

# Chapter 3: Accomplishments, Beliefs, & Dreams

## BELIEFS

This section is designed to help you examine the **beliefs** that you have about yourself, the world of work, and educational pathways. It's important to recognize the beliefs that you hold because they impact the decisions you make as well as your ability to successfully implement your career plan.

We get messages about education and work from a young age. This information can come from parents, other family members, friends, our culture, and the media - just to name a few sources.



Messages can be things that we are told (e.g., doctor is a successful career choice) or things that are simply implied but never actually spoken about (e.g., if your parents didn't speak with you about post-secondary options, perhaps the message was "you're on your own to figure it out").

The messages we take in from the world around us influence the beliefs we hold and shape the expectations we have for ourselves, for others, and about our career. Once you can identify your messages and beliefs, it's important to examine how they may help or hinder you.

For example, your parents may have told you that "you have to get an education" or that "you will take over the family business when you're ready".

You may have heard that "university is better than college" or that "if you make lots of money, you'll be happy". For different people, these messages could be beneficial or detrimental.

Over the next few pages, you'll be guided to identify and reflect upon your messages and beliefs. Once you've completed these sections, you'll be asked to think about your ideal career and lifestyle. Do your best to be honest with yourself and identify what's important to you versus a message that's been shared with you but doesn't line up with what you value or how you want to shape your career choices.

MESSAGES REGARDING WORK AND YOUR CAREER:

While your ideal career and lifestyle may or may not be completely realistic, this exercise is a solid foundation from which to start your career planning journey and build your career direction. Your counsellor is here to support you in challenging any beliefs that you find difficult to let go of.

Below, identify your beliefs regarding educational pathways, work and your career and note whether you still agree with the messages you have received, using the following scale:

1 - Strongly Disagree    2 - Disagree    3 - Uncertain    4 - Agree    5 - Strongly Agree

STATEMENT	MY AGREEMENT
Example: <i>I need to be in a career that requires university level education.</i>	4

CAREER BELIEFS

The following exercise examines commonly held career beliefs, which you will rate on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree.

This will help you and your counsellor examine which beliefs could have a positive impact on your career planning and which ones could limit and hold you back.

STRONGLY DISAGREE      DISAGREE      NEUTRAL      AGREE      STRONGLY AGREE

There is only one career suited to me.					
I don't have a lot of time to plan my career.					
Everyone else seems to have their career direction figured out.					
Others influence my career decisions to a large extent.					
It is possible to pursue more than one career at a time.					
My career should always be planned.					
It is common for people to change careers in their lives.					
I am in total control of the direction of my career.					
My career identity is tied to my self-esteem.					
My career decision is irreversible.					
It is my responsibility to manage my career.					
Career change indicates failure or indecision.					
The career ladder equals career success.					
There is only one path for a given career.					
It is important for me to achieve some sense of meaning from my work.					
I'm not capable of pursuing a career that requires many years of schooling.					
There are options I can't choose because of my sex and/or gender identity.					
There are no good jobs out there.					
My interests are all over the place.					

REFLECTION:

Identify 5 career beliefs from the previous two tables that you believe could have a **negative** impact on your career planning by holding you back or limiting what options you explore. Explain your rationale for how each belief could negatively impact your career.

	BELIEFS	RATIONALE
	<b>Example:</b> <i>Helping others through nursing isn't suitable for men to do</i>	<i>Overlooking strengths of caregiving and nurturing</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

What are some strategies you can implement to minimize the negative impact of these career beliefs (i.e., supports to talk to, resources, ways of thinking, information to gain to expand perspective, etc.)

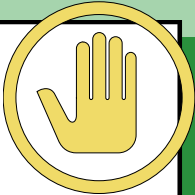
1.	
2.	
3.	

Identify 5 career beliefs that may have a **positive** impact on your career. Explain how each belief will impact your career positively.

		BELIEFS	RATIONALE
		<b>Example:</b> <i>You can do anything you put your mind to!</i>	<i>You will stay open to many possibilities and push yourself when something is difficult</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Refer to [page 192](#)

CAREER CRITERIA SUMMARY



Consider some of the messages and beliefs you have about your career.

