

**NOTICE  
EMPLOYEES  
ONLY**

# **WorkFirst Toolkit**

Specialized Employment Services for  
Providers Helping Men and Women  
Successfully Transition from Homelessness

# WorkFirst

The WorkFirst Toolkit is a project of Pine Street Inn, a Boston-based nonprofit that assists 11,000 homeless men and women annually to find recovery, housing and employment.

The Toolkit was launched in 2009 to assist individuals who are formerly homeless, newly housed, and who face multiple barriers to remaining housed, finding and keeping jobs, and building self-sufficiency for the long-term.

Our goal is to widely disseminate this Toolkit to workforce development and homeless service providers, equipping them to promote employment as a critical strategy in ending homelessness and achieving self-sufficiency.

## *Acknowledgments*

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# Introduction

## Background

Over the past decade, the housing first movement has spurred a revolution in the quest to end homelessness, housing thousands of Americans who were previously languishing in shelters, on the streets, or in social service programs.<sup>1</sup> These individuals and families are now living in permanent housing and striving to stay there by trying to overcome the often significant challenges that led to their homelessness in the first place. Such challenges include poverty, high housing costs, and personal issues, such as struggles with mental health and substance abuse. In response to these challenges, housing first practitioners are seeking resources to help growing numbers of formerly homeless tenants engage more directly in their communities, including through employment.

Indeed, research shows that employment is a critical and effective strategy in preventing and ending homelessness:

- Given the opportunity, homeless people (including chronically homeless people) can and want to work.
- Quickly finding a job helps homeless people afford and stay in housing.
- Employment offered at the earliest stages of engagement with homeless people helps them develop trust, motivation, and hope.
- Work is a critical recovery tool for people with substance abuse or mental health histories, supporting their continued stability.
- Client contributions through employment income can help supportive housing programs stretch subsidy dollars.
- Employment services offered within a supportive housing model result in increased net earnings for tenants and decreased reliance on public entitlements.
- Cost-savings and additional tax revenue provided by client income offset more than three quarters of funder investment.<sup>2</sup>

This Toolkit is designed for practitioners working with newly housed, formerly homeless men and women, including housing-based case managers, retention or stabilization specialists, and counselors. For consistency, all such professionals will be referred to as “counselors” in this book.

## Purpose

Traditional employment services are based on the premise that clients must be “job ready.” In other words, they must possess the requisite life and professional skills to find and retain a job before being deemed ready to look for work.

The WorkFirst Toolkit diverges from this premise in its underlying philosophy that anyone is ready for work—at any point in his or her journey toward housing and community integration. Such an approach is well suited to the population for whom this text is designed. Many were homeless for years and still struggle with substance abuse, mental health issues, and developmental disabilities, as well as having minimal work and education histories and criminal records. The approach is also informed by the previ-

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<sup>1</sup> Housing first is a strategy to end homelessness that relies on the immediate provision of permanent housing, not shelter, along with support services. For more information, visit <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1425>.

<sup>2</sup> Sources: Shaheen and Rio (2007) and Abt Associates (2003).

ously mentioned research suggesting that individuals’ interest in finding work can motivate them to take positive steps in other areas of their lives.

**Advantages**

The entry-level jobs commonly held by formerly homeless individuals often do not lead to long-term employment or financial security. Thus, a goal espoused in the Toolkit is for clients to view growth potential and career ladders as fundamental components of work experience. Toward this end, counselors assist clients in seeking training, credentials, and other requirements necessary to advance to more skilled and better-paying jobs. Such an endeavor requires a sustained commitment from client and counselor alike.

The key to the Toolkit’s approach is its flexibility, with the model allowing for direct service workers to initiate conversations with clients about employment in various settings, whether on the street, in a shelter, or in permanent subsidized housing. During the WorkFirst pilot (2009–2012), no predetermined limit was set on enrollment; clients were considered engaged for as long as they provided consent. This flexibility arises from an understanding of career as a long-term process that may begin not only at any stage in an individual’s personal journey but also in any physical location.

