Unit 1: Getting Started: Creating Your Career & Life Planning Vision

Unit 1 Learning Objectives

- Apply the career exploration and planning process.
- Describe the stages of career development and identify the stage you are currently in.
- Identify and apply important factors related to mindset such as a positive mental outlook, self-confidence and the power of positive thinking.
- Differentiate between a job and a career.
- Brainstorm ideas for your personal and career vision.

A Journey Begins...

"If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else." This popular saying attributed to Yogi Berra, an American professional baseball catcher, suggests that we should have a pretty clear picture of where we are headed. And college, for most of us, is an important step toward a fulfilling and exciting career. But the fact is that the employment market and job-seeking techniques have changed significantly over the past ten years and will continue to change; it is not as easy as it once was to map out a clear career path. However, a clear direction can still provide enough flexibility to respond to the changing needs of today's job market. In fact, building flexibility into your career plans is a requirement for achieving a successful career.

Consider the ways in which the job market has changed—and what it may mean to your planning:

- You will likely be employed by many organizations in your lifetime. The idea of working
 for a single employer is no longer the rule but rather the exception. In fact, the U.S.
 Department of Labor found that on average, people hold close to eleven jobs between
 the ages of eighteen and forty-two. This trend means today's graduates need to be very
 flexible in their career plans and that they should make an effort to identify and develop
 transferable skills in order to navigate the changing employment market.
- Five years from now, you may be working in a job that does not even exist in the present. As new technology accelerates and national and global priorities (such as going green or national security) take on a new sense of urgency, new needs are identified and new jobs will be created to fill those needs. Think about this: five years ago, a search engine optimization (SEO) specialist was a job in only a handful of Webcentric companies. With the meteoric growth of Google, SEO is now a common role in just many marketing departments—and a job in relatively high demand. In the same way, the aging population has created new opportunities in elder care, the events of 9/11 has created a whole new category of jobs in homeland security, and new discoveries and approaches in science have created fields like biotechnology and

- nanotechnology. Today's students and job hunters must become lifetime learners to keep up with new trends.
- The physical location of a job is no longer as important as it once was. Other than jobs
 that require you to serve customers in a specific location or region or jobs that require
 specialized equipment (as in manufacturing facilities), companies increasingly have offsite employees who stay connected via the Internet. This means that students and job
 hunters should be able to demonstrate the ability to work independently and produce
 results without consistent, direct personal supervision.
- The growth of job posting sites online has created a glut of applicants for most posted
 positions. You have access to millions of job opportunities via the Web, but so do
 hundreds or thousands of other job seekers. Each employer must go through hundreds
 of resumes received for each job posted on the Web. Strategies for standing out in this
 crowded field become very important.

These factors combine to create a job environment that is different from what most people might expect. The way you prepare for a career needs to be more flexible and more personalized. Technology will play an important role in your career development. Linking your demonstrable skills to the needs of a job will be the key to your success.

1.1 Overview of Career & Life Planning

"The Department of Labor defines 840 occupations in its Standard Occupation Classification system¹—and new occupations are being created at an ever-faster rate. Just ten years ago, would anyone have imagined the job of a social media marketing specialist? How about the concept of a competitive chef? As new careers develop and old careers morph into almost unrecognizable versions of their original, it's OK if you aren't able to pinpoint exactly what occupation or career will be your lifetime passion. However, it is important to define as best you can what field you will want to develop your career in, because that will help dictate your major and your course selections."

The process of career exploration can be a lot of fun, as it allows you to discover a world of possibilities. Even those students who have a pretty clear idea of what they want to do should go through this process because they will discover new options as backups and occasionally a new direction even more attractive than their original choice. The career exploration process involves four phases addressing four important questions:

- Phase 1: Who Am I?
- Phase 2: What's Out There?
- Phase 3: What Factors Might Affect My Choice?
- Phase 4: Where Do I Go From Here?

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *U.S. Department of Labor: Standard Occupational Classification User Guide 2010*, http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc_2010_user_guide.pdf (accessed July 13, 2010).

Phase 1: Who Am I?

This phase involves getting to know who you are. Understanding who you *really* are—is the first step of career exploration. You will have the opportunity to engage in many different career assessments in Unit 2 to allow you to learn more about your values, character strengths, personality preferences, interests, skills, and abilities. Each assessment will help you gain a better understanding of who you are and where you may fit best in the world of work.

