

## DECISION-MAKING BARRIERS

There are **five barriers** to effective career decision making. Try to identify the ones that may prevent you from making a satisfying decision.

- 1. Lack of Self-Awareness** – The first step of making an effective career decision is to know your preferred interests, values, skills and work environment in order to choose an occupation that allows you to use those preferences. The match of your job satisfiers with your future career is an essential part of your decision.
- 2. Decision Risk** – Any important decision involves some element of risk. Do you have difficulty making any decision? This can result from a fear of change, failure or making the wrong choice. Asking yourself, “What is the worst thing that can happen?” and doing thorough research can help you gain more confidence in your decision-making abilities.
- 3. Authority Preference** – Do you avoid making a decision by expecting someone else in a role of responsibility to make the decision for you, such as a parent, counselor, teacher or friend? Shifting the responsibility to someone else avoids the difficulty of making independent choices that may be difficult, but will not usually be based on your unique values and interests. Talking to others that you respect is very important and helpful, but in the end, you must make the choice about the occupation that will be right for you.
- 4. Leaving it to Chance** – If you feel that you have no control over what happens to you in your life and that situations that happen are primarily out of your control, you may expect to just let fate take its course and “fall into a career” through your first job or college experience. This lack of self-direction can lead to careers that are based on circumstances that don’t match your interests or preferred skills. This barrier relates strongly to your level of self confidence in you own abilities to achieve your goals. Realizing that you have the resources to achieve your goals will overcome this barrier.
- 5. Alternative Gain** – You may avoid making a career decision due to the trade-offs that are involved in committing to a career choice. This can involve leaving home for the first time, wanting to stay in college indefinitely, or the expense that may be involved in preparing for certain occupations. Identifying what you may be concerned about giving up to make a career choice is a good first step in dealing with this barrier.

Discussing any of the above barriers that relate to you with your guidance counselor can be a good first step in overcoming them. This will help you to be sure that you are making an informed occupational choice based on good information instead of emotional concerns.