



*What If?
Just A.S.K.*

The Magazine

- *The Philosophy= PAGE 3*
- *Occupation Spotlight= PAGE 9*
- *Skills PAGE 10*
- *Spring 2022*

What If? Just A.S.K.

Spring 2022

Our Staff

Editor In Chief

Rodney Brooks

Editor

Breanne Brooks

Creative Director

Rhonda D. Brooks

1

The Philosophy

An understanding of the principles behind What If? Just A.S.K.

Just A.S.K.

2

Key Skills

Why EEP

3

Occupational Spotlight

Occupational Employment and Wages in State and Local Government

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1 The Philosophy

Rodney D. Brooks
and Breanne Brooks



We believe the A.S.K. tool is essential in helping individuals to think of and look at alternatives. We believe that forward thinking drives ultimate success. We also believe that without a fundamental methodology that it is possible to stay focused.

What If?

What if you could change, improve, or become an influence in those things you desired to embark on? Would you do it? If someone asked you how would you do it, could you tell them how?

Ask the Question

We dare you to ask yourself the question: “What if I could be or do whatever I dreamed of or felt inspired to do?” Everything starts with a question. The question is what challenges, motivates, and inspires you to take action. If you are not inspired to action, then action will not be taken. Since the question is “What if?,” then you are automatically challenged to see other alternatives or a better way of doing or envisioning things. So ask yourself...

“What If I...?”

Seek the Answer within Yourself First, and Then Use Your Resources

Challenge yourself to answer the question. The question is going to drive your passions and your beliefs, which mean the answer is going to come from within you. Seeking the answer from within also drives the “how.” The how is what stimulates your mind. This is what helps you to understand yourself and your passion for wanting to be the best, improving the situations that you want to see improved, and inspiring others around you to do the same. Your resources become a validation of what you may already have discovered within yourself. Your resources may also challenge you to think of other questions and to dig deeper into your question and its solution.

Know and Believe In Your Abilities

If you do not know and understand your abilities, then no one else will. No one knows you better than you. No one knows what you are passionate about and your dreams better than you. You can ask the question and answer the question. However, if you don’t believe that you can fulfill your dreams and do those things that you are passionate about or change those things that you would like to see changed, then it is time to start over and re-evaluate the question. Knowing and

believing in your abilities also helps you to improve on those abilities. It pushes you to be the best that you can be and it drives honesty within yourself. No one automatically has all the skills to reach their dreams or make the changes that they desire. It takes work, hard work. That work starts with learning and then constantly improving on those things that you need to improve on or make better and stronger. A better you means a better person for society! Now that you know the recipe for your success, your change, and your dreams; just A.S.K. and dare to make a difference!



Founders Rodney D. Brooks and Breanne E. Brooks

A marble bust of a man with a full, curly beard and hair, shown in profile facing right. The bust is set against a textured, light brown background.