Phase 2: What's Out There?

Unit 3 addresses phase 2 which involves doing career research. Once you have taken time to research yourself and gain a stronger understanding of who you are, you can begin to explore what types of careers might be best suited to you. This phase involves online research, talking to professionals in the field and gaining hands on exposure through volunteer work, internship experience, and networking. This phase also includes researching industry expectations and understanding minimum qualifications for employment. The more information you gather and the more you learn about the world of work will help you make well-informed decisions about your future career.

Phase 3: What Factors Might Affect My Choice?

In phase 3, you will take time to explore factors that may affect your choice and start making some decisions. It is important to use your creative thinking skills to come up with alternative "right" answers to factors that may present an obstacle to pursuing the right career.

- **Timing.** How much time must I invest before I actually start making money in this career? Will I need to spend additional time in school? Is there a certification process that requires a specific amount of experience? If so, can I afford to wait?
- **Finances.** Will this career provide me with the kind of income I need in the short term and the security I'll want in the longer term? What investment will I need to make to be successful in this field (education, tools, franchise fees, etc.)?
- **Location.** Does this career require me to relocate? Is the ideal location for this career somewhere I would like to live? Is it somewhere my family would like to live.
- Family/personal. How will this career affect my personal and family life? Do friends and family members who know me well feel strongly (for or against) about this career choice? How important is their input?

Taking time to research, these factors will help you with the decision making process and allow you to plan and prepare for your future. The decision making process will be discussed in detail in unit 4 along with internal and external factors that influence decision-making.

Phase 4: Where Do I Go From Here?

It may seem odd to be thinking about life after school if you are just getting started. But you will soon be making decisions about your future, and regardless of the direction you may choose, there is a lot you can do while still in college. You will need to focus your studies by choosing a major. You should find opportunities to explore the careers that interest you. You can ensure

that you are building the right kind of experience on which to base a successful career. These steps will make your dreams come to life and make them achievable. In Unit 4, the educational planning process will be introduced. You will take time to learn about the career certificate programs, associate degree, and transfer programs at COC and gain a good understanding of what program you'd like to pursue while developing your comprehensive student educational plan.

Keep in mind that deciding on and pursuing a career is an ongoing process. The more you learn about yourself and the career options that best suit you, the more you will need to fine-tune your career plan. Do not be afraid to consider new ideas. Keep an open mind, apply careful consideration as you narrow down your choices, and solidify your career plan. Career planning is exciting: learning about yourself and about career opportunities, and considering the factors that can affect your decision, should be a core part of your thoughts while in college.

1.2 Career Development²

See if you can remember a time in your childhood when you noticed somebody doing professional work. Maybe a nurse or doctor, dressed in a lab coat, was listening to your heartbeat. Maybe a worker at a construction site, decked in a hard hat, was operating noisy machinery. Maybe a cashier at the checkout line in a grocery store was busily scanning bar codes. Each day in your young life you could have seen a hundred people doing various jobs. Surely some of the experiences drew your interest and appealed to your imagination.

If you can recall any such times, those are moments from the beginning stage of your career development.

What exactly is career development? It's a lifelong process in which we become aware of, interested in, knowledgeable about, and skilled in a career. It's a key part of human development as our identity forms and our life unfolds.

Stages of Career Development

There are five main stages of career development. Each stage correlates with attitudes, behaviors, and relationships we all tend to have at that point and age. As we progress through each stage and reach the milestones identified, we prepare to move on to the next one.

² <u>Career/Life Planning and Personal Exploration</u> by Lumen Learning references Career Development by Linda Bruce, which is licensed under <u>CC BY 4.0</u>

Table 1.1 - Career Development Stages

Stage	Description
Growing	This is a time in early years (4–13 years old) when you begin to have a sense
	about the future. You begin to realize that your participation in the world is
	related to being able to do certain tasks and accomplish certain goals.
Exploring	This period begins when you are a teenager, and it extends into your mid-
	twenties. In this stage you find that you have specific interests and
	aptitudes. You are aware of your inclinations to perform and learn about
	some subjects more than others. You may try out jobs in your community or
	at your school. You may begin to explore a specific career. At this stage, you
	have some detailed "data points" about careers, which will guide you in
	certain directions.
Establishing	This period covers your mid-twenties through mid-forties. By now you are
	selecting or entering a field you consider suitable, and you are exploring job
	opportunities that will be stable. You are also looking for upward growth, so
	you may be thinking about an advanced degree.
Maintaining	This stage is typical for people in their mid-forties to mid-sixties. You may be
	in an upward pattern of learning new skills and staying engaged. But you
	might also be merely "coasting and cruising" or even feeling stagnant. You
	may be taking stock of what you've accomplished and where you still want
	to go.
Reinventing	In your mid-sixties, you are likely transitioning into retirement. But
	retirement in our technologically advanced world can be just the beginning
	of a new career or pursuit—a time when you can reinvent yourself. There
	are many new interests to pursue, including teaching others what you've
	learned, volunteering, starting online businesses, consulting, etc.

Keep in mind that your career development path is personal to you, and you may not fit neatly into the categories described above. Perhaps your socioeconomic background changes how you fit into the schema. Perhaps your physical and mental abilities affect how you define the idea of a "career." And for everyone, too, there are factors of chance that can't be predicted or anticipated. You are unique, and your career path can only be developed by you.

Activity 1.1 - Identifying Your Career Development Stage

Review the 5 Stages of Career Development listed in the table above and answer the questions below.

1. Which stage of career development do you feel you are in currently?

Activity 1.1 - Identifying Your Career Development Stage

- 2. Provide the 2 descriptions you identify with the most from your career development stage.
- 3. What challenges are you facing now in your career development?
- 4. Where are you headed next in your career development path?

Setting Yourself Up for Career Success

There are many factors that contribute to career success, such as: hard work, motivation, attitude, grit, resilience and talent. All these factors are related to mindset. Your thoughts and ideas in your mind influence your belief about yourself and your abilities. This influence directly impacts your attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance. Your mind is a powerful tool and you can use it to your advantage or disadvantage. You are in control!

1.3 Setting a Growth Mindset

Your mindset can help support a healthy career journey or it can be used to sabotage your efforts for success. Dr. Carol Dweck, a world-renowned Stanford University psychologist, conducted a research study with junior high students and presented them with puzzles to solve, ranging from easy to hard. She observed different attitudes in the students. Some gave up more easily and did not believe in themselves. Others continued to work hard despite mistakes and did not give up. She discovered that some people view their intelligence and abilities as something that is *fixed* where others viewed intelligence and abilities as something that can be developed. In Dr. Carol Dweck's book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, she states:

"In one world- the world of fixed traits- success is about proving you're smart or talented. Validating yourself. In the other - the world of changing qualities- it is about stretching yourself to learn something new. Developing yourself. Losing a tournament. Getting fired. Getting rejected. It means you are not smart or talented. In the other world, failure is about not growing. Not reaching for things you value. It means you are not fulfilling your potential . . . In one world, effort is a bad thing. It's, like failure, means you are not smart or talented. If you were, you would not need effort. In the other world, effort is what makes you smart or talented." (Dweck 15-16)

The illustration on the following page demonstrates the two mindsets. The *fixed* mindset views intelligence as static. The *growth* minset views intelligence as something that can be developed. Review the illustration and ask yourself: "Which mindset do I generally practice in my everday life?"

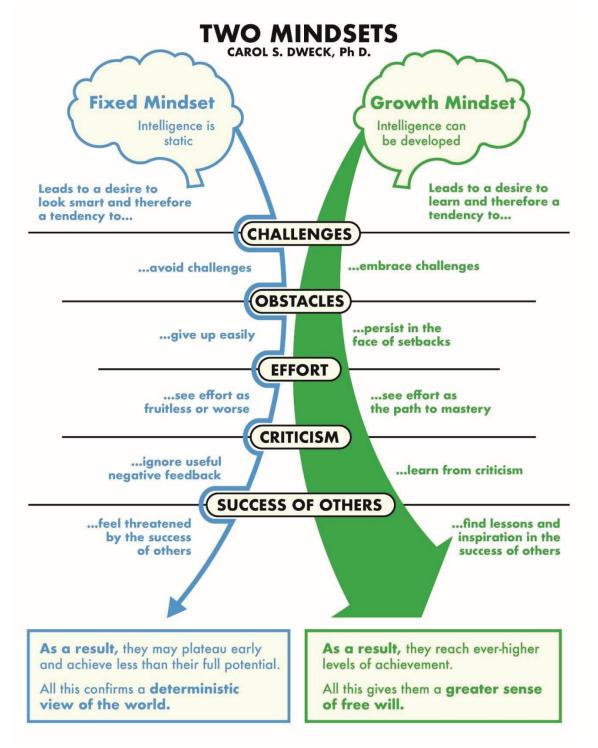


Figure 1.1 – Two Mindsets. (Image by <u>Ian Joslin</u> is licensed under <u>CC BY 4.0</u>)

