APhA CAREER PATHWAY EVALUATION PROGRAM®

for Pharmacy Professionals

BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Instructions: Please complete the exercises in this Briefing Document before attending the live workshop. The assignment should require less than an hour of your time, but it is critical to the success of the workshop. **Please be sure to bring this document with you.** Thank you.



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Introduction

The ongoing revolution in the delivery of health care creates unprecedented challenges for the profession of pharmacy. Today's pharmacists need to be technically competent as well as caring professionals capable of effectively monitoring and providing cognitive services for many therapeutic health parameters. The exciting part of all of this is that you, as a pharmacist, have great opportunities to develop and practice your skills for the benefit of the patient in more ways than ever before.

Individuals who carefully plan their career strategies will do well against tough competition in employment markets and will achieve greater personal and professional satisfaction with their career selections.

Many student pharmacists graduate with exposure to very few of the career options available to them. To make a sound career decision, you need knowledge about two important subjects: the pharmacy profession and you. After working through the exercises in this document and participating in the workshop of the *American Pharmacists Association (APhA)* Career Pathway Evaluation Program for Pharmacy Professionals, you will not only have detailed and useful information on many areas of pharmacy in which to practice, but also have a clearer understanding of how to choose a career path in pharmacy that is appropriate for you.

The Program

The APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program for Pharmacy Professionals was originally developed by Glaxo Inc. (currently GSK), a major U.S. pharmaceutical company, as part of its continuing commitment to health care education. In the year 2000, APhA acquired the program to enable continued access for the pharmacy profession. In 2007, APhA contracted with several research scientists to update the program's research. The program itself has a self-directed portion and a portion conducted in a live, interactive format.

The program consists of three key components:

- Self-assessment exercises (two of which have been programmed to be interactive via the Internet at www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm).
- A workshop that focuses on a five-step decision-making process.
- Resources materials and follow-up counseling.

What's in It for You?

The purpose of the APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program is to provide you with a process and resources for making informed career decisions. The program provides information and guidelines you will need to carry out this process. It is not a "quick fix" that will enable you to reach a career decision by the end of the workshop nor is it a substitute for your own research. However, it can help you identify a pharmacy career option that is appropriate for you.

The Briefing Document Assignment

This Briefing Document contains some basic concepts and exercises that will prepare you for the workshop. The exercises should require less than an hour of your time, and will give you a good start on a decision-making process that should prove very helpful.

There are no right or wrong answers to these exercises. If you are planning to participate in a live workshop, please bring this document with you. The rating and ranking of critical factors in Exercises 5 and 6 also can be done online at www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm.

If you chose to do these exercises online, please print out your results and bring them with you to the workshop.

Decision-Making Model

The basic decision-making model outlined on the following page provides the framework for the *APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program*. The model shows what steps are needed to be a *vigilant* decision maker. The vigilant decision maker is alert, thorough, open, and persistent in looking at and evaluating different possibilities.

Please study the model and the explanatory paragraphs about the model on the following pages:

The Vigilant Decision-Making Process

Step I. Appraising the Challenge

- Determine the importance of informed decision making.
- Acknowledge the consequences of making a "passive decision."

Step II. Assessing Yourself

• Conduct a thorough self-analysis; assess your goals, values, strengths, skills, interests, and preferences.

Step III. Surveying Alternatives

• Explore a wide range of alternatives.

Step IV. Evaluating Alternatives

- Search for new information.
- Take account of new information, even if it does not support the course of action you initially preferred.
- Match your self-assessment with career options.
- Consider both positive and negative consequences of all alternatives.

Step V. Achieving Commitment

• Decide the best course of action, including a contingency plan in case your first choice doesn't work out.

The Vigilant Decision-Making Process

Step I. Appraising the Challenge

Your first step is to recognize the importance of taking an active role in making career decisions, rather than just assuming things will work out. You also should recognize the difficulty of thoughtful career decision making, including the amount of time needed to do it well. Problems occur when you underestimate the demands of the task or postpone tackling it out of reluctance to look at the issues involved.

Step II. Assessing Yourself

Good career decisions require an unusual degree of self-knowledge. For many people, self-examination is the hardest part of the decision-making task. But you must understand what your goals, values, strengths, interests, and abilities are if you are going to make the career decision that is right for you.

Step III. Surveying Alternatives

Because there are a lot of career paths to choose from, you may be tempted to rule out options right from the start. You may feel you don't have the time, energy, or resources to review them all, or you may feel you already know what you want to do. But you might overlook an exciting possibility if you aren't sufficiently active and open at this step.

Step IV. Evaluating Alternatives

In many ways, this is the heart of the matter: matching your preferences and priorities to the options attractive to you. The challenge is to remain open and objective even when what you discover about a given career—or about yourself—runs counter to your expectations. This part of the decision-making process requires an ongoing effort—you may well have revisit steps II and III.

Step V. Achieving Commitment

After all the relevant factors have been identified, explored, and weighed, you must reach a conclusion. Part of the challenge of this stage is that you must use both intuitive as well as analytic thought.

Exercise 1: What Led You to Pharmacy?

In the space below, indicate your professional and/or personal goals, interests, and other factors that led you to the profession of pharmacy.

Goals: (what the profession of pharmacy will enable you to accomplish—personally and profession	nally)
Interests: (what personally attracted you to the profession of pharmacy)	
Other Factors: (any other factors that led you to the profession of pharmacy)	

Exercise 2: What Are Your Career Options?

Use the Career Options Chart on pages BD-8 and BD-9 to orient your thinking about career options for you. The chart is designed to depict the major categories and environments with a reasonable level of detail.

Where the same career option exists in more than one environment (e.g., pediatrics), it is repeated on the chart. In other instances, where an option more typically pertains to one environment (e.g., nuclear pharmacy), it has been listed in the area where it is usually found.

Instructions: When you have reviewed the Career Options Chart, list the options in one of the following three columns on page BD-10:

Understand—Career options you know enough about to either consider or reject as possible career options for you. Consider how much of the daily routine you actually know.

Aware—Career options you may be aware of superficially, but know too little about to reject or consider as career options.

New Options—Career options that have been introduced to you on the chart.

CAREER OPTIONS FOR PHARMACY PROFESSIONALS

ACADEMIA

Administration Pharmaceutics
Biological Sciences Pharmacognosy
Clinical* Pharmacology

Continuing Education Pharmacy Administration

Experiential Education Pharmacy Practice

Medicinal Chemistry

Traditional careers in academia include schools of pharmacy, medicine, dentistry, allied or public health

COMMUNITY

Chain
Clinical*
Independent
Clinical*

Franchise Franchise Home Health Care Home Health Care

Long-Term Care
Corporate Management

Medical Group Affiliate
Office-Based Practice

Group/HMO
Clinical*

CONSULTING
Clinical*
Long-Term Care

Home Health Care Medicaid Pharmacy Consultant

Managed Care

Hospice Hospital Clinical*

INDUSTRY

Administration

Continuing Education Medicinal Chemistry

Continuing Education

Professional Relations

Project Management

Pharmacognosy
Pharmacology

Business Pharmacology
Management Pharmacy Administration

Marketing Pharmacy Practice
Sales Technical/Scientific

Sales Technical/Scientific

Research and Development Drug Information

Administration

Basic Research

Manufacturing

Medical Science Liaison (RMS/MSL)

Biological Sciences Postmarketing Surveillance
Clinical* Product Control Quality

Clinical Research Regulatory Affairs

Institution

Hospital (Government, University, or Community)

Administration Clinical*

Distribution and Control

Nuclear

Outpatient/Ambulatory

Long-Term Care Medical/Dental

REGULATORY

Federal

Bureau of Prisons

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services (CMS)

Clinical*

Department of Defense (Armed

Services)

Department of Health and Human

Services

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Drug Enforcement Administration Food and Drug Administration

Health Resources and Services

Administration

Indian Health Service

Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Services Administration

U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Public Health Service

State

Board of Pharmacy

Clinical*

Department of Consumer Affairs

Department of Health

Medicaid Services

OTHER

Computer Technology

Accreditation Surveyors (ACPE, JCAHO)

Legal Mail Order

Pharmacy Associations

Specialty Pharmacy

Third-Party Insurance/Pharmacy

Benefits Management Professional Publications

U.S. Pharmacopeia

Veterinary

Wholesale Services

*Clinical includes the following:

Adult Medicine
Ambulatory
Critical Care
Drug Information
Emergency Room
Geriatrics
Immunization Services
Infectious Diseases

Internal Medicine

Intravenous Drug Therapy Medical Oncology Nutrition Pain Management Pediatrics Pharmacokinetics Poison Control Psychiatric

<u>Understand</u>	<u>Aware</u>	New Options			
-					

Exercise 3: Status of Your Decision

What steps have you taken toward choosing a career option within the pharmacy profession or in changing your career path? Perhaps you have spent time and effort investigating different kinds of opportunities. Or maybe you have not begun to look into different options, or have only some vague hunches.

