

Summary

In summary, then, how can we, as teachers, use personality types to help our students? Extraverted students need to be involved in their learning and be able to discuss it with the teachers and other students. Introverts need time to work through the material by themselves. They need good printed material and references for their own independent study. Sensing persons need the material laid out for them in detail. If they are expected to do intuitive activities, they will need some examples. Intuitive persons need clear task definition so they won't go off on a tangent. They need to be inspired to go beyond the course requirements. Thinking and feeling persons need to know the bases on which decisions are to be made. They need tasks to help them understand their own decision making process. Judging students need structure in all phases of their courses. Perceptive persons need flexibility in the way course objectives are accomplished. They should be provided some simple structures that help them stimulate structured behavior.

There is no simple recipe for using personality type in the classroom. The personality type of the teacher is an important factor in designing instruction for all. The most important fact to remember is that each instructional activity included in a course will be very helpful for one group students and rather difficult for another group. The best solution is a varied group of activities that provide something for everyone. Comfort will be found in the preferred ways of learning and growth will occur from those tasks not preferred.

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Advising On Early Career Planning

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Introduction

We often hear from students: "I don't know what I want for a career." or "Tell me what types of jobs I can get with my degree." The disconcerting factor in these situations is not the questions asked but the fact that they often come from **seniors** preparing for graduation.

A missing link in the series of events making up these students' college careers is advance planning. They did not (and perhaps were never encouraged) do any exploration of themselves or potential career areas.

Most students do not understand "career planning;" the words alone imply too much work. They are committed to keeping up with coursework, making good grades, participating in co-curricular activities and, in most cases, working a part-time job.

It is important that we, as advisors, teach students that "work" is a stimulating challenge and an integral part of our lives. The career planning done during college will pay lifelong dividends.

There are two challenges advisors face in encouraging students:

1) Planning for a career, not just a "job." Help them understand that a career is a life path, a summary of all the job decisions made in a lifetime. The first job choice in their career is just one in a series. If planned and executed carefully, each new position is a positive step on their career ladder.

2) Being serious about the educational background they are receiving. Is it adequately

preparing them for a career that will satisfy their interests, skills, strengths and needs?

Career planning is not easy. Starting in the freshman year, students should have an action plan that includes a list of **realistic** goals. The plan should be flexible and modified as new information about themselves and careers is learned. Encourage students to set goals; these goals should serve as excellent motivators.

Career planning involves three major activities:

- Self-assessment
- Career exploration
- Placement (in a position)

Without these three components, the employment search process is nothing more than **random job hunting**, which usually results in dissatisfaction and disappointment.

Self-Assessment

Starting a journey with no plan for arriving at the destination can result in wrong paths, dead ends or worse yet, backtracking. Self-assessment is a method of laying the groundwork for a successful "journey" to a fulfilling career.

Self-assessment means a detailed, thorough analysis of a student's background, qualifications, interests and aspirations. This self-inventory is the starting block to career planning.

From this assessment, the student will determine the most important criteria to use in analyzing career options. An example might be: "I am happier when I

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am around people, so I know my career will have to include that element.”

Students can get help with their self-inventories from:

- * college advisors/counselors
- * career counseling/placement offices
- * publications

Remind students that the **key word** in this exercise is “self.” To be accurate and useful, the self-inventory must be conducted by them.

Techniques for Self-Assessment

- **Autobiographies.** These are personal stories written in narrative form. For organizational ease, they can be done in subheadings: skills, interests, values, etc. Have the student write all relevant information from their past.
- **Inventories.** List words that best describe students' values, interests, personality, etc. The list should reveal strengths and weaknesses.
- **Psychological tests.** These should be administered by a career counselor and are available in most career counseling offices.

An effective self-assessment integrates education, experiences, skills, values, interests and personal qualifications. When complete, it can be evaluated in light of career information.

Through self-assessment, a student can narrow the wide field of career options they want to explore. They can eliminate those careers having characteristics that conflict with the student's needs, interests, etc.

Career Exploration

Career exploration is a searching and investigative activity. Only when a student **understands** career alternatives, can he or she make a fair analysis of a career choice. Career exploration involves a systematic collection of information about career options.

Sources for Career Exploration

- **Career Planning/Placement Office.** This office contains informational brochures, publications, annual reports, etc. on various employers. Encourage students to routinely explore this office and become acquainted with its staff and services.
- **People in occupations that interest students.** Encourage informational interviews. Have students interview people to learn what a “typical” day is like, the type of background required for that position, etc. Have them shadow that person, ie. spend the day with them on the job.
- **Newspapers.** Explain the importance of reading newspapers. Examples: **Wall Street Journal**, **USA Today**. Have them watch the news on television, particularly the national news. It is important they be aware of current news which can throw light on various career choices.

- **Trade Publications.** Help students learn which professional magazines target the career area that interests them. They might consider subscribing to or routinely reading, them. These publications are typically found in placement offices, department or university libraries and will enable students to stay abreast of developments in their field.

Placement

The placement process is the culmination of self-assessment and career exploration. The student knows him or herself — strengths, weaknesses and needs — and the type of occupations that require those characteristics. The “first job” pursuit can then begin.

Stress to students that the placement process (if done carefully) often requires several months. The reward, however, for being persistent and patient is greater than just taking the “first thing that comes along” in a random job search.

Using a College Placement Office

A college placement office is the ideal place for a student to learn the “do's and don'ts” of an employment search. Following are some of the services these offices provide.

- workshops/presentations on:
 - writing successful resumes
 - job search strategies
 - polishing job interview techniques
- on-campus job interviewing with potential employers
- practice (mock) interviewing
- libraries containing employer information
- magazines, newspapers and various trade publications
- job descriptions/profiles
- actual position announcements from employers

If properly conceived and executed, students' career decisions will be a series of positive adjustments. These “adjustments” allow them a maximum level of career satisfaction.

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