

**APhA CAREER  
PATHWAY  
EVALUATION  
PROGRAM<sup>®</sup>**

*for Pharmacy Professionals*

**WORKSHOP WORKBOOK**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



**American Pharmacists Association<sup>®</sup>**  
Improving medication use. Advancing patient care.

**APhA**

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6th Edition

## Introduction

Welcome to the *APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program for Pharmacy Professionals*. The workshop you are attending will provide you with information on a five-step decision-making process designed to help you make better informed career decisions.

The exercises introduced in the workshop along with materials compiled in the Follow-Up Materials section of this guide will aid you in choosing among career options.

Three different numerical scales are used in the program to facilitate calculations in the exercises. These calculated results are designed to make your preferences more visible, but should **never be interpreted as a final decision**. (Portions of this program also may be completed on the Internet at [www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm](http://www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm).)

Your facilitator will provide more detailed information as you work through the exercises in the workshop.

We trust that the workshop will be valuable for you and that it will facilitate your career option decision.

**What Is the *APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program*  
for *Pharmacy Professionals*?**

It is:	It is not:
A decision-making process	A decision
A source of useful information	A substitute for your own research
An aid in choosing a career option	A shortcut to career satisfaction
A self-directed process	Comprehensive career counseling
An interactive workshop	A lecture course
A thorough, ongoing effort	A quick fix

## **Steps in 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 the positive and negative consequences of all alternatives.

### **Step V. Achieving Commitment**

- Decide on 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

### Program Activities

- Appraising the Challenge Exercise
- Overview of Program Goals and Format
- Presentation of Decision-Making Model
- Summary for Appraising the Challenge

## Appraising the Challenge Exercise

Turn to Exercises 1 and 3 on pages BD-6 and BD-11, respectively, in your Briefing Document. In Exercise 1, you described the goals, ideas, and interests that led you to choose a career in pharmacy. In Exercise 3, you described the steps you have taken toward choosing a career option within the pharmacy profession.

*Activity:* Pair off with your neighbor and take turns discussing your answers to these questions. Specifically, share with your partner:

- What led you to pharmacy?
- What major decisions will you have to make while you are in pharmacy school (or in practice)?
- How are you going to make these decisions?

Be an empathic listener by asking questions for clarification rather than interrupting to make your own points. When one of you has finished sharing his or her thoughts, reverse roles and have the other continue the conversation.

## Summary for Appraising the Challenge

- Determine the advantages of becoming proactive and systematic about the decision-making process.
- Assume responsibility for the decision.
  - ✓ Avoid being influenced by the biases of well-meaning family members, peers, and advisors.
  - ✓ Avoid postponing the decision out of reluctance to face the issues involved.
- Avoid adhering to an initial, unexamined choice.
- Determine the approximate amount of time needed to carry out the process and integrate it into your schedule.



# **The Vigilant Decision-Making Process**

## **Step II. Assessing Yourself**

### **Program Activities**

- Introduction to Self-Assessment
- Self-Assessment Exercise
- Introduction to Critical Factors
- Summary for Assessing Yourself

## Self-Assessment Exercise

Turn to Exercises 4 and 6 on pages BD-12 and BD-21, respectively, in your Briefing Document. In Exercise 4, you indicated your primary decision-making style (thinker, feeler, or doer). In Exercise 6, you indicated the relative importance of a number of critical factors that will enter into your career decision.

*Activity:* Pair off with your neighbor and take turns discussing your answers to the following questions. Specifically, share with your partner:

- Your decision-making style—thinker, feeler, doer—with an example of a major decision you have made in the past.
- The five critical factors you feel are most important to you—and why.

As in the first exercise, be an empathic listener: ask questions for clarification, rather than interrupting to make your own points. When one of you has finished sharing his or her thoughts, reverse roles and have the other continue the conversation.

## 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”
- Working on Holidays
- Working on Weekends
- Presentations

## Summary for Assessing Yourself

- Conduct a thorough self-assessment.
- Use both subjective and objective knowledge to assess your goals, values, strengths, skills, interests, and preferences.
- Honestly evaluate the critical factors that are important to you.

# **The Vigilant Decision-Making Process**

## **Step III. Surveying Alternatives**

### **Program Activities**

- Career Options for Pharmacists
- Career Options Profile Exercise
- Summary for Surveying Alternatives

## Career Option Profile Exercise

*Activity:* Take about 10 minutes to review the sample career option profile on the following pages, comparing the data with your rating and weighting of the critical factors in Exercises 5 and 6 of the Briefing Document, pages BD-14–BD-22 (or the print-out results from the online assessment found at [www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm](http://www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm)).

After reviewing the sample profile, please complete the exercise on the page following the profile in this Workshop Workbook section.

The following career option profile on **Academia: Pharmaceutical Sciences** was compiled from research sponsored by APhA in 2007. Other career profiles can be accessed on the Internet at the APhA Career Center at [www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm](http://www.pharmacist.com/careers.cfm).

## **Academia: Pharmaceutical Sciences**

### **Background**

Academia is an attractive option for pharmacists who enjoy working with students while also having the potential for engaging in research. With the increase in the diversity of academic positions, it can no longer be said that an academician's career is confined to the laboratory or classroom. Three distinct profiles are included in this series: Clinical Practice; Economic, Social, and Administrative Sciences (ESAS); and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Each profile provides information on the similarities and differences in these three academic careers.

Pharmaceutical scientist academicians often work with other health care professionals in a consultative capacity or as a consultant for government and industry research endeavors. The research expertise of pharmaceutical science-based academicians is frequently solicited by the pharmaceutical industry and the government. Therefore, these academicians have more of an indirect impact on patient care.

The "Academia" category may be loosely defined as belonging to a university faculty, usually that of a college of pharmacy. However, pharmacists in this area also hold academic positions in medical, veterinary, dental, and other health care-related educational institutions. Positions may range from the dean of a college of pharmacy to an entry-level teaching/research position. In addition, pharmaceutical sciences-based faculty have expertise in variety of areas including but not limited to: anatomy, physical/chemical sciences, pharmacology, toxicology, cell and molecular biology, biochemistry, immunology, formulation, biological sciences, and pharmaceutics.

Duties of a pharmaceutical scientist academician may include administrative activities, scientific research, teaching professional student pharmacists, supervising research and teaching graduate students, speaking and/or publishing in scientific venues, and teaching student pharmacists through experiential practice sites.

In the 2005–2006 academic year, there were a total of 2,308 full-time and 568 part-time pharmacy faculty. (Source: [http://www.aacp.org/Docs/MainNavigation/InstitutionalData/6676\\_2005-03.pdf](http://www.aacp.org/Docs/MainNavigation/InstitutionalData/6676_2005-03.pdf). Accessed June 23, 2007.)

One respondent noted, "I am working toward a profession wide goal that I believe is worthwhile and necessary."

### **Characteristics**

Twenty-five individuals responded to the 2007 *APhA Career Evaluation Pathway Program* survey. Seventy-two percent of the respondents had an entry-level degree in pharmacy, with 32% having earned a PharmD degree. Forty-four percent of respondents had a residency or fellowship. Sixty-eight percent reported an advanced degree (PhD). An additional 16% indicated certificate training of some kind.

Respondents' average age was 46 years old. Slightly more than half (56%) of respondents were male. Income data show over half (36%) earn between \$80,000–\$100,000, while 56% earn \$100,000 or more per year with 14% greater than \$170,000, the highest percentage in the survey related to academics. These salary figures include consultative fees that are received. The average time worked per week was 54.6 hours, among the highest of all job areas surveyed. Respondents represent 14 states.

A large majority of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their job, with 92% indicating “extremely satisfied.” On a similar scale, respondents said that they felt the job was challenging, with 88% indicating “extremely challenging,” and 12% indicating “somewhat challenging.”

One respondent summed up the thoughts of others regarding the satisfaction they have for the position: “We are helping to develop the next generation of pharmacy practitioners.”

### **Insider's Perspective**

#### **What aspects of the job are most appealing?**

Twenty-eight percent of the respondents said the most appealing aspect of their work was “working with students.” The second highest ranked item was “research,” cited by 24% of the respondents. One respondent indicated that appealing aspects of the position included “doing research that contributes to society.”

Working on clinical trials, drug discovery, and other areas of research were cited in comments as positive aspects of the position.

#### **What aspects of the job are least appealing?**

Among the least appealing aspects for these faculty was a 21% response for “administrative activities” and 12% for “political issues.”

Working within a large organization like a university necessarily involves a considerable administrative load. “Committee and paperwork” was noted by one respondent. Another stated concern for the “over-scheduling of the calendar for committee meetings.”

#### **What advice should students and practitioners consider when selecting the option of Academia?**

Finding a setting that keeps your interest was the most frequent factor cited by respondents. One respondent wrote that “you have to love what you do—research, teaching.”



### Helping People

Surprisingly, this factor was listed as a 4.1 mid-range level. There was a wide variety of responses as noted above because some research is more direct in patient care than others.

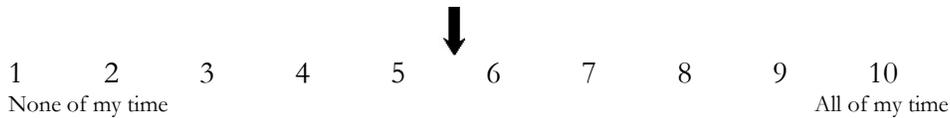
= 4.1



### Collaboration With Other Professionals

Collaboration with other professionals ranked just above the midpoint with a 5.6 rating, indicating that these academicians collaborate more often than others. Perhaps this can be explained by the statement of one respondent: “Clinical trials mean interacting with patients, physicians, pharmacists, and other researchers.”

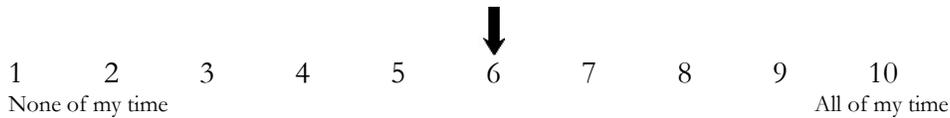
= 5.6



### Educating Other Professionals

Academicians spend their time involved with educating other professionals. This is not surprising, since many are involved in university, government, or industry projects. One respondent stated that “working with colleagues in other disciplines and fields is rewarding.”

= 6.0



### Variety of Daily Activities

A rating of 7.9 reflects the academic research pharmacist’s role as a varied one. One respondent stated it simply: “No two days are alike.”

= 7.9



### Multiple Task Handling

One of the higher ratings at 8.9, multitasking is a near-universal aspect of these academic positions. One respondent stated, “teaching, student development and internal motivation, willingness to work hard, and handle many items at once.”

= 8.9



### Problem Solving

The response on this question indicates the need for these researchers to seek out new solutions for new problems, versus being able to rely on previously useful solutions.

= 7.2



### Focus of Expertise

Respondents indicate only a slight tendency toward having sharply defined areas of expertise versus a broader area of expertise. This may be caused by the wide breadth of research that is included in this field, collaborative projects, and teaching.

= 6.8



### Innovative Thinking

A high rating of 8.4 in this area reinforces the need for innovative solutions and thinking. One respondent stated: “The opportunity exists to contribute to the discovery and development of a new drug.”

= 8.4



### Applying Scientific Knowledge

Not surprisingly, researchers rely heavily on the application of scientific knowledge in their practice activities whether in teaching or research.

= 8.6



### Applying Medical Knowledge

Relative to the application of scientific knowledge, research faculty apply less medical knowledge to their work. Many respondents indicated that their work is “scientific versus medical” in the early stages of their research and that the medical application comes once a product or project moves toward patient use.

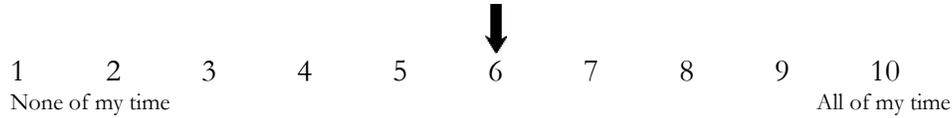
= 7.2



### Creating New Knowledge by Conducting Research

The slightly higher than mid-range ranking of 6.0 of creating new knowledge by conducting research is surprising. This especially holds true as 34% of the respondents' time is spent on research activities.

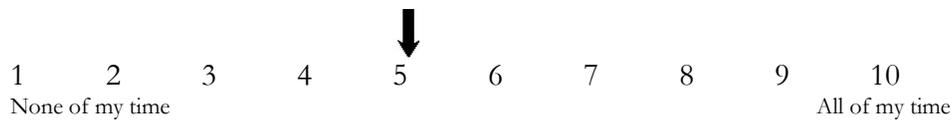
= 6.0



### Management/Supervision of Others

A mid-range response from participants shows that this group is involved in the management and supervisory responsibilities of others. This is related to the number of graduate students that work with faculty in their labs and in clinical trials.

= 5.1



### Management/Supervision of a Business

Many of the respondents indicated that they spend little to no time managing a business. Only 8% of respondents time is spend on business-related activities.

= 2.7



### Pressure/Stress

An upper mid-range rating of 7.0 indicates that academics have a slight tendency toward experiencing stress or pressure in their work. Some stress is associated with publishing articles in professional journals and obtaining funding for research. One respondent indicated that the position is “stressful because of having to manage many people with not enough time allowed for everything.”

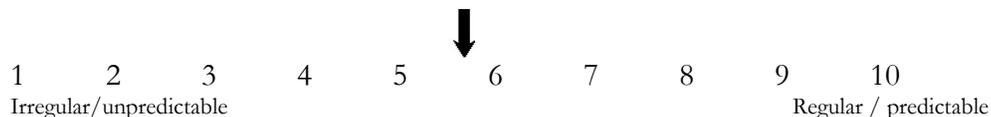
= 7.0



### Work Schedule

Academics responding to this survey are around the midpoint of the range of unpredictable versus predictable work scheduling. One respondent stated that “there can be very long hours dependent on the research project.”

= 5.7



### Part-Time Opportunities

Academic settings infrequently offer part-time work opportunities. However, this does vary by institution and the type of academic position.

= 2.5



### Job-Sharing Opportunities

Job-sharing is not a common practice in academic institutions, which is reinforced by the low ranking of this factor.

= 2.2



### Exit/Re-entry Opportunities

Exit/re-entry opportunities are low in this practice environment.

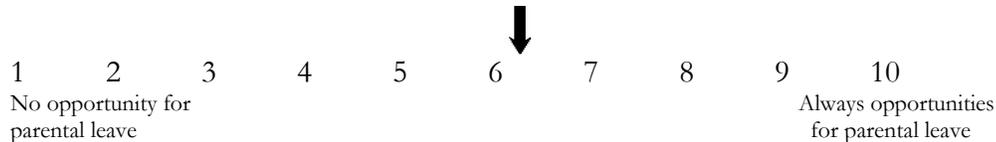
= 2.8



### Parental Leave Opportunities

Parental leave opportunities ranked higher than others in the areas of work-related options. Most institutions provide the opportunity for parental leave.

= 6.2



### Leisure/Family Time

Academicians reported varying experiences regarding time for leisure and family activities—some said they have adequate time for these activities, while others claimed to have very little. One respondent wrote that “balancing work and family time is very tricky, but can be done.”

= 6.5



### Job Security

Pharmaceutical science–based faculty enjoy a high level of job security, ranking highly across all careers surveyed at 8.2. Employment contracts, tenure, and academic year appointments contribute to this stability. This is similar to other academic positions.

= 8.2



### Opportunities for Advancement

To a high degree, academics enjoy opportunity for advancement. Universities are large organizations with constantly changing and widely varying personnel needs, leading to openings and promotion opportunities, both within the pharmacy areas and administration within the university setting. Research scientists also have the opportunity to look at other science-related programs at the university. There is a hierarchy within academia that includes the following positions: lecturers, clinical instructors, post-doctoral fellows, assistant professors, associate professors, full professors, assistant deans, associate deans, and deans.

= 8.4



### Opportunities for Leadership Development

The 8.7 response indicates that respondents indicated they have ample opportunities to develop their leadership potential. Such opportunities could be within the college of pharmacy itself, within the greater university setting, nationally within the specialty field (e.g., drug development), or within the professional association field.

= 8.7



### Community Prestige

Science-based researchers, generally as employees of a university, are perceived as prestigious members of the community. Being employed by such a prestigious institution as a college or university brings a high level of respectability.

