SUMMER CAREER CAMP
Program Report 2016
The second year of Summer Career Camp ran July 4 to 8, 2016 at the University of Alberta Career Centre. 33 students from Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton Catholic School Board, Charter Schools, St. Paul, and St. Albert schools participated. Students engaged in five days of exploratory and experiential learning activities, lead by Career Centre staff (Mentors), to learn career management skills and to explore the depth and breadth of their career options.
Four Grade 10 students
Ten Grade 11 students
Ten Grade 12 students
Nine post-Grade 12 students
(upgrading, gap year, or attending U of A in fall)

3:1 Student to Mentor
LEARNING GOALS

- Learn how to be an agent of your career
- Unpack your skills, interests, values, and other attributes
- Practice exploring and researching your career options
- Connect with professionals who will share their career stories and advice
- Visit workplaces on and off the University of Alberta campus
- Map out the next few steps you will take to move forward in your career
At the Career Centre, we aim to educate about the dynamic reality of careers by grounding our practice in research like Planned Happenstance (Krumboltz and Levin) and The Chaos Theory of Careers (Bright and Pryor). Essentially, research shows it is unrealistic to expect a static, unchanging career that seamlessly flows from point A to B. Rather, careers are influenced by a complexity of factors and unexpected events constantly changing at varied rates, including parental or family influence, economic climate, health status, financial status, available time and resources, and so on. This complexity of influences makes predicting one’s future impossible.

Students can become successful in their careers by envisioning their careers as journeys, rather than final destinations. Career resilience is positively impacted by appreciating and expecting uncertainty by focusing on the next few steps rather than the distant future. Discovering their beliefs, values, skills, and interests, continually learning new things, and saying yes to opportunities can help them prepare for the future. Students can embrace change by using varied career research methods and keeping many options open. Active managers of their careers frequently take action and reflect to learn from their actions. Their learnings inform next steps and gradually their careers unfold; careers that are flexible and adapt to the continual change within themselves and around them.

Career management skills are not inherent. Career education, like Summer Career Camp, introduces students to key ideas about career development and these understandings allow students to build a foundation for healthy career management. Like all skills, career management skills require practice and this camp gives students the opportunity to practice their new skills in a safe environment where guidance and feedback will be given.
“I think this workshop really helped my daughter gain practical knowledge and insight into what a career is like. It also helped her build confidence in herself.”
EVALUATION RESULTS
METHODS

- **Liked-Learned-Change**: Students completed short evaluations immediately following each session during camp
- **Pre- and Post-Program Self-Evaluation**: Students indicated their level of agreement with a series of statements
- Students and parents/guardians were sent separate surveys to provide feedback about the program

RESULTS

Results suggest students achieved the intended learning outcomes. Although we cannot infer causation from the results, we can state that after camp the students:

- Can identify strategies to help manage their career
- Feel more optimistic about their career
- Feel more confident in explaining their career decisions
- Feel motivated to take actions that will move them forward in their career journey
Pre- and Post-Program Surveys
(Percent moderately and strongly agree)

- Where I end up in my career is greatly influenced by my reactions to unplanned events.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 65%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 93%

- I should have a clear idea of where I want to be in five to ten years.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 29%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 64%

- Careers are unpredictable and it is ok to feel uncertain about my career.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 90%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 100%

- I know the next few steps I want to take in my career.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 20%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 86%

- I feel optimistic about my career.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 20%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 86%

- If I have a clear career plan, I will be less likely to get distracted.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 29%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 64%

- I feel confident in explaining my career decisions.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 29%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 64%

- I can identify strategies that will help me manage my own career.
  - Pre-Camp (n=20): 10%
  - Post-Camp (n=14): 45%
Something that really stuck with a student was that, “You must have a balance between action and reflection. Too much reflection will cause you to dwell on things and never accomplish anything.”
I made some decisions about my education.

- 100% of students (n=8) said they learnt how careers happen in reality.
- 100% said they determined that what they’re feeling about their career is normal (e.g., anxious, uncertain).
- 63% said they gained practical skills they can use to manage their own career.
- 100% said they received assistance in planning some next steps they need to take in their career.
- 63% said they narrowed down their ideas about occupations and industries they might be interested in pursuing.

Additionally:
- 88% said they made some decisions about their education.
- 75% said they expanded their ideas of what occupations and industries they might be interested in pursuing.
From this data, some students indicated they did not make decisions about their education or about future occupations. It should be noted, however, that students did demonstrate remarkable improvement in decisions around next steps (short-term, realistic things they will do to move their career forward). We see this very positively since our aim was to demonstrate the dynamic and unpredictable nature of careers and to help students appreciate how change and unexpected events will impact them. We wanted to open students’ minds to opportunities they had not previously been exposed to.
Any questions?

Contact the *University of Alberta Career Centre* at
780-492-4291
yourcareercentre@ualberta.ca
uab.ca/cc

Registration for Summer Career Camp will open in April 2017
Thank you **students** for being daring, sharing your stories, and inspiring your mentors.

Thank you **parents** and guardians for supporting your student’s development of healthy career management skills.

Thank you **mentors** for sparking ideas, supporting action, and mobilizing minds.