**Principles**

Three basic principles inform the Toolkit’s approach. All services must be (1) person centered, (2) client directed, and (3) strengths based. These principles—elaborated in the following text—are consistent with harm-reduction<sup>3</sup> and motivational interviewing,<sup>4</sup> two commonly used approaches in the field of homelessness.

.....  
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.....

A **person-centered** approach is based on the idea that an individual is ultimately responsible for his or her self-change—and that each individual can change for the better. For the counselor, this means the approach is noncoercive. It also emphasizes a client’s inherent strengths and idiosyncrasies rather than seemingly desirable qualities he or she simply does not have. Such an orientation helps clients feel validated in their human uniqueness, giving them a steady platform from which to work toward accomplishment.

Counselors must keep two simple elements in mind when implementing this approach:

1. Reflective listening. This refers to paraphrasing or reflecting a client’s stated feelings, without inserting judgment.
2. Accurate and useful communication of one’s own opinion. If, for example, a counselor objects to a client’s choice, the counselor can identify the concern and the reasons behind it. In the interaction, however, the counselor must always make clear that the concerns are his or hers, and that the client need not agree with them. Such a communicative yet nonintrusive approach may lead to a productive conversation and greater understanding by the client about implications of the choice.

A **client-directed** approach means that the client ultimately decides whether to choose services and which services to choose. Initially, this may mean the client agrees to engage in a conversation with staff

<sup>3</sup> Refers to a series of strategies aimed at reducing the harmful effects of substance use. For more information, visit [www.harmreduction.org](http://www.harmreduction.org).

<sup>4</sup> Refers to a counseling technique that engages a client’s intrinsic motivations to change his or her behavior. For more information, see [www.motivationalinterviewing.org](http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org).

about his or her life experience, perhaps to have a cup of coffee or a stroll around the block. All along, the client dictates the pace and degree of interaction. A counselor, of course, is free to make suggestions or inquiries, but the client always retains the right of refusal. As clients come to realize that their counselor is there to support their individual journey, they are more apt to engage in frank discussions about their needs and to make decisions compatible with their aspirations.

As suggested in the paragraphs on the person-centered approach, this model focuses on each client's strengths, skills, and abilities. By emphasizing pluses rather than minuses, a **strengths-based** approach helps clients envision a path around obstacles and toward achievement of goals. For clients, enduring and surmounting homelessness already demonstrates a significant degree of strength. They must now translate this personal strength—and its attending attributes—to fulfilling and appropriate entry into the workforce.

### **Emphasis on Employment**

Almost all clients addressed by this text have struggled with mental health or substance abuse issues. The clients know of their diagnoses and their need for treatment. In the Toolkit's model, however, mental health and substance abuse challenges are placed in the context of a client's central goal: finding and keeping a job. In this way, employment becomes a component of the behavioral health intervention, even as it does not constitute traditional behavioral health treatment.

For example, if a client's behavior is blocking his or her path to employment, a counselor will raise concerns, always respectfully. After the client and counselor have discussed the concerns, they will work together to create specific interventions aimed at eliminating the behavioral obstacle. No penalties are introduced for behavioral "infractions," with the idea being that clients will encounter (and hopefully overcome) natural difficulties by engaging in the world of training and employment.

In addressing behavioral concerns, counselors comment directly and nonjudgmentally: "I can smell alcohol on your breath. I am concerned that if you go to a job interview, you most likely will not get the position." "You seem very distracted and unfocused on our conversation, and I worry about how this lack of focus might appear to an employer."

Such statements help initiate or continue a conversation about a client's substance use or mental health status. For a counselor, two approaches are paramount in this process: seeking to understand the client's perspective and helping the client understand that a behavioral health challenge may be a barrier to reaching goals. Once a client has acknowledged that a behavioral health issue can be a barrier, he or she will be more willing to accept assistance. Counselors, in conjunction with housing support staff, can also offer treatment referrals.

Counselors, overall, strive to maintain an open relationship with clients rather than one that focuses primarily on behavioral health. This means that while the counselor will seek strategic opportunities to check in with a client about his or her substance use or mental health, the emphasis is on the main goal: finding and keeping a job. By aligning with a client's aspirations, the counselor can keep the focus on strengths, not deficits.

### **Stages of Change**

The Toolkit structure and approach are based on the transtheoretical model of behavior change, also known as the stages of change model, developed by James Prochaska, John Norcross, and Carlo DiClemente. The theory draws upon research showing that most change is incremental, and that small changes add up over time. More specifically, the model states that individuals pass through the following five stag-

es when changing a behavior—though not necessarily in order, and often returning to previous stages as the process unfolds:

1. Precontemplation
2. Contemplation
3. Preparation
4. Action
5. Maintenance

First designed for addiction recovery work, these stages have been used in many other situations as well. Most notable for our purposes, John Rio, of Advocates for Human Potential, applied them to the field of homelessness at its nexus with vocational assistance.

This Toolkit builds on Rio’s work in outlining characteristics of the vocational situation, as well as establishing a motivational orientation and corresponding intervention techniques. Accordingly, a counselor can identify a client’s stage based on the behaviors he or she demonstrates, with interventions then targeted to the appropriate stage. Moreover, the model considers any positive change or engagement toward employment to be a marker of success.

## Structure

The Toolkit is divided into five sections to match five stages of behavior change, with each section containing a fuller description of the stage as it relates to employment, including steps toward reaching fulfilling employment. After identifying the stage, based on indicative behaviors, each section also notes:

- **Outcomes**      Key behavioral outcomes that indicate the client is moving toward the next stage of change (e.g., articulating a career goal, completing a resume)
- **Competencies**      Soft skills needed for all entry-level jobs, which the client can enhance by completing the activities for each stage.
- **Actions**      The activities themselves, aimed at assisting the client in moving toward the next stage.
- **Resources**      Handouts and checklists to support activities for counselors and clients alike.

Each section provides the client with a menu of actions, or activities, from which to choose, depending on his or her particular needs. Activities can be adapted for both one-on-one and small-group settings.

For their part, resources can be adapted for one-on-one or group use, depending on the situation, and enlisted to guide conversation. Some resources appear in more than one stage of the book, and thus are subject to interpretation by the counselor. Resources are drawn primarily from existing employment-related curricula, which are cited in full at the back of this text.

# Stage 1: Precontemplation

.....

*“Precontemplation indicates in many cases an active resistance to change ... At any other stage of change, the issue is not whether help should be offered, but what type of help is best. With precontemplators, the question often arises whether help is even a possibility.”*

— *Changing for Good*,<sup>5</sup> p. 75

.....

## Overview

### Characteristics of Vocational Situation

The statement that best characterizes a client during this phase is “I’m not thinking about work.” Correspondingly, a client:

- Resists discussions about work.
- Doesn’t see a job on the radar.
- Feels anxiety about employment.
- Identifies unemployment as necessary for working on recovery—does not, in turn, see the health benefits of working.
- May claim he or she could work if and when he or she chose to do so. Common expressions along these lines include “Working won’t make a difference in my life” and “I am too disabled to work.”

### Outcomes

Key outcomes that indicate a client is progressing to the next stage include:

- Agreement to a single meeting to discuss employment goals outside the residence (e.g., a restaurant or library). Meeting in a neutral space facilitates alliances between a client and counselor, and helps foster an emphasis on the client’s strengths.
- “What if” statements by the client. These may include willingness to ask what will happen to public benefits, rather than simply letting the fear fester unspoken.

### Competencies

By participating in the activities in this stage, clients can enhance the following soft skills:

- Personal qualities, including sociability and self-esteem
- Thinking and reasoning skills (e.g., “a job may help me feel less isolated” or “a job may help me make a desired purchase, such as a TV”)
- Basic skills such as clear speaking and attentive listening
- Resource management (e.g., use of time)

One aim, at this stage, is to provide participants with a wide variety of activities to motivate them to change their behavior. The activities themselves can be arranged based on drop-in times at a given residence or whenever best suits the client and counselor. A key to the counselor’s success when leading

<sup>5</sup> Hereafter *CFG*.

these activities is to maintain a client-directed focus (see earlier section on “Philosophical and Theoretical Approach”). This means remaining positive even if a client misses appointments or doesn’t follow through on other commitments. Rather than saying, “I can’t work with you if you don’t come,” say, “I would like to work with you, but we haven’t yet been able to meet. Can we work on this?” The latter approach allows counselors to express concern without placing blame, thereby allowing a conversation to unfold.

