

identity crisis. Reaffirm yourself of two important things:

- My intention- When you set an intention to pursue something for the Pleasure of Allah, you recognise that Allah Ta'ala is your reason for everything. Consider the career you want. Ask yourself - 'Am I doing this to serve Allah and His creation? Or do I only want worldly benefit?'
- My definition of success- There's nothing wrong wanting a well-paying career, but consider its position on your list of priorities. Social media can distort our idea of success, associating it with outrageous displays of luxury - expensive cars and homes, indulging in the fanciest of foods, partying and striving for status. Chasing after the world leads to a false sense of happiness. Know your limits, and caution yourself on the temptations that lie ahead.

"And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion" (S 3: V 185)

8. CAREER COUNSELLING

A career counsellor can help you with the following:

- Figure out who you are and what you want out of your education, career and life.
- Allow you to talk about your thoughts, feelings and concerns.
- Help you to identify and assess your interests, abilities and values.
- Help you determine the steps ahead, and develop a plan to achieve your goals.

Try your best not to place too much pressure on yourself to have your entire life figured out.

Always remember that Almighty Allah is the Best of planners.



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CHOOSING THE CAREER PATH THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

It is possible that you or someone you know may be struggling to find a career that works for them. For learners in school, those who have matriculated, or those who are navigating early adulthood, there can be a lot of pressure to have your life mapped out, leading to feelings of uneasiness or anxiety. The following guidelines are geared to help you choose the career path that's right for you.

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1. HOW TO DECIDE ON A CAREER PATH

Choosing a career path involves considering several things, especially whether you think you would like to do a specific line of work.

- Choose a career you have a strong passion for
- Know what interests you, your strengths and weaknesses, and your skills and abilities
- Choose a career that you know will benefit you and your relationship with Allah Ta'ala

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

There are plenty of self-assessment tests online (personality and career aptitude tests) to assess your strengths and weaknesses. A quicker self-assessment is to ask yourself the following:

- What are my strengths and weaknesses? It's often helpful to make a list of them
- What am I good at currently? People-skills, good with numbers, reciting the Qur'an, etc.
- What am I passionate about? What you are good at may not necessarily be what you are passionate about; for instance, you may excel at accounting, but dislike it entirely!

Our strengths and weaknesses are subject to change throughout our lives. If you are struggling to identify what your strengths are, you can reframe this as an opportunity to explore what you feel your strengths may be. Think deeply about how you can use these strengths to benefit yourself and others.

3. SPEAK TO PROFESSIONALS

Speaking to professionals within a certain career field can be a valuable source of information. Speak to them with an enquiring and open mind. Try to find out about the kind of work they do, the hours that they have to work, the working

conditions, the advantages and disadvantages of the job, the employment opportunities for this career field, the training hours required and their general advice to you as someone who is interested in this field of work.

4. GAIN EXPERIENCE

Building a career isn't just about obtaining a degree, or joining or starting a business. It has to interest and suit your abilities and skillset. Try to gain some experience before deciding on a career. This shows potential employers how serious you are, and allows you to gauge which paths may suit you.

Volunteer

- Volunteering is a great way for you to do some meaningful work that speaks to your passion, whilst also gaining valuable experience that you can one day put on your CV.
- It is a good idea to volunteer your time towards something that you care about and also aligns with your professional interests that can help you build experience.
- Volunteering at NGOs, aid organisations, or businesses teaches responsibility.

Gap Year

- If you are confused or unsure about the journey ahead, a gap year may be a good option to pursue, as long as you use your time wisely!
- Some institutions and madrasas offer gap year courses, which helps build your Islamic knowledge and life skills.

5. CONSIDER CAREER SUSTAINABILITY

For a career to be sustainable, it has to grow and benefit you throughout the years. This does not only include financial benefit, but psychological and spiritual satisfaction too. Finding a career

that helps meet your long-term needs can feel almost impossible in the current job climate. It can feel disheartening when one tries to pursue their passion, but is met with barriers. Do your research beforehand. Consider your location, the needs of society and the Ummah at large. Know the available opportunities, research the job market and fields that have the most potential for growth.

Ensure the path you choose is a Halal one, allowing you to reap the rewards of this world and the next. Remember that the most sustainable career path may take some time to find. The career may not even exist yet! Think about the job title 'App Developer', which did not exist 20 years ago, yet demonstrates immense potential in terms of sustainability and growth today.

6. TAKE HEED OF ADVICE, BUT DON'T RELY TOO MUCH ON OUTSIDE OPINION

We all have loved ones who are concerned about our future and life choices. This often comes from a place of genuine love and care. However, sometimes well-intentioned parents, family members or friends try to make decisions for you or choose a career for you without considering your interests, skills and values. This can cause relationship tension, strain for you and your choices that you have in mind. Therefore, consider and respect others' opinions, but do not rely too much on them. This does not mean one should not take advice, it simply means that one should try and incorporate it into their choices and decisions in a balanced way.

7. MAINTAIN YOUR ISLAMIC IDENTITY

Many individuals become ashamed of their Islamic identity when entering 'the real world'. Societal influence can sometimes lead us to dress, behave and interact contrary to our Islamic teachings. This can even lead to an