

Career Research Paper

The main purpose of this final class paper is to provide you the opportunity to consider and present a thoughtful plan for your professional goals that can range from vocational careers to graduate school. You will chose a career or educational goal, conduct some research to find out more about that goal, and then present your findings in this paper. As you compose this paper, try to address as many of the following questions¹ as possible:

1. Education and Training

- What is the minimum education required for this career? Maximum?
- How many years of study are involved? At what cost?
- Where would you obtain this education?

2. Job Skills, Talents and Experience

- What special skills, talents, or personality traits are necessary for this occupation?
- Where could you gain that experience?
- In what ways are you suited for this career?
- What personality characteristics or skills do you currently possess that you believe will benefit you in this career?
- What “real” life experiences have you had that have prepared you for this career?

3. Earnings

- What is the standard beginning wage for this job? In this area? Elsewhere?
- What is the maximum salary you can expect? Here? Elsewhere?
- What factors affect the salary range?
- What expenses are involved in setting yourself up in this profession?
- How can the start-up costs be financed or deferred?

4. Benefits/Health Factors

- What health benefits are available to employees?
- What health and safety issues are involved in this occupation?
- What other benefits might this occupation include: vacation time, retirement plan, etc.?

5. Employment

- What is the prospect for employment in this occupation?
- What factors influence the availability or jobs in this field?
- What is the growth potential for this job?

6. Typical Day

- Describe the typical day for a person in this job
- What are the usual hours?
- What are the best parts of the day?
- What would be the most challenging aspects?

An A paper will include **ALL** of the following elements:

- One of the references is our **class textbook**, Tim Lemire's *I'm an English Major—Now What?* You may simply pick one of the career options Lemire mentions in his book and refer to that chapter or you may make another strong connection to the book (for instance, to one of the appendixes).
- The paper includes information from **two outside sources** (one source can be one of the websites mentioned in class and on the class website; the other source must be new).
- The paper contains primary research: **contact a professional** who holds a similar position and conduct a Q&A with that person. A face-to-face discussion would be most beneficial, but you can conduct an informal interview in electronic form as well. You may use the questions mentioned on this assignment prompt as the discussion questions for your conversation with a professional.
- The paper you turn in is an **academic paper** that includes an introduction, a body section, and a conclusion. You may use the questions on this prompt as a possible outline for the paper's paragraphs.
- The paper is be at least **five full pages** long.
- The final draft has been **proofread and edited** carefully.
- The paper has been formatted according to **MLA documentation** guidelines (consult a handbook or the online MLA web site).

¹ I have adapted the questions from Jana Edwards, "Career Research Paper Requirements." Oct. 7, 2008. <www.janaedwards.com/FILECABINET/CAREERPAPERnew.doc>.