Note: The **handouts** included in this section can be used not only as exercises but also as discussion guides or models for content to include on “discovery cards.” The **resources**, meanwhile, can help frame a “walking tour” or another activity or meeting at the residence.

## Tips for Counselor Engagement with Clients

Following are scripts for responding to clients during the precontemplation stage:

Client says:	Counselor responds:	<p><b>In general:</b> Listen reflectively, provide information, and explore options, rather than offering advice. An opening for exploration may be provided by the client's expressions of dissatisfaction. Also, seek opportunities to collaborate by engaging in activities such as career mapping, free-writing, and searches on job websites.</p>
<p><i>I can't work.</i></p>	<p>How do you know? Why do you feel that way? Do you want to work? What does work mean to you?</p>	
<p><i>No one will hire me.</i></p>	<p>How do you know? Has anyone hired you in the past? What kind of work are you looking for? What have you tried so far? Would you hire yourself?</p>	
<p><i>I'll lose my benefits.</i></p>	<p>That depends. Let's find out. Do you know anyone who lost benefits when they started working? Are you willing to work if you can keep your benefits? Here's some information on work incentives (at a level of detail that seems appropriate).</p>	
<p><i>There's too much going on.</i></p>	<p>Let's set priorities and figure out what you can do. What would you like to have happening? Do you have existing supports, resources, or other forms of assistance? (Then brainstorm other possible resources.)</p>	
<p><i>I need to work on my recovery first.</i></p>	<p>How's that going? I don't want to interfere with your other appointments, so let's figure out what you might do. Where do you need to be in your recovery? Have you ever thought of work as integral to your recovery? Is this your first time in recovery? How might work be a support in the recovery process?</p>	
<p><i>They say yes, but act otherwise.</i></p>	<p>I'd like to meet with you, but we haven't been able to make that happen. What can we do differently? Here are the goals we've set out (list them). Here's what we can accomplish together. But there's a gap between where we are now and where we want to go. Here are some options for moving forward.</p>	
<p><i>I don't want to [engage in an action].</i></p>	<p>What keeps you coming? You said you wanted this. Maybe we should meet later. Could we still meet and work together on something? Sounds like now's not the time. Here's my card in case you are interested in working together in the future.</p>	

## EXERCISE 1.1

### Family and Friend Job Tree

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To identify and explore clients' awareness of the influence of family and friends
- » **Materials Needed:** Paper
- » **Vocabulary:** advice (noun), advise (verb), colleague, coworker, guidance, imam, influence, minister, pastor, priest, rabbi, and working "under the table"
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Information: interprets and communicates information; Systems: understands systems; Thinking: reasoning
- » **Methodology:** Large-group discussion and individual activity
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

Draw a model "family job tree" on the board to help clients identify influences in their lives. The people can be real or imagined. For example:

My Family's Job Tree

Father: truck driver; Mother: supermarket checker; Grandfather: coal miner; Uncle: unemployed; Step-brother: construction worker who also works "under the table" making cabinets for friends

Me: \_\_\_\_\_

- Ask clients to draw their own "family job trees." The tree may include mother, father, step-relatives, foster relatives, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and others who have had a significant impact on their lives.
- Lead a discussion using the following questions:
  - What are the major jobs that members of your family have had?
  - What kinds of jobs did most of the men have?
  - What kinds of jobs did most of the women have?
  - How have technological changes affected jobs?
  - How did your family's jobs shape their lifestyles and values?
  - What education, skills, or qualities are necessary for these jobs?
  - Have members of your family encouraged you in any way to learn about their jobs, or go into their fields? How? Give specific examples.
  - Can you identify a job pattern in your family, aside from what we've discussed regarding men's and women's jobs?
  - If you can talk to some of your relatives, ask them what they would have wanted to do with their lives had they been able to choose again. What else would you ask them?

- In general, how do careers of family members affect career choices?
- Include your children in the job tree. How can the job tree change?

**Extension Activity**

Ask clients to circle the names of family members to whom they go for help. For example, the leader can start by asking, “Whom do you talk to when your child is sick” or “Whom do you talk to if you have a conflict with a friend?” Then ask each client to remember or think about whom he or she talked to (or would talk to) when making employment decisions.

- Whom did you talk to?
- Why did you choose that person(s)?
- What advice did the person(s) give you?
- Did you follow the advice? Why or why not?

Wrap up the session by pointing out that we all seek advice and are influenced by family and friends. It is important to be aware of these influences and how they can both help and hinder us as we explore careers.

## HANDOUT 1.1

### My Experiences

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

Place a check mark next to the items in which you have experience. This is a key step in imagining work and a career.

#### Working with People

- Take care of a sick relative
- Give medicine to a child
- Care for a child who is disabled
- Help at a school event
- Make phone calls
- Visit friends and family in nursing homes
- Visit new places
- Take care of my children or other people's children
- Teach or coach a sport
- Organize parties for family or friends
- Teach at my place of worship
- Help children with their homework
- Participate in community events
- Volunteer at a library
- Work with other parents in schools
- Help out on field trips with teens
- Play music or dance for others
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Working with Data

- Write checks and balance a checkbook
- Create a budget for my family
- Keep track of money for a club or group
- Handle money or finances for a small business
- Read a map
- Follow directions
- Read a flyer or poster
- Apply for a loan or credit
- Fill out forms and applications
- Make airline arrangements

- Enter data onto a computer
- Select and price items to be purchased by a group
- Maintain sales records for an organization's store or sale
- Choose colors for sewing, crafts, or decorating projects
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Working with Things

- Take care of plants, garden, farm
- Cook
- Do housecleaning
- Arrange flowers
- Care for animals
- Type, file, or do other office work for an organization
- Use a computer
- Take photographs
- Operate stereo equipment
- Build furniture
- Repair equipment, repair appliances
- Operate equipment (lawnmowers, saws, forklifts)
- Use tools
- Drive buses, vans, taxis
- Prepare meals for large groups
- Build things
- Cut down trees
- Give haircuts, or style hair
- Service cars
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## HANDOUT 1.2

### **My Personal Profile**

*Adapted from Marian Collette, Beverly Woliver, Mary Beth Bingman, and Juliet Merrifield, Getting There: A Curriculum for Moving People into Employment, rev. ed. (Knoxville, Tenn.: Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, 1996). Used with permission.*

Please fill in your answers on the blank lines.

**1.** My hobbies are \_\_\_\_\_

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**2.** When I have free time, I like to \_\_\_\_\_

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---

**3.** The most interesting section of the newspaper is \_\_\_\_\_

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**4.** On my day off from work or school, I like to \_\_\_\_\_

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---

**5.** My favorite thing to read is \_\_\_\_\_

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**6.** My favorite type of television program is \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**7.** My favorite form of recreation is \_\_\_\_\_

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**8.** In conversation, I like to discuss \_\_\_\_\_

---

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**9.** My favorite subjects in grade school were \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST 1.1

### Identifying Skills

*This checklist is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

#### Communication Skills

- Reading and following directions
- Putting terms in alphabetical order
- Comparing or cross-checking two lists
- Filling out forms
- Writing letters and memos correctly
- Reading and understanding policies and memos
- Writing reports
- Speaking to people you don't know
- Speaking English and another language
- Taking notes while someone speaks
- Finding information (e.g., finding what you need from the phone book, a dictionary, the library)
- Using a map
- Reading bus, train, and plane schedules
- Explaining situations to other people
- Knowing when to ask for help or more explanation

#### Number Skills

- Doing arithmetic
- Using percentages and decimals
- Using a calculator
- Rounding off numbers
- Typing/keyboarding
- Calculating hours worked, money owed, etc.
- Estimating costs or time needed to complete a job
- Using a computer database

#### Technical Skills

- Making, fixing, and repairing things
- Operating machinery
- Installing things
- Building things
- Gardening, landscaping, and farming

#### Business Skills

- Operating a computer
- Using a business telephone
- Filing, sorting, and classifying information
- Balancing checkbooks
- Working with budgets
- Setting up and closing out a cash register

#### Management and Self-Management Skills

- Being patient with others
- Keeping a cheerful attitude
- Getting interested excited in a task
- Offering to help when it's needed
- Knowing how to accept directions
- Motivating oneself to complete necessary tasks
- Helping motivate others to get the job done
- Prioritizing tasks so that the larger goal is met on time
- Following the rules
- Presenting a neat and professional image
- Checking your own work
- Working hard without complaining
- Being courteous with others
- Seeking help when needed
- Being eager to learn
- Speaking up for yourself
- Solving problems in a cooperative way

### **Creative and Artistic Skills**

- \_\_\_ Drawing
- \_\_\_ Expressing oneself on paper or in speech
- \_\_\_ Performing
- \_\_\_ Presenting artistic ideas
- \_\_\_ Dancing and other body movement
- \_\_\_ Designing
- \_\_\_ Model making
- \_\_\_ Handicraft making (e.g., baskets, pots)
- \_\_\_ Writing poetry
- \_\_\_ Illustrating, sketching
- \_\_\_ Taking photographs
- \_\_\_ Mechanical drawing

### **People Skills**

- \_\_\_ Caring for children responsibly
- \_\_\_ Caring for the sick and elderly
- \_\_\_ Showing warmth and empathy
- \_\_\_ Calming people down
- \_\_\_ Helping people complete a task
- \_\_\_ Teaching someone a skill or task
- \_\_\_ Knowing how to get along with different people or personalities
- \_\_\_ Leading groups or activities

## EXERCISE 1.2

### Evaluating My Strengths

*This exercise is adapted from Martha and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients identify their interests and talents and use that information to guide their educational and career decisions
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “My Strengths,” “Identifying Skills”
- » **Vocabulary:** fix, “how to do,” interests, “know how to make,” organize, show someone, talents
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: writing; Thinking skills: reasoning; creative thinking

#### Instructions

Distribute the “Strengths and Skills” handout, and ask the clients to think about and fill in their answers. Say that they can refer to their “Identifying Skills” checklist for listing skills. Once clients have completed the chart, have them form small groups to share their responses. For English as a second language (ESOL) clients, model how to complete the handout on the board or an overhead screen so that they understand the objective.

#### Extension Activity

Ask clients to prepare a “demonstration presentation” for which they select one of “three things I could show someone else how to do.” After each client presents to the group, ask the other clients to name the skills used in presenting the material.

## HANDOUT 1.3

### Strengths and Skills

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

<p>At least three things I have made</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Skills I used</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>At least three things I have organized</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Skills I used</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>At least three things I have fixed</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Skills I used</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>At least three things I know how to do</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Skills I used</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>At least three things I could show someone else how to do</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Skills I used</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## EXERCISE 1.3

### Identifying Hopes and Dreams

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients begin to talk about their hopes and dreams as the starting point for career exploration
- » **Materials Needed:** Access to a CD player or computer and the song “Fast Car” by Tracy Chapman. Find lyrics by doing a web search.
- » **Vocabulary:** checkout girl, convenience store, cruising, dreams, hopes, promoted, suburbs
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: listening, reading; Information: interprets and communicates information

#### Instructions

Distribute lyrics to “Fast Car” and play the song for clients. You can point out that Tracy Chapman attended college in Boston and that she was once homeless and began playing music on the streets in Harvard Square.

Facilitate a discussion about the song, recording key words and phrases on the board. Consider including the following questions:

1. Look at the title. What do you think the song is about? What are some uses for cars?
2. In the beginning of the song, where is the singer working? How does she feel about her life? Can you describe her?
3. What is the singer’s plan? With whom is she making plans? Where does she want to go?
4. Why did the singer quit school? What was the problem? Do you think she should have quit? If you had known her then, what would you have said to her? Why?
5. When does the singer feel she can “be someone”? Why do you think she has this feeling? Do you ever have this feeling? If so, when?
6. What happens after the singer and her partner move to the city? Does she get a job? What is her job? Does her partner get a job? Where do they live? Does she still have plans? Is she still hopeful?
7. At the end of the song, what is happening? Is the singer happy? Is she hopeful? What do you think she should do? If you were her friend, what would you say to her?

