

How career dreams are born

A new study shows just what it takes to convince a person that she is qualified to achieve the career of her dreams. Researchers found that it's not enough to tell people they have the skills or the grades to make their goal a reality. Instead, many people need a more vivid and detailed description of just how pursuing their dream career will help make them successful.



This is especially important for people who have the skills and potential to pursue a particular career, but lack the self-confidence, said Patrick Carroll, author of the study and assistant professor of psychology at Ohio State Lima.

"Students who have chronic self-doubt may need an extra boost to pursue the dreams they are certainly able to achieve," Carroll said. "This study finds that what they really need is a vivid picture of what will happen if they succeed."

Carroll said he sees the relevance of this research nearly every day, as students seek his input about career plans or the possibility of graduate school. "Sometimes students have the grades, the motivation and the ability but simply lack the necessary self-confidence to whole-heartedly invest in the pursuit of a realistic new goal," he said. "This work shows how parents, teachers and counselors can steer students into the right direction to achieve their dreams."

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