

ASSESS YOUR INTERESTS TO FIND THE RIGHT PATH

Summary: Find out how you can examine your career options while still in college.



Question: I have almost completed my second year of college and I don't know what I want to do with the rest of my life. I have interests in computers, the Internet, design, psychology, and sports. Everyone urges me to go for a business degree, but I can't see myself trapped like that. I can do well in a lot of areas, but I want to be happy with my occupation and salary. How can I find the right path?

Answer: Take a little of the pressure off by narrowing down "the rest of my life" to a more manageable chunk of time. No one can even begin to imagine in college all that life will hold. What you can do is gain exposure to a wide variety of courses and experiences, and begin to develop and focus your career goals based on two factors. Pay attention to the internal pull, the courses and activities you are naturally drawn to and the external pull, the careers that seem to meet growing needs and offer marketability.

Whether you go for a business degree or a liberal-arts program is less important than the courses you select and the practical experience you gain. Take classes that foster writing, quantitative analysis, interpersonal communications, and computer/technical skills.

In addition to reading about a variety of careers in books like *The Occupational Outlook Handbook* from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, internships and co-op placements offer a perfect opportunity to examine work environments and make contacts. Get creative with combining the interests you mentioned. For example, you could apply for an internship with *Sports Illustrated* or with a local sports complex to assist with web-page design and maintenance.

Pull together a few of your most creative friends and acquaintances to brainstorm careers and work settings that mesh with your interests. You will be surprised at how many far-out fantasy careers emerge. You may select only one or two as in the ballpark for you, but these will provide direction and bring you closer to defining your career goals.

- See [Explore Your Options in College to Find the Best Career Path](#) for more information.