Another set of questions might be:

1. What does the singer want? What are her hopes and dreams?
2. What does she think it will take to realize her hopes and dreams?
3. What steps has she taken to reach her dreams?
4. What kinds of jobs has she had or is she planning to get?
5. What gets in the way of her hopes and dreams? (e.g., lack of a job, low-paying job, no high school degree, alcoholic father, absent mother, homelessness)

In guiding the discussion toward the hopes and dreams of the clients, ask the following questions:

1. Think about your own life. What kind of song would you write about your life?
2. What would be the song's title?

Wrap-up items focus on the relevance of "Fast Car" and the discussion to career exploration:

1. It is important to know yourself—what you want and need.
2. Having hopes and dreams gives us something to work toward.
3. Everybody faces obstacles, whether big or small.
4. Obstacles can be addressed more effectively by breaking down the process into small steps.

### **Extension Activities**

1. Ask clients to write down two of their dreams or hopes. Once everyone has done so, ask each client to share one of the dreams or hopes and write it on the board. Then ask each client to name at least one obstacle that blocks achievement of that dream or hope and write it on the board beside the dream or hope. Examples of obstacles might include working as a housekeeper at night, children, limited English proficiency, and family disapproval of a client's dream.

Then have the clients brainstorm ways in which obstacles might be overcome and write down the results. These might include small steps that can be taken right away. For example, English classes are a step toward better-preparedness for a higher paying job. Or clients might enlist an older family or community member to support their dreams. They might also talk to a supervisor about additional opportunities at work.

2. Ask clients to "build" their dream job using pipe cleaners, putty, and other materials. (Note: as with the discovery cards, skip this activity if it does not seem appropriate for the client.)

## EXERCISE 1.4

### Setting Goals: An Introduction

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009). Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients begin to understand the importance of setting goals to reach their dreams
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Student Goal Scenarios” and “Worksheet for Student Goal Scenarios” (see *Integrating Career Awareness*); newsprint
- » **Vocabulary:** motivational, road map
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: listening, writing; Information: interprets and communicates information

#### Instructions

With clients, brainstorm words used to discuss the future, such as dreams, hopes, wishes, desires, goals, and aspirations.

Provide clients with copies of the handouts “Student Goal Scenarios” and “Worksheet for Student Goal Scenarios.” Select scenarios to read aloud, while clients read along. Have clients look at the goal scenarios, individually or in pairs, and answer this question about each scenario: “What are the writer’s goals for this year?” Have clients write each of these goals on the worksheet.

Then ask clients to write down short answers to the following questions:

- What were some of my childhood dreams or hopes for my life?
- What hopes or dreams did I have for my career when I was younger?
- What hopes or dreams do I have for my life now?
- What hopes or dreams do I have for my career now?
- What do I need to do to reach my dreams?
- Where do I see myself in five years?

Clients can share their answers either in pairs or in a large group.

Then, as a group, brainstorm reasons why having goals is important. Some answers might include (1) the value of having something to work toward; (2) the need for a road map; (3) the motivational effect of goals; and (4) the need for something concrete.

Explain that when we can see our goals clearly, we are more likely to achieve them. The process may go something like this: Begin with a goal in mind. Then create a plan to get where we want to go. Yet always remember that goals are not set in stone. They may change over time, as we change.

#### Extension Activity

Have clients practice writing goals using journal entries or prompts. Use a selection of these entries to illustrate the process of setting realistic goals and to inspire other clients to explore and write their own goals.

## HANDOUT 1.4

### **Job Values Inventory**

*Adapted from Victoria King and Charley Cartwright, California Career Planning Guide, 2003–2005. Used with permission.*

This exercise helps you identify the job qualities you value most. Rank the following items from 1 (most important) to 12 (least important). Once you begin exploring job possibilities, focus only on jobs that earn scores of more importance.