Instructions: In the spaces below, answer each of the following questions.
What steps have you taken so far in investigating possible career options?
What pharmacy career options do you think are most likely for you? (Note: You may wish to refer to the list of options on the Career Options Chart on pages BD-8 & BD-9.)

Exercise 4: Decision-Making Style

A significant aspect of self-knowledge is to recognize that each of us tends to use a particular decision-making style: analytical (thinker), emotional (feeler), or action oriented (doer). It will be helpful for you to become more aware of your own decision-making style and the possible effects of different styles.

Thinkers are primarily analytical. They use an objective approach to decision making and run the risks of ignoring their feelings and over-analyzing an issue rather than acting.

Feelers primarily rely on their emotions in making decisions. They use a more subjective approach to decision making and run the risk of ignoring the importance of rational evidence.

Doers are driven by the need to act. While they are not encumbered with over-analyzing a decision, they may ignore both considered analysis and emotional input in order to take action swiftly.

Instructions: Think of an important personal decision you have made (e.g., what pharmacy school to attend, where to live while attending school, your first job) and remind yourself of *how* you reached this decision. Write a brief description of the way you went about making this decision—not its outcome. Decide if thinking, feeling, doing, or a combination guided you in your decision.

You might want to discuss your answer with someone who knows you well. See if he or she agrees with your assessment of yourself as primarily a thinker, feeler, or doer.

Exercise 4 (continued)

Exercise 5: Rating Critical Factors

The following items describe important aspects of the work of pharmacy professionals. These "critical factors" provide insight into your career decision. Your rating of these critical factors will help you assess your goals, values, strengths, likes, and dislikes.

Instructions: Highlight your rating on the continuum for each critical factor below, and/or go to www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm and click on "Online Assessment Tool" to complete this online.

These continua have been developed to help you assess your own preferences; however, they do not imply or suggest any judgment about you or your choices. Each pharmacist and student pharmacist is unique. It is quite normal to like certain aspects of a particular pharmacy area, as well as to dislike other aspects.

1. Interaction With Patients

How much time do you want to spend interacting with patients and other members of the public?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
None o	f my time	2						1	All of my time

2. Conducting Physical Assessments

How much time do you want to spend performing physical assessments?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
None	of my tim	e						A	All of my time

3. Interpreting Laboratory Values

How much time do you want to spend interpreting laboratory values?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
None	e of my time	e						Α	ll of my time

4. Continuity of Relationships

To what degree do you want to have ongoing or long-term relationships with patients or clients?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No on	ngoing/							Al	l relationships are
long-te	erm relatio	onships						Of	ngoing/long-term

5. Helping People

Would you prefer that your work directly or indirectly add to the well-being of individuals?



How n	6. Collaboration With Other Professionals How much time do you want your work to involve working with health care professionals other than pharmacists?											
1 None of	2 my time	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 All o	10 of my time			
7. Educating Other Professionals To what extent do you want your work to involve educating other professionals?												
1 None of	2 my time	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 All c	10 of my time			
To wha	8. Variety of Daily Activities To what degree do you want your work composed of activities and tasks that are variable versus repetitive day to day?											
1 Highly re	2 epetitive	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Hiş	10 ghly variable			
		ask Har o work		ask or a	ectivity a	t a time	or sev	reral at o	nce?			
1 Always o	2 ne activity	3 at a time	4	5	6	7	8	9 Always sevei	10 ral tasks at a time			
What to Specific	10. Problem Solving What types of problems do you prefer being requested to solve in your work? Specific problems with largely "tried and true" solutions or more theoretical ones that require exploring untested alternatives?											
1 Always tr	2 ried and tro	3 ae	4	5	6	7	8	9 Always untes	10 sted alternatives			
In your	r work a		macist,						fined area of nacy-related			
1 Generally	2 defined a	_	4	5	6	7	8	9 Sharply	10 y defined area			

To what de ideas pertai						rk to inv	volve g	enerating new				
1 2 Never involvinnovative thin		4	5	6	7	8		10 Always involves anovative thinking				
13. Applying Scientific Knowledge To what extent do you want your work to demand the application of scientific knowledge?												
1 2 None of my time	3 me	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time				
14. Applyi To what ex knowledge	tent do yo		_		lemand	the app	lication	of medical				
1 2 None of my time	3 me	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time				
15. Creating How much knowledge.	time do y		•		_			eate new				
1 2 None of my time	3 me	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time				
16. Manag How much managing,	of your a	ctivity v	would y		er be dir	ected to	oward o	organizing,				
1 2 Prefer no manactivities involved	_	4	5	6	7	8		10 fer a great deal of time toward business activities				
17. Manag How much managing,	of your a	ctivity v	would y	ou prefe		rected to	oward o	organizing,				
1 2 Prefer no man	_	4	5	6	7	8		10 fer a great deal of time toward business activities				

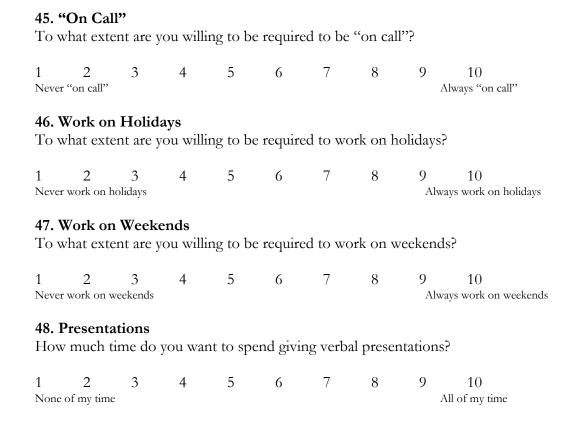
12. Innovative Thinking

18. Pres How m	uch pre	essure (c	_		-	kly inter	preting	medic	al/technical
1 Prefer env with no 1		3	4	5	6	7	8		10 For high-pressure environment
19. Wor What ty			edule d	o you p	refer?				
1 Can accep and/or lo		3	4	5	6	7	8		10 refer regular, dictable hours
20. Par How m					for work	ting par	t-time h	ours?	
	2 ortunity fo employme		4	5	6	7	8		10 ny opportunities t-time employment
21. Job How m					for job-s	sharing o	of hours	35	
1 No oppor job-sha		3	4	5	6	7	8		10 y opportunities r job-sharing
22. Exi How m			-		for exit/	re-entry	into th	e worl	xforce?
1 No oppor exit/re-e		3	4	5	6	7	8		10 ny opportunities r exit/re-entry
23. Par How m					for pare	ntal leav	re?		
1 No oppor parenta		3	4	5	6	7	8		10 y opportunities parental leave
24. Leis To wha activitie	t extent			our wor	k to allo	ow free t	ime for	family	//leisure
1 No free tin	2 me	3	4	5	6	7	8		10 ample opportunity for free time

25. Job Securi How much sec where you stan and income)?	urity an							
1 2 No security/stability	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Total secu	10 arity/stability
26. Opportuni How much oppoffer?					you wan	t your c	areer sit	uation to
1 2 Can accept limited of for advancen		4 ies	5	6	7	8 W		10 advancement ctunities
27. Opportuni How much opposituation to off	portunit		_	_		o you v	vant you	r career
1 2 Can accept limited led		4	5	6	7	8		10 ny leadership nt opportunities
28. Community How importanthe community	t to you	is the d	_	-	ge accord	led to y	ou as a p	oharmacist by
1 2 Much less respect anyone else in the co		4	5	6	7	8		10 spected standing e community
29. Professional Involvement How important is it that your work provides the opportunity for professional involvement at meetings and other events in the pharmacy profession?								
1 2 Require no opportu- professional involv		4	5	6	7	8		10 opportunity for nal involvement
30. Income How importan work you do?	t is inco	me to y	ou (ince	ome tha	t you fee	el comp	ensates y	you for the
1 2 Compensation level important but w comfortable life	ant a	4	5	6	7	8		10 vel compensation for performed is very important

31. Benefits (vacation, health, retirement) How important is the employee benefit package offered by your career choice?									
1 Benefits	2 aren't very	3 y important	4 t	5	6	7	8	9 10 Benefits are v) very important
32. Geographic Location How important is the ability to practice anywhere in the country versus being limited to one geographic area?									
1 Limited	2 to one loca	3 ation	4	5	6	7	8	9 10 Can practice	
33. Autonomy How much autonomy in decision making and working independently do you want in your career choice?									
1 No auto	2 onomy at al	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10 Total au) ntonomy
34. Self-Worth To what extent do you want your career choice to create self-worth through creating personal value and positive outcomes in your work?									
1 Not nee	2 eded	3	4	5	6	7		9 10 Have strong nee) ed for self-worth
35. Future Focus To what extent do you want your career choice to allow you to be focused on the future versus a focus only on immediate tasks?									
1 Focus o	2 n immedia	3 te task	4	5	6	7	8	9 10 Focus o) on future
36. Professional Prestige To what extent do you want your career choice to provide you with the opportunity to become well known and/or prestigious in the pharmacy profession?									
1 Not pro	2 ovided for	3	4	5	6	7	8 de		ng desire for essional prestige
37. Unique Practice Environment To what extent do you want your career choice to be in a unique practice environment (not very common)?									
1 Not at a	2 all unique	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10 Have stron unique pr	ng desire for

			t your c	areer ch	oice to	require	a grad	uate-level degree
1 2 Advanced de	3 egree not requi	4 ired	5	6	7	8	9 Ad	10 vanced degree required
	epreneuria extent do y ities?		-		oice to l	have en	trepre	neurial
	3 rial opportuni needed	4 ties	5	6	7	8	9 en	10 Have strong need for trepreneurial opportunities
	tional Tra extent do y	_	t your c	areer ch	oice to	require	contin	uing educational
1 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not required								estrong need for continuing educational training
		you wa	nt to sp	end inte	J	with co-	-worke	ers and/or
None of my		·	J	Ü	,	Ü		All of my time
42. Trave How muc	el ch time do	you wa	nt to sp	end trav	eling?			
1 2 None of my	3 time	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time
43. Writin	ng ch time do	you wa	nt to sp	end writ	ing for	work?		
1 2 None of my	3 time	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time
	ing With '		nt to sp	end wor	king wi	th team	s?	
1 2 None of my	3 time	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 All of my time



Exercise 6: Weighting the Critical Factors

Review each of the critical factors and ask yourself how important each will be in making your career decision (i.e., how much weight each item will carry). For example, though you may prefer a flexible **work schedule**, this may carry less weight in your overall decision than your preference for **opportunity for advancement**.

Instructions:

- 1. For each critical factor in the following list, assign a priority weighting based on a scale of 0 to 5 (0 = not at all important; 5 = extremely important).
- 2. When you are finished, highlight the five critical factors that are most important to you in your career decision.

Note: If you are completing this exercise online, the program also will collect this information.

Please remember to bring this document with you to the workshop.

Priority Weighting	Critical Factors
	Interaction With Patients
	Conducting Physical Assessments
	Interpreting Laboratory Values
	Continuity of Relationships
	Helping People
	Collaboration With Other Professionals
	Educating Other Professionals
	Variety of Daily Activities
	Multiple Task Handling
	Problem Solving
	Focus on Expertise
	Innovative Thinking
	Applying Scientific Knowledge
	Applying Medical Knowledge
	Creating New Knowledge by Conducting Research
	Management/Supervision of Others
	Management/Supervision of a Business
	Pressure/Stress
	Work Schedule
	Part-Time Opportunities
	Job-Sharing Opportunities
	Exit/Re-entry Opportunities
	Parental Leave Opportunities
	Leisure/Family Time
	Job Security
	Opportunities for Advancement
	Opportunities for Leadership Development
	Community Prestige
	Professional Involvement
	Income
	Benefits (vacation, health, retirement)
	Geographic Location
	Autonomy
	Self-Worth
	Future Focus
	Professional Prestige
	Unique Practice Environment
	Advanced Degree
	Entrepreneurial Opportunity
	Additional Training
	Interaction With Colleagues
	Travel
	Writing
	Working With Teams
	"On Call"
	Work on Holidays
	Work on Weekends
	Presentations

Notes