



UNISA

TRAVELLING THE CAREER HIGHWAY

A FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The choice of an appropriate career is one of life's most important events. It will have a far-reaching impact on a person's social, emotional and physical existence. During the career development process a person will make a number of decisions. The most important of these concern the choice of a career path and the educational preparation that has to be made for that career. This decision point occurs in most cases during the last two years at school or soon after leaving school. People still make career changes at later stages of their lives but the process remains essentially the same.

In spite of its importance, the career decision-making process is often treated in an offhand way. There are a number of reasons for this:

- Many people are not adequately exposed to the world of work, with the result that when they have to make career decisions they do so on the basis of inadequate career information. These people may be regarded as being career immature and should be educated in the career decision-making process. If not, they run a serious risk of making incorrect career decisions.
- Many people do not have access to professional career counselling and this situation is bound to become more serious in the future. Professional career counselling would imply that adequately trained professionals who are able to use sophisticated psychometric tools are available to users, as indicated above.
- Many people regard a career decision as a one-off event. They believe that individuals are suited only to one occupation and have to be told by outsiders what these suitable occupations are. They are unaware that a career decision is a process which often results in a compromise between the ideal and reality.

Career Highway was written as an educational aid to assist career decision-makers who find themselves in any of the categories mentioned above. Career decision-makers have to use the book under the guidance of trained professionals such as psychologists and teachers, who are required to provide counselling in school settings. The book is aimed primarily at career guidance teachers.

Throughout this guide two terms are used which need to be clarified. They are *facilitator* and *traveller*. A *facilitator* is someone who will guide individuals or

groups through the career education process as conceptualised in *Career Highway*. The facilitator should be thoroughly acquainted with the contents of the book and be classifiable in one of the categories mentioned earlier. A *traveller* is someone who uses *Career Highway* to become more career educated. It is used under the guidance of a facilitator. Travellers may be educated individually or in groups.

Working through the book will expose travellers to a range of options or choices which they can consider at their leisure. The book also stresses that a career decision is not a one-off event, but a series of steps or stages that have to be completed in sequence for the desirable end result to be achieved. Perhaps the main benefit of the book is that travellers are actively involved in the career decision-making process. It is not imposed on them from the outside. The outcome of the process reflects their input, and that is something they are likely to accept and act upon.

The book is written in the metaphor of a journey. A journey is an event that all people can identify with. They can understand the steps involved in a journey and what they have to do to reach their destination. The idea of movement from one position to another emphasises the dynamic nature of a career rather than the statism with which it is regarded by many people. The career journey is divided into stages, which stresses the point that making a career decision is not a single event but a process of sequential steps or stages.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE CAREER HIGHWAY

Travelling the career highway is a long-term, even a life-time process. The section of the career highway which this book deals with, is divided into six stages.

Note: Page numbers in brackets refer to pages of *Travelling the Career Highway – a logbook for career travellers*.

Stage One: LIFE EXPERIENCES THAT MAY AFFECT MY CAREER TRAVELS

In Stage One (pp 1–4) the traveller is required to do two things, namely to look backwards at his/her personal history and to look forward to where he/she would like to be at specified times in the future.

Part 1.1 Significant historical events

This section (pp 1–4) provides a selective historical view which involves an analysis of past events that may have a bearing on the traveller's future goals and decisions.

Questions 1 to 5 (p 2) require the traveller to provide information on the highest academic qualifications and the occupations of parents and siblings. The answers to these questions will provide information on the social environment which the traveller has been exposed to. It may provide leads to the type of career role models that the traveller may have had and to how widely exposed he/she has been to the world of work.

Question 6 (p 3) will provide more information on the number of outside activities the traveller has been involved in and also the depth of involvement. People who have been extensively involved in outside activities have acquired experience which they can use profitably in a future career. The answer to this question should be explored further in an interview situation.

Question 7 (p 3) deals with work experience. In the modern occupational era experience is most important in finding the occupation that will provide travellers

with the start that they need. This question is particularly important if the traveller is a career changer rather than a new career entrant. It is also important to note the activities that the traveller has enjoyed being involved in. The answer to question 7 can be combined with that of question 6 to provide information about the practical work-related experience that the traveller brings to the decision-making process.

Question 8 (p 3) deals with the traveller's prior academic performance. It is common knowledge that in many school systems at present results are not always good indicators of potential. It is also true that the best predictor of future performance is past performance. Research has indicated that potential can be judged by looking at a person's relative position in a group of peers: for example, someone with good potential but who finds him/herself in a disadvantaged group would still rank near the top of the group, in the same way that someone with good potential would rank near the top in an advantaged group. If it is possible to obtain a valid indication of a traveller's class position, this will be a good indication of what can be expected from that person in later life.

Part 1.2 How I see my occupational future

The second part of Stage One (p 4) will provide some indication of the future goals and milestones of the traveller. The traveller has to provide a perspective on the type of position and work environment that he/she foresees at set times in the future. From the responses the facilitator can get an indication of how realistic the future goals are and whether the traveller has realistic expectations of how to reach the goals. A traveller, for example, may have the urge to become a well-known engineer but his/her performance ranks in the lower 20 per cent of his/her class. This would require some reality counselling to bring future and current performance into line. In Stage Six (pp 32–34) the statements to the questions about the future will also be checked against the objective analyses from the Career Highway Summary Sheet (p 59).

Care should be taken to impress on travellers that the provision of information about parents' training and work situations is not meant to demean them in any way. It is intended to fill out and complete the picture which the facilitator is helping the traveller to construct.

Stage Two: SELECTING YOUR CAREER HIGHWAY

The selection of the career highway (p 5) is an important ground-breaking process.

