



# KEEP THE DREAM

THE EDUCATIONAL GUIDE TO YOUR  
BRIGHT FUTURE

STACKED PUBLICATIONS

The purpose of this Educational guide is to provide you with the contact details of Institutions of (Tertiary) Higher Education and organisations that offer ongoing skills training, mentoring, financial aid, job opportunities and support in the Western and Eastern Cape – with important information and advice on how to manage the process.

You are guided through simple self-assessment tests to help you to get to know yourself; your strengths and your weaknesses, so that you can choose a course of study that will be right for you – One that you can enjoy and be good at.

A chapter has been dedicated to the social issues many young people face – with information on how to manage your personal issues to ensure that they don't negatively affect your education.

You control your future, your destiny.

Your attitude shapes your reality.

By recording your dreams and goals on paper,  
You will set in motion the process of becoming  
the person you want to be.

Put your future in good hands.... Your own.

Adapted from Mark Victor Hansen

Now take the first small step  
To becoming the person you are meant to be...

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## SOUND ADVICE FOR GRADE 12 STUDENTS FACING THE LAST HURDLES.

Dear Grade 12 students

After 12 years of schooling, this is it. Both teachers and parents must have told you that you make or break your future depending on how well you do in this final test of your knowledge and ability before you leave school forever. I wanted to give you some advice as you approach this final hurdle in your school life.

**1,** do not panic, for one simple reason - it will not help you. Stay calm. Panicking unnecessarily will only make the situation worse. You will forget things you know and you might freeze in the examination room. Do not take pills to stay calm. Some pills are downright dangerous, and not all bodies respond to medication in the same way. Use the normal remedies, like a long jog the night before the exam, or listen to the kind of music that calms you whenever you feel a bit of stress coming on.

**2,** It is not true that your life is over-dependent on how you fare in the final Grade 12 examinations. You have many options. You can rewrite one or other subject at a future date; this is not the end.

Since when does a single examination determine your worth and potential as a human being? That is simply nonsense. Of course you want to do well, and if you studied hard and consistently over the past few months, you certainly have nothing to fear. But you are worth much, much more than the results on a mathematics or English or history test. Remember that. Keep perspective.

**3,** this is the time to hang out with calm and positive people. Do not spend time in the last six weeks with negative students who left everything to the last minute. They will cause you to panic. Hang out with positive students who are steady and competent learners, and who can help you master those difficult sections of a subject you struggle with. This is where study groups can be really helpful to you, but do not choose groups where the eating breaks are longer than the study periods.

**4,** whatever you do, try not to outguess the examiners. It is common for students to try and predict what might be in the final exam and then leave out large chunks of study material. "This was in last year so it will not be in again this year." Big mistake.

Study everything or there is a good chance you will show up in the exam venue and see there are questions worth 12 or 20 marks that you have to ignore because you did not cover those sections in your studies. Do not take such chances.

**5,** especially in these final days, find a place to study that is calm and quiet, and where nobody can disturb you. I realise not all of you have options in this regard, but remember the next few weeks are crucial in terms of your future, so even if you must move in with your cousin or friend, do it if this allows you to break away from a constantly rowdy family set-up or a nagging parent.

**6,** use every minute between now and October 28 productively. You will have friends, in school and out of school, who come to drag you away to a party or lure you to unproductive activities. You know what I mean. This is the time to focus and do nothing else but plan every single minute in such a way that you can concentrate on covering the study plan for every subject. Make sure you have a daily study routine, and nothing should cause you to deviate from that plan.

**7,** Every now and again, as part of your study routine, plan something that gives you a genuine break of mind from the intensity of study. Go watch a comedy at the movies or a soccer game (anything else would be disastrous) just to get your mind off things. As soon as this is done, go right back to your work location to resume studies. You will be amazed how refreshing it can be to take a break for a couple of hours and do something completely unrelated to your studies. Other than that, good luck, enjoy the final examinations and believe in yourself.

# CHAPTER 1

## WHERE DO I START?

You may be one of the fortunate few who already knows what motivates you and where you are heading. But, if you are like most teenagers going into Grade 11 or 12, you probably have no idea what you want to do for the rest of your life and only a vague idea about which study choices would suit you, or what employment opportunities are out there.

Your idea of a 'perfect career' will not be the same as the next person and so it is important not to try to fit into what everyone else may be doing. You are unique, with your own strengths and weaknesses and it is YOUR journey - only you can make it happen. So make informed choices that will ultimately lead you to a career that you will enjoy; that will make you happy; that will enable you to earn a living and allow you to contribute to the world by being the best that you can be.

Now is the time to ask yourself some honest questions, about who you are and what makes you tick. There are no right or wrong answers – just fair, honest responses that will lead you to a realistic result.

**SELF ASSESSMENTS** – These are sets of questions designed to help you discover your strengths, preferences, talents and skills. By knowing these things about yourself and by recognising not only what you are good at but also what you are not good at, you will be able to know which career will suit you best. Try this:

1. Observe yourself over a period and take a look at what interests you.
2. Ask people who know you well for their advice and for their impression of what you are good at.
3. Think of all the work tasks and responsibilities you have had up to now and write down a list of at least 10 skills that you have acquired as a result of these experiences.
4. Note those skills you learnt with ease e.g: Are you good at working out how things work – and fixing things around the house? Are you interested in cooking? Are you a good listener? Are you naturally tidy? Do you always think before you speak? And so on.....
5. Now take note of those skills you really love doing, it could be a sport, or drawing, or organising a family function, reading books or chatting to friends. These are just examples - - the possibilities are endless. Ask those closest to you what they have seen you doing when you are at your happiest. Keep the lists accessible for a few weeks to allow you to add to them.

**Here are some key questions. Use them as inspiration to help you fill up your lists:**

- What skills or talents do you already have to offer – that you enjoy doing? There will be some things that you are already quite good at – growing vegetables, baking, or drawing? (You may already be considering turning some of these skills into a career!)
- What are your strong points – qualities you have even without learning, eg - How are your skills of communication? Do you speak well? Or do you prefer to listen.... Or to write your thoughts down...rather than to speak?
- And what about your interpersonal abilities; leadership / management skills? Are you aware of what is happening around you, or do you tend to focus on specific actions and activities? (Is your world big or small?)
- Do you have multicultural sensitivity and awareness?
- Are you good at caring for others? Do you have empathy? Do you work from the heart?

- Where do your interests lie? Do you like words - (languages, stories, journalism, pictures - or pictures, visual, graphics (creative, art, clothing, buildings, photographs), or numbers (maths, accountancy, commerce)?
- Are you flexible/ adaptable / can you manage multiple priorities?
- Are you good at planning/ organising; problem solving/ reasoning?
- Do you like working with your hands? Are you creative or technically minded? Would you like to work with computers? Do you like to find out how things work?
- Do you enjoy logic? Do you love to analyse things?
- Do you enjoy research?
- What are the values that are important to you? (Values are influenced by family, school and religion). Values can be respect, honesty, reliability, integrity; or tolerance (e.g. of those less talented or less fortunate than you, or people of different culture or lifestyles).
- Do you like to work in a team or do you prefer to work independantly?
- What careers naturally interest you? Have you had some thoughts already? This may be easier to answer once you have done some research on what careers are out there. (see pg 158)

It is easier to discover your career if you have an obvious skill like playing the piano or if you are good at a particular sport, but sometimes your specific skills are not immediately obvious. If the tests confuse you, you can always contact a college or university of your choice (or the one closest to you, for help, or you can go to a private career guidance counsellors for an in-depth assessments and they will work through things with you. If there is no-one close by, they may even be prepared to help you via email.

(See pg 15 for private Career Guidance counsellors; and websites offering more self-assessments )



Here is a simple Self Assessment quiz: -

## BASIC SELF ASSESSMENT QUIZ

(The sample answers that have been added here in light grey, are those given by 'Vusi' in the case studies below the quiz).

On a separate piece of paper, list YOUR OWN preferences and thoughts.

1. Favourite and least favourite subjects:

.....  
 Geography, English, Xhosa; least favourite: Maths

2. Interests / hobbies / extra mural activities:

.....  
 Interested in Drama and also part of the debating team. I grow vegetables and sell some to the local shop. I like people and listening to music. I am interested in the environment.

3. How would I describe myself?

.....  
 I am determined, hard-working, caring, outgoing, funny, and easy-going. I am friendly, enjoy meeting new people and finding out about them.

4. Values. What are the most important things in my life?

.....  
 I want to be able to help my mother to support our family. Helping people is important to me. It would be nice to make money but I do not need to be rich, just to have enough. I want to help to uplift my village. There is a lot of poverty and unemployment here.

5. Goals (Set short term as well as long term goals.)

.....  
 My goal is to study further. I would like to go to university, but I am not sure that I qualify. My goal is to pass matric with a bachelor's pass.

6. My thoughts about the future:

.....  
 I would like to help people and being a doctor would be a good way to help people (although I am worried that my matric subjects may not be the correct ones?) It is a long way to the clinic in the nearby town. I am worried about finances as my family has very little money for daily expenses and we cannot afford the fees to study.



## UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project during 2013. Its Rapid Research team of Cameron Cyster, Jessica Hacking and Sinazo Azola Qhina compiled information for the sections on scarce skills, tertiary institutions and funding opportunities for this booklet.

The full book is available through Keep the Dream and will become available electronically and as smart phone app during 2015.