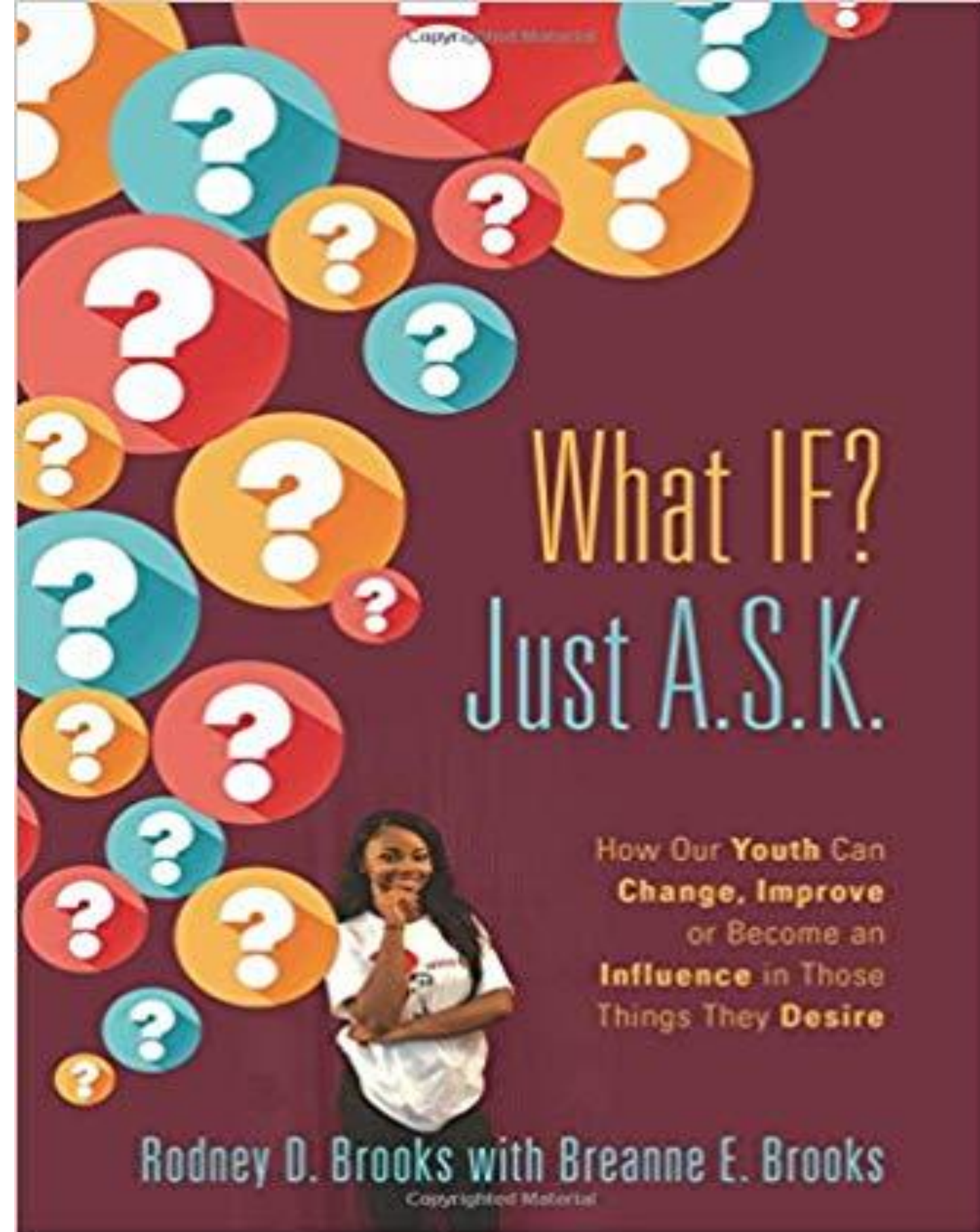
**“The mind is not a vessel
to be filled but a fire to
be ignited.” —Plutarch**



W.I.?..J.A.-nnect
Career Center



One Stop Connection



<https://www.whatifjustask.com/wija-nnect-career-center-1.html>

Available online at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and other retailers

Why E.E.P?

by Rodney D. Brooks



What is E.E.P?.

E.E.P stands for Exploring, Engaging and Pursuing. We believe when it comes to an individual wanting to follow their dreams that these three elements are key. It is philosophy that drives one to action.

Exploring

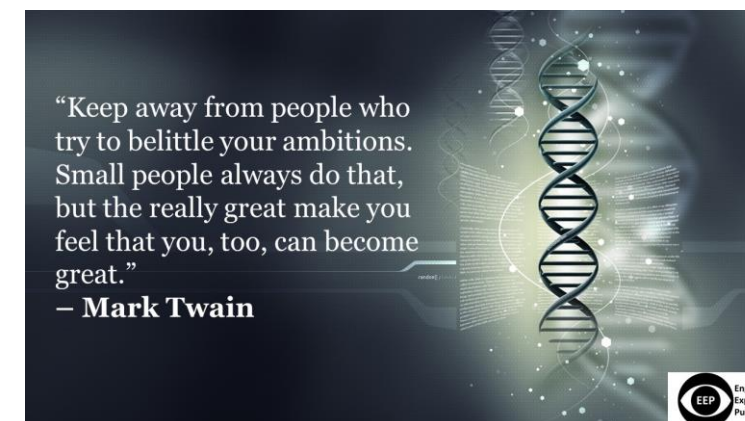
To explore means to Examine or Evaluate an option or possibility. You must continue to look at all the things that you can and want to be. Take the word can't out of your vocabulary. You have the ability to be what you want to be. But you must explore first.