Take a moment to add these to the "**MESSAGES OR BELIEFS TO BE AWARE OF**" section of your Career Criteria Summary!



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Complete the table below for various periods in your life, choosing the **achievements** that you are most proud of. Think of externally granted achievements (i.e., competition medals, nominations, etc.) and personally defined accomplishments (i.e., saving up for a trip, overcoming a challenge, or pushing yourself to learn something new).

For each achievement noted, include:

- the age at which it took place
- the particular skills you used to accomplish it
- why you are proud of this accomplishment

Achievements	Age	Skills Used	Why Are You Proud?

## IDEAL CAREER & LIFESTYLE

The next section will be an opportunity to dream about your ideal career and lifestyle!

**Some key points to remember as you complete the following exercise:**

- Focus on what's most important to you and what you envision being part of your preferred future.
- Feel free to guess if you aren't sure! This exercise is meant to be playful and fun.
- Use your imagination and let it wander beyond barriers. Our dreams typically reflect our values, hopes, wishes, passions, and aspirations.
- Your dream career doesn't not have to be realistic so don't hold back.



**Some useful questions to prompt your thinking are:**

- What would you do if you could do anything?
- What if there were no barriers or limitations and you were not afraid?
- What would you do if you knew you could not fail?



When you're in a positive mood, find a place where you can dream about your ideal career and life. Project yourself **10** years into the future or a time when you can imagine living out your ideal lifestyle.

- What would you be doing each day or each week?
- Who would you be talking to?
- What kinds of conversations would you be having?
- What types people would you be interacting and conversing with?
- What environment would you be in?
- How would your days be structured?
- Where would you be living?
- What would the rest of your life look like?
- How would you be feeling?

Depending on your preference for this exercise, you may choose to use one of the two options provided:

- **(Option 1)** - the structured questions
- **(Option 2)** - writing freestyle about your ideal career and lifestyle

You may even grab a blank piece of paper and draw out your ideal career, or create a digital vision board.

You may also utilize a combination of all three!



unsplash.com/photos/UhpAf0ySwuk



unsplash.com/photos/1K4h3ZO5PSA



OPTION 1:

MY IDEAL CAREER & LIFESTYLE - DESCRIPTIVE BREAKDOWN

A) Day-to-day tasks and responsibilities - Identify the main duties/tasks of your ideal career; describe **what** you are doing, and **how** it is done. If you can, include an estimate of the percentage of time you would spend doing each task.

Duties/Tasks/Aspects of Your Ideal Career	% of Time

B) What is the purpose of the job or primary focus of your ideal career?

C) What types of skills and knowledge are required for this work?

**D)** What type of position is it? Select all that apply.

Permanent		Full-time		Multi-tracking	
Season/Sessional		Part-time		Shift Work	
Contract		Casual		Evenings & Weekends	
Self-employed		On-call		Evenings & Weekends Off	

Other important details about your ideal work schedule:

**E)** What kinds of people would you want to work with; who brings out the best in you? Try to think about your leader, colleagues or the people who might be reporting to you if you would like to be in a leadership role.

**F)** Describe your ideal work environment: Indoors or outdoors, an office building, a farm, a boutique, at home?

**G)** Think about whether you would prefer to work for yourself, or under the supervision of someone else. i) Describe the type of direction you would like to receive from a leader or a mentor:

ii) What would be the ideal format of your work reviews? (e.g., how often would you have a formal review and the format of the review, or is all feedback informal?)

iii) What is your preferred form of recognition? (e.g., I just like to be told I've done a good job, a bonus, etc.)

Please add any other relevant details:

## H) Dream Life:

i) Where are you living?

ii) What is your home like?

iii) What are you doing in your leisure time?

iv) Who are you spending time with (family, friends...)?

**OPTION 2:**

**MY IDEAL CAREER & LIFESTYLE - WRITTEN OVERVIEW**

Describe, in your own words, how you would envision your ideal career in as much detail as you can: