What lifestyle factors should I consider when thinking about different career options?

**Work, Family, and Lifestyle**

**Summary**

Students learn about different theories (models) of work, family and lifestyles. Working groups, formed around each of the three models, research and defend their model. Class discussions focus on how individual perspectives on the roles of work and family affect lifestyles, thus learning that careers influence lifestyles.

**Objectives**

Students will:
1. Learn about three theories (models) that explain different perspectives on the dynamics of work, family, and lifestyle.
2. Explain which one of the three models fits their values and identify why.
3. Distinguish the positive and negative impacts of their model of choice.
4. Report how their occupational goals compliment or conflict with their future life role and why.

**Preparation**

Become familiar with the different work theories (models). Review *Theories on Work, Families and Lifestyles* instructional note.

Optional: Make a sign for each of the models to post around the room.

Photocopy *Personal Life Values and Life Roles* worksheet.

Make overheads of *Perspectives on Work* and *Models of Work, Family and Lifestyle Dynamics*.

**Materials**

- *Perspectives on Work* overhead
- *Theories of Work, Family and Lifestyle Dynamics* overhead
- *Personal Life Values* worksheet—one per student
- *Life Roles* worksheet—one per student
- Colored pens or pencils

**Computer Use**

CIS: Occupations

**Subject Area**

Debate, English, Guidance, Health, Social Studies

**Time Required**

Three class periods; additional outside class time may be needed for research and preparation

**Group Size**

Individuals and six small groups

**Steps**

**Day One**

1. Introduce the concept of family/work dynamics. Explain to students that studies have found that work and family issues often impact each other and can sometimes conflict (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Personal, family, and lifestyle values, should be considered when weighing
career options, as they will likely influence each other. Some issues to consider when choosing a career path are flexibility of hours, benefits that may help ease the stress of work/family obligations, and the degree to which the work is demanding of time and effort. Encourage students to think seriously about what values are important to them such as family life, leisure time, or career advancement opportunities. Values should then be used to match against potential career options to see if they are a good fit. Research shows that people who enjoy what they do for a living and feel a good balance between work and quality of life are more content (Greenhaus & Beutell 1985, as cited in Zedeck, & Mosier, 1990).

2. Project the Perspectives on Work overhead. Instruct students to write down the perspective with which they most identify with and why. Then ask that they write down the perspective with which they least identify and why.

3. Discuss the important factors that led each student to identify with a particular perspective as well as the differences and similarities between the various perspectives.

4. Project the overhead, Theories of Work, Family and Lifestyle. Discuss each theory in more detail. Explain to students that several career researchers have identified these theories (which parallel the perspectives in the first overhead) to describe work, family, and lifestyle dynamics. These models should be used to consider how one views the relationships between their life roles. Have students again think about which model they most relate to and write it down.

5. Assign three locations in the room, one for each model or use signs. Ask students to gather around the perspective that they agree with most. (Students may agree with more than one; they are to select the statement with which they most agree.) Once students have formed groups around their model, divide the groups in half forming one group to argue the pro side and one group to argue the con side of the model. Explain these will be the groups in which they will be working to research, and defend their perspective.

6. Each group will prepare to present their point of view for five minutes with a maximum of three minutes for rebuttal. In order to have a successful rebuttal, both sides will need to understand the other side’s view. Note: Debate experience is helpful but not required.

7. Ask members in each of the groups to conduct research using CIS’ Occupations Information, CIS for Internet, or other library resources to support their model. (Helpful CIS information in Occupations and Job Search). Groups must take notes of findings and prepare to defend their model in a presentation the next day. Distribute CIS for Internet username and password to students so they may use this resource at home to prepare. Have groups keep in mind the reasons why their work model was most important to them, and what consequences the other models may have on work, family, and lifestyles.

**DAY TWO**

8. Groups present and debate their models. Class discusses how individual perspectives on the roles of work and family affect lifestyle. Remind students that lifestyle preferences should be considered when considering career directions. Occupations influence lifestyles. Thus, careers decisions should be influenced by lifestyle values.

**DAY THREE**

9. Distribute the Personal Life Values and Life Roles worksheets; have students complete the Personal Life Values sheet first. Encourage students to be as honest as possible as the information is confidential and only they will see it. This worksheet is intended to open thinking and reflection on one’s self.

continued
10. Students will need two separate colors of pens/pencils for the Life Roles worksheet. Instruct students to use one color for time (percentage) they currently spend in each of the life roles listed on the sheet. When finished students are to use a different color for how they would like their life roles time (percentage) to be in five years. Instruct students to create a key somewhere on their sheet to indicate which each color means.

11. Reiterate to students that the occupation they choose may have a big effect on their life roles; thus, it is an important point to consider when weighing career options. Have students pick an occupation of interest and research the occupation to compare how it matches with their values and future wants. Have students write a brief report on whether or not their occupation(s) of choice complimented or conflicted with their future life roles and why. Also ask students to discuss one thing that they discovered about themselves during the lesson.

**VARIATION**

Instead of continuing the lesson for a third day assign the last day’s activities as homework. Have students use Internet CIS at home to research their occupations. Students will bring the completed worksheets back to class to be included into their portfolios.

**ALLIED ACTIVITIES**

Getting What I Want
Career Self-Portrait
Designing Me

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

Students will:
1. Identify with a model and help prepare a presentation to defend their assigned model.
2. Complete the Personal Life Values worksheet
3. Complete the Life Roles worksheet
4. Compose a short report discussing how their occupation(s) of choice compliments or conflicts with their future life roles and why.

**STUDENT WORKSHEETS**

Personal Life Values worksheet
Life Roles worksheet

**OVERHEADS**

Perspectives on Work overhead
Models of Work, Family, and Lifestyle Dynamics overhead

**PORTFOLIO**

Personal Life Values and Life Roles worksheets and report could be included in portfolio. However, inclusion needs to honor confidentiality.

**INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES**

Work, Family, and Lifestyles
CREDITS AND CITATIONS

SORTING

Subject/Program Area: English, Guidance, Health Education, Social Studies, Technology
Grade Level: 11, 12
CIS Component: Occupations, Job Search

STANDARDS

CRLS: Personal Management, Problem Solving, Communication, Teamwork, Career Development
SCANS: Information, Interpersonal, Systems
NCDG: Positive self-concept, Skills to interact positively with others, Decision-making skills, Understanding inter-relationships of life roles
ASCA: Career Development, Personal and Social Development

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Bloom’s Taxonomy: Application
Theories of Work, Family, and Lifestyle Dynamics

**SPILOVER THEORY:**

There is a similarity between what occurs in the work environment and what occurs in the family environment. The level at which someone is satisfied at work relates to overall life satisfaction as work attitudes bleed over into the family norms. This theory emphasizes that often a person’s career sets the standards for all other parts of their life.

**COMPENSATION THEORY:**

Work and family roles are inversely related. Positive events at home compensate for disappointments at work and vice versa. The combination of the two is required for balance.

**SEGMENTATION THEORY:**

Work and home roles exist side by side without influencing one another. Family is where intimacy and significant relationships exist, work is more impersonal and competitive.
Perspectives on Work

1. Work satisfaction and dissatisfaction are related to life satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

2. Events at home compensate for disappointments at work and vice versa.

3. Work and home roles are clearly defined and compartmentalized. What happens at one is separate from the other.
NAME ____________________________

Personal Life Values

My favorite pastime is _______________________________.

I spend __________________% of my time doing this activity.

If I had more time I would like to _____________________________.

Currently I spend _______________________ amount of time with my family and friends.

I feel this is adequate time to spend with my family/friends. Yes/No

Work gives me a sense of _____________________________.

I would rather work alone. Yes/No

It is important that I be able to use my skills in my chosen career. Yes/No

The most important thing to me in my personal life is _____________________.

The most important thing to me in my professional life is _____________________.

If I could change one thing in my life it would be _____________________________.

My biggest challenge is _____________________________.

My biggest strength is _____________________________.

NAME ____________________________