The Power Of "Yet" By Carol Dweck3

Carol Dweck is a professor at Stanford and the author of *Mindset*, a classic work on motivation and "growth mindset." Her work is influential among educators and increasingly among business leaders as well. She researches "growth mindset" — the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn and to solve problems. In this talk, she describes two ways to think about a problem that's slightly too hard for you to solve. Are you not smart enough to solve it ... or have you just not solved it yet?



Figure 1.2 - Watch Carol Dweck's TED talk, "<u>The Power of Believing That You Can Improve</u>." (link: https://www.ted.com/talks/carol dweck the power of believing that you can improve).

Your mindset can play an important role in your career and life planning process. As you prepare to answer the question, "Who Am I?" in Unit 2, we ask you to keep a *growth mindset* and practice the power of "yet" by Dr. Carol Dweck.

Grit⁴

What is Grit? According to the <u>Merriam- Webster Dictionary</u>, Grit is: firmness of mind or spirit; unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger.

Passion and Perseverance or "Grit" by Angela Duckworth

Leaving a high-flying job in consulting, Angela Lee Duckworth took a job teaching math to seventh graders in a New York public school. She quickly realized that IQ wasn't the only thing separating the successful students from those who struggled. Here, she explains her theory of "grit" as a predictor of success.

³ <u>Career/Life Planning and Personal Exploration</u> by Lumen Learning references <u>Foundations of College Success:</u> <u>Words of Wisdom</u> by Thomas C. Priester, which is licensed under <u>CC BY-NC-SA 4.0</u>

⁴ <u>Career/Life Planning and Personal Exploration</u> by Lumen Learning references <u>Foundations of College Success:</u> <u>Words of Wisdom</u> by Thomas C. Priester, which is licensed under <u>CC BY-NC-SA 4.0</u>



Figure 1.3 - Watch Angela Lee Duckworth's TED talk, "Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance." (link: https://www.ted.com/talks/angela lee duckworth grit the power of passion and perseverance).

After watching the videos, reflect on how you can apply a "growth mindset" and "grit" to your career and life-planning journey!

Affirmations

Positive self-talk improves self-image and allows for empowerment toward deliberate change. Affirmations are positive statements that describe a desired outcome and are often repeated until you start to believe them. Affirmations are directly related to mindset. As discussed earlier, your thoughts and ideas in your mind influence your belief about yourself and your abilities. This influence directly impacts your attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance. Be good to yourself and use affirmations to help build your confidence and belief in yourself.

Affirmations can be used to help raise self-confidence, control negative feelings and acquire new desired behaviors. They are particularly useful to help overcome negative thinking and self-sabotaging behaviors. Affirmations are intended to create new possibilities.

For example, let's say I struggle with organization and often miss deadlines and this negatively impacts my performance at school and work.

My new desired behavior is to be organized and keep up with deadlines. To develop an affirmation for this desired new behavior there are a few things to keep in mind. When creating effective affirmations, it is necessary to:

Phrase the affirmation in the *present tense*. For example:
 I am organized and manage my time well.

٧s

I will be organized and manage my time well.

 Phrase the affirmation in the positive rather than the negative I am productive and motivated.

VS.

I am not lazy and unmotivated.

Make sure the affirmation is believable and meaningful.

- Share your affirmations with others.
- Visualize success.
- Recite your affirmations daily.
- Repeat your affirmations when you start to engage in negative thought or behavior.

Here are some examples of positive affirmations:

- I practice a growth mindset.
- I am successful.
- I embrace challenges and view them as learning opportunities.
- I am strong and in control of my thoughts and behaviors.
- I am a valuable team player with a strong work ethic.
- I value hard work and put forth 100 % effort in all I do.
- I use my time wisely and complete assignments on time.
- I am mindful of how I spend my time and with whom.
- I practice a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising and forgiving myself when I make mistakes.

