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Reading and Writing for the College Bound

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### Criminal Investigators vs. Real Estate Broker

While conducting research for two careers that I could potentially pursue during my college years, it was important to me to consider my own characteristics. When describing myself, I would use the words optimistic and hardworking. The jobs that consume my interest continue to excite me. Oddly, I have had interest in two completely different occupations: criminal justice and designing houses. Ultimately, I decided to learn more about both and to match my skills to making a potential choice. Therefore, I researched to learn about Criminal Investigators and Real Estate Brokers. These two job fields best fit who I am since a Real Estate Broker has an ability to be optimistic when selling houses as well as hardworking in order to build a client list. Additionally, in order to be a Criminal Investigator, I need to be committed at problem solving in order to bring cases to to a conclusion. My personality rarely drifts from my intent. With a sense of determination, I will compare the financial rewards, working conditions, and daily schedules of these two careers in order to find clarity in my life path.

#### Average salary and Education

According to My Next Move, Criminal Investigators earn a median salary of \$79,970 (“Detective”). In order to be successful in the criminal justice field, it is advised to get a Bachelor’s degree, meaning it will take four years of undergraduate school. Coursework may

vary depending on what specific program one studies. To add, the most common majors in this field include criminology, forensic psychology, introduction to law enforcement, and criminal justice (“Detectives” Education). The classes focus on knowledge of laws. Clarity of the laws is the central part of becoming a detective. Besides the legal part of this job, a person must study people. Many psychology classes are taken in order to understand the human mind. Law enforcement differs greatly from the more visible job in Real Estate. In fact, the median salary for a Real Estate Broker is around \$56,730 (“Real”). Working in this type of career field doesn’t require a type of degree; **however**, it is required to get a Real Estate certification. According to Vanessa, a Real Estate Agent, “.I was hesitant because it can be risky. But the education gave me the knowledge I needed to succeed at it” (“Real” Interviews). Like Vanessa’s insights, I wonder if it is an unpredictable career field for me. Although I could be debt free by not going to college, there are other paths I could take involving this career. If I were to go to college for this occupation, possible majors to enhance my skill and knowledge are composed of marketing and trends, finance and accounting, and business. After reviewing my research, I believe that going to school to become a Criminal Investigator would be rewarding rather than getting a certificate for Real Estate. I want to know more than just information; I want to learn about people, how they think, and earn a college degree.

#### Daily schedules

Both career fields that interest me have similar schedules. As said on Career Cruising, Criminal Investigators usually work 40+ hours each week; schedules may include night and/ or weekend shifts. These special agents can expect to travel to a variety of locations (“Detective” Working Conditions). If not traveling, then one would most likely work in an office environment

solving cases. Most of the time, people will work for a large firm. Although these long hours may seem stressful, Real Estate Brokers don't have it any easier. Brokers work for themselves and are responsible for the success or failure of their company. Because they work for themselves, job security is low. Also, a license isn't required in order to represent clients. Real Estate Brokers typically work a schedule between 9-5 and are expected to work 40+ hours each week ("Real" Working Conditions), similar to a Investigator. A chief factor is being organized in order to properly executing the needs of each house sale. It is the Broker's job to make up a schedule, meaning one can pick his or her own hours that work best. On top of making their schedule, Brokers must accommodate to their client's schedule. After comparing the daily schedule of both careers, I found that it would be challenging as a Real Estate Broker to make a new schedule each week depending on a client. To conclude, it would make me feel better to have a schedule, like an Investigator, knowing exactly what each week will hold.

#### Working conditions and Daily activities

The two careers that I thoroughly pursued have completely different daily tasks. For example, according to Careeronestep, Criminal Investigators prepare reports that contain investigation findings as well as verifying evidence by interviewing the victim, perpetrator, suspects, etc ("Criminal"). Records may also be analyzed for additional information. One is expected to use the data that is found to interpret what type of prosecution should take place. This is very different than what a Real Estate Broker is expected to do on a daily basis. Also discussed in Careeronestep, a Broker is in charge of selling real estate for other people in return for a fee. One must have the responsibility of obtaining agreements from property owners in order to sell properties with other Real Estate Firms ("Real"). Brokers ultimately deal with

negotiations between buyers and sellers; it is their job to have both parties meet in the middle. Though they are two different fields of work, working conditions are somewhat alike. Using information from Career Cruising, the website goes into detail of how Criminal Investigators are able to travel to several destinations depending on the case they are working on (“Detective” Working Conditions). On the other hand, Real Estate Brokers have to travel to different locations such as community events to meet with potential clients as well as going to the property that is for sale. Brokers usually work in a large firm with numerous branch offices. If I had to choose between the two careers, I feel like it would be interesting to be a Criminal Investigator and to travel to different crime scenes. According to Michael, a Crime Investigator, “You never know what is going to happen next or when a seemingly predictable day will be thrown into chaos” (“Detective” Interviews). There are a number of different scenarios that you may be exposed to that one may not see unless in that career field. I want to be in a job field that excites me and offers something interesting everyday, instead of doing the same tasks on a daily basis.

## Conclusion

After I compared the working conditions, financial aspects, and daily schedules for both job fields, it has become clear to me that I would prefer a path in the criminal justice field. Criminal Investigators are more likely to earn a higher salary. Additionally, the occupation requires critical thinking skills and hard work which better suits me. When it is time for me to go to college, I want to feel that the money that I’m putting in for schooling is well worth it in the end. My goal would be to earn over the median salary a few years after I graduate from college. What really pulled my attention was learning more about criminology. To me, it is an

opportunity to think through a criminal's mind. To add, investigating crime scenes while puzzling together what has happened would challenge me to the highest level.

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