Career Decision-Making Style

As you begin to explore the world of work and decide on a career path, it's important to gain an understanding regarding your style of decision-making. When making decisions, do you tend to spend a lot of time exhausting all of the pros and cons, or are you closer to the other end of the spectrum - just going with what feels right or what your gut instinct is telling you? Learn about the various career decision-making styles below and identify the style or styles that you tend to utilize when making decisions.

The Procrastinating Decision Makers
The Procrastinating Decision Makers have a tough time making up their mind. The pressure of making a difficult decision gives them a sense of paralysis that leads to indecision. You'll hear the Procrastinating Decision Maker saying things like, "I'll deal with it later," or, "I just can't decide." Many students procrastinate their decision on a major or career direction because of the amount of time it takes to explore all the options. Other students put off a decision due to their lack of exposure to career options. How can you choose if you don't know what's out there?

The Intuitive Decision Makers
The Intuitive Decision Makers go with their gut or instinct when making decisions. You'll tend to hear these decision makers saying things like, "I made that decision because it felt like the right thing to do," or, "I just followed my heart in making this decision." Job seekers tend to use this style after being influenced by some external force, such as television, family, and friends. They see their cousin do well in accounting, so they feel like accounting would be good for them. There's not much thought put into the decision for the Intuitive Decision Maker.

The Dependent Decision Makers
The Dependent Decision Makers rely or depend heavily on the opinions of others. You'll hear the Dependent Decision Makers asking, “What do YOU think I should do?,” or, “What would you do if you were me?” Many students fall into this category, due again to the overwhelming feeling of trying to pick that one perfect career or major out of the hundreds of prospects. Students will rely on anyone and everyone to help them make this all-important decision.
The Educated Decision Makers
The Educated Decision Makers identify all their options, research options of interest, ask numerous questions, and systematically engage in a process of elimination until that perfect option is found. These decision makers will say things like, “I need to explore more options before I'm able to make a decision,” or, “I have gone over all the pros and cons and compared them to my other options.” The Educated Career Decision Makers will engage in a thorough self-assessment process, read about all of the career options of interest, seek advice from career counselors and professionals in the workforce, and observe professionals at work (work shadowing). They will keep logs of what they've learned, and constantly analyze their options.

The Recommended Career Decision-Making Style: The Combination Style
The recommended career decision-making style is a combination of the above styles with the exception of the procrastinating method. You should primarily use the Educated Decision Making style, but along the way, rely on career counselors, professionals in careers of interest, and other people you respect to offer advice, guidance and feedback (Dependent Decision Making). Then, once you have thoroughly completed the self-assessment and career exploration processes, incorporate the Intuitive Decision-Making style to let your feelings and intuition in on the decision. Your intuition is always a pretty accurate gauge, but it's even more accurate after you have all the factors laid out on the table.