

Choosing a career: an important choice

Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions in one's life. This choice should be made with the broadest possible information about the person and about the job market.

Preparing now for careers in the future requires not only an idea of the individual's interests, aptitudes and opportunities for training and education. The student also must have information about employment trends and industrial projections reaching far into the future.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides current information on labor statistics and projections.

Occupational Profile

Professional and technical workers: This category includes many highly-trained workers such as engineers, scientists, physicians, teachers, entertainers, and pilots.

Greater efforts in transportation, energy and environmental protection will contribute to a growth of demand for scientists, engineers and technicians. The medical and health profession is expected to grow. Professional workers to develop and expand the computer industry will be needed.

There will be less opportunity for teachers, artists, entertainers, airline pilots and oceanographers.

Managers and administrators: The number of self-employed business managers will decline as large corporations and chains dominate many areas of business.

The demand for employed managers will grow as firms increasingly depend on trained management specialists, especially in highly technical areas of operation.

Clerical workers: This group constitutes the largest occupational group and includes bank tellers, bookkeepers, cashiers, secretaries and typists.

New development in computers will greatly affect employment trends. As operations are computerized, employment for bookkeepers, file clerks and many office workers will decline, but the need for computer and peripheral equipment operators will increase. Technological innovations will not affect those jobs requiring a large amount of personal contact, like secretaries and receptionists.

Sales workers: Employment of this group is expected to grow by 27 percent. Most of the growth will be due to the expansion of retail trade.

Craft workers: This group includes a wide variety of skilled workers including carpenters, machinists, electricians, and mechanics. Employment in all construction trades is expected to grow, especially heavy equipment operators, electricians, plumbers and pipefitters. Among mechanics and repairers, growth will be in automobile repair, computers and office equipment, appliances and industrial machinery.

Operatives: Employment of operatives — production workers, assemblers, painters, welders — is tied to production of goods. A slow-down in some manufacturing such as textiles, along with mechanization, will slow employment growth in this area.

Transportation operatives: Overall employment of drivers will increase, although some occupations such as switch-operators and bus drivers will decrease.

Non-farm laborers: Employment in this group is expected to grow only slowly, as machinery replaces manual labor.

Household service workers: Housekeepers, child care workers, and caretakers will decline. In spite of a rising demand for services, the lower wages and strenuous nature of this work makes it unattractive to many workers.

Service workers: Firefighters, janitors, cosmetologists, bartenders and other fields will expand rapidly due to the rising demand for commercial cleaning services, protective services, and more frequent use of restaurants and beauty salons.

Farm workers: This group includes operators and laborers. Employment opportunities have declined for decades due to mechanization and greater



Mr. John L. Winkel, from Hughes Aircraft Company, presents the Hughes Trophy to Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, Jr., which was awarded to 2nd Lieutenant Jerrette Lee as the outstanding Reserve Officer Training Corps graduate of 1983 at a ceremony held in the Pentagon. (Photo: Robert D. Ward)

High technology no substitute for academic skill

One of the myths underlying the current debate about American schooling is that we must gear our children for jobs in a "high-tech" society. According to this myth, the American economy will demand higher level, more sophisticated skills from its workers than it has in the past—skills the schools must provide.

The primary skill touted by believers in this "new" economic age is how to use a computer. Like some magical gatepost to success, the computer now stands as the guardian of career advancement. Television commercials sponsored by computer companies tell parents that without a home computer, Johnny will fall behind in class, lose his acceptance to a "good" college, and never get the answers correct on his math test. Computers serve as an all-too ready substitute for good teachers, good parents and good textbooks.

In relative terms, the fastest growing occupations for the 1980's and 1990's are high-tech related. Between 1978 and 1990, the need for data processing machine mechanics, computer systems analysts, and computer operators are projected to double, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is four times the growth rate of all other occupations.

In absolute terms, however, not

one of the 20 occupations expected to generate the most jobs by the end of the decade is high-tech oriented. Only four require more than a high school degree. Only two, teaching and nursing, require a college degree. By 1990, for each new analyst, there will be three new janitors. For each new computer programmer, there will be five new fast food workers. Although there will be 350,000 new jobs in these two high-tech professions, there will be 1.4 million new jobs in the two low-skilled ones. Government analyses estimate that high-tech occupations will account for only seven percent of new jobs between 1980 and 1990.

In fact, the advent of computers in the work place may require even fewer skills of employees than in the past. Although the earliest computers required users to have fairly complex skills and extensive training, these requirements have declined considerably. The new generation of office computers require no special computer skills to operate. The same change occurred in the automobile industry—although cars are more sophisticated than they were 50 years ago, they are much easier to run.

This does not mean that we should all be training our children to

be janitors, or that this is the highest expectation we should have for them. It does mean that we should not be sold too inflated a definition of what computers can do, or too narrow a definition that cuts the use of computers off from any greater educational goal.

A child who cannot write a solid English composition with pen and paper or on a typewriter will not be able to do so on a computer. Computers should be used to improve students' communication, reasoning, and problem solving skills—not as a substitute for those skills. Microcomputers are machines to be mastered because of their increasing pervasiveness in our society and tools to expand thinking and creativity. They do not offer a panacea to educational problems. Nor are they a fad to be avoided. To the degree that computers fit within a set of broader instructional goals, they will improve education. They will maximize children's talents to the extent that they are available to everyone. Relying on parents to purchase home computers for their children, or on wealthy school districts to purchase individual computers for their students, only promises to widen the current educational gaps between rich and poor, minorities and non-minorities.

Careers in Gerontology

Gerontology, or the study of aging is a relatively new field. A gerontologist is a professional in the area of human development and Aging. Gerontologists have the knowledge and understanding about the physiological, psychological, economical and social aspects of aging, and their interactive and additive effects. An increasing number of individuals are being formally educated at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) offers a very limited number of geriatric post-doctoral (after completion of the Ph.D. or M.D.) fellowships.

Gerontologists are working for government and non-profit agencies and institutions, businesses, industries, health and human services. The role of the gerontologist is to address issues related to program planning, development, evaluation, policy development, administration, training and delivery of direct services. Society is just beginning to recognize the need for specialists who can identify issues and recommend policies for the elderly. Gerontologists, therefore, are assuming roles as counselors, consultants, career planning specialists, policy analysts, long-term care and health administrators, planners, educators, program developers, managers and researchers.

Gerontology helps professionals understand aging individuals and aging populations. Geriatricians or aging practitioners, such as geriatric nurses, social workers, psychologists, dentists and physicians apply their gerontological knowledge in treating older people or groups. Geriatrics is the application of gerontological knowledge to the diagnosis and treatment of the elderly.

Degrees presented at ceremonies

Approximately 950 degrees have been awarded in commencement ceremonies at the University of the Pacific campus in Stockton.

There were a total of 800 undergraduate degrees and 150 graduate degrees presented at individual commencement ceremonies for each of the seven schools and colleges.

UOP was founded in 1851 as the first chartered institution of higher education in California. It is comprised of a liberal arts college and professional schools in music, pharmacy, education, engineering, business and public administration, and a graduate school, all located in Stockton. The university's McGeorge School of Law is in Sacramento and the School of Dentistry is in San Francisco.

Oregonians in this years graduating class include:

Glen R. Wagner, Milwaukie, Oregon, Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics; Christopher D. Boyer, Portland, Oregon, Bachelor of Science; Patricia B. New, Portland, Oregon, Masters of Science; Louisa L. Markus, Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering; Dale Schmidt, Salem, Oregon, Bachelor of Music.

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