

## Starting on your Way cont.

...give you insight into what level of training is required, what duties are involved, the working hours, your likely location (Chartered accountants in Cameroon are mostly based in the economic capital which hosts the major accounting firms) and of course the pay range for the your prospective career.

ii. **Plan**– As they say; proper planning prevents poor performance. This applies for career planning as well. On a clean sheet outline your vision for yourself. How many years of study do you need? Where do you aspire to further studies if necessary? Make short term goals, and long goals to keep yourself in check. Keep this sheet detailing all your aspirations safe. Show it to a few close friends, mentors or family to encourage you and remind you of the journey you have mapped out for yourself.

iii. **Get Experience**– You can never be truly sure the career you have chosen for yourself is ideal until you experience it. Because one rarely gets employed without previous experience, it is wise to volunteer in line with you career so as to pick up practical skills and start building a résumé.

iv. **Find mentors**- The importance of professional mentors cannot be overstated. Finding the right person to guide and direct you, look over your applications, motivational letters critique your performance and help you build your strengths is the equivalent of finding gold.

## Feeling Lost?

Perhaps you have a passion for technology but because of certain circumstances, you find yourself studying for a degree in teaching. Or maybe you feel you have a talent for interior decorating, but your family won't support that and have a fixed idea of an acceptable job for you?

Choosing a career and developing a career plan is rarely easy. A lot of factors and other peoples opinions have to e taken into consideration. You might lack financial support and need to take a job to make ends meet. This does not mean you have (or should) give up on your career. You're may be simply laying a foundation for the career you dream of.

You may, for instance, merge your love for technology and knowledge in education. Create a educative app, or use tech to promote learning in a way only you can. On the other hand, if you feel pressured to take on a job, you could do so and use it as an opportunity to save up for setting up your own enterprise after a while. It might be difficult and require patience, but it is never impossible to switch lanes and go for the career you truly want.



*What do you want to do with the rest of your life?*

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## Intro

After a number of years of higher education, you finally graduate. What's next for you? Work, further studies, *chomencam*...? How are you going to see what you've studied for the last few years? Are you going to use it at all? A lot of students don't think beyond the next test or exam, they fail to see that these are just a means to an end. Notches on the rope you climb as you determine what you will do for the rest of your life. It's never too early to start planning your career, in fact most career planning begins with the childhood ambitions you had for yourself. This is a brief intro to career planning just for you. We hope it helps.

## Jobs VS. Careers

First let us make a note worthy distinction. Here we will be talking about **career development**. While a job is something you do to put "food on the table" or support yourself usually requiring short term training, a career is more of a gradually developed aspiration, usually taking years to achieve because of years of professional training and climbing up the ladder. One often experiences mobility in their career (moving vertically or horizontally) while jobs are quit and changed all together. Certain professions aren't jobs while others are careers, on the contrary, what one person considers a part time job might be another's' field of specialty and thus their career.

Developing a career takes passion and patience. A lot of people settle for jobs they can do for extended periods of time (sometimes for a lifetime) because chasing their ambitions was too hard and responsibilities persist.

## Why Choose the *Right* Career?

Imagine spending over 80,000 hours of your life doing work which does not fulfill or satisfy you. We will have worked (post standard years education) at least three decades of our lives. That alone demands caution in planning. In addition to that, your chosen career will determine how much time you spend with family, friends, and of course your financial strength and social status.



## Choosing the Right Career

Ask yourself these questions:

### 1– What am I good at?

You might have heard it before: we all have unique talents. This is true, yet people often overlook their aptitude in certain things. When we hear of talent we often think of athletes who break records, best-selling authors or singers who win millions on shows. Yet our talents may just be those things we do with ease. Your talent might be simpler but no less remarkable. You might have talent as a negotiator (Peace-keeping missions would need you), you may be a talented conversationalist (think talk show host) or have a knack for remembering routes (a career as a tour guide or travel writer is beckoning). You excel at what you are good at and whatever you excel in can be easily monetized.

### 2– What are your values and passions?

Our values are those things that are most important to us. While our passions are the things, people, information which interest us, satisfy us and bring us pleasure. Having a fulfilling career means loving what

you do. You need not smile at every aspect of your work, but it should ultimately satisfy you. This is a question to spend some time on. If you value money and financial success, not every career would satisfy simply because the wage gap is below your expectations. If you value social justice, you'll want a job where you feel you are addressing unfairness. Rather than contributing to it Likewise if you are passionate about numbers or technology you would like to be able to use that in what ever career you choose.

### 3– Where and How do you want to Live?

These aspects are often overlooked when outlining our career ambitions, yet they ultimately affect how successful we are in our aspirations. Not everyone does well in different environments, you may need a secure urban setting, in which case a career as an international development worker (with UN bodies) would not be ideal for you.

How you want to live also matters a great deal; What standard of living do you require? Do you need stability to start a family or are you okay with being away from home often? What kind of home you want and how much personal time do you need for yourself? The answers to these questions should help you match your ambitions to practical realities

## Starting on your Way

Perhaps you already have an idea of what career would be right for. Where do you begin? Here are a few steps to get you started.

*i– Research* your prospective career, Look up what a pediatricians work involves, or what it takes to be a media consultant, or the required training for an air hostess. Your research should...