How to Research a Trade

In order to truly consider whether or not a trade is right for you, you must first learn all you can about it. Here are a few ways to get started:

Read About It

Go online and check out the Oregon Tradeswomen website at www.tradeswomen.net and click on the "Resources" page for specific trades information (**www.tradeswomen.net/resources**). Use the website as a starting point to investigate various trades.

Go to the library. Find books on trades you're interested in.

Visit or call specific trade training centers to find out more.

Talk to People About It

Conduct Informational Interviews. Contact people that are doing what you might like to do and ask them what it's like, how much they earn, what they like/dislike, etc. Talking to people that are already in that field can really help you get a better idea of "what it's really like."

Attend an OTI Support Group meeting or volunteer with Oregon Tradeswomen to meet tradespeople and learn about their experiences. Ask the instructor about these opportunities.

Find out if the trade you're interested in offers an open Trades Orientation and attend.

Try It Out Firsthand

If you know someone that's doing the work, ask if you can help out for free just to learn.

Set up a job shadow. Find someone who has the job you want and ask them if you can go to work with them for a day. OTI has special insurance that provides liability coverage for job shadows. You must let us know well in advance so we can provide the employer with a Certificate of Additional Insured. Please contact Amy James Neel, Construction Manager for information. 503-335-8200 x34.

Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.   Trades and Apprenticeship Career Class

Seek out coursework that offers hands on experience. See our "At a Glance" handout.

Volunteer with an organization that does work that interests you like Habitat for Humanity, the Rebuilding Center, REACH Community Development or the Community Energy Project.

Take classes at PCC or Mt. Hood Community College.

Any of these experiences could potentially be included in your Career File or Resume. Keep track of reference information for later use.