Part 2.1 Career and occupational interests

In Part 2.1 (pp 5–10) the traveller will work through a set of statements that are evaluated on a four-point scale. The statements are based on the well-known Holland Typology which can identify six personality types. These types in turn can be combined and described in two-letter codes that are linked to specific occupations.

Part 2.2 Career categories

The second part (pp 10–12) is used to gain a global perspective of the career areas that the traveller has considered previously. A table consisting of two columns are provided. Column A contains the broad career areas that are addressed in the book, which in the terminology of the book are regarded as career highways. In column B a number of specific occupations are provided, which are used only to verify the career highways. Two career categories are chosen on the basis of occupations which have been considered in the past. These career categories are matched with the results of the interest assessment to ensure that the career highway has been correctly identified and that further analyses can proceed.

Stage Three: WHAT DO I EXPECT FROM MY OCCUPATIONAL VEHICLE?

Stage Three (pp 13–18) looks at information that will shed more light on the choice of a person's appropriate occupation or, in the parlance of the book, the appropriate occupational vehicle.

Part 3.1 Career values

Career values (pp 13–15) will indicate what a person will find fulfilling in an occupation. They lie at the core of life. If values are not satisfied, the person will become frustrated and it will show in his/her personal life.

Part 3.2 Subject preference

Subject preference (p 15) indicates broad subject areas that a person would favour, based on previous experience in those areas. The preferences would indicate the type of theoretical or content areas he/she would enjoy. Subject preferences need not refer only to active contact at school level but also to contact on an informal level in community or part-time work.

Part 3.3 Abilities

Abilities (pp 15–16) are indicated by activities that a person can perform very well. They may be manifested in school/academic activities, hobbies, extramural activities, etc. Abilities are not specific events but the skills that underlie the events. Someone who is good at art, for example, would have the ability to match different forms and colours to create a pleasing picture. However, this ability would also be relevant to other creative activities, which shows that abilities cut across boundaries between events. Travellers will have to determine if they have the required abilities to support the occupational vehicle they decide on.

Part 3.4 School performance

In Stage One the class rank was used as an indication of overall potential. School performance (p 17) provides an indication of more specific areas of academic expertise, although in some school systems a low correlation is found between average school performance and performance at tertiary level. School results give an indication of the spread of subjects and the relative strength that students may take with them into further training. School results will also indicate whether a traveller has a matriculation exemption. It still is the minimum entrance qualification to universities in South Africa.

Part 3.5 Training level

The training level (pp 17–18) that the traveller aspires to will give an indication of how realistic the traveller's self-knowledge is, bearing in mind the performance level and abilities that he/she may take into the post-school period. Brief descriptions of the various training levels are given to enable the traveller to make a more informed choice.

Stage Four: CHECKING THE CLIMATIC AND ROAD CONDITIONS

Up to Stage Three the main focus of the activities was on gaining more self-knowledge. From Stage Four (p 19) the focus shifts to the external environment and a series of questions are posed about the nature of the wider world of work as well as the specific career that the traveller has identified.

The traveller is introduced to the wider world of work through the PEST Procedure. This comprises an analysis of Political, Economic, Social/cultural and Technological developments at international, national and regional levels. Basic guidance is given and a structure is provided according to which the analysis could be done. The outcome of this analysis will throw light on the conditions that travellers should be concerned about when they finally embark on their careers.

The second part of Stage Four involves an analysis of the opportunities and threats that may lie in store for the specific career. However, information gathered by means of the PEST Procedure can be used for the more specific analysis. The identified opportunities and threats are listed in a table and the strength of each item is indicated with a horizontal bar. Once the process has been completed, it should be easy to see which environmental influences ought to be considered further.

It is important to stress that these analyses should be done under the guidance of a qualified person because the information is often not readily available and should therefore be given to travellers.

Stage Five: RESEARCHING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OCCUPATIONAL VEHICLES

In Stage Five (pp 28–31) travellers are guided through the process of identifying the properties of specific occupations. Having finalised the career decision, travellers choose a number of occupations from the Guide to Occupations (Appendix A, p 36) which they then analyse in more detail. The occupations are evaluated in terms of the items listed in the Summary Sheet. The main aim of this stage is to determine to what degree the expressed preferences match the chosen occupations. Travellers are referred to appropriate sources from which occupation-specific information can be gleaned.

Stage Six: SELECTING AN APPROPRIATE OCCUPATIONAL VEHICLE

In Stage Six (pp 32–34) all the information acquired up to this stage is combined and a quantitative process is used to evaluate and rank order the occupations. The quantitative process has an advantage over other more subjective decision-making models: the traveller can clearly see how his/her preferences are encapsulated in the occupations selected for further analysis. The outcome of Stage Six can be further micro-analysed but generally it should provide an acceptable level of certainty about the occupations most suitable for the travellers.

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR COMPLETING *CAREER HIGHWAY*

Facilitator

Career Highway can be completed in a group or an individual setting. The facilitator who guides travellers through the process will need the following materials:

- A copy of *Career Highway*.
- A set of *Career Highway* transparencies.
Masters for the production of these transparencies appear in the Appendix.
Users can make their own transparencies from the masters.
- Water-based transparency markers.
- A set of reference books with occupational information.

Travellers

Travellers on the career highway will need the following materials:

- An unmarked copy of *Travelling the Career Highway*.
- Writing materials.

GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATORS

It has been mentioned that *Travelling the Career Highway* was written as a career education book with the aim of helping travellers become more career mature. Over time facilitators will find other particular uses for the book and such unique applications are encouraged. The book can be used in its entirety or in part. It is preferable that the first option be adhered to.