Activity 1.2 - Building Your Affirmations

Using positive self-talk and repeating positive messages to yourself will help reinforce a positive self-image and will contribute to your career success! Take a moment and practice this.

Develop six affirmations related to being successful in your career and life planning. Be sure to state your affirmations in the present and use positive phrases. Make your affirmations personal and meaningful to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Activity 1.2 - Building Your Affirmations

4.

5.

Read your affirmations daily and modify them as needed. Practice them especially when you feel overwhelmed or discouraged. When you repeat your affirmations over and over, you will start to **believe** them and this will change your expectations, attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance.

Building Self-Confidence

Self-confidence plays an important role in many aspects of our lives. It is a key factor that contributes to success in school, work, home and in personal relationships with family and friends.

Many factors influence self-confidence. Some factors include environment, childhood upbringing, culture and experiences and interactions with others. These factors can help build confidence and strengthen our belief in ourselves and our abilities. Or they can minimize confidence and cause us to question ourselves and our abilities.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." This is a powerful statement because it emphasizes the control you have within yourself. Building self-confidence takes time and patience and is definitely worth the effort.

One way to help build self-confidence is to focus on a past success. Look at an achievement you are proud of. For example, earning an "A" on your English 101 research paper. Earning that "A" grade involved:

- A desire to do well internal motivation
- Commitment making the assignment a priority and taking time to work on it
- Research Skills -using resources to collect the information needed to write the paper
- Time-management taking time to write and revise the paper

Another important factor that can help build your self-confidence is to think about your strengths. Your strengths are generally things that come naturally to you and you do well. For example, some strengths may include:

- Communicating well with others
- Staying calm during a crisis
- Problem solving
- Seeing the silver lining in the midst of chaos

Recognize and reward yourself for the achievements you have accomplished thus far. Give yourself credit for overcoming setbacks and using those situations as opportunities to learn and grow. When things get difficult, it is common to question your abilities. It is times like these when it is necessary to look back at your accomplishments and recognize that you have been successful before and can do it again. Learn from past challenges and how you have conquered them. Focus on the skills you have and the strengths you have developed through previous challenges. Learn from your past successes to help build your future successes.

As you build your self-confidence you will start to feel more in control of your future.

College of the Canyons Student Resources

As you prepare for career success it is also important to take time to acquaint yourself with the services on campus to help you be a successful student. There are many resources on campus to help you pursue your academic and career goals at College of the Canyons. Familiarize yourself with the student support services and identify those you can benefit from. Click here for a comprehensive list of College of the Canyons Campus Resources & Support Services. Don't be afraid to ask for help. COC offers many services to help support you on your journey. All you need to do is know what is available to you and how you can benefit from each service.

So far, we have addressed several important factors to get you started on your career journey. Practicing a growth mindset, affirmations and building self-confidence will help guide you through the process of creating your career and life planning vision. Before we begin your journey, let's take a minute and differentiate between a job and a career.

1.4 Job vs. Career

Before we dive into the career exploration process, it is important to differentiate between a job and a career. These two terms are often used interchangeably however, they have different meanings.

A **job** is something you would like to have, especially if you want to pay your bills. A job lets you enjoy a minimal level of financial security. A job requires you to show up and do what is required of you; in exchange, you get paid. A job can lead to a career.

A career involves an occupation or profession requiring special skills or training; a progression of jobs followed as one's life pursuit. A career involves holding jobs, but it is more a means of achieving personal fulfillment. In a career, your jobs follow a sequence that leads to increasing mastery, professional development, and personal and financial satisfaction. A career requires planning, knowledge, and skills. If it is to be a fulfilling career, it requires that you utilize your full set of analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills to make informed decisions that will affect your life in both the short-term and the long-term.

A career allows you to express your self-concept. Self-Concept is how you see yourself, your own self-awareness of who you are. Donald Super, a psychologist who made great

contributions to the field of career counseling, influenced the idea that developing a sense of self and realizing that you change over time is important when planning your career. Self-concept changes over time and develops as a result of experiences. Super's five stages of developmental Self Concept will be discussed in class in greater detail. Refer to the class handout titled "Donald Super's Theory of Developmental Self-concept."

