Reading

There are four items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary
4. Successories

I. Reading

Career Resources

Which career is right for you? The Career Connections information will help set you on the right path. The O*Net Online®, CareerOneStop™, America’s Career Infonet™, and the university’s own Career Network and Career Resources areas are just some of the many valuable resources that you will be exploring to help you connect to the right career path.

If you already have a career, or know the career you want, these resources can help you discover how your interests and skills can help you achieve your educational and career goals. If you are not quite sure where you want to go, these resources can help you explore this in more detail.
Select the link in your Course Resources area in the home area.

One of the first steps of successful career planning is self-assessment. This is where you take time to get a clear view of your own career-related interests, personality traits, skills, and values. Take time this week to complete the Focus2™ Career Planning System, which is designed to help you develop a comprehensive career profile that you can use as your foundation for further career research and exploration.

Completing your Focus2 assessment (found in your online course under “Course Resources”) will:

- Combine your interests, personality traits, values, and skills to generate your profile
- Identify the major areas of study at Kaplan University that match your profile
- Capture your results in an online student portfolio

Take time to explore outstanding career resources as you continue to gather information that will assist your personal growth and development throughout your Kaplan educational career. These will be explained more below in the Reading.

- O*Net Online – http://www.onetonline.org/
- CareerOneStop - http://www.careeronestop.org/
- America’s Career Infonet - http://www.careerinfonet.org/default.asp O*Net Online

There is great information online that can help you as you are exploring career options. Perhaps you would like more information on your area of expertise. You might be interested in finding out about options within a certain career area. Maybe you have not decided what you want to do and you want to find a starting point for your career research.

Wherever you are in your journey, the O*Net Online is a great website to help you start your exploration:
http://online.onetcenter.org

**Where to Begin your Exploration of the O*Net**

Begin your exploration of the O*Net site by selecting the “What is O*NET?” tab and then selecting the Starting Points tab. Look for the STUDENT section where you will find direct links to the following valuable resources:

- O*Net Interest Profiler — a self-assessment designed to help you identify your interests and connect them with possible career options. This is a great starting point for career exploration.
O*Net Work Importance Profiler — a self-assessment designed to match your values with work choices. This is an excellent way to ensure you are focusing on occupations that “fit” with what is most important to you.

My Next Move — a career exploration tool that will provide you with printable reports highlighting the following eight areas related to your career choices: knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, technology, education, job outlook, and explore more.

Continue your exploration by returning to the O*Net Home page. Select on the "Find Occupations" link. Then find the job family title and select on the arrow to select your area of interest. Then select on "Go." Have fun exploring.

CareerVideos.com features over six hundred short video profiles of real people doing real jobs. Here you will be able to view videos in which people reflect on their occupations. They will provide personal words on the field in which they have chosen to work.

Whether you are just beginning to think about your career possibilities, or whether you are in a current position, it is vital to keep your eyes open and your critical thinking brain engaged in consistent growth in learning and acquiring information. In order to develop as a person and as a professional you need to go out of your comfort zone, which is not always easy but necessary for success. Continue your quest for information.

**CareerOneStop and America’s Career Infonet**
http://www.careeronestop.org/
http://www.careerinfonet.org/default.asp

**Career Resources**

**Career Action Planning**

You will reflect upon information from course readings, assignments, career research, the informational interview assignment, and the LASSI assessment as you complete your Career Action Plan.

Much like a road map, a well-constructed career action plan will help you see how to get from where you are now to where you would like to be at certain points in your future. You might think of it as your personal GPS.

The process of creating an action plan will actually require that you make use of many of the skills you have covered in this course: time management, goal setting, writing, reading, note taking, critical thinking, career planning, and career/value assessment.
A Clear Vision

A career action plan will help to create a road map as to how you can attain your professional goals. This type of planning can also help you with various other aspects of your life as well.

You have come a long way in this course beginning with a study of self-awareness. You have grown in your skills of critical thinking, reading, note taking, improving your professional writing skills, setting personal and professional goals, and exploring career fields that may hold interest for you.

Focusing on career action plans will give you the motivation to reach your goals you set for yourself. Taking time to critically analyze and research information before you make decisions will enhance the success of the goals you want to achieve.

What do you want to be “when you grow up?” That is a great question for each one of you at any age. Are you there, yet? Are you changing direction? Are you just beginning your journey? Writing a career action plan will guide you to completion.

Life Lesson: Oprah Winfrey

Surround yourself with only people who are going to lift you higher

Action Planning

Action planning is a continuous process that revolves around four basic steps/questions:

- My Present — Self-Assessment: Where am I right now?
- My Future — Goal Setting: Where do I want to be in the future?
- My Path — Evaluation: How will I get there?
- My Actions — Following through: What specific tasks must I complete?
By now, you should be recognizing that career action plans are much like the critical thinking strategies of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy that you have explored throughout the course – always in action, always in review.

Whether you write a short few words or paragraphs of plans, the most important thing is to write. Write down your thoughts to bring them to reality. Include the information necessary to keep your career action plan Specific, Measurable, Action oriented, Reasonable and Timely. You should recognize those terms from Unit 7 and the discussion of S.M.A.R.T. goals.
Benefits

The career action plan allows you to turn your thoughts regarding your career, into an organized steps-by-step sequence so you can operationalize your plan.

Spending time writing a career action plan gives you the opportunity to explore your options. Establishing curiosity is a strong critical thinking skill in the process. Most people are not in the same place in their respective career journeys, so the career discovery that you do will be on different levels than your classmates – some using life experiences, some beginning at the beginning.

Take a look at the visual above once again.

My Present –

Self-Assessment: Where am I right now?

This question is important because it will help you to establish a clear picture of your current skills, experiences, and areas for improvement as well. You will want to make sure to reflect upon recent course readings, discussions, and activities that have helped you to recognize your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and abilities. Remember, critical thinkers regularly take time to look at themselves closely, honestly and critically. This is just what you will be doing in this stage — the result will be increased self-awareness.

My Future –

Goal Setting: Where do I want to be in the future?

This question is important because it will help you to create a solid vision of your future as you define exactly where you want to be in the next 2–5 years. Make sure you understand your inner-motivations for each goal as well by asking yourself the following question: “Why is this goal important to me?” As you set career goals for yourself, you will want to apply the S.M.A.R.T. elements you focused on in earlier units. Make sure to develop both short- and long-term goals so that you can see yourself making progress as you complete short-term goals that move you closer to achieving your long-term goals. Remember, your goals should be challenging, yet realistic; they should inspire you and keep you motivated. Do not be afraid to aim high, but be ready to put forth the hard work and effort it will take to realize your dreams.

My Path –

Evaluation: How will I get there?
This question is important because it will help you to begin mapping out your forward progress. This is where you design your strategy for success, so to speak. You will definitely need to make use of your critical thinking skills as you determine the route you will take to move from point A (my present), to point B (progress towards achieving goals), to point C (achievement of short-term goals) and all the way to point D (achievement of long-term goals). You will also want to consider resources you will need to make use of (instructors, employers, advisors, books, courses, and websites). Remember, it will be important for you to return to this stage frequently throughout your action-planning process because as your life circumstances change or as you encounter unexpected obstacles and setbacks, you may need to reevaluate and readjust your strategies. **My Actions –**

**Following Through: What specific tasks must I complete?**

This question is important because it will help you to determine the actions you need to take in order to achieve your goals. The specific actions you take are the building blocks of successful goals; without actions backing them up, your goals will be nothing more than fancy words on paper. Each goal you set should be backed by a series of specific actions or steps you will take in order to make progress towards achieving the goal. Remember, you should also establish clear deadlines or completion dates in order to ensure that you are constantly moving forward and making continuous progress.

**Next Steps –**

**Continuous Process: What’s next?**

This question is important because it will help you to continuously look forward. Once you reach your short- and long-term goals, you will most likely want to go through the entire Career Action Planning process repeatedly.

**Reach Your Goals**

Your career action plan is a tool that will help you reach your goals; however, the key component is ongoing action on your part.
You must regularly reflect upon your plans, adjust them to accommodate changes in your thinking and circumstances and focus on carrying out the tasks that will bring you closer and closer to the goals you have set for yourself.

Build your awareness

Value Inventories and Work Values
Value inventories determine the priority of your values to you. Some of these values may also be organizational values as well. How well your personal values align with the organization’s values bodes well will influence your overall job satisfaction. Values can include such concepts as integrity, salary, ethical approaches, relationships, collaborative work environment, opportunities for personal and professional growth etc.

Your work values can be subdivided into intrinsic values are both intrinsic to working in a career like developing relationships with others, and those values that are extrinsic like receiving medical benefits from working.

Examples and Definitions of Work Values
Here are examples of items that could appear on a work value inventory, along with a definition of each one. When reading this list, think about how important each value is to you.

**Autonomy:** receiving no or little supervision
**Challenge:** performing tasks that are difficult
**Helping Others:** providing assistance to individuals or groups
**Prestige:** having high standing
**Job Security:** a high probability that one will remain employed
**Collaboration:** working with others
**Helping Society:** contributing to the betterment of the world
**Recognition:** receiving attention for your work
Compensation: receiving adequate pay

Achievement: doing work that yields results
Utilizing Your Skills and Background: using your education and work experience to do your job
Leadership: supervising/managing others Creativity: using your own ideas
Variety: doing different activities
Leisure: having adequate time away from work
Recognition: receiving credit for achievements
Artistic Expression: expressing one's artistic talents
Influence: having the ability to affect people's opinions and ideas

Career Advancement

Many students are working toward a goal of career advancement as they complete their degree. This is an area of importance for each person and again it is never too early to realize possibilities. In researching with several valid sites, you will find out more about topics of relevance such as employment laws, skills, finding jobs, negotiating salary, balancing work and life, losing a job, quitting a job and many other important components of careers. Be sure to be an avid researcher as that is always the first step in critical thinking.