Engaging

To engage means to Participate or Become Involved. You have to constantly be a part of your dreams. No one else can dream for you or truly tell you what your desires are. You must work each day towards your dream by learning, doing and preparing. Just exploring does not move you forward in your dream; you must be involved and focused. It is a commitment!!!!

Pursuing

To pursue means to follow. It is following in a manner that the whole purpose is to capture or get what you are following. It starts with a mindset that leads to action. When you are pursuing your dreams, you have laid down the groundwork by engaging and exploring and now it is time to capture.



So, Where do I start?

We have developed some great tools for you to use to help you get started and all you have to do is download them for your own use (at no cost). Just follow the links below.

The Dream Form – This form is designed to help you think about your dream and dig deeper into understanding them .

<https://www.whatifjustask.com/eep.html>

The A.S.K. Worksheet – This form is designed to help you ask the question what if I dreamed to be a It also helps you seek the answers within yourself and utilize your resources and it helps you to know and believe in your abilities to realize your dream.

<https://www.whatifjustask.com/eep.html>

Your Dreams are the Key for Your Life's Journey. It is the engine that moves and motivates you. It creates your passion. Fulfilling your dreams defines your success. We need you to explore, engage and pursue your dreams. All it takes is for you to A.S.K. "What IF I followed my Dream?"

**“You are braver than you
believe, stronger than
you seem and smarter
than you think.”**

—A.A. Milne

3

Occupational Employment and Wages in State and Local Government
Audrey Watson

**“There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.”
– Paulo Coelho**



As you embark on your quest to explore engage and pursue your dreams, keep in mind that failure is an option. If one doesn't try, then one can not achieve.

Michael Jordan

Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team — a heartbreaking experience for any teenager. Then he became one of the greatest basketball players in the history of the game.

He is the author of one of my favorite quotes about failure, one proudly displayed on the Failure Wall at my company: “I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, job losses in large private sector industries such as food services and drinking places received a lot of attention. State and local government also had high job losses. From March 2020 to March 2021, employment fell by 5.1 percent in state government and 6.5 percent in local government, compared with a 4.3-percent decrease in the private sector. The types of jobs in state and local government differ from those in the private sector, as do wages. This Spotlight on Statistics compares the occupational mix and wages in the private sector, state government, and local government.

Educational instruction and library was the largest occupational group in state and local government



Occupational Spotlight continued

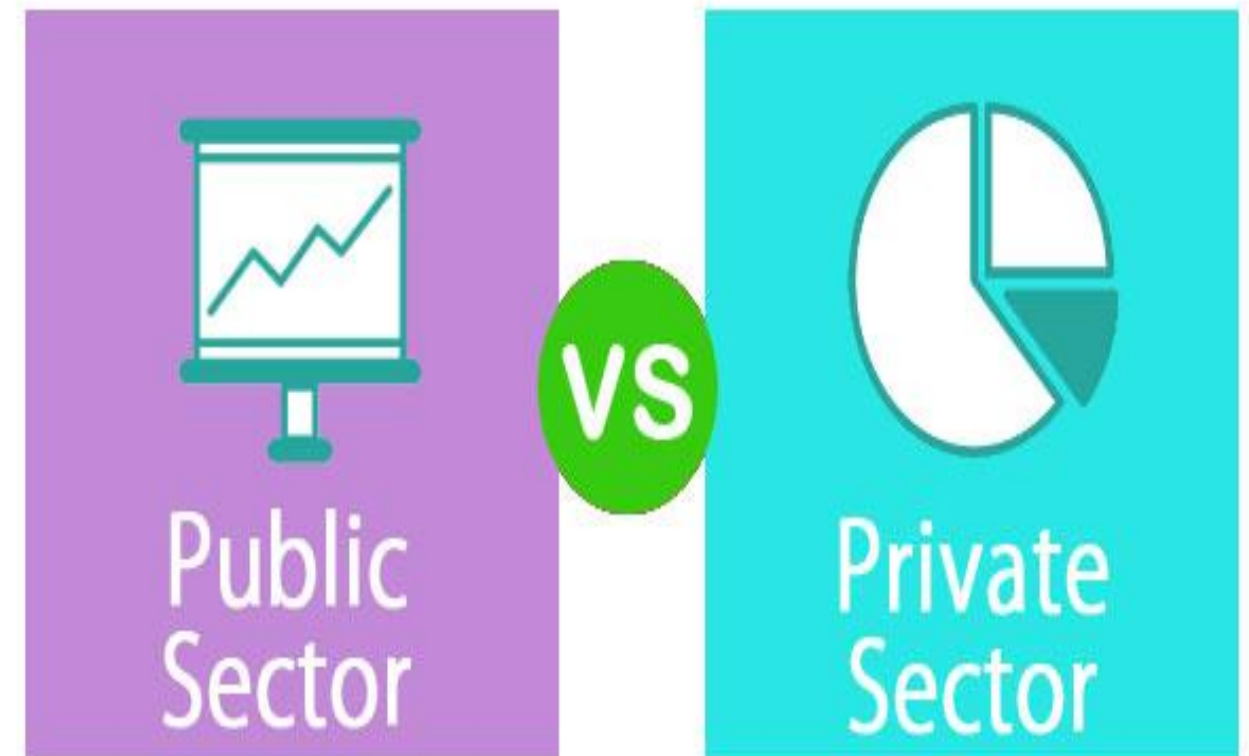
There were nearly 118 million private sector jobs in May 2020, representing 85 percent of U.S. employment. State government had 4.6 million jobs (3.3 percent) and local government had 14.1 million jobs (10.1 percent). Office and administrative support (15.5 million), sales and related (13.0 million), and transportation and material moving (11.5 million) were the largest occupational groups in the private sector. Educational instruction and library was the largest occupational group in both state government (917,480) and local government (5.3 million), followed by office and administrative support (703,020 in state government and 1.6 million in local government). Protective service was the third-largest occupational group in local government with 1.5 million jobs and was among the largest occupational groups in state government (416,640) in May 2020



Educational instruction and library occupations made up over a third of local government jobs

Educational instruction and library occupations made up 20 percent of state government employment and nearly 38 percent of local government employment, compared with less than 2 percent of private sector employment. State and local government also had higher shares of protective service and community and social service occupations than the private sector in May 2020. Sales and related, food preparation and serving related, production, and transportation and material moving occupations accounted for a greater proportion of employment in the private sector than in state and local government. Life, physical, and social science occupations made up less than 1 percent of jobs in the private sector, but nearly 4 percent of employment in state government.

- In May 2020, annual mean wages were \$9,980 higher in state government than in the private sector, while annual mean wages in local government were \$1,980 above the private sector. The higher average wage in state and local government largely reflects differences in the occupational mix, including higher shares of occupations that typically require postsecondary education for entry, rather than higher wages for individual occupations. Compared with the private sector, state and local government had lower mean wages for high-paying occupational groups such as management, legal, and computer and mathematical occupations, and also smaller employment shares of low-paying groups such as food preparation and serving related and healthcare support occupations. Wage differences for the groups also reflect differences in the mix of detailed occupations within the group. For example, higher wages for protective service occupations in state and local government can be attributed to the fact that law enforcement workers made up the majority of protective service employment in the public sector, while security guards made up three-quarters of protective service employment in the private sector. The large wage difference for educational instruction and library occupations in state government reflects the fact that state government had a much higher share of postsecondary teachers.



4



SMART is an acronym, giving criteria to guide in the setting of objectives, for example in project management, employee-performance management and personal development.