Understanding Super's theory helps provide a framework for your career planning journey. Identify where you are in terms of Super's five life and career development stages and keep this in mind as we continue with self-exploration in unit 2 and answer the question "Who Am I?"

Activity 1.3 – My Job Experience

Think of your current and past work experience, and all the jobs you have held thus far. Consider both paid and unpaid experiences including part-time jobs, volunteer work, and internship experience. Include any leadership roles you may have held as a club officer or part of a sports team.

In your job(s), describe your role(s). What tasks and responsibilities were you accountable for? What skills did you practice in this job? What did you enjoy about this job? What did you not enjoy about this job?

In some cases, a job can help guide you towards your career. Understanding what you like and don't like is a very important part of career and life planning. You may come to find you love one aspect of your job such as helping people and may wish to incorporate that into your future career. Or you may come to learn you did not particularly like trying to persuade clients to purchase a particular item and may learn sales is not your passion. Your past work experience can help you learn a lot about yourself and your future career desires.

Your response to these questions sets the stage for PHASE 1 of the Career Exploration Process and unraveling the question "WHO AM I?" Get ready to engage in self-exploration in the next unit!

1.5 Your Personal and Career Vision

Where do you see yourself in the next 5, 10, 15, 20 plus years? What career path do you want to pursue? Each person in this class has their own thoughts and ideas about their future. Some may be very clear while others may be very fuzzy and some may be somewhere in between. Regardless of the level of clarity you have at this time, take a moment to visualize where you see yourself in the next 5 to 20 years. What will your ideal career look like? Start thinking about:

- What kind of work will be meaningful to you and allow you to feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day?
- What level of responsibility do you plan to hold?
- What type of work environment will energize you and give you a sense purpose?

As you begin Unit 2 with Self-Exploration, begin painting the picture of your career vision in your mind. Before the end of the semester, your mental image will be drafted into a career vision statement.

Career Vision statements are very powerful and meaningful when paired with career exploration. Creating a vision statement may take several attempts and rewrites until you identify with your career vision statement. Below are a couple of examples of career vision statements to help you brainstorm. You will have the opportunity to draft your personal career vision statement throughout the course of this class.

Career Vision Statement Sample #1:

I will become a well-known and respected leader in the food industry revitalizing the ways food is produced and marketed, making healthier products to help people live better lives.

Career Vision Statement Sample #2:

I will provide the best technical support and customer service to our clients, helping improve their business and lives, striving to solve problems with a positive attitude that spreads to my co-workers.

For more information on creating your career vision visit: https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/vision-statement-samples

Activity 1.4 – Creating My Career & Life Planning Vision Statement

As you begin PHASE 1 of the career exploration process and answer the question "Who Am I?" start thinking about your personal and career vision. Where do you see yourself in the next few years? What accomplishments do you wish to achieve in your personal and professional life?

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 10 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 15 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 20 years....

What will your ideal career look like?

Activity 1.4 – Creating My Career & Life Planning Vision Statement What kind of work is meaningful to you? What level of responsibility do you desire? What type of work environment will energize you and give you a sense of purpose? Reflect on your responses to the questions above and develop your career vision statement here Each phase of the career exploration process will help you refine your career vision statement and solidify it by the end of this course. Enjoy the process! Get ready for PHASE 1- "WHO AM I?"

1.6 Unit Summary

Now that you have completed Unit 1, we will revisit the unit learning objectives before moving to Unit 2. At this time you have:

- Applied the career exploration and planning process.
- Described the stages of career development and identified the stage you are currently in.
- Identified and applied important factors related to mindset such as a positive mental outlook, self-confidence and the power of positive thinking.
- Differentiated between a job and a career.
- Brainstormed ideas for your personal and career vision.

These concepts provide the underlying foundation for the remainder of the course. Studies have shown individuals who are in careers that line up with their values, strengths, personality, interests, skills, and abilities tend to be more satisfied in their careers than those that do not. In the next unit, you will complete a series of different career assessments to help you gain a better understanding of yourself and the world of work. The more you learn about yourself and the more career information you gather, the more equipped you are to make well-informed decisions to help you solidify your career and life planning vision. The next unit will address the first phase of the career and life planning process: Phase I – "Who Am I?" Are you ready?