Student Worksheet: Job vs Master’s vs PhD (Evaluation Matrix)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Use this evaluation matrix to compare different career options.

**Step 1: Choose Criteria.** Examples of useful criteria: **Financial Stability** (salary, funding, debt risk)**; Time Commitment** (duration, opportunity cost), etc.

**Step 2: Weight Criteria.** Not all factors are equally important. Assign **weights (1–5)**, where 5 = most important. Evaluate criterion one by one, and fill in.

**Step 3: Score Each Option.** Rate each option (Job, Master’s, PhD) on each criterion **(1–5)**. Multiply by the weight.

Assign a weight (1–5) to each criterion, then give a score (1–5) for each option. **Multiply weight × score** to get **the weighted score** (the examples are given in the table: 5x5=25, 5x2=10). Replace example numbers, and fill in your own **weights** and **scores** in the table.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Weight (1–5) | Job (score) | Job (weighted) | Master’s (score) | Master’s (weighted) | PhD (score) | PhD (weighted) |
| Financial Stability | 5 | 5 | 25 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 15 |
| Time Commitment | 4 | 5 | 20 | 3 | 12 | 1 | … |
| Career Growth Opportunities | 4 | 2 | 8 | 5 | … |  |  |
| Personal Interest & Motivation | … |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Work-Life Balance |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Networking & Connections |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Geographical Flexibility |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Long-Term Career Goals Fit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL | - | - |  | - |  |  |  |

Step 4: **Interpret.** Total highest score shows which option fits best for you now.

**If scores are equal** (for example, Job and PhD), it means that both possibilities are equally attractive to you, but in different ways. Contemplate on differences and timing!