Career Planning Process

1. Become aware of the need to make career decisions.
   - Something inside you says you have to make a change.
   - Usually an event or feeling: graduation, job fatigue, retirement, etc.
   **TIP:** Don’t panic! We all go through this many times in our lives. It can be very uncomfortable. Use this feeling as motivation to act.

2. Learn about and/or reevaluate yourself.
   - Identify your interests, skills, personality, work values, goals, etc.
   - You have to know yourself before you know what to look for.
   **TIP:** What do you like and don’t like right now? What might be holding you back? Take an interest survey. Talk to a career advisor.

3. Identify occupational alternatives.
   - Don’t limit yourself yet—just explore the possibilities. See what suits you.
   - Careers have “personalities,” too (e.g., hands-on; detail-oriented; creative)
   **TIP:** Resources like ONet.org and MyNextMove.org can help you identify careers you might not have thought of.

4. Obtain information about identified alternatives.
   - From your list of alternatives, pick a few to investigate more deeply.
   - Find out what these careers really look like day-to-day.
   **TIP:** Research the job market. Talk to several people in the field. Shadow someone. Get an internship!

5. Make tentative choice from among available occupations.
   - Choose one occupation or narrower field to pursue.
   - Remember, you don’t have to do this the rest of your life!
   **TIP:** Make a list of positives and negatives.
   How will this fit your lifestyle? How do you feel about identifying yourself with it? What do your friends and family think?

6. Make educational choices.
   - Find out what you’ll need to be competitive in your chosen field.
   - Pursue degrees, certifications, job or volunteer experience, leadership opportunities, etc.
   **TIP:** Look at job postings of the occupation you want. What do they require in a qualified applicant? What do they prefer? Start developing your skills to meet all of their expectations.

7. Get and keep a job.
   - Develop your elevator speech for networking.
   - Customize your resume & cover letter specifically for every job postings.
   - Prepare stories of when you have demonstrated your skills.
   - Build your “soft skills”: attitude, self-confidence, communication, etc.
   **TIP:** Include your best, concrete examples of success in your resume/cover letter. Ask friends, classmates, family, and other connections to help you contact people working in the field.

Career Resources at UNM-LA

Career services from UNM-LA Student Services:

- Advising for choosing a major
  - Career Cluster survey, card sorts, etc.
- Resume & cover letter reviews
- Job board of recent job postings
- References for internships
- Mock interviews
- Professional clothing closet (in development)
- GNST 193 – Career Readiness 1-credit class
- Workshops on career readiness skills:
  - Writing resumes
  - Writing cover letter
  - Composing elevator speeches
  - Networking
  - Interview skills
  - Professionalism in the workplace

STeP Program:

- Grant-funded program to assist students in STEM degrees to transfer to 4-year programs
- Primary relationship with New Mexico Tech
- Paid stipends and travel expenses to visit their campus
- Career fair & Student Research Symposium trips
- Early advising for transferring students
- Paid internships and research opportunities after transferring!

Career Resources Online

- UNM Career Services:  http://www.career.unm.edu/
- O*Net occupation database:  http://www.onetonline.org
- My Next Move:  http://www.mynextmove.org/
- O*Net Interest Profiler:  http://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip