

3.1

Using the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)*, published by the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, is a helpful resource that you should familiarize yourself with. Your task is to embark on an occupational scavenger hunt using the handbook as a guide. Use either the paper version found in your career center or the electronic version found on the Internet at www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm.



Step 1. Gain access to the *OOH*. Review the table of contents and become familiar with how the resource is organized.

Step 2. Label a sheet of paper with the title of the exercise—"Using the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*"—and date it. **You will put this exercise in your portfolio upon completion.**

Step 3. After briefly reviewing the *OOH*, select an occupation you wish to learn about. Enter the title of that occupation at the top of your paper (e.g., physical therapist, carpenter, cook).

Step 4. Answer the following questions about your selected occupation:

- A. Describe the nature of the work you would be doing.
- B. Describe the work environment and conditions. Are there any physical demands? If so, explain what they are.
- C. Describe the educational requirements. What is the necessary training? Will you need special training? A four-year degree?
- D. Describe the job outlook. Remember, this is only a prediction for the future based on past and present conditions. What do the trends look like at this time?
- E. Briefly include the salary, typical hours, and other benefits.

*follow-up questions*

1. Based on your research, does this occupation interest you? What aspects are most and least appealing at this time?

2. What other career areas might you research?

3. What are your reactions to using the *OOH* as a tool? How do you think it is most useful?

4. Briefly describe how this exercise helped you with your decision-making process.
