Focus: Research specific careers or majors and narrow down your choices.

Activities at this stage

- Online research
- Networking
- Informational Interviews
- Job Shadowing

In the previous step, students created lists of possibilities. This stage now involves gathering information and talking to people to narrow the list. To get started, students can search online to get information about majors and careers. Doing online research can help them focus. There is a good deal of information online, specifically from the Department of Labor (DOL). The DOL has two websites with updated career information that can be helpful. If they are researching different majors, they can check out the UAlbany website (linked below) or participate in the “Munch with the Majors” event, to learn about majors and careers.

While searching online is a great way to start, they might not fully understand all aspects of a career or major until they talk to someone who has already chosen that path. This next step requires some networking. For careers, it is best to talk to people who are working in those actual roles to gain their personal perspective. If any of your students feel ready for that, great! Most first year students can, however, find that overwhelming. There are also ways they can network with other students to learn more about majors and careers too, which may seem more approachable. This type of networking is called informational Interviewing. For these
interviews, your students are the interviewers. Their goal is to identify what their interviewees love about a major/career and what they don’t. They should also find out what their day-to-day experience is. This is a good opportunity to learn about any areas that concern them too. Maybe they are worried about how difficult a specific required course is and how much support they can get.

At the end of this stage, students should have 1 or 2 ideas that they want to explore. In the next stage they will build a plan for trying out these ideas.

**Class Activities**

- Have students brainstorm lists of people who could tell them about specific careers.
- Discuss who, what, when, why, and how students can network to start exploring potential career paths. (Talk about the Great Danes in NYC Program opportunity in the Resources below)
- Have students research either a career or a major using the resources listed below. Pair them with another student and discuss these questions.
  - What surprised you?
  - What sounds interesting?
  - What concerns do you have?

**Resources**

- O*Net [https://career.albany.edu/resources/career-exploration-resources/](https://career.albany.edu/resources/career-exploration-resources/)
- LinkedIn [https://www.linkedin.com/](https://www.linkedin.com/)
- UCAN [https://career.albany.edu/resources/ucan/](https://career.albany.edu/resources/ucan/)
- Candid Career [https://career.albany.edu/resources/candid-career/](https://career.albany.edu/resources/candid-career/)
- UAlbany Four Year Plans [https://www.albany.edu/academic-advising/four-year-plans](https://www.albany.edu/academic-advising/four-year-plans)

**Assignments**

- Conducting an Informational Interview [https://career.albany.edu/resources/networking-informational-interviews/](https://career.albany.edu/resources/networking-informational-interviews/)