

[UPBEAT MUSIC]

Welcome back to The Career Corner podcast. This is career coach, Brad Minton. We're rolling right along on this amazing season, titled Career FAQ, where we address common concerns that many students have regarding their career journeys. In today's episode, I'm going to address a rather important, yet complex issue which centers on what factors should go into making a career choice?

While this isn't exactly a simple concept, I will try to simplify as much as humanly possible to give you the basic ingredients. I'll highlight two major factors that really go into making a well-informed career choice and break each one of them down for you. The factor number one when making a career choice is you. Making a well-informed career choice is so dependent on how well you really know yourself. So here's a few points to really examine within yourself to get on that path.

Number one, what are your work values? Values really correlate with fulfillment. So really think about what is important to you. Is it high income? Is it independence? Is a contribution to society? Is it creativity? What is it that you put a high level of importance on?

Number two, what are your talents, strengths, and skills? These are going to directly correlate with how successful you ultimately are. It makes sense, right? The better that you are at something, the more natural that something comes to you, the better that you're going to be, and the more growth that you're going to have over time.

So really think about what are those talents and strengths that you have. Are you an amazing communicator? Do you have an uncanny ability to bring the best out of others and lead? Do you have a mathematical mind and are very tech savvy? So really think about what those things are.

Number three, what are my personality preferences? So your personality preferences are really going to correlate with your comfortability and determine how much work actually feels like work or doesn't. So, these are things like how do you get your energy? How do you direct your energy? How do you take in and process new information? How do you make decisions? And how do you like to structure your environment? All of these things really control a lot of the satisfaction and the comfortability that we get within our work. And so, they are really important determinants in making a career choice.

Number four, obviously, what are my interests? Your career interests are obviously going to correlate with your motivation, your drive, your desire to show up every day, and want to continue to learn more, and get better within your field. If you're not interested in your work, it's really hard to do what's necessary in order to be successful in it. So interest is obviously a really core ingredient.

Factor number two is really understanding the career itself. It's imperative that you really know what to expect, and that you do the research on what the position actually entails, and what you're going to get from it. So here's a few points to really consider before making a career choice.

Number one, what are the duties and responsibilities of this particular career path? So it's so important to really know what the actual job does, what it entails, and not just assume that we think we know because we've seen it on TV. Research the position thoroughly. And interview individuals who are currently working in the profession. Doing informational interviews here is absolutely incredible. Really get to understand what the job entails. And then, obviously, interview a range of different people. If you ever need to know what the job actually entails, you can use a resource like [onetonline.org](http://onetonline.org) and find a lot of that information.

Number two, what education and training do I need in order to get into the field? So, you don't want to dive into a career path that requires significantly more education and training than what's ideal for you. If it's not important for you to spend 4, 6, 8, 12 years in school, then that will help you potentially rule things out. So take the time to research the requirements on ONet and on other various websites and really assess how far you're willing to go within your education.

Number three, what can I expect to make? So this is really important. Higher education is an investment. Just like any other investment, you really want a good return. It's important that you calculate approximately what your education can cost, and what your total salary compensation can look like. Using a source like salary.com or glassdoor.com can really help you in understanding what you can expect to make, along with the informational interviews that I already discussed.

Number four, what are the economic trends for this field? So it's really important to look at sources like the Bureau of Labor statistics and other labor trends data, and really know how your career path is trending. Is it looking up? Are there good opportunities? Is the position growing over the next couple of years? Or is it shrinking?

Are there ample job opportunities out there right now? And does it appear that it's going to go that way in the future? Taking the due diligence to look within, gain self-awareness, along with assessing these various aspects of the career itself, will make a huge difference in your confidence to make a well-informed decision.

I hope this episode was helpful for you. Remember, if you are struggling to clarify your career goals and you need some assistance, reach out to a career coach. Myself, Barb, April, and Logann are here for you any time. Schedule an appointment on Handshake at [emich.joinhandshake.com](https://emich.joinhandshake.com). Stay tuned for our next episode, where Logann will talk to you about career assessments and how they can be helpful for you. Until then, remember, we're here for you. And we support your goals.

[UPBEAT MUSIC]