Often the term S.M.A.R.T. Goals and S.M.A.R.T. Objectives will surface. Although the acronym SMART generally stays the same, objectives and goals can differ. Goals/Dreams are the distinct purpose that is to be anticipated from aspiration of what you are looking to achieve overall. Objectives are the steps that you will take to achieve your Goals/Dreams

Specific

Your goals/Dreams should be clear and specific, otherwise you won't be able to focus your efforts or feel truly motivated to achieve it. When writing your goals/dreams, try to answer the five "W" questions:

What do I want to accomplish?

Why is this goal important?

Who is involved?

Where is it located?

Which resources or limits are involved?

Measurable

It's important to have measurable goals/dreams, so that you can track your progress and stay motivated. Assessing progress helps you to stay focused, meet your deadlines, and feel the excitement of getting closer to achieving your goals/dreams.

A measurable goal/dream should address questions such as:

How much?

How many?

How will I know when it is accomplished?

Achievable

Your goals/dreams also needs to be realistic and attainable to be successful. In other words, it should stretch your abilities but still remain possible. When you set an achievable goal/dreams, you may be able to identify previously overlooked opportunities (Use the W.I.J.A.-SWOT Analysis Sheet to help you) or resources that can bring you closer to it.

An achievable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- How can I accomplish this goal?
- How realistic is the goal, based on other constraints, such as financial factors?

Relevant/Realistic

This step is about ensuring that your goals/dreams matters to you, and that it also aligns with other relevant goals/dream you may have. We all need support and assistance in achieving our goals, but it's important to retain control over them. So, make sure that your plans drive you forward, but that you're still responsible for achieving your own goal.

A relevant goal can answer "yes" to these questions:

Does this seem worthwhile?

Is this the right time?

Does this match our other efforts/needs?

Am I the right person to reach this goal?

Is it applicable in the current socio-economic environment?

Time-bound

Every goal/dream needs a target date, so that you have a deadline to focus on and something to work toward. This part of the SMART goal criteria helps to prevent everyday tasks from taking priority over your longer-term goals.

A time-bound goal will usually answer these questions:

When?

What can I do six months from now?

What can I do six weeks from now?

What can I do today?

5 Six Things We Should not Do that can harm our dreams

All or Nothing Thinking

Seeing things as black-or-white, right-or-wrong with nothing in between. Essentially, if I'm not perfect then I'm a failure.

- I didn't finish writing that paper, so it was a complete waste of time.
- There's no point in playing if I'm not 100% in shape.
- They didn't show, they're completely unreliable!

Overgeneralization

Using words like always, never in relation to a single event or experience.

- I'll never get that promotion
- She always does that...

Minimizing or Magnifying

Seeing things as dramatically more or less important than they actually are. Often creating a "catastrophe" that follows.

- Because my boss publicly thanked her she'll get that promotion, not me (even though I had a great performance review and just won an industry award).
- I forgot that email! That means my boss won't trust me again, I won't get that raise and my wife will leave me.

Jumping to Conclusions

1) Mind-Reading: Making negative assumptions about how people see you without evidence or factual support.

- Your friend is preoccupied, and you don't bother to find out why.

You're thinking:

- She thinks I'm exaggerating again
- He still hasn't forgiven me for telling Fred about his illness

2) Fortune Telling: Making negative predictions about the future without evidence or factual support

- I won't be able to sell my house and I'll be stuck here (even though housing market is good).
- No-one will understand. I won't be invited back again (even though they are supportive friends).

Discounting the Positive

Not acknowledging the positive. Saying anyone could have done it or insisting that your positive actions, qualities or achievements don't count...

- That doesn't count, anyone could have done it.

