

# How to Determine Your Career Path

by Jerry Borton

The simple question, 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' gives permission to ignite a dream. It is a question frequently asked of young children. Could it really be that easy? Very few of us work today in the career we first dreamed of as a child. But it's a wonderful place to begin. Sadly, that question is asked much less frequently of children born with a disability.

One of my earliest aspirations was to be a professional baseball player. I grew up with cerebral palsy and have used a wheelchair for most of my life. Eventually, I realized a career as a professional baseball player would not happen; but I still enjoyed being around the game. I thought about being a baseball coach or sportswriter. While I was in high school, I coached Little League baseball and wrote sports for my local newspaper. I discovered working with kids was fun. I went to college to become a youth pastor. I soon realized there weren't a lot of churches ready to hire someone in a wheelchair as a pastor. I started a ministry to help churches reach out to people with disabilities. This eventually led to what I do now; helping people and families affected by disability to unleash their God-given potential.

***And it all started with wanting to become a professional baseball player.*** I believe the dream morphed because people did not tell me I couldn't but let me explore options.

I am convinced that we are purposefully created to do things that bring us joy and serve others. The following questions will help you think about what brings you pleasure and what you can do to meet the needs of others. You need not answer them all at once. This process works best when given time.

As you get started don't put any limits on your answers. Is there a career or job that you think you'd enjoy? Maybe it's a career that runs in your family, like law enforcement, a schoolteacher, a college professor or an athlete. How about the military? Whatever it is, name it. There's power in identification. Admitting what it is makes it real, possible, and begins the adventure.

Some people may use the information they glean from this activity to engage in a volunteer opportunity, while others may seek a paying job, career, or higher education. For the purposes of these questions we use the words job, work, activity, or employment to include any of these options.

Some questions may seem repetitive or overlapping. The idea is to look from as many angles as possible. People with disabilities have the same right to risk, fail, or succeed as anyone else.

1. Describe a time in life when you felt accomplished, successful, or delighted?  
What specific activity or experience created that feeling?
2. If you could set up your ideal work, describe what it would be like every day. Give as much detail as you can.
3. When would you get up?
4. What would an average day be like?
5. Can you do this job or activity from home, or would you need to go to an office, or other location?
6. If you have to go to another location how would you get there? Do you drive?  
Can you take a bus? Would you need a driver?
7. If you got this job, what do you think a typical day would be like?
8. What would your supervisor be like?
9. Who are the people you'd be working with? What are they doing?
10. Where can you learn more about this job? Consider books, job fairs, magazine articles, TV shows, YouTube videos and personal contacts.
11. Who do you know who does this job? Have you spoken to them? Can you shadow them for a day, an hour?
12. What is it about this job that appeals to you?
13. What parts of this job do you think you could do extremely well? Why?
14. What are the obstacles that you will have to overcome to do this job well?
15. What skills will you need to do this job?
16. Where could you get these skills? Technical school, college, apprenticeship, on-the-job training?
17. Have you talked about this job with your family and friends who know you well?  
How do they respond? Do they encourage you or are they apprehensive? What did they suggest you do next?
18. Who are the people others suggest you talk to?

19. Is there one part of this job or activity that excites you the most? What other jobs or activities offer that same type of joy or satisfaction?

20. What is one step you can take now to move toward this goal?

Sometimes personality profiles are helpful in this process

(<https://luke14exchange.org/2020/02/05/how-to-know-who-you-are-as-a-leader/>). We recommend the DISC profile and the Clifton Strengths 34 (formerly Strength Finders). You can take either profile through Luke 14 Exchange and we can help you process the results.

If you'd like to talk with someone about these questions, please contact us.

**Luke 14 Exchange, Inc.**  
**[www.Luke14Exchange.org](http://www.Luke14Exchange.org)**  
**863-940-3816**  
**[Jerry@Luke14Exchange.org](mailto:Jerry@Luke14Exchange.org) or [Joan@Luke14Exchange.org](mailto:Joan@Luke14Exchange.org)**