

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” **Teach Students How To Decide**

What do you want to be when you grow up? is a question young people hear all the time - and they hate it because most of them have no answer they truly believe in (although many of them become good at faking it). Smart Focusing™ and Career Focusing™ career decision-making programs teach students how to answer with confidence.

A Teachable Framework

Starting as early as grade 7 (depending on the province/territory) all the career decision-making steps are put into a clear teachable framework. Students learn exactly how to make their decisions, exactly where they are in the career decision-making process at any given time and exactly what their next step has to be.

Teachers learn how to facilitate this process using concrete, structured, grade-specific lessons that can be implemented in a single grade, or (ideally) delivered as a fully integrated program over several grades for maximum impact.

Parents have a concrete way to support students all along the way.

“How do I know if work is a good fit?”

The key to student success lies in the fact that they start with the end in mind – work that fits. How many times have people assumed that students know how to figure this out? The first step to developing engagement and motivation is the one that teaches students how to answer their most difficult and frustrating question

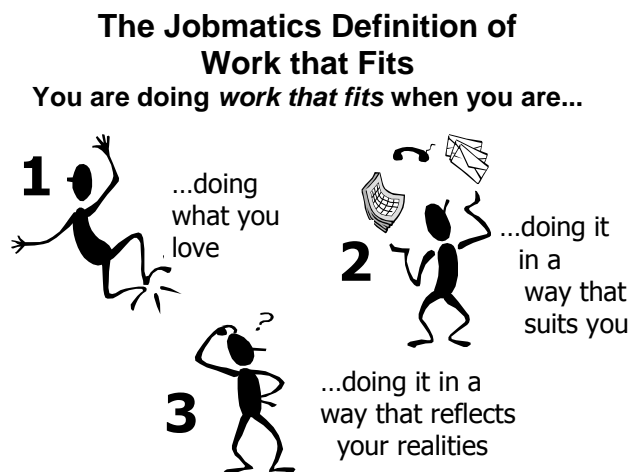
“How do I know if work is a good fit?”

Once they have this answer, students can set and justify a plan for what to do next that they are motivated to follow because it is *their* plan. They know exactly where the plan comes from, and exactly why it makes sense for them as they make their next move.

Avoid Information and Option Overload

Students often give up trying to make decisions because they are on information and option overload - put there by people who are trying to help, but in fact, do the opposite. Jobmatics programs teach students how to use their tools in a clear structure that allows them to **manage** all of the information they must consider when making their decisions – basic information in grade 7/8/9, and then increasingly complex information when they have acquired the basic skills required to handle it. Success with establishing their “best fits” leaves students feeling focused and motivated to stick with their decisions.

Ultimately, we see self reliant and internally motivated students equipped with the tools, skills and strategies they need to make the right moves in work, learning and life situations right now, and repeatedly in their future characterized by constant challenge and change.



Career Focusing™/ Smart Focusing™ **Building *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* Competencies**

Career Focusing™/ Smart Focusing™ are constructivist career decision-making programs that teach students how to build purposeful and satisfying lives. When teachers use the Career Focusing™/ Smart Focusing™ Programs in a scoped, sequenced and developmental manner, students have the time they need to mature in their ability to use concrete tools, skills and strategies in making informed, intentional career decisions. They get to work, learning and life activities they are excited about. In the end, students acquire what might be referred to as a critical **4th Literacy – the ability to design their lives** so that they can apply their other literacies in the most satisfying manner. When they have this ability, they are more likely to become fully engaged, highly productive, happy and healthy members of society. Career Focusing™/ Smart Focusing™ programs develop the following *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* competencies:

Personal Management

- **Build and maintain a positive self image:** Students know how to define the gifts they have to give the world. This asset approach to defining where and how they can be most successful is key to building and maintaining a positive self image.
- **Interact positively and effectively with others:** Students are confident in what they have to say. They know how to express their plans, explain why the plans make sense and advocate for what they need to accomplish their plans.
- **Change and grow throughout one's life:** Students know how to set and follow a straightforward, clear growth and development strategy that is applicable both right away and as circumstances change. They always have a framework for directing their own growth and development.