"Should(s)"

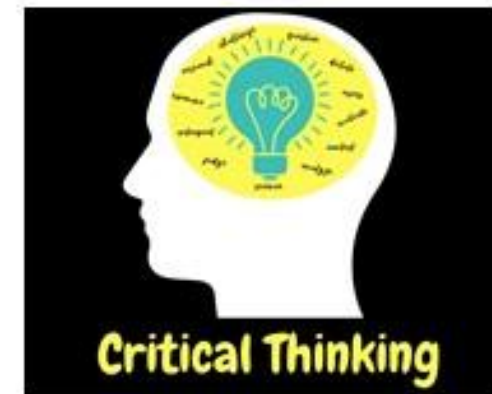
Using "should", "need to", "must", "ought to" to motivate oneself, then feeling guilty when you don't follow through (or anger and resentment when someone else doesn't follow through).

- I should have got the painting done this weekend.
- They ought to have been more considerate of my feelings, they should know that would upset me.





Community Service



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6 College Recruiting Outlook for 2022

Stewart Mease Executive Director, Employer Relations Wake Forest University

Entering 2022, the outlook for college graduates is as murky as it was in 2020 as the emergence of the omicron variant wreaks havoc to on-campus recruiting and threatens to stall a vibrant economy.

Nearly two years of virtual recruiting is completely changing how companies recruit college talent, and how career centers must adjust their programming and educational strategies to maximize outcomes for its students.

As virtual recruiting persists due to Covid coupled with cost and time savings, vendors (such as Handshake) are encouraging virtual events on their platform by connecting schools to create multi-school events. On-campus recruiting is becoming a relic of the past decade. Consider Handshake's claim that in 2019 78% of events were school-hosted compared to 47% in 2021.

Changes presents Challenges

This switch does have challenges for schools. First, many top tier schools that have leaned on target-school status by name-brand companies, are now facing greater competition from other schools to retain their market share. Employers have realized that through virtual recruiting, they can cast a wider net on Handshake and reach many more students they never were touching through the target school model. Second-tier schools, by simply being a Handshake-platform school, are now able to access opportunities that were before out of reach for their students. These students can now compete for opportunities once found only at top-tier schools simply by a concentrated effort to participate in open virtual recruiting events. Collectively, students at these schools are gaining market share with name-brand firms.

Meanwhile, students at top-tier schools must compete virtually to retain opportunities that have been commonly available on their local campuses, as well as obtain new opportunities to offset the loss of market share. This shift will likely result in a "long tail" of companies, as more firms will hire a fewer number of students than what previously occurred.

As a result, career centers must shift the content of their educational programs, alter their coaching techniques, and connect their students in new ways to the market.

Consider the following analogy. If a brick-and-mortar store stayed closed for two years and during that time started selling their product online, would anyone visit the brick-and-mortar store two years later? Why would a physical store exist if the same product can be bought and sold with less overhead? The question is will the same volume of product be bought or sold without a physical location by customers? Perhaps, but it will require different marketing and selling activities. Paid and organic search becomes more important instead of newspaper ads and sidewalk billboards. So is the case with college recruiting. No longer is a tailored suit, shaking hands and working a room the focus rather it's being able to "present in a box" and understanding how to use Handshake technology. Career centers will have to pivot to stay open for business.

Data Insights

One positive trend from virtual recruiting is now all activities are online and therefore measurable. These datasets can now provide never-seen-before insights on the actions of students in their pursuit of employment opportunities. This data, visualized and analyzed, can provide a roadmap for all constituents to create more market equilibrium and efficient uses of time in the job search process.

Data analysis has discovered some interesting insights. From July 1 to December 15, the year-over-year change in Total Applications to postings in the Handshake system increased 15%, and the number of unique student applicants also increased 18%. While these increases are encouraging, it pales into comparison to the increase in total postings - 103% or 56,618 during the same time period. These postings were generated from 8,548 unique employers - a 66% increase. What's most striking is that only 10% of the total opportunities available to students in the Handshake system had at least one application. Thus, 90% of all postings did not attract a single applicant.