Writing your career action plan is a great place to start. Keeping it current is a major part of keeping it in your sight. Do not put it away where you will not see it for ages, mark your calendar to take a look at it routinely and be open and available to information that may present itself that will require revisions and enhancements to your plan.

Career Action Planning Resources

Please take time to read more about the importance of career action planning and view a sample template at the careers gateway Planning Your Career site. http://www.careers-gateway.co.uk/Planning_your_career/Action_planning/
Finalizing

You should now be finalizing work on your own Career Action Plan. Demonstrate what you have gained from course Readings, Assignments, career research, web fieldtrips, the Informational Interview Assignment, and the LASSI assessment by developing your own Career Action Plan.

II. Challenge Activity Taking Control of Your Career Strategy

Why are you going to school? Do you think your degree is the "magic formula"? What are those special qualities you possess? How will you develop the qualities/skills you will need? What one skill/quality do you possess that will make someone want to hire you? How will you demonstrate this to a potential employer? What skills will make you stand out? How will you demonstrate this in a cover letter/resume? When is the best time to start working on your cover letter and resume?

III. Powerful Words for a POWERFUL Vocabulary – 7 words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees. However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is actually quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need in order to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you are able to use, the more creative, convincing and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.
Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

Merriam-Webster’s Word of the Day
http://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day/

Activity: Make your own flashcards: http://quizlet.com/

Vocabulary Words

Complete the vocabulary activities here http://www.studymate.com?id=3fqByFR6z

Disparaging: Belittling.

Dispassionate: Calm; objective, unbiased.

Elude: Evade; cleverly avoid.

Myriad: A great number; innumerable.

Ubiquitous: Existing everywhere; omnipresent.

Meticulous: Extremely thorough; finicky.

Loquacious: Talkative; wordy
IV. Successories

The information provided in the Successories area is designed to provide you with valuable tips, skills, and resources, all related to your ongoing success at the university and beyond.

**Please take time to review the following:**

There are various personality indicator instruments out there but the most widely used is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®). Although the concept was initially conceived by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, it was later developed into what exist today by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers.

The MBTI indicates a personality type on a scale with zero or neutral in the center on four personality factors:

- Extroversion (E) to Introversion (I),
- Sensing (S) to Intuitive (N),
- Thinking (T) to Feeling (F), and
- Perceiving (P) to Judgement (J).

So someone would be one of one of sixteen possible combination types. For instance someone might be an ENFP, or an ISTJ, etc. so it is the combination of these four factors as well as the degree that someone is more aligned with that personality factor which determines their MBTI type. It is much more complex than this simple explanation of course. However, you get the idea. Some employers will ask a person’s MBTI or do an assessment and be inclined to consider or hire candidates with particular personality types predominantly successful in that particular type of job.

Here are the four different scales of the MBTI in highly summarized version:

**Scale #1:**
Extroverts (E):
Invigorated by spending their time with others. Need to speak aloud their thoughts to better understand them
Like attention
Act first and then think
They tend to speak, then listen
Fast pace

Introverts (I):
Energized by spending time alone
 Prefer to be in the background
 Think then act
 Listen then speak
 Keep their enthusiasm to themselves
 Enjoy a slower pace

Scale #2:
Intuitives (N)
Follow their intuition
Oriented towards the big picture
Like new ideas, innovation, creativity
Like learning new skills and easily bored once they master skills
Future orientation

Sensors (S)
Trust the concrete
Only like new ideas if they are practical
Realistic
Specific, literal, detail oriented
Present oriented

Scale #3:
Thinkers (T)

Logical, impersonal, objective, decision-makers
Consider policies, procedures, and rules
May use words such as true, false, right, and wrong.

Feelers (F)
Subjective decision-makers
Consider personal values and how decisions affect others
Get personally involved in decisions
Sympathetic to others emotions

Scale #4:

Perceivers (P)
Need time in the outer world to process things before deciding
Gather information and make observations
More flexible and keep schedules and viewpoints open to accommodate possible changes

Judgers (J)
Prefer action
Make quick decisions
Organized, decisive, and do advance planning
Prefer to control events and people
Prefer deadlines and living by the rules

For more information:
http://www.mbticomplete.com/ is a website endorsed by the Myers & Briggs Foundation for additional information.

Dr. Jon Niednagel is a consultant to the National Football League among many organizations regarding brain types. He contends that peoples' brain types can be determined by their motor skills and body function.

More information is available at: http://www.braintypes.com/
Additional resources:

You might want to read, “Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type” by Paul Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger.
References

