

Career Questions for Soon-to-be High School Graduates

What am I passionate about?

Could this still be my passion in 20, 30, or 40 years? Is the industry growing or dying, and is that trend projected to continue?

If I do not know what I am passionate about yet, do I have an aptitude for any subjects in school? Would I enjoy pursuing these subjects for a career?

Workforce, Trade School, or College?

Does college or trade school make sense for the field I want to work in? If so, can I afford to continue my education? If I cannot afford it, is it worth taking on student debt to pursue?



Where do I want to live?

Do I want to stay close to home or move? Do I want to travel for work? Would I enjoy living in the city, suburbs, or country? What is the housing market like in that area? Do I want to have a yard, live in a community, or a high rise? What are the state and local tax rates in that area? How long is the commute?

Do I want to have a family?

Will I be able to house, clothe, and feed multiple people? Will my job put me in a good school district? Will I be able to have a good work-life balance with this career?

If I do not want a family, are there other obligations I will have to balance with work? Do I want work to be my main priority?

What Type of Job do I Want?

Do I enjoy reading and writing, working with my hands, working with computers, etc.? Am I shy or outgoing? Do I like working with others or by myself?

Do I want to be salaried or be paid hourly? Will there be opportunities for advancements? Do I want to be in a leadership/management role?

What type of environment do I want?

Do I want to work at a desk, work in a lab, stand all day, or work from home? Is it important to me to be inside or outside? Do I want to work closely with customers or other team members in my organization? Would I rather be able to keep to myself? What size company do I want? Do I want to be a big part of a small company or a small part of a large corporation?

MORE THAN COLLEGE

There is much more to choosing which career path to start down than deciding whether or not to attend college. There are countless variables that affect your answers to these questions. In addition to the **Career Questions for Soon-to-be High School Graduates**, here are a few statistics that highlight the financial consequences of choosing post-secondary education.

- ❖ **As of 2021, 13.6% of Pennsylvania residents have unpaid student loan debt. (educationdata.org)**
- ❖ **The average amount of student loan debt for Pennsylvanians in 2021 is \$35,000. (educationdata.org)**
- ❖ **Students who attend a two-year trade school will typically amass only \$10,000 in student loan debt (collegescholarships.org)**
- ❖ **On average, trade school costs roughly 75% less than a four-year bachelor's degree in 2019. (moneywise.com)**
- ❖ **People who enter the workforce right after high school accrue \$0 in student loan debt, and start earning income immediately.**