**“He who asks a question
is a fool for five minutes;
he who does not ask a
question remains a fool
forever.”**

—Chinese proverb



**Explore
Engage
Pursue**

2022 Dream Journal

Download your free 2022 Dream Journal at
<https://www.whatifjustask.com> and then select EEP Tools



**“Ever tried. Ever failed.
No matter. Try Again.
Fail again. Fail better.”
– Samuel Beckett**



Engage
Explore
Pursue

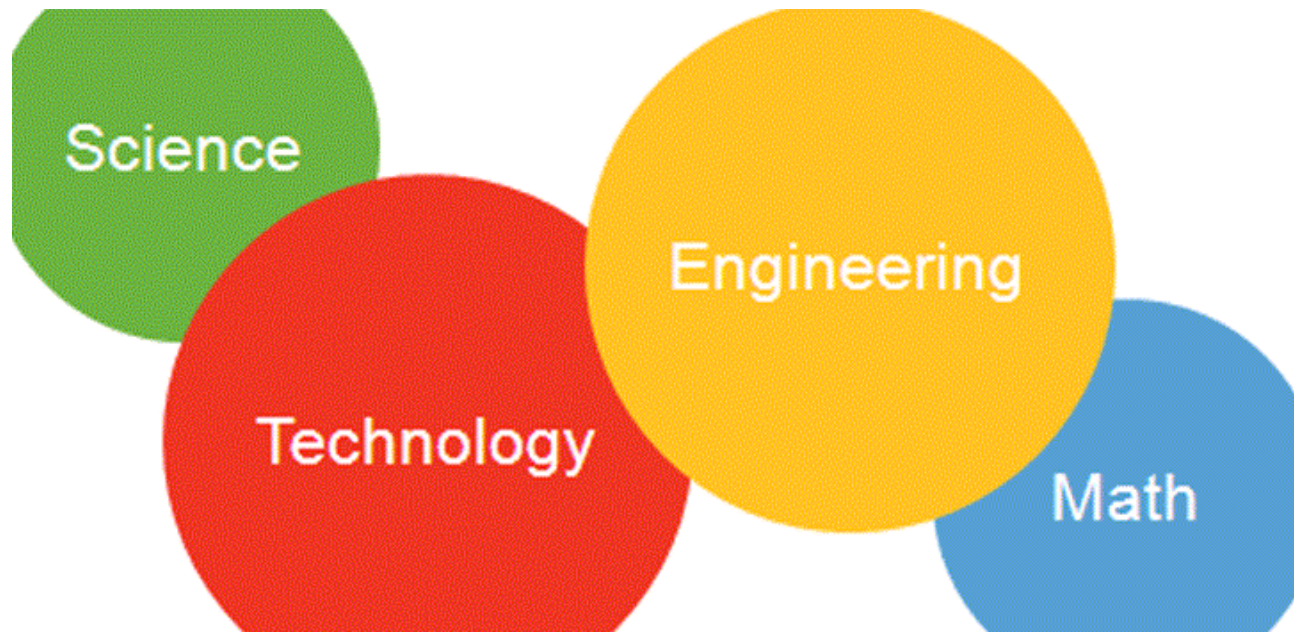


**Connect your
dreams and
ideas with
expectations,
solutions, and
execution**

<https://www.whatifjustask.com>

7 | What is STEM Education?

Elaine J. Hom, LiveScience Contributor



STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — in an interdisciplinary and applied approach. Rather than teach the four disciplines as separate and discrete subjects, STEM integrates them into a cohesive learning paradigm based on real-world applications.

Though the United States has historically been a leader in these fields, fewer students have been focusing on these topics recently. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 16 percent of high school students are interested in a STEM career and have proven a proficiency in mathematics. Currently, nearly 28 percent of high school freshmen declare an interest in a STEM-related field, a department website says, but 57 percent of these students will lose interest by the time they graduate from high school.

As a result, the Obama administration announced the 2009 "Educate to Innovate" campaign to motivate and inspire students to excel in STEM subjects.

This campaign also addresses the inadequate number of teachers skilled to educate in these subjects. The goal is to get American students from the middle of the pack in science and math to the top of the pack in the international arena.

