

# Career choices

## 1 Three careers at a glance

a) Read the following profiles. In a grid, make notes about why these people chose their careers.

"I'm **Chiara**, and I'm 26 years old and from Manchester. When I was a girl I lived opposite a church, and every weekend I had the chance to see weddings. I *loved* watching the brides in their beautiful white dresses and I always thought,  
5 "What a shame: Just one day for such a pretty dress and such a lovely party with family and friends. If only *every* day could be a wedding!" Well, very soon, every day really *did* become a wedding for me.

10 When I was 21, I helped my older sister plan her wedding. I found the perfect dress for her, the perfect restaurant for the reception, the perfect food for the big wedding dinner, and the perfect decorations, and a great DJ. I just presented  
15 her my different ideas, and she chose what she liked best. It was fun for me, and *relaxing* for her, which is important when you're getting married. And it was a *huge* success! Two wedding guests asked if they could book me to organize *their*

20 weddings. So, I was in business! I love to see people happy, and it's very satisfying<sup>1</sup> to help make the most important day in a person's life special. And wonderful!"



"Hi. I'm **Andrew**. I'm 26 years old, from L.A. Three years ago Dale, a friend from college, invited me to stay with his family up in Santa Barbara for the weekend. That was when I met  
25 Dale's 18-year-old brother, Brian, for the first time – and it changed my life.

I had been working in junior management<sup>2</sup> at a big construction company that specializes<sup>3</sup> in million-dollar homes, and I was making very  
30 good money. I had a hot car, knew hot girls and went to hot parties. But somehow, something seemed to be missing in my life.

I had never really spent time with handicapped people, and it was easy to see that  
35 Brian didn't have an easy life. But: Dale and his family gave him lots of love and attention. Brian couldn't do anything by himself, so they gave him his bath, took him to the bathroom, dressed him, fed him, told him stories, took him  
40

everywhere with them in his wheelchair. It was hard work – but they did it with a *smile*. I loved that. It made *me* want to help people who couldn't help themselves.

The next Monday, I registered<sup>4</sup> for a training program to get the qualifications to work in an assisted-living center<sup>5</sup>. And now, three years later, it's my full-time job to take care of other teens like Brian. The money isn't the best, the hours can be long, and I've hurt my back a few times lifting  
45 people out of bed or the bathtub. But at the end of the day, when I look in the mirror, I like the person I see much better than the cool guy who used to sell million-dollar homes."

“Hi, I’m **Diane**, and I’m 29 years old, from America. I knew from a very early age what I wanted to do. My father worked as a diplomat for the US government, and it was exciting to meet people from so many different countries. I knew I wanted to work internationally.

You might think being a diplomat is all about having lots of privileges<sup>6</sup> – a big house, a pool, a chauffeur. But being a diplomat also means a lot of hard work – and sometimes even danger.

First of all, before you even apply to the Foreign Service, you have to have a college education, excellent grades, *very* good all-around knowledge, a gift for languages, and good intercultural skills.

And once you actually pass the difficult exams (many don’t) and become a diplomat, you can be sent to dangerous locations, and even ‘safe’ places can suddenly become dangerous. Also, what many people don’t know is that diplomats are sent by their governments to a new country every three or four years – whether they want to go or not.

As a diplomat you have to be flexible and do what your *country* wants, and not necessarily what you want; it’s about duty. But I like representing my country. And being flexible also means that things stay interesting. Sure, and being able to speak several languages really helps when you travel as much as I do. But best of all: I have friends on every continent!”



b) Discuss the results of your grid with the class. Why did Chiara, Andrew and Diane choose their careers?

## 2 Discussion: Job satisfaction

What is ‘job satisfaction’? Explain the ways Chiara, Andrew and Diane experience it in their jobs.

## 3 Your turn

What aspects of a job would bring you the most job satisfaction? Why?

## 4 Role plays: A talk show

On a TV talk show, the theme today is ‘What makes a job a good job?’ You and your classmates now have the chance to act out roles on this talk show yourselves.

1. Divide up into different groups of four. In each group, one person plays the talk-show host, and the other three take on the roles of Chiara, Andrew and Diane.
2. After you have decided who is doing which role, take 5 minutes to think of what questions the host might ask / think about the answers to possible questions about the jobs Chiara, Andrew and Diane told you about.
3. Now each group presents its ‘show’ in front of the class.

<sup>1</sup>satisfying [ˈsætɪsfajɪŋ] befriedigend • <sup>2</sup>junior management [ˌdʒuːniə ˈmænɪdʒmənt] lower level of management • <sup>3</sup>to specialize in sth [ˈspeʃlaɪz] sich auf etw spezialisieren • <sup>4</sup>to register for sth [ˈredʒɪstə] sich für etw anmelden • <sup>5</sup>assisted-living center [əˈsɪstɪd ˈlɪvɪŋ ˌsentə] (Pflege-)Heim mit umfassender medizinischer/therapeutischer Betreuung • <sup>6</sup>privilege [ˈprɪvɪlɪdʒ] Privileg

## Lösungsvorschläge:

1

Reasons for choosing their careers:

**Chiara**

Thought it was a shame for a wedding to be over so quickly and so she wanted to deal with more weddings regularly; loves planning and organizing; likes to see people happy

**Andrew**

had a good job and money, but felt something was missing; meeting his friend's handicapped brother changed his life; wanted to help people who can't help themselves

**Diane**

influenced by her father's career, wanted to work internationally; likes to represent her country

2

Reasons for job satisfaction:

**Chiara**

loves making people happy; loves making the most important day in a person's life special, wonderful, etc.

**Andrew**

loves taking care of people; loves looking in the mirror at the end of the day and seeing a happy person, and not just a 'cool' person with a good job and lots of money; the money isn't important

**Diane**

Never knowing what the next day will bring keeps things interesting; speaking several languages is helpful; best of all is having friends on every continent

3

*Individuelle Antworten*

4

Examples of talk show questions / answers:

Question: What tips do you have about finding good jobs?

- Answer:
- It depends on what you're looking for.
  - Think about what you enjoy: People? Travel? Being outside? Being in a business environment? Working by yourself?

Question: What is the best thing about your job? Why?

- Answer:
- I like doing something useful.
  - I enjoy taking care of other people.
  - I like seeing people smile / making people happy.
  - I like seeing the world.
  - I enjoy change.
  - I don't like desk jobs, so my job is perfect for me.

Question: Does a good job have to pay well?

- Answer:
- It's all a question of priorities. We all need money, but the question is: How much?
  - For some people, yes; for others, no.

Question: What's the best advice for future jobs you could give to people still in school or just beginning university?

- Answer:
- Talk to people who are already doing jobs that you might like.
  - Visit people on the job.
  - Do internships on your summer holidays.
  - Be active; don't wait for the job to come to you!

Question: Even if you enjoy your job, are there ever days you think, "I can't deal with work today, I hate my job"?

- Answer:
- Yes, I think everybody has had that experience!
  - Never! I love my job every single day!