Learning and Work Exploration

- **Participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work:** Students know how to back map from what they want in their lives to the learning they need to do in order to accomplish their goals. When people are doing work they are excited by, ongoing learning becomes a natural by-product.
- **Locate and effectively use life/work information:** Students know and follow a clear process for deciding what information to look for, how to get it and, once they have it, how to use the information in their decision-making process.
- **Understand the relationship between work and society/economy:** Students clearly understand that contributing their best efforts through the paid, unpaid, learning and leisure work they do impacts positively on both the economy and on society as a whole.

Life/Work Building

- **Secure/create and maintain work:** Students know how to identify “good fit” employment, market themselves clearly and with integrity, and participate in a mutual matching process to ensure the best possible outcomes for themselves and the employer. Students know how to identify opportunities and create work by applying the gifts they innately bring to every situation and circumstance.
- **Make life/work enhancing decisions + Understand, engage in and manage one's own life/work building process:** Students know and follow a clear, concise process for turning up the volume on their internal voice so they can analyze and evaluate their options, decide on the “best fits” and make/implement/revise plans they can trust for getting there.
- **Understand the changing nature of life/work roles:** Students know that the new shape of work requires them to take control and self-determine their life/work pathways.
- **Maintain balanced life and work roles:** Students know that life/work balance is defined differently and is more blurred in the new shape of work. They know how to achieve their sense of purpose across all 3 arenas as opposed to simply dividing their time between work and their personal lives.

The Jobmatics *Smart Focusing*™ Programs

*Delivered by classroom teachers
Usually delivered in sequence, but each component can be delivered
as a stand-alone program*

Grade 7/8 depending on the province/territory (uses *Smart Focusing*™ Workbook 1)

Assume:

Students are aware that a lot of important decisions lie ahead. They have done a variety of career related activities. However, they have not learned a strategy that teaches them how to connect all the information they have in order to make career decisions that take them to work and learning they find personally satisfying and will work hard at.

This Year:

Students learn a concrete career decision-making framework. They build basic tools, use basic skills and learn the central strategy for identifying *work that fits* and then back mapping to related learning options.

Specific Activities:

- Identify Strong, Neutral and Weak Smarts.
- Expand occupational awareness.
- Learn how to find, analyse, evaluate and select work that matches Strong Smarts (*work that fits*).
- Identify related learning options at college

Success Messages:

- *I have something to offer the world.*
- *I know how I am smart.*
- *There is work and learning that fits me.*
- *I know how to figure it out.*

Grade 8/9 depending on the province/territory (uses *Smart Focusing*™ Workbook 2)

Assume:

Students have a basic understanding of the career decision-making framework. They have begun to define their preferences, can use that information to identify *work that fits*, and find related college pathways to that work.

This Year:

Students consolidate the concepts and skills for finding *work that fits*. They increase their ability to work with the basic concepts and skills related to back-mapping. They learn how to integrate information about self, work and learning by looking forward to *work that fits* and planning backward to set a grade 9/10 plan that reflects the success strategy they have learned.

Note: Part of this step may be enabled by back mapping software if available.

Specific Activities:

- Confirm Strong, Neutral and Weak Smarts.
- Establish a list of *work that fits*.
- Learn how to find and analyze learning pathways to *work that fits* (part of this step may be enabled by back mapping software if available).
- Set a grade 9/10 plan based on the “plan to pass/adjust if needed” strategy.

- *I know how to figure it out.*
- *I know what to do first and how to adjust my plans if needed.*
- *I have future work and learning options that make sense for me and know how to adjust them if circumstances change.*
- *I know how to involve my parents in helping me succeed.*

The Jobmatics Career Focusing™ Programs

Delivered by classroom, guidance, and other teachers who support student decision-making
Usually preceded by the Jobmatics Smart Focusing™ Programs

Grade 9/10 depending on the province/territory (uses Career Focusing™ for Early High School Workbook)

Assume:

Students have participated in the Smart Focusing™ Program to develop the basic concepts and practise the basic skills needed to identify their preferences, evaluate work options, identify good and back-map to set related pathway plans.
Note: This program fits into a scoped, sequence developmental program, but can also be delivered as a stand-alone.

This Year:

Students use a more sophisticated decision-making program - Career Focusing™ - and use it with more complex information to expand and enhance their ability to identify good work and learning fits.

Specific Activities:

- Add to decision-making tools.
- Use enhanced tools to critically examine a wider range of options to identify personally satisfying work and related learning pathways.
- Refine ability to set an informed, intentional grade 11/12 learning plan and a skills development plan with confidence.
- Learn the basic concepts and skills related to applying to chosen work/learning e.g. writing Focused résumé and Focused applications for learning or work options.

Success Messages:

- *I have unique gifts to give the world.*
- *My unique gifts are needed in many different kinds of work.*
- *I understand what I need to do next and why I need to do it well.*
- *I know how to adjust my plan if I need to.*
- *I know how to involve my parents and other people who support me.*

Experiential Learning job shadow, work experience, co-op, community involvement, etc. (uses Career Focusing™ Student Worksheets)

Assume:

Students have identified a small number of work options that are a really good fit for them, and know how to apply the decision-making skills, tools and strategies they have developed to evaluate and select related experiential learning options.
Students know the basic concepts and have the skills related to applying to work.

This Year:

Students use their career decision-making tools and skills to select, apply to, troubleshoot and evaluate experiential learning experiences. They adjust their overall work/learning plans if needed.

Specific Activities:

- Identify "Best Fit" options for experiential learning.
- Work with teacher to integrate the information to refine list and make final selection.
- Learn/apply appropriate work entry skills (e.g. writing a Focused résumé and cover letter; participating in a Focused interview).
- Learn/apply appropriate work exit skills (e.g. thank you letter).

Success Messages:

- *I know how to select the best experiential learning option(s) for me.*
- *I know how to market myself with integrity to an employer.*
- *I know how, and want to do well in the workplace.*
- *I have a framework for troubleshooting potential problems in the placement.*
- *I know how to adjust my future work/learning plans based on my workplace experience.*

Grade 11 (begins to use the *Career Focusing™ for Transition Planning Workbook*)

Assume:

Students have used their career decision-making tools, skills and strategies to set both a senior high school learning and skills development plan.

Note: If implemented now as a stand-alone program, there may or may not be a senior high school plan.

This Year:

Students will implement their senior high school plan and adjust if needed. They will begin to use additional career decision-making tools and skills, and work with more complex work/learning information in order to set a personally satisfying high school exit plan.

Specific Activities:

- Work with Guidance and other teachers as needed to review and revise senior high school plan.
- Learn additional skills required to work with very complex work/learning information in order to set the stage for finalizing exit year plan.

Success Messages:

- *I know exactly what I have to do now, and how well I have to do it.*
- *I know how to figure out what to do next.*
- *I know how to adjust my plan if needed.*
- *I know where and how to get support if needed.*

Grade 12 (uses the *Career Focusing™ for Transition Planning Workbook*)

Assume:

Students have been following, and adjusting as needed, their informed, intentional senior high school plan.

This Year:

Students will continue to build and apply additional decision-making tools and skills required to work with very complex work/learning information in order to finalize and implement their exit year plan.

Specific Activities:

- Confirm specific learning/work options to pursue.
- Apply.
- Adjust decisions if needed.

Success Messages:

- *I have made a good decision about what to do after high school.*
- *I can explain my decisions and choices to the people who support me.*
- *I know how to adjust my plans and make good choices whenever things change for me in the future.*
- **WOW!**