizations
Build a résumé and cover letter	Visit Career Services for résumé/cover letter review	Identify internship opportunities on Handshake
Complete a mock interview (practice) with Career Services	Complete an internship	Grow your network
Find a mentor	Update résumé & cover letter	Get feedback on your updated résumé/cover letter
Finalize your references	Use Handshake to find job leads	Attend a career fair



TAKE ACTION

Career Action Plan — My Education & Career Plan

My Academic Advisor:

Contact Information:

FIRST SEMESTER

Classes:	Extracurriculars:

SECOND SEMESTER

Classes:	Extracurriculars:

THIRD SEMESTER

Classes:	Extracurriculars:

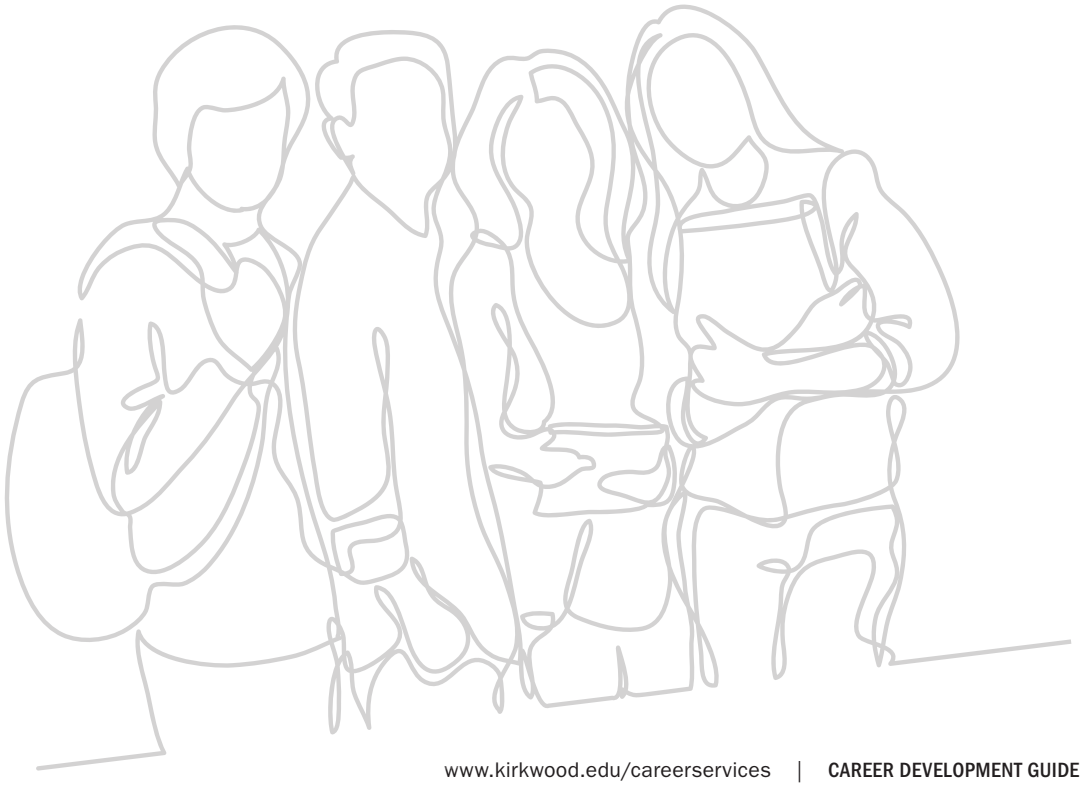
FOURTH SEMESTER

Classes:	Extracurriculars:

Career Action Plan — My Education & Career Plan



FIFTH SEMESTER		SIXTH SEMESTER	
Classes:	**Extracurriculars:**	**Classes:**	**Extracurriculars:**



Career Services
319-398-5540
www.kirkwood.edu/careerservices