The book can be used in two ways. The first is in the one-on-one situation where a facilitator will guide a traveller through the book. The second is in a class or workshop situation where a facilitator will guide a group of people through the process. It is envisaged that the group situation will be used most often. There will be many areas of overlap between the two modes. In the discussion that follows, the group situation will be dealt with. It should be possible to complete the group process in three sessions lasting a total of 2,5 hours. It is preferable that breaks between sessions be given. If this is not possible, the process can be completed in one session with adequate breaks between sections.

SESSION ONE (± 45 minutes)

The facilitator should introduce the process by briefly explaining the rationale behind the use of the book and the expectations that travellers may have of it. A preamble like the following can be given:

You are at the stage where you should start thinking seriously about a career. Some of you will already have made a firm career decision. I can imagine that a group of you still do not have an idea what you would like to do after school. Over the next few periods we are going to work through the book *Travelling the Career Highway*. The book will be very helpful in improving your knowledge about the career decision-making process. After completing the activities you will have a good idea of the career and the occupations you should consider. This should be helpful for those of you who have already made up your minds because it will confirm your decision. For those of you who are still uncertain of the direction to take it will help to give you some firm guidelines.

Introduction

Introduce travellers by letting them read the Introduction on pp ix–xii to help them understand why careers, occupations and jobs are compared with a journey. Remind them to stop after they have completed the initial reading.

To test the travellers' level of insight into what has been read, the facilitator could ask the following questions:

- Do you think that the story of travelling along a career highway is appropriate to explain the process of making a choice of career and occupation?
- Do you think that very young children can be taught something about career planning? Explain your answer.
- Do you think that people are suited to follow only one career? One occupation? One job? Explain your answer.
- What is the icon that is used to indicate to you that you should read for information? That you should stop for instructions? That you should continue with an activity?

Stage One: Life experiences that may affect your career travels

In the first part of Stage One the facilitator will guide the travellers through the various questions. This should be done slowly to enable everyone to work at his/her own pace. It should also allow the travellers to ask questions if there are uncertainties. The facilitator should circulate through the venue to see if there are problems. Travellers are sometimes reluctant to put up their hands to ask for assistance. By circulating, the facilitator makes it easier for the travellers to ask questions.

Travellers read the Information section  on p 1. The facilitator urges them to understand that questions about their families' career backgrounds are important only to show to what career influences they have been exposed. Their answers will also help the facilitator to get to know them better, which will be helpful if they should want to speak to him/her individually later. After the travellers have read the information section, continue filling out questions 1 – 5 on p 2.

Show transparency 1. Fill out question 1 as an example.

Travellers are then referred to the Instruction section  which follows immediately after question 5. The facilitator can read through the section with the group. The group's attention is directed to the questions which are asked. Each traveller should answer the questions for himself/herself.

Travellers are then directed to the Information section  preceding question 6 as well as the question itself. The same procedure is followed with questions 7 and 8. Care should be taken to help travellers with question 8. There may be a tendency to overestimate performance, especially if no records of performance are available.

Show transparency 2. Demonstrate to the travellers how they should calculate or estimate their class position.

In the second part of Stage One the travellers are asked to make a projection into the future. They have to indicate how they would view themselves at specified times in the future. Direct travellers to the Information  and Instruction  sections on p 4. Allow them ample time to fill out the blanks that follow. Travellers may use more space than has been given. The responses to the three projections should give the facilitator a good indication of the future plans of the traveller and should indicate how realistic these plans are. The projections should also provide an indication of how motivated the traveller is. The clearer the projections are, the stronger the motivation would be to follow the plans through.

Stage Two: Selecting your career highway

Stage Two is very important in the career journey. It contains the identification of the career highway which a traveller will use and it provides the basis for the stages that follow.

The facilitator should point the travellers towards the Information section  on p 5 and continue to the Instruction section  on the same page. This section has to be demonstrated to the group. The point that needs to be emphasised is that the Career Highway Summary Sheet should be detached from the book and placed in front of the traveller. Show the travellers how they should fill out the items of their choice in the shaded part of the Answer Sheet. Travellers often misinterpret this instruction. Make sure that they understand what to do. Also indicate to the travellers that they have an example of a completed Summary Sheet on p 57 which they can consult should they be unsure. Emphasise that they should always ask for help.

Show transparency 3, which is a copy of the Summary Sheet.

Refer travellers to the Information section  on p 5 and allow them time to read it through on their own. Continue with the Instruction section  on p 17 to ensure that they understand what they have to do. This applies in particular to the example which precedes the beginning of the activity.

Show transparency 4, which is a full-page copy of the Interest Survey.

Allow the travellers ample time to complete the evaluation of the statements on pp 6–9. Be available for any questions that should arise as a result of the travellers' misunderstanding of the statements. When they have completed the evaluation of all the items, they should be shown how to add the scores in the columns and to transfer these totals to the table on p 10.

Show transparency 4 again and demonstrate how to add up the columns.

Show transparency 5. Demonstrate how to fill out the Summary Table.

The instructions that follow on p 10, where the travellers are informed about how they should go about determining their career code(s), are very important. It is preferable that the group be shown how to conclude the procedure by using an example. The example may be the one shown on p 57 or it may be chosen at random from the group. While the travellers are completing this step, the facilitator should move through the venue to answer any questions that may be directed to him/her. Be particularly aware that a traveller may have three or more fields with exactly the same score. This is a very rare occurrence, but be prepared for it.

Show transparency 5 and use an example to demonstrate how the career code is calculated. Fill it out on transparency 3.

