

POST-SECONDARY STUDENT FOCUS GROUP  
LAMAR UNIVERSITY, BEAUMONT  
JANUARY 23, 2002, 1:30 - 3:30

**SUMMARY**

**PURPOSE OF THE FOCUS GROUP**

How do students make career decisions in high school? What was helpful in making a career decision and what would improve the career-counseling program in high school? How useful is the counseling process at Lamar Orange and what can be done to improve it?

**FOCUS TOPICS**

- How did you make your career decision -- who exerted the most influence?
- How effective were people and tools in helping you make a career decision?
- How would you improve the career decision-making process in high school?
- What do you consider the most important elements of Lamar's counseling process?
- How would you improve the Lamar counseling process?
- Where would you go for help in finding a job?

**HOW DID YOU MAKE YOUR CAREER DECISION AND WHO EXERTED THE MOST INFLUENCE? HOW EFFECTIVE WERE PEOPLE AND TOOLS IN HELPING YOU MAKE A CAREER DECISION?**

- Only 5 of 12 participants made a career decision in high school
- Four of the 12 participants had not declared a major
- All twelve agreed that people not tools had the most influence on their career decision
- Family members had the most influence 5 of the participants
- Work-based learning activities influenced 5 of the participants
- Some mentioned a life-long interest as motivation for choosing a career
- Aptitude test were administered but results were not discussed
- Four had no career counseling from counselor. Most agreed that counselors dealt with college prep more that careers.
- Some mentioned teachers having an influence on their career decision.

### **HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THE CAREER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL?**

- All 12 agreed on the need for career guidance in high school
- Compulsory classes on careers with guest speaker from many fields
- Offer more career-related classes -- more business, professional or college level electives
- Guest speakers from a variety of occupations speak to academic classes
- Disregard aptitude tests
- More career-guidance counselors
- Counselors focus more on students who are not college-bound. For those who are college bound, focus more on financial aid for college.
- Standardize high school career counseling statewide
- Teachers offer career counseling integrated into curriculum
- The focus at high school should be on a solid core curriculum that will prepare students for success with an emphasis on developing the self-confidence of students
- Counselors need more knowledge of the real world
- Counselors should meet one-on-one with every student starting in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade

### **WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF LAMAR'S COUNSELING PROCESS?**

- At Lamar, advisory personnel are assigned to students by major when they are freshmen. However, these advisors generally just help students set up their class schedules but don't do career counseling.

### **HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE LAMAR'S COUNSELING PROCESS?**

- More advisors available for student counseling
- Students pick their advisors
- Students should be told why they have to take certain classes

### **WHERE WOULD YOU GO FOR HELP IN FINDING A JOB?**

- 4 out of 12 mentioned TWC while the rest chose the Lamar Job Center. Eight out of twelve knew about TXC but said that Lamar was more convenient.