

## Overcoming Barriers to Success

Gaining a clearer understanding of the roles that barriers play in the career decision-making process is one of the best ways to fully explore your career options. Barriers are those obstacles that may discourage you from reaching your goals. Sometimes we believe that something is not possible because of a perceived barrier, we might then compromise our goals by considering others instead. By identifying potential obstacles, you can effectively develop strategies to overcome them. The more aware we are of potential barriers, the more prepared we will be when we face them.

It is helpful to differentiate between internal and external barriers. Many of the barriers we face are *internal* and come from within. Normally we have some control over these barriers, and through determination and effort we can usually overcome them.

Another type of barrier is *external*, and the source usually comes from outside. Normally we have little, or no, control over these barriers. Although we may have difficulty controlling external barriers, recognizing them can often help us. Below are some examples of internal and external barriers:

<i>Internal Barriers</i>	<i>External Barriers</i>
Anxiety when making career decisions	Economic Trends
Concerns about multiple life roles & responsibilities	Lack of available or local educational/training opportunities
Low confidence in your ability to obtain your degree	Lack of funds or financial assistance to pursue a career
Poor Study Habits	Employment Outlook
Procrastination	Educational Requirements

### “Barrier” Exercise:

As a group, come up with at least three internal and three external barriers that you believe are obstacles to succeeding in college. You may need to vote, if your group can not agree.

Internal Barriers	External Barriers
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
4)	4)
5)	5)