Continue to part 2.2 (p 10) and let the group read the Instruction section  on their own. Make sure that they know what to do and where on the Summary Sheet they have to fill out the information. This is a fairly simple activity, which should pose few problems.

Show transparency 6 which is a copy of the Career Categories. Explain how to make a choice and how to fill out the Summary Sheet.

The first session could end with this activity. Indicate to the travellers that they have completed the first stage of the journey and have identified the highway that they will travel. The next session will be spent identifying the characteristics of the vehicle in which they will travel and the climatic and road conditions which affect the highway on which they will travel.

SESSION TWO (± 45 minutes)

Stage Three: What do I expect from my occupational vehicle?

Start the session by referring to the previous one. Indicate what travellers can expect to learn from the activities.

Career values

Let the travellers read the Information sections  on p 13. Then read the Instructions  (p13) preceding the choice of values. Make sure that the travellers rank order the values as they fill them out on the Summary Sheet. Also ensure that the Summary Sheet is correctly filled out.

Show transparency 7, which is a section from the values assessment. Indicate the decision process and how the values should be rank ordered.

Before starting with the next activity, indicate to the travellers that the next four activities will deal with various aspects of their previous experience. Indicate the importance of experience in choosing an occupational vehicle.

Subject preference

Let the travellers read the Instruction section  on p 15 (part 3.2). The broad subject areas will indicate the subjects – with their accompanying terminology and basic facts – which the traveller has been exposed to previously.

After demonstrating the choice of career values, it should not be necessary to demonstrate how the Subject Section and the Abilities Section have to be completed.

Abilities

Read the Information section  on p 15 (part 3.3) and impress on the travellers that their abilities will reflect the nature of their social and educational environment. They will reflect the type of experience the travellers have been exposed to. Abilities may not correspond with interests. For example, although the traveller may be good at working with figures, it may not be something that he/she would like to do on a continuous basis. Travellers should rank order the abilities they have chosen. They may have specific questions about the abilities. The facilitator should be at hand to answer these questions.

School performance

In Stage One it was mentioned that class rank may be a more reliable indicator of future performance than the actual percentage travellers have achieved. This is a safer option in the current situation of unequal standards in schooling. Yet the actual curriculum that students have been exposed to, their percentages for individual subjects and information on whether they are following or have followed a matriculation exemption curriculum, can provide important insights into the knowledge base that the travellers would bring to a tertiary training institution. In this respect, the information gathered in this section will differ from the class rank in Stage One, which will be more an indication of potential and motivation to succeed.

Allow travellers to read the Instruction section  on p 17. Be available to help travellers determine whether they have matriculation exemption or not. If there is doubt about this issue, a knowledgeable person should be consulted.

Show transparency 8 to demonstrate to travellers how they should fill out the table. Explain the grade levels, estimated performance and the issue of matriculation exemption. Become acquainted with the basic conditions for matriculation exemption.

Training level

The last activity in the assessment of experience is the training level (pp 17–18) that the travellers would like to attempt. Travellers who perform poorly at school, but see themselves as going to university and obtaining higher qualifications, may be completely out of touch with themselves and the environment. The training level should also provide clues to the traveller's level of motivation.

It is important that travellers should read the Instruction section  (p 17) thoroughly before continuing to choose the level of training that they wish to attempt. The facilitator should take time to explain the differences between the various training options. Travellers should clearly understand the differences between a university and a technikon, for example.

At the end of Stage Three, the facilitator should explain to the travellers that they have come to the end of the self-assessment part of the book. They have identified their career highway and have gathered information that will eventually help them to choose the most appropriate occupational vehicle in which to travel the highway. Their eventual choice will be influenced by conditions in the environment and in the job market. These are the issues that will be researched in the next two stages. Stage Four will deal with the process of finding more information on the factors that influence the career environment in general while Stage Five will deal with the process of finding information on specific occupations.

Stage Four: Checking the climatic and road conditions

Facilitators should become thoroughly acquainted with the background to the study of climatic and road conditions (pp 19–22). In *Travelling the Career Highway*, climatic or general weather conditions refer to changes in the environment that may influence the world of work. Road conditions refer to the effect the changes in the environment could have on the career area which a traveller may consider. This may be a difficult section for many travellers to understand, because they have seldom been exposed to an analysis of environmental changes at a global and national level. In spite of its unfamiliarity, knowledge of environmental changes is important because the career and occupational decisions will influence life over the long term. This is a section that should be dealt with thoroughly and slowly with ample use of examples and exercises that the travellers can work through to help them in their research. It also implies that the facilitator should be well acquainted with the general situation as far as the world of work is concerned.

We will emphasise some points which should be stressed and give some guidelines about how the process could be conducted. Facilitators, however, should not be inhibited from using their own creativity to make the information relevant for their travellers.

Changes in the environment at international, national and regional levels should be explained to the travellers. At the international level a facilitator could use a map of the world as a starting point. Ask travellers to indicate where they think the largest job market is at present. Let them give answers and ask them why they think so. Then the facilitator could point to the Pacific Ocean area and ask the travellers to identify some countries that make up the so-called Pacific Rim. The

travellers should then point out countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China and Malaysia. The next question is why these countries produce so many jobs. Again the travellers could provide answers which can be recorded by the facilitator. Note answers such as highly educated workers, workers familiar with technology, an ability and willingness to work long hours, the ability to produce goods cheaply and to provide them cheaply to the world markets, including South Africa, and the proliferation of small businesses that supply large firms. If these answers do not come up, the facilitator could provide them. The next question could prompt the travellers to consider how these international trends might impact on the job market in South Africa. The discussion could serve to show the relationships between international and national trends.