= 8.1



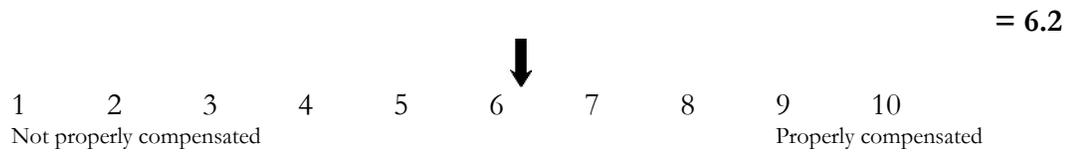
### Professional Involvement

The second highest ranking by the participants in this survey is their high level of opportunity to participate in professional association meetings and similar events within the profession of pharmacy. Accordingly, it is not unusual to see an academically based pharmacist in a leadership position in a state or national professional association. Indeed, these pharmaceutical science-based faculty also are involved nationally with the pharmaceutical industry or the government.



### Income

Respondents indicated that they are slightly above the mid-range of being properly versus not properly compensated for their professional services. It is not uncommon, however, for faculty members to be expected, even encouraged, to seek additional outside sources of income, through consulting projects, for example, which would supplement their faculty salary. Even with this said, a number of faculty indicated that a low income was an issue for them.



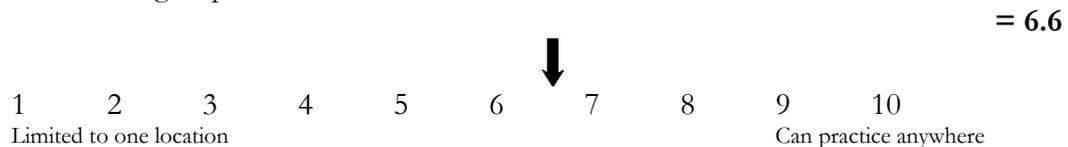
### Benefits (vacation, health, retirement)

This ranking moves toward the upper end of the scale, indicating a higher level of benefits in the form of vacation time, health insurance, and retirement packages. This is not surprising because faculty members are typically employees of large institutions, which normally offer such benefits to all their employees.



### Geographic Location

With a moderate end ranking on this standard, respondents have a generalized opportunity to practice many places in the country among the nation's 100 colleges and schools of pharmacy. However, not all colleges of pharmacy offer opportunities for high-end technology research. This may be the reason why this group ranks this factor the lowest of the three academic groups.



### Autonomy

A high ranking of 8.5 indicates that faculty members are trusted professionals with a high level of independence and decision making. The underpinning of this autonomy, however, is a high sense of responsibility, self-discipline, and initiative. One respondent stated that faculty members “have the ability to set their own research agenda.”

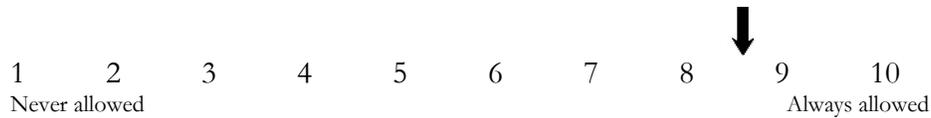
= 8.5



### Self-Worth

College and university settings encourage the advancement of personal value and the full development of the potential of student and teacher alike. Many of these respondents are sought by industry for their knowledge.

= 8.6



### Future Focus

Academicians are highly focused on the future of the profession and health care. Activities such as teaching and research are concerned with advancing knowledge and understanding the latest scientific information.

= 7.8



### Professional Prestige

The third highest rating (9.2) among respondents indicates a high level of prestigious exposure within the pharmacy profession. Former students, as well as other pharmacists, appropriately hold faculty pharmacists in high esteem.

= 9.2



### Unique Practice Environment

Faculty members indicate a relatively mid to high level of uniqueness in their practice settings. Researchers can be involved with a research project that is set in a unique environment.

= 7.0



### Advanced Degree

Rated as the highest factor at 9.7, advanced/graduate degrees are listed as a necessity for this career path. Sixty-eight percent of respondents hold a PhD degree.

= 9.7



### Entrepreneurial Opportunity

Respondents indicate a mid-level rating for entrepreneurial opportunities in their practice settings. External consulting or research activity presents such opportunities.

