

What Trade is for me?

Hello

It's music to my ears to think another Lady is looking to follow her heart & consider getting into a trade. If you've not completely decided on a particular trade, are still considering your options or trying to work out 'what trade' may be good for you...this is one thing I tell all Ladies to do. Get yourself an exercise book or similar (or do it electronically on your computer/phone/tablet - this is about to be all about you!

Your first heading is something like: 'About me' or 'Personal Inventory' - then under that, I want you to list all your likes, dislikes, strengths & weaknesses (or obstacles)
You can do it like the example below, divide the page into 4 columns, 4 squares or just make a list?

Likes	Dislikes	Strengths	Weaknesses/Obstacles
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
List everything you can think of in each section			

or

Likes	Dislikes
*	*
*	*
*	*
*	*
Strengths	Weaknesses/Obstacles
*	*
*	*
*	*
*	*

Consider things like:

- Do you prefer being indoors or outside to work, (if you like outdoors, write it under 'likes' - if you don't, stick it under 'dislikes' etc
- How do you feel about heights, (like, dislike?)
- Are you fit &/or strong, etc - can you lift reasonably heavy objects,
- Do you have any allergies, (to things such as such dust, fumes etc) these may be weaknesses
- Are you artistic/do you enjoy art/graphics etc
- Do you have any current injuries,
- Do you have great attention to detail,
- and any more you can think of

Then there are other things to consider, such as; would you be ok crawling under a dark house that may be wet, have spiders, cobwebs, snakes etc, (I know that's a big No for me!) How do you

feel about roof cavities? Think about it...you will most likely have to go into these areas a plumber or an electrician.

Anything at all that you can come up with that sums up who you are, what you like, don't like, what you want & what you really don't want to do. Ask your parents, brothers, sisters, friends or even your school careers advisor for help if you need to (they often know you pretty well).

Then think about the trades that you are considering. On a separate page in the book for each trade, write a heading for each trade you may be considering on the top of each page. Then on that page for each one, (rule a line down the middle) & write down the pros & cons of those trades (as many as you can possibly think of). When you've done that, go through that list & for everything you cannot do, or do not like - cross it off/put a line through it. You'll soon see the trade that may be good for you! (the one with most things still on the list!!) :-)

Think about the reality of all trades; some may involve heavy lifting, working at heights, some may be very dusty jobs, some strenuous on the upper body, neck & shoulders & even on your back. If you can handle that, brilliant! - if you can't you may want to reconsider that one.

My biggest advice is **don't rush it**. Consider anything & everything in these first stages & take your time. It would even be really worthwhile for you to attend a 'try-a-trade' careers expo. This is a great opportunity to talk to the people in the industry, pick their brains, ask them what is involved & even try a little demo of what you may be doing. The same goes for simply contacting & chatting to any existing tradies you know, have the courage to go chat to them. Ask them questions about what their trade involves & even consider asking them if they'd take you on for work experience or if you can tag along with them for a few days just to observe without touching anything.

Don't just think of the more common trades like carpentry, plumbing, electrical, plastering, either. There are many trades that are not 'as' strenuous or dirty. Things like sign writing, painting (which includes wallpapering & maybe small amount of plastering) can also develop into things like murals if that interests you? Women usually have a great eye for colour & painting is also very linked to the latest fashion trends colour wise. It's like fashion for your home.

I hope I haven't bamboozled you with information, but they're questions you need to ask yourself before you go too far (if you haven't done this already). The biggest hurdle I find with women & girls wanting to get in to trades, is not really knowing themselves (their likes/capabilities), not knowing what the trade involves. They jump in too soon & may not like it once they start (because they picked the wrong one).

Remember – once you've secured or started your apprenticeship, it's harder to switch over & go through that application process all over again. Try to get it right now. Also, from an employers point of view, they are going to want to be convinced you know what you're getting in to & why you want this job, so this will also help you if you get an interview. At that job interview, there will be 20+ more people knowing exactly what's involved & really wanting it too, so you need to convince them you are their best person!

Good Luck, don't hesitate to contact me again & keep me informed of how you go.
My biggest aim is to help create new Lady Tradies!

cheers

Wendy

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