STEM jobs do not all require higher education or even a college degree. Less than half of entry-level STEM jobs require a bachelor's degree or higher. However, a four-year degree is incredibly helpful with salary — the average advertised starting salary for entry-level STEM jobs with a bachelor's requirement was 26 percent higher than jobs in the non-STEM fields, according to the STEMconnect report. For every job posting for a bachelor's degree recipient in a non-STEM field, there were 2.5 entry-level job postings for a bachelor's degree recipient in a STEM field.

Much of the STEM curriculum is aimed toward

attracting underrepresented populations. Female students, for example, are significantly less likely to pursue a college major or career. Though this is nothing new, the gap is increasing at a significant rate. Male students are also more likely to pursue engineering and technology fields, while female students prefer science fields, like biology, chemistry, and marine biology. Overall, male students are three times more likely to be interested in pursuing a STEM career, the STEMconnect report said.



A person is shown in silhouette, sitting and resting their chin on their hand in a thoughtful pose. The background is a dark, bokeh-filled scene with out-of-focus lights in shades of purple, blue, and yellow, creating a dreamy and contemplative atmosphere.

**Are you
contemplating
your next
move for
success?**

<https://www.whatifjustask.com>

8 | 10 pieces of advice for high school graduates

1. Find a mentor

Consider finding a mentor who's willing to guide you and give you advice. This might be a teacher, coach, manager, family member or friend. Find someone you admire who has a career that interests you and can offer you both general advice and career advice. For example, if you want to pursue biology, then you might ask your high school biology teacher to mentor you.

2. Identify your interests

Identifying your interests can help you discover what career you want to pursue. Try writing a list of all your interests, then research careers that align with them. Researching jobs can help you decide if the typical job duties for these positions interest you. For instance, if you enjoy animals, biology and medicine, you might consider becoming a veterinarian or a veterinary technician.

3. Choose a job you like

Try to choose a job you like or a job that makes you happy. It's important to choose a desirable career path so you feel satisfied with your work. You can research job positions or consider talking to a career counselor to help you find and pursue a fulfilling career.

4. Pursue your ambitions

Pursuing your ambitions might include choosing what college you want to attend, what degree you want to pursue or where you want to live after graduating from high school. Following your ambitions involves taking the necessary steps to achieve your goals, such as completing educational certifications or internships in your intended field. For example, if you want to become a construction worker, you might try to get an apprenticeship or earn specialty certifications.

5. Try different things

Trying different things is an essential part of life after graduation because it helps you learn about your likes, dislikes and talents. Consider trying new hobbies, classes, foods or skills. This can be especially valuable if you're unsure of what you want to do after high school. For instance, if you decide to try cooking as a hobby, you might discover you want to pursue a career as a chef.

6. Get involved

Consider volunteering with local organizations, attending community events or participating in clubs. Getting involved in your community can help you experience new things and meet people, which may broaden your experiences and help you find job opportunities. For example, you might connect with someone in your community who informs you about an interesting job listing or internship position. You can also include this volunteer work or a club membership on your resume to potentially make it more attractive to employers.

7. Ask for help

Pursuing a new educational or career path after graduation may be challenging but asking for support can help you find solutions. You can ask mentors, teachers, professors or family members for career and educational advice or tips. For example, if you're struggling with a class, you might ask your professor for additional help so you can learn study tips and perform better on tests.

8. Work hard

Working hard can show employers you're dedicated. If you go to college, work hard in your classes by completing your assignments on time and studying for tests. If you pursue a career after high school, try to meet your quotas and complete all your weekly tasks. Working hard involves giving yourself goals, breaks and motivation. For example, if you're working on multiple projects at once, it may be beneficial to take breaks to help you stay productive in the long term.

9. Form relationships

Try to make relationships with the people you meet after graduating from high school. This could include new coworkers, friends, managers or professors. For example, you might consider meeting with coworkers outside of work to develop your relationships with them. Maintaining these relationships can help you develop interpersonal and communication skills and may lead to new opportunities, such as jobs or internships.

10. Create a schedule

Try to create a schedule for yourself because many careers require consistent work hours. For example, you might manage your time by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day. Having a schedule can improve your productivity and help you build healthy habits. Schedules can also help you be punctual to work or classes and help you meet important deadlines.



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