= 4.9



### Additional Training

Considering the high number of respondents who hold a PhD, it is surprising to see that respondents indicate the need for additional training. However, one can take into account the need for additional training for new equipment and/or other related areas that underscore the ranking of this factor.

= 8.6



### Interacting With Colleagues

Academics tend to interact with co-workers on a regular basis through committee work and group teaching.

= 7.8



### Travel

Academics, for the most part, have lower needs to travel for their day-to-day activities. However, attending state, national, or international meetings do provide some travel opportunities.

=4.0



### Writing

Respondents were in the mid range regarding writing. Respondents listed preparation of research proposals they are involved with for the school of pharmacy. In addition, some indicated that working with industry also requires writing of protocols, SOPs, and project management process reports.

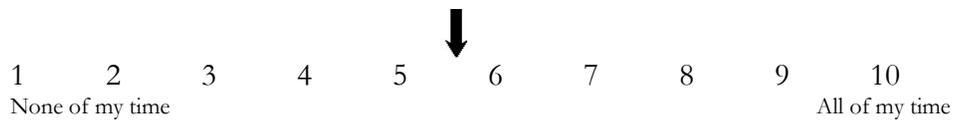
= 6.7



### Working With Teams

Respondents tend to have some team-related projects. In addition, they tend to team teach courses.

= 5.8



### “On Call”

Respondents indicated a low “on-call” need for the positions. A few respondents in clinical trials areas are required to be “on call” for a specific amount of time. In addition, specific research activities may require an “on-call” status.

= 2.6



### Work on Holidays

As noted under the work schedule factor, academics tend not to work on holidays at their place of employment. However, if a research project requires laboratory data collection, hours may need to be completed on a holiday.

= 3.4



### Work on Weekends

This is similar to the statement above although more work is required on a weekend versus holiday. Even with this said, this factor is rated low on the scale.

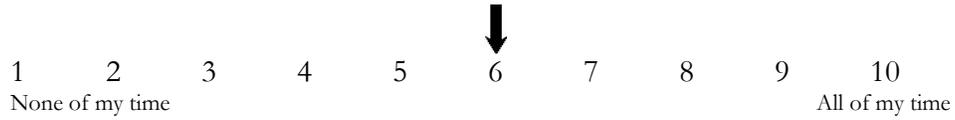
= 4.4



**Presentations**

Teaching was listed as the second highest amount of time (31%) used in a given week. Presentations are a given for most in the academic practice environment. What differs is the extent that the person is involved as a course coordinator for administrative functions or actual lecturing. Most respondents indicated that this was one of the more appealing aspects of the position.

**= 6.0**



### Mean Scores for Critical Factors

1. Interaction With Patients	3.0
2. Conducting Physical Assessments	1.4
3. Interpreting Laboratory Values	2.4
4. Continuity of Relationships	3.6
5. Helping People	4.1
6. Collaboration With Other Professionals	5.6
7. Educating Other Professionals	6.0
8. Variety of Daily Activities	7.9
9. Multiple Task Handling	8.9
10. Problem Solving	7.2
11. Focus of Expertise	6.8
12. Innovative Thinking	8.4
13. Applying Scientific Knowledge	8.6
14. Applying Medical Knowledge	7.2
15. Creating New Knowledge by Conducting Research	6.0
16. Management/Supervision of Others	5.1
17. Management/Supervision of a Business	2.7
18. Pressure/Stress	7.0
19. Work Schedule	5.7
20. Part-Time Opportunities	2.5
21. Job-Sharing Opportunities	2.2
22. Exit/Re-entry Opportunities	2.8
23. Parental Leave Opportunities	6.2
24. Leisure/Family Time	6.5
25. Job Security	8.2
26. Opportunities for Advancement	8.4
27. Opportunities for Leadership Development	8.7
28. Community Prestige	8.1
29. Professional Involvement	9.3
30. Income	6.2
31. Benefits (vacation, health, retirement)	8.8
32. Geographic Location	6.6
33. Autonomy	8.5
34. Self-Worth	8.6
35. Future Focus	7.8
36. Professional Prestige	9.2
37. Unique Practice Environment	7.0
38. Advanced Degree	9.7
39. Entrepreneurial Opportunity	4.9
40. Additional Training	8.6
41. Interacting With Colleagues	7.8
42. Travel	4.0
43. Writing	6.7
44. Working With Teams	5.8
45. "On Call"	2.6
46. Work on Holidays	3.4
47. Work on Weekends	4.4
48. Presentations	6.0

**References**

Schommer JC, Brown LM, Sogol EM. *APhA Career Pathway Evaluation Program 2007 Pharmacist Profile Survey*. June 2007.