The facilitator could then switch their attention to the national situation. Show the position of South Africa on the map and also the region which most of the travellers come from. Ask the travellers to consider how the trends they have identified internationally could impact on the national situation. What, for example, would be the impact of cheap clothing imports on the textile industry in South Africa? The answer which should be elicited is that it will put local semi-skilled textile workers out of work. Continue to look for other ways in which the international situation can impact on the national one. If, because of their lack of exposure to this level of thinking, the travellers find it difficult to come up with any reasonable answers, help them by giving them leads and explaining the impact of the environmental changes. Remember that the aim is to demonstrate to the travellers how they should do their own analyses.

Introduce the travellers to the PEST Procedure as it is described on pp 20–21. Discuss the meaning of the different categories and the examples given on pp 20–21. When the facilitator is sure that all the travellers understand the process, they could be divided into small groups as suggested in the workbook. The group should be requested to fill out the tables on pp 22–24. Ample time should be allowed for completing the activity. After the groups have completed their work a plenary session should be held in which information can be pooled for the benefit of all.

Use transparency 9, which is the PEST table for the environmental analysis.

The next part of the environmental analysis is checking the road conditions as they would be affected by the weather. The first thing to do would be to confirm the

accuracy of the career path. The procedure for doing this is explained on pp 24–25. It is suggested that the steps should be followed carefully and that the facilitator should be present to answer any queries that the travellers may have. Help would probably be needed with the last step of the procedure. This is the confirmation of the choice of career highway through a comparison of career interests and career categories.

The next step would be the explanation of the concepts *opportunities* and *threats* in terms that the travellers can understand. Use the example on p 25 or 26 and explain why the identified opportunities and threats are seen as important. Use the example to draw conclusions which could strengthen the points that were raised.

Show transparency 10, which is the copy of the table on opportunities and threats which refers to the technical and engineering career.

Divide the large group into smaller groups again. Let them select one career identified by one of the members. Allow the small groups to analyse that career according to the process they have been exposed to. If time allows, the small group can help other members with their analyses. This would be a useful exercise which they can use later to refine their own thinking.

Depending on the time remaining, Session Two can be concluded. The very important Fifth Stage, which involves the gathering of information on which the choice of an occupation will be based, will follow in the next session.

SESSION THREE (± 45 minutes)

In this session the last two stages of the career journey are completed. They deal with the research to be done before choosing an occupation as well as the decision-making process itself.

Stage Five: Researching the characteristics of occupational vehicles

Allow travellers to read the Information section on p 28 and then proceed to the

Instruction section , which is the introduction to an important activity. It is suggested that the process described on pp 28–29 should be dealt with step by step to ensure that the travellers understand thoroughly what they have to do. The facilitator should circulate through the group while they are answering questions and help individuals who seem to have a problem.

Use transparency 3 again to show how the process of identifying occupations should be concluded.

The next section deals with the research process, where the travellers will have to gather information about the occupations they have targeted for further investigation. The two major sources of information will be personal interviews, either by letter, telephone or in person, and literature about occupations. It is suggested that both these forms of research be discussed and demonstrated to the travellers.

Asking people for information may be regarded as a difficult task and for that reason travellers may shy away from this very useful source of data. The first thing to do is to decide which questions to ask. If the traveller should go to an interview unprepared, or if the questions in a letter are vague, the outcome may be less than satisfactory. As part of the process of preparing travellers for personal contacts, they may be given the instruction to compile a list of questions they would want to have answered. A good starting point would be the information they have put together about themselves, that is the information that appears on the Summary Sheet. They will have to evaluate occupations against this information in Stage Six and it should be helpful for them to focus their enquiries on the self-knowledge they have gained. Each participant should draw up a list of questions and some of the participants may be asked to share their questions with the rest of the class just to check that they have the correct idea.

Once they have completed the lists, a number of role plays and other exercises may be done to give the participants exposure to what it would be like in real life. A personal interview and a telephone conversation can be acted out with the

facilitator taking the role of the person in the job and the traveller being himself/herself looking for the correct information. In this case, the role play can be a group project to be evaluated by the facilitator.

Where travellers have to read up about a number of occupations, it would be useful if the facilitator had copies of career information books for the travellers to be introduced to or to use under supervision. Ideally the books should be available for the travellers to consult, but if that is not possible, the facilitator should do some research beforehand to determine where in the vicinity the information can be obtained. This could be a local library or a careers centre. If time allows, a research project can be given in which the travellers are given a week to gather information about the occupations that they have chosen. At the end of the week they can report back to the facilitator, who can then check whether they have gathered adequate information.

This last information-gathering phase is an important one and it should not be rushed. Career maturity depends heavily on having adequate information on which to base the crucial decisions which follow.

Stage Six: Selecting an appropriate occupational vehicle

This is the stage (p 32) which concludes the whole process. In this stage travellers will make decisions about the actual occupations to consider and this demands considerable insight from them. The quality of their decisions depends heavily on the quality of their research. If the preceding steps have been concluded properly, they will be satisfied with the outcome. If not, the facilitator can expect some dissatisfaction.

Start with the instructions  on pp 32–34. Follow the steps carefully and make sure that all the participants understand what they have to do. It is preferable that the facilitator should demonstrate to the travellers how they should fill out the Summary Form.

**Use transparency 3 and complete the filling-out process.
Demonstrate clearly how the rating of each of the relationships
should be done.**

Stress that the values the travellers attach to the relationships between self-analysis data and the characteristics of the occupations are subjective, but that they should use the information they have gathered in the research process. If they have any problems, they should consult the facilitator. He/she must expect many questions and should be prepared for them.

AFTERCARE

It is important that the facilitator should create an opportunity for individuals to consult him/her in private if they should want to discuss their findings in more detail. It should also provide the facilitator with an opportunity to check the accuracy of the weights that the travellers have given the relationships. The facilitator should also check through other background information to ensure that the decisions are realistic. Personal interviews should be scheduled as soon as possible after the completion of the rating process.

The actual outcome of the process may be a surprise to the travellers. Occupations may be indicated which they have not considered before and these may be a surprise or even present them with unacceptable options. This is an important reason for providing an opportunity for personal and private discussion.

Personal interview

During the personal interview the facilitator should first go over the Summary Sheet with the traveller. This should be done carefully and further clarification could be sought. For example, the chosen values could be clarified by asking the traveller to give practical examples of how he/she has experienced the abilities in real life.

If the facilitator is happy that the Summary Sheet has been correctly filled in, the values that were attached to relationships between personal characteristics and occupations should be checked. If there is a distinct difference between the evaluations of the facilitator and the traveller, the discrepancy should be cleared up and consensus should be sought. Once the final check has been completed, the column totals on the Summary Sheet can be recalculated if necessary.

If the traveller is still not satisfied with the outcome, the facilitator will have to look at the characteristics of occupations and the occupational directions that

the traveller is considering. This situation will arise mostly with travellers who are considering a change, either in career or in occupation. Travellers who are still at school should not have this problem.

With increasing experience the facilitator will be able to identify occupational characteristics which were not apparent from the outset. Users who are already working often do not have the freedom to consider the range of options available to school-leavers. They are locked into positions where they have to make the best of a given situation. The *Travelling the Career Highway* can help them to understand their current occupational situation better and to make small changes which will establish a more acceptable work environment.

A CASE DISCUSSION

Background

The traveller was a 17-year-old male matric pupil. He completed the *Career Highway Logbook* during the second term of his matric year. The data provided by the traveller were as follows:

STAGE ONE

His family background indicated that his mother was a computer programmer/analyst. He came from a single-parent family and nothing was reported about his father's work orientation.

His hobbies involved various sports codes. He had some work experience working over weekends selling tickets at the motorway and filling a casual position at Edgars in the men's clothing department. This job he enjoyed.

He rated himself in the 50 per cent group of the upper half of his class. His projected occupational future indicated that he would start out as a 'rookie' gaining hands-on experience. He saw himself working in an artistic field in a business environment. In ten years' time he saw himself as poised to make a breakthrough. He would have started making name for himself, although he would still be involved in a hands-on position. In fifteen years' time he would have made his breakthrough. He would be 'wearing a suit' and 'giving orders'.

This assessment of the occupational progress shows good insight into the normal stages of occupational growth. It indicated a large measure of realism, which augured well for occupational practice.

STAGE TWO

The career code which was the result of the identification of the career and occupational interests is reported on the Summary Sheet on p 28 of this guide. The Summary Table had indicated the following outcomes:

Concrete	11
Scientific	7
Artistic	19
Social	6
Commerce	17
Clerical	9

An analysis of the actual rating of the items – that is, looking at how the statements were interpreted – showed that the statements which attracted ratings of 3 had to do with managing his own business, building bridges or buildings, using wood and other materials to produce art works, doing photography, etc. An analysis like this often provides useful additional qualitative information, which can throw further light on the traveller's preferences.

The choice of career categories is reported on the Summary Sheet. It concurs with the career code (which appears on the Summary Sheet).

STAGE THREE

Stage Three consists of a number of important self-evaluatory activities. The actual choices made by the traveller are reported on the Summary Sheet.

The career values indicated two areas, namely being in a creative environment (creativity and variety) and receiving recognition (achieving and prestige). The values provided important information about the motivators or drivers in the traveller's life. They indicated that the practical work environment should be unstructured, free and provide the opportunity for individual input. The reward for the traveller's input should be high and commensurate with the effort expended.

The subject preferences confirmed the leanings towards art, but also brought out another element, namely computer science. An interesting possibility of combining art and the use of the computer was raised.

The self-assessment of abilities again showed two groups, namely creative (creative and visual-spatial) and social (social and teaching). Social ability indicated that the traveller would probably be frustrated if he were to be in a work environment where direct and frequent contact with people was limited. The typical work situation of the artist, that is, working for long stretches at a time on his/her own, is hereby questioned as a possibility in this case.

His school subjects and performance were as follows:

English HG	60%
Afrikaans HG	70%
Mathematics HG	45%
Science HG	50%
Computer Science HG	50%
Art HG	70%

The subject choices and results show that his preferences lie in communication areas and in art. They concur with the assessment of abilities, which strengthens the validity of this assessment.

Lastly, the training level that the traveller would like to attempt was set at university level. Although there was no evidence that he would not be able to cope, this eventual decision would be dependent on the chosen occupation and the commensurate training course. More comment about this issue will be made later.

STAGE FOUR

Stage Four is generally a difficult one to travel, because most travellers take little note of issues that have to be addressed here. It is also a stage that preferably has to be travelled under the guidance of a facilitator who is well prepared and knowledgeable about the issues that need to be addressed.

The traveller in this case discussion did this section on his own. In the category on political factors that might influence the world of work he indicated that the 'New South Africa' had opened a number of new career avenues, but that work was generally harder to find. He indicated that the regional situation (Gauteng) was subject to an influx of people, which made the competition for jobs much greater.

In the economic arena he indicated that the international situation was well organised. Nationally the opportunity had been created for new businesses to start up and become established but they have to contend with fierce competition. On regional level the physical business environment was unpleasant because of the decay of the infrastructure and the unsafe environment (referring to Johannesburg).

In the sociocultural arena the international situation was characterised by a low crime rate, technological advances, tolerance and maturity. Nationally South Africa was still becoming established as a country and crime was a big problem.

On the technological front the rapid advances in technology were mirrored nationally and regionally, particularly in the computer industry. This created many opportunities for those travellers with marketable computer skills.

The next step in Stage Four was to check the road conditions for the broad career area chosen. This area was indicated as a combination of art/design and management. The opportunities in this area were that, with the improving economy, room had been created for businesses to be established. This opportunity was rated at 60 per cent. A good knowledge of computers would also be useful: the need for such knowledge was judged to be about 50 per cent. A threat was that competition was stiff because of the many new businesses springing up. The occurrence of competition was rated at about 80 per cent, and this constituted a distinct negative aspect.

The overall assessment was that the traveller had a good insight into the environmental conditions that affected the work situation. He was well aware of the stiff competition that awaited him and that success would be slow in coming. Insight into the environmental conditions concurred with the future projections in Stage One, which had indicated that his goals were realistic and attainable.

STAGE FIVE

Stage Five is not included in this case discussion. If *Travelling the Career Highway* is used in a class situation, travellers would be provided with the reference material which they can consult under the guidance of the facilitator.

STAGE SIX

The concluding stage is the one where the input of the facilitator is very important. The case discussion illustrated the pitfalls very well and the example should be studied.

The Summary Sheet (p 28 below) is an exact replica of the one submitted by the traveller. The shaded column on the left was correctly filled in, as was the career code line. The process followed by our traveller in choosing his/her occupations deviated from the instructions. Advertising management appeared in the artistic-commerce group but graphic design and architecture did not. Graphic design appeared in the career code rated second, namely artistic-concrete. Architecture, however, was in the artistic-scientific group, which did not seem a viable option because the scientific interest was low.

Caution should be exercised in the interpretation of the results of the activities. Nobody is suited to only one occupation. Occupations are also diverse in nature and they may contain elements shared by a number of other occupations. This is exactly why a thorough study of the occupations (Stage Five) and the environment (Stage Four) should precede the quantitative evaluation.

The ratings of the traveller are given on the Summary Sheet. The author's ratings are reported in brackets. This clearly shows why it is important for adequate aftercare to be provided. Some of the ratings differed, particularly for management, prestige and social contact in the job situation. When the ratings were altered, the ranking of the occupations also changed. The ratings indicated that advertising management was the one occupation that met the requirements of the traveller to the fullest degree. There were still some gaps, for example with regard to teaching and computer science, but these were negligible. Overall the occupation fitted very well compared to the others that were rated.

INTERVIEW

The traveller was engaged in an interview during which the data in the Summary Sheet was discussed. His own preference prior to working through the *Career Highway Logbook* was to do graphic design. He saw himself only as an artist. When it was pointed out that advertising management involved a close working relationship with the artists, but that it also brought his interest in business and dealing with people into the equation, he was able to see the career development in perspective. It also tied in well with his career projections over a fifteen-year timespan.

It was suggested that he should consider a graphic art course, preferably at a technikon, to be followed by establishing himself in the advertising industry. He

should then get to know the industry and could consider studying business, particularly account management and marketing. This should prepare him for the position he would want to fill eventually.

The response of the traveller was that the process of working through the logbook had helped him to see his career development in perspective and to make an informed decision. He was unaware of advertising management as an eventual career option and was excited about the possibilities that it offered.

CAREER HIGHWAY SUMMARY SHEET

CAREER CODE									
Code 1:	Artistic-commerce								
Code 2:									
OCCUPATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY	A Advertising management	B Graphic design	C Architecture	D	E	F	G	H	I
CAREER CATEGORY									
1 Art and design	2 (2)	3 (3)	2 (3)						
2 management	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (2)						
CAREER VALUES									
3 Creativity	2 (3)	3 (3)	3 (3)						
4 Achievement	3 (3)	3 (3)	3 (3)						
5 Variety	2 (3)	2 (3)	2 (3)						
6 Prestige	3 (3)	1 (1)	2 (3)						
SUBJECT PREFERENCE									
7 Art	2 (3)	3 (3)	2 (3)						
8 Computer Science	1 (2)	3 (2)	2 (2)						
ABILITIES									
9 Creative	2 (3)	3 (3)	3 (3)						
10 Visual-spatial	3 (3)	3 (3)	3 (3)						
11 Social	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)						
12 Teaching	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)						
TRAINING LEVEL									
UNIVERSITY	3 (3)	3 (3)	3 (3)						
TECHNIKON									
TECHNICAL COLLEGE									
IN-SERVICE									
TRAINING COLLEGE									
COLUMN TOTALS	21 (35)	21 (29)	21 (32)						
RANK ORDER	2 (1)	1 (3)	3 (2)						

APPENDIX

TRANSPARENCY 1

Career background of your family

Fill out the blanks below. If you need more space, you may write between the lines. **This is your logbook.** The time and effort that you put in now will be to your advantage and you can always refer back to the information later.

1 What is/was your father's highest academic qualification?

2 What type of work does/did your father do?

3 What is/was your mother's highest academic qualification?

4 What type of work does/did your mother do?

5 What type of work do(es)/did your brother(s) and/or sister(s) do? Specify in each case

TRANSPARENCY 2

Your average class rank during your last three years at school

Bottom 50%					Top 50%				
Bottom 10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	50%	40%	30%	20%	Top 10%

Career Highway Summary Sheet

[illegible]

TRANSPARENCY 4

Your occupational interests

Use the scale below to evaluate each statement:

- 3 = strong interest
- 2 = average interest
- 1 = weak interest
- 0 = no interest

Fill in a number (indicating the strength of your interest) in the shaded block.
(At the end of each page you have to add the scores in each column.)

Statement		A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Play a musical instrument in an orchestra.						
2	Pilot an aeroplane or drive a bus.						
3	Install, service or repair computers.						
4	Study the behaviour of people.						
5	Do interior decorating of houses or offices.						
6	Manage your own business.						
Add the scores in the columns							

TRANSPARENCY 5

The final totals for your occupational interests

Columns	A	B	C	D	E	F
Fields of Interest	CONCRETE	SCIENTIFIC	ARTISTIC	SOCIAL	COMMERCE	CLERICAL
Page 6						
Page 7						
Page 8						
Page 9						
Total						

TRANSPARENCY 6

The career categories

Column A	Column B
Art and design careers	Fashion designer, Graphic artist, Interior designer, Stage designer, Architect
Biological science careers	Agriculturist, Biochemist, Botanist, Entomologist, Food scientist, Forester, Marine biologist, Medical physicist, Microbiologist, Nature conservationist, Physiologist, Zoologist
Clerical and secretarial careers	Receptionist, Secretary
Communication careers	Diplomat, Journalist, Librarian, Public relations officer, Radio announcer, Television presenter
Computational /quantitative careers	Mathematician, Statistician, Accountant
Computer careers	Computer programmer, Systems analyst
Economic careers	Economist, Stockbroker
Educational careers	Lecturer, School counsellor, Teacher
Law enforcement and security careers	Defence Force member, Policeman, Prison warder
Law careers	Advocate, Attorney, Magistrate, Public prosecutor
Managerial careers	Marketing manager, Production manager, Purchasing manager, Personnel manager
Medical and related careers	Dietician, Medical doctor, Nurse, Occupational therapist, Optometrist, Pharmacist, Physiotherapist, Radiographer, Veterinary surgeon, Dentist
Performing arts careers	Actor/actress, TV presenter
Physical science careers	Archaeologist, Astronomer, Chemist, Explosives expert, Geologist, Geophysicist, Hydrologist, Meteorologist, Mineralogist, Nuclear scientist, Oceanographer, Physicist
Quantitative careers	Accountant, Actuary, Cost and management accountant, Mathematician, Operational researcher, Statistician
Social science careers	Ethnologist, Geographer, Home economist, Minister, Psychologist, Social worker, Sociologist
Sports careers	Professional sportsperson, Coach, Sports promotor
Technical and engineering careers	Engineers (e g mechanical, civil, electronic), Technicians, Building and Construction careers

TRANSPARENCY 7

Your most important career values

Column A	Column B
Achievement	To receive recognition for the work you or others have done; recognition creates opportunities for advancement.
Acquaintance	To be acquainted with the people and the type of work you will do; to feel comfortable in the work environment.
Adventure	To do exciting things which will have unpredictable results.
Aesthetic satisfaction	To work with; to design and to produce beautiful articles.
Competence	To have a high level of competence in the tasks you have to perform.
Creativity	To design something; to develop new ideas; to think of new ways to perform a task; not to follow a fixed pattern.
Income	To have a high income; money is more important than the work itself.
Independence	To be independent; to plan your own work schedule without supervision.
Intellectual satisfaction	To be intellectually stimulated and to have challenges which stretch your abilities.
Leadership/management	To plan and organise the work of others; to supervise the work of others.
Pleasant work climate	To have good relations with fellow workers; to feel at home in the organisation.
Power/dominance	To be in control of an organisation; others must follow your wishes.
Predictable work pattern	To work predictable hours; to do routine work.
Prestige	To be known; to be recognised; to fill a high status position in an organisation.
Security	To know that one's job is secure; that one will always have work.
Social service	To help others; to be concerned about their welfare.
Supervisor relationship	To have a good relationship with your supervisors and to be treated fairly by them.
Variety	To be able to perform different tasks.
Work conditions	The work conditions are more important than the work content, for example it is important to work out of doors or in a pleasant room/venue.

TRANSPARENCY 8

Your previous learning performance

In the table below, you write

- the school subjects you have done or which you are doing.
- the grade levels (HG or SG) at which you have taken them or are taking them
- your performance in percentages or symbols, estimated to the nearest 5%.

Subjects		Grade levels	Performance
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
Matriculation exemption		Yes	No

TRANSPARENCY 9

Expected climatic conditions on your career highway

Political factors

International:	
National:	
Regional:	

Economic factors

International:	
National:	
Regional:	

etc.

TRANSPARENCY 10

Diagram showing opportunities and threats in a technical and engineering career

Opportunities	Threats
Strength =	Strength =
Companies are making fixed investments 	World Bank withholds money for development projects
Current shortage of engineers 	Training opportunities are limited and dependent on knowledge of maths and science
Engineers can create jobs 	
Export markets good for manufactured goods 	
Economy can only be revived through manufacturing 	

CAREER HIGHWAY SUMMARY SHEET



CAREER CODE

Code 1:

Code 2:

OCCUPATIONS FOR
FURTHER
STUDY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I

CAREER CATEGORY

1									
2									

CAREER VALUES

3									
4									
5									
6									

SUBJECT PREFERENCE

7									
8									

ABILITIES

9									
10									
11									
12									

TRAINING LEVEL

UNIVERSITY									
TECHNIKON									
TECHNICAL COLLEGE									
IN-SERVICE									
TRAINING COLLEGE									
COLUMN TOTALS									
RANK ORDER									

