

WELCOME TO MODULE 5: PLAN NEXT STEPS

It may have taken some time, but if you have made it this far in the MicroCourse you now should have a career goal(s) in mind. This module will help you make the educational action plans to start moving toward those goals.

Core Exercise: Educational Planning

Below are a series of steps to help you map out the route from where you are to where you wish to be—your career goal.

1. Determine what you need

Depending on your chosen career and where you are starting from, you may have to complete numerous steps to get you from point A to point B, or very few. The research you did in Module 3 should have revealed the types of experience and education/training required.

If you are still lacking this information, go back into Career Cruising, look up the career goal(s) you have in mind and for each one click on the Education button in the left-hand column to see what the requirements are for that career.

 www.careercruising.com

If Career Cruising does not list the particular career you are aiming for, try consulting the other sources listed in Module 3, Researching Options. For each career goal, start an **Education Options Worksheet** (page 5), to compile this information. You can use the “alternate programs” field to list programs, if any, that could take you toward your goal but might be more of an indirect route.

Under “Other Experience or Informal Training” consider things like: seeking mentorship;

conducting information interviews for networking purposes; joining a professional association; attending conferences; reviewing and updating your resume; to name just a few possibilities.

However, for most people the largest and most important action step will be gaining new (or additional) education by enrolling in some type of program or courses.

2. Determine who offers the education you need

If Sheridan offers the education that will move you closer to your career goal we hope you will consider us first.

You can browse Sheridan full-time programs by program title or interest area in order to learn about the program, see the course list, and find out admission requirements. To do this, go to the Sheridan home page, select *Academics* then *Programs and Courses*.

If a full-time program may not be your immediate reality, look at our Continuing Education offerings for part-time courses and programs.

On the net page are some resources to help you do broader educational program searches beyond just Sheridan programs.

We developed this MicroCourse, as well as the other career planning resources like Idea Generator and Career Planning QuickTips, to help you make effective choices about your career and educational direction. It is in the best interests of our school and future students to have you choose the right program for you, and feel motivated and directed because of it.

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 Click orange mouse for live web link.

Ontario College Program Locator

This site will allow you to search colleges across Ontario for specific programs by title, keyword and other criteria. Results will show not only which colleges offer your program of interest but also the current application status of each program (open, wait list, full) for upcoming and future start dates.

 www.ontariocolleges.ca/FindProgram

Ontario University eInfo

This site includes a listing with hundreds of university program majors. For each one, a cross-referenced chart shows at which universities it is offered, what type of degree it is, and what the requirements are for those degrees.

 www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca

Career Cruising Program Search

This site can search for programs on various topics at colleges and universities in Canada as well as the U.S. To get to the program finder, click on the “Education” button near the top of the web page.

 www.careercruising.com

3. Confirm the program is appropriate to your goal

Find the program description on the school web site then look for a section titled “Career Opportunities” or something similar. Most schools include this in their program information, and it will help you understand the intended career outcomes for the program.

A program consists of a number of courses. Another useful task here is to look up the listing of courses for your program you are considering. Keep in mind that course titles are just a few words and do not always tell the full story. Some school websites (including Sher-

idan’s) allow you to access a database of the detailed Course Outlines for any course. The Course Outline is a document distributed to students in their first week of class and spells out in detail what the course covers, what the student will accomplish and how they will be evaluated. This can be a tedious research task but nothing beats it to really understand what exactly a course involves.

4. Check admission requirements

Complete an **Admission & Application Worksheet** (page 6) for each program you listed on your Education Options Worksheet.

Almost all programs have academic requirements, which is to say specific courses or credentials (e.g., high school diploma) you need to be admitted. Don’t panic if you don’t have all the academic requirements; you may be eligible for an exemption as a mature student or other status. In addition, most colleges (including Sheridan) offer academic upgrading for specific subjects like math, sciences, etc.

Some programs have nonacademic requirements which may include things like portfolio, questionnaire, resume, interview, or attendance at an info session. In addition, you may find listed requirements that may occur during the program, such as inoculations, criminal reference checks, first aid certificate, etc.

In the college system, a *Graduate Certificate* requires a degree or diploma (sometimes relevant to program, sometimes not) or substantive related work experience for admission.

5. Apply!

Ontario colleges and universities use centralized application systems for full-time programs and some part-time programs.

 www.ontariocolleges.ca

 www.ouac.on.ca

These systems allow you to apply to multiple Ontario schools/programs through a single application. They also keep maximum spaces available by allowing applicants to have multiple offers but only accept one offer at any given time. These systems now integrate many of the transcript request processes directly into their application. Here are some helpful hints when using the application systems:

- The same program may be offered at more than one location of the same school so be clear which campus you are choosing.
- On the university application site (OUAC) be sure you are using the correct application: 101 for current high school students, 105 for non-high school students.
- If asked for your Ontario Education Number (OEN), this can be found on any high school report card or transcript you may have.

Keep in mind that by applying you are not committing yourself, absolutely, to attend. When you get an offer(s) you have a time period within which to decide to accept or decline. What applying does do is keep your options open, so it is always better to apply than to think about it for so long that the program you wanted is already full!

School Selection Factors

Services. Compare what schools have to offer and how much they emphasize learning resources. Also, find out about other student services (e.g., counselling, health, athletics, etc.) that may be of importance to you. Some schools operate mentoring, or “buddy” programs, where first year students are paired up with senior students.

Reputation. A school’s reputation relies on, in part, its teaching faculty and the performance of its graduates. The bottom line is what potential employers think of the school.

Location. Think about how close the school is to home and family in terms of your level of (or desire for) independence. Might it be a good time to spread your wings, or are there reasons you should be cautious?

Atmosphere & Social Life. Campus setting will be an important factor in how much you enjoy student life. Look into what facilities are available on, and near, the campus and how far it is to the types of activities and amusements you might make use of. You will want to know what types of clubs, associations, and activities take place on campus in order to get a feel for student life.

Does it capture your heart? Going to post-secondary education like college or university, you will spend a fair bit of your life on campus, in studies and in extracurricular activities. For this reason, it is important that you like the school and choose the best one to suit your style and preferences.

See for yourself. A visit is the best way to gauge reality. All schools offer some type of tours and taking the time to attend these is an investment in yourself that can help you assess the considerations above.

 Click orange mouse for live web link.

Additional Resources

Ontario College-University Transfer Guide

If you have a credential already from college or university, this site will help you explore educational pathways that may include getting some credit for the schooling you have done.

 www.ontransfer.ca

Canada University Program Locator

This site searches a database of degree programs at universities across Canada. You can select a major, a geographic area, as well as other criteria.

 www.universitystudy.ca



CONCLUSION TO CAREER PLANNING MICROCOURSE

We hope that this course has helped guide you through the career and educational planning process. By doing the exercises in each module, you will have gained insight into yourself, explored career options you might not have otherwise, and gathered information about those options so you are making more informed choices.

Informed choices tend to result in higher motivation. You have a goal in sight, and your confidence in the decision-making process which determined that goal means you will work harder to reach it.

We hope that Sheridan will be part of the plans to get to your career goal. We are proud of our school, our services, our reputation, and most of all, our students.

ADMISSION & APPLICATION WORKSHEET

A·D·M·I·S·S·I·O·N R·E·Q·T·S

School/Program:	Rank#
High School credits	Non-Academic Requirements: <input type="checkbox"/> Attend an info session <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> Resumé <input type="checkbox"/> Interview <input type="checkbox"/> other
Previous experience or diploma/degree*	Apply By:

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