- \_\_\_ Good salary
- \_\_\_ Good benefits (insurance, retirement, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Job security
- \_\_\_ Work hours that meet your needs
- \_\_\_ Satisfactory location
- \_\_\_ Compatible coworkers, supervisors, customers
- \_\_\_ Opportunity to learn and develop skills
- \_\_\_ Challenging and satisfying work
- \_\_\_ Good working conditions or environment
- \_\_\_ Like or believe in what the organization does
- \_\_\_ Chance for promotion or advancement
- \_\_\_ Prestige and respect

## HANDOUT 1.4.1

### **Job Values Inventory Summary**

*Adapted from Victoria King and Charlseay Cartwright, California Career Planning Guide, 2003–2005. Used with permission.*

List the six “job values” you consider most important (see the “Job Values Inventory”).

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Out of these six job values, select three and explain why you feel you cannot manage without them:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Your job values may apply to other areas of your life but somehow be most significant in your career. By taking the time to evaluate these values’ importance, you can enhance self-understanding and ultimately attain fulfilling work.



## EXERCISE 1.5

### Skills That Travel

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients identify transferable skills
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “My Experiences” and “Client Life Lines” (see *Integrating Career Awareness*) along with Post-it notes, newsprint
- » **Vocabulary:** career, influence, timeline
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: reasoning, creative thinking; Basic skills: reading

#### Instructions

*Note: To complete this activity, clients need to have already completed a “life line.”*

Ask clients to take out their life lines and refer to (or add) the event “Start attending English/GED class.” Then distribute the “My Experiences” handout. In reviewing the checklist as a group, ask clients to identify items they have accomplished in order to begin attending an English or GED class. Record the answers on the board. Then ask clients to select another event on their life line. Distribute Post-it notes; then, using “My Experiences” as a guide, ask clients to identify four or five personal experiences that relate to the new event and to jot these down on the Post-it and attach it to the new event. Have clients share these recorded experiences with a partner.

Have clients turn to the “future” part of their life line and write down three “hopes, dreams, or plans.” Then return to the “My Experiences” handout and ask them to list (on a Post-it) skills they can use to achieve their hopes, dreams, or plans. Have clients attach the Post-it to the future part of their life line and, as before, ask them to share their notes with a partner. Clients can complete the worksheet “Client Future Timeline” (ICA) the following day to reinforce this activity.

#### Extension Activity

Ask each client to choose one event on his or her life line and then “tell a story” about the event, including how he or she made it happen and what resulted. Meanwhile, the listening client jots down the steps taken by the teller. Together, the two clients then review these steps and identify the skills used to take each step. Clients can refer to the skills listed in “My Experiences.”

Have the clients return to the larger group. Then ask them to complete the “Client Future Timeline.” Go around the room and ask each to name one of his or her employment goals or events. Thereafter, ask each client which of the skills they identified with their partner might be used to help them accomplish their goal or reach their desired event.

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 1.1

### **Creating an Employment Portfolio**

An employment portfolio encompasses skills, interests, and educational and occupational goals, giving the client a tool to advocate for him or herself in seeking various opportunities. Working together, a client and counselor can use the activities and other resources in the Toolkit to develop just such a portfolio.

The portfolio may include, but is not limited to, the following items:

- Discovery cards—index cards on which clients note their existing positive attributes, additional attributes discovered when working with counselors, and community resources<sup>6</sup>
- Checklist of skills, interests, and abilities
- Map of community resources
- Practice applications for jobs or training programs
- Evaluations from internships or volunteer positions
- Results from KeyTrain and WorkKeys (or another certificate-based program)
- Certifications, licenses, and other relevant qualifications
- Cover letters
- Resumes
- References

To encourage creativity when thinking about jobs, counselors can post work-related images from magazines and other media around the room. As appropriate, use these images to initiate a discussion of what clients want and do not want in a job.

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 1.2

### **A Walk for Coffee: Exploring What-Ifs for Jobs and Workplaces**

On “walking tours” around the neighborhood, counselors can ask clients to record thoughts on jobs in bullet-point format on discