The past is not the future in the world of work in the United States. Dramatic social changes have and will continue to affect the U.S. job market. Manufacturing jobs are less abundant. Over 75 percent of U.S. jobs are now in the service sector. A greater percentage of women are participating in the workforce. Two career families are becoming the norm. The population in the coastal zone is expected to double by the 21st century. All of these mega trends will affect the world of work and may influence your career choice. These trends will also influence the type of marine related careers that will be available.

There are thousands of different careers to select from in the United States. Choosing one is a difficult and important decision. By knowing something about yourself and the career opportunities available, you can select the career that is right for you.

A variety of people are needed to work at all levels in the marine and aquatic environment. Today more than two million people, ranging from unskilled workers to specialists with advanced degrees, are employed in marine-related work. But changing times mean that only a fraction of these actually work on the water—in shipyards, docks, vessels and research boats. There is a growing demand for business and public administrators, economists and lawyers qualified to work in the marine field. Some universities offer courses in general marine affairs, designed to provide background in marine and freshwater-related careers.

**KNOW YOURSELF**

What is important to you?
What are your interests and abilities?
What are your strengths and weaknesses?
What are your goals in life?
What do you want to be and what do you want to be doing in five years? in ten years?

**KNOW THE WORLD OF WORK**

What careers are available?
What does an oceanographer, marine geologist or coastal engineer do?
What are the benefits and demands of a marine-related career?
What is the current demand for the career you are considering?
What is the potential future demand?
What training or education do you need for a specific career?

**REFERENCES**

Listed below are some references that will help you learn about the world of work, the world of water and marine-related careers. Your public library may contain these and additional references on careers.


*Careers in Oceanography. V.T. Neal. 1986. College of Oceanography, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331.*


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