Academic Pharmacy's Vital Statistics. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. April 2007. [www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org)

**Professional Organizations**

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP)  
1426 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
Tel: 703-739-2330 Fax: (703) 836-8982  
[www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org)

American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS)  
2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700, Arlington, VA 22201-3046  
Tel: 703-243-2800 Fax: 703-243-9650  
[www.aaps.org](http://www.aaps.org)

American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)  
3101 Broadway, Suite 650, Kansas City, MO 64111  
Tel: 816-531-2177 Fax: 816-531-4990  
[www.accp.com](http://www.accp.com)

American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE)  
20 North Clark Street, Suite 2500, Chicago, IL 60602-5109  
Tel: 312-664-3575 Fax: 312-664-4652  
[www.acpe-accredit.org](http://www.acpe-accredit.org)

American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education (AFPE)  
One Church Street, Suite 202, Rockville, MD 20850  
Tel: 301-738-2160 Fax: 301-738-2161  
[www.afpenet.org](http://www.afpenet.org)

American Pharmacists Association (APhA)  
1100 15th Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: 800-237-APhA Fax: 202-783-2351  
[www.pharmacist.com](http://www.pharmacist.com)

American Society of Health System Pharmacists (ASHP)  
7272 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814  
Tel: 301-657-3000  
[www.ashp.org](http://www.ashp.org)

## Career Option Profile Exercise (continued)

After you have finished the career option profile, please complete the following exercise:

- List your top five weighted critical factors below.
- In Column A, list the rating you gave each of these factors in Exercise 5 of your Briefing Document.
- In Column B, list the mean score for each factor as found in the sample profile.
- Subtract the items in Column B from those in Column A and write the remainder in Column C.
- Total the numbers in Column C. NOTE: Ignore plus and minus signs.

The closer the total is to “0,” the more likely it is that this career option may require further investigation. This total alone, however, means very little until you have compared it with those from each career option profile.

Critical Factor	A Your Rating (1 to 10)	B Mean Scores From Profile	C Difference

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Summary for Surveying Alternatives

- Review a wide range of alternatives.
  - ✓ Research every possible practice environment that is of interest to you.
- Don't overemphasize externship/internship (or practice) experiences.
  - ✓ Don't make decisions on research done with an "N" of one.
- Be open to new alternatives.
  - ✓ Consider new possibilities or a combination of new possibilities that have been sparked by your initial research.
- Gather information from many sources to expand your options.
  - ✓ Talk to as many people as possible.
  - ✓ Read.
  - ✓ Attend state and national pharmacy association meetings.
  - ✓ Volunteer.
  - ✓ Seek experience.
  - ✓ Contact professional organizations.
  - ✓ Contact recruiters.
  - ✓ Search the career Web sites.

# The Vigilant Decision-Making Process

## Step IV. Evaluating Alternatives

### Program Activities

- Introduction to the Decision Balance Sheet
- Decision Balance Sheet Exercise
- Summary for Evaluating Alternatives

## Decision Balance Sheet

Critical Factors (Self/Others)	Career Option: _____	Career Option: _____	Career Option: _____
	Value* Comments	Value* Comments	Value* Comments
Other Considerations (Self/Others)			

\* -5 (least appropriate fit) to +5 (most appropriate fit)

Decision Balance Sheet Sample\*

Gender: Female

Age: 22

Marital status: Engaged to be married

Employment: Part-time in chain setting

Critical Factors (Self/Others)	Career Option		
	Independent Community Pharmacist	Hospital Pharmacist	Industry Research & Development
	Value* Comments	Value* Comments	Value* Comments
<b>Entrepreneurial Opportunity</b>	+5 I'd be responsible for managing the entire operation.	-2 Probably not much opportunity.	+2 Would depend on my position in the company.
<b>Helping People</b>	+4 Working with customers is what I like best in the job I have now.	+3 I'd be helping patients, though indirectly for the most part.	-2 I won't see how I'm helping any one individual; all my help will be indirect.
<b>Conducting Physical Assessments</b>	+4 People would depend on me.	?? Probably not many chances to conduct physical assessments. I need to ask someone about this.	-3 None.
<b>Leisure/Family Time</b>	-4 <b>Self:</b> Very long hours. <b>Others:</b> Once we have kids, it will be especially tough.	+4/+2 <b>Self:</b> Friends say I'd probably have a lot of free time, but it may depend on the hospital. <b>Others:</b> When we have kids, I could work part time.	+4 <b>Self:</b> Plenty of free time. <b>Others:</b> Lots of companies have on-site day care. I could continue to work full time if I want.
<b>Work Schedule</b>	-4 Very demanding.	+3 Depends on hospital.	+4 Would probably have a predictable schedule.
<b>Job Security</b>	-2 <b>Self:</b> Having my own store will be risky. <b>Others:</b> There will be a lot more pressure on Bill to have a secure job.	+3 Hospitals always need a pharmacist, so I'd never have to worry.	+5 <b>Self:</b> My position in a company will be clear and my job secure. <b>Others:</b> Some of the pressure will be off Bill.
<b>Income</b>	-1/+3 At the beginning, not as much as with a chain. But with my own place, I'll earn a lot more.	+3/?? <b>Self:</b> From what my friends say, the money is pretty good. <b>Others:</b> Is it enough for us to save?	+3 <b>Self:</b> I'll make a very good salary but not as much as on my own. <b>Others:</b> We'll have two good incomes.
<b>Applying Scientific/Medical Knowledge</b>	??/-2 I hope so. Most of the time at work, I'm too busy filling prescriptions.	+3 I'll be a resource for everyone on the hospital staff.	+4 Prof. Lakes says research is my strong point and thinks I should make a career of it.
<b>Other Considerations (Self/Others)</b>			
<b>Geographic Location</b>	+5 Could establish pharmacy in most locations.	-2 Only urban areas would have best positions.	-4 Would be limited to location of company.

\* This example has been created for discussion purposes only.

## Decision Balance Sheet Case Discussion

*Activity:* Take approximately 5–10 minutes to review the sample Decision Balance Sheet on the preceding page. Use the following questions to analyze the information:

- What seem to be the **major values** driving the decision making of the student at this point?
- What **gaps/inconsistencies** do you see in her information?
- What **questions** would you ask of this student, based on the information on this balance sheet?
- Of the three **career options**, which seem **most questionable** and why? What **other** career options might you encourage the student to consider?
- What **step of the decision-making process** do you think the student is in?

Use the space below and on the next page to record your observations and answers.

Major values:

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## Decision Balance Sheet Case Discussion (continued)

Gaps/inconsistencies:

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Questions to ask:

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Questionable career options:

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Other career options:

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Steps of decision-making process:

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## Summary for Evaluating Alternatives

- Make effective use of all the time available.
  - ✓ Build career-oriented appraisals into daily routine during internship, summer, and part-time jobs (or current job).
  - ✓ As an option, keep a journal of your expectations, observations, reactions, and questions.
- Test your facts and your reactions by talking to others—pharmacists, faculty, and staff in counseling roles, and peers.
- Follow up actively with potential role models. Discriminate between personal qualities and the work itself.
- Believe in the process and the possibility of achieving the best possible solution.



# **The Vigilant Decision-Making Process**

## **Step V. Achieving Commitment**

### **Program Activities**

- Interactive Session With a Pharmacist (optional)
- Career Guides (optional)
- Other Research to Learn About Career Options
- Summary for Achieving Commitment





## Summary for Achieving Commitment

- Try each likely option on for size.
  - ✓ Talk with others about the possibility. See how it feels.
  - ✓ Do not prematurely announce a decision; it will make the process more difficult.
- Assume total responsibility.
  - ✓ You can't delegate this decision; it's your career.
- Consult your intuition.
  - ✓ Having done all of the above as well as you can, try to suspend your rational judgment and let your feelings emerge about the different options you are considering.
- Review the negatives of your choice.
  - ✓ This will enable you to cope with negative feedback when you announce your decision and increase your ability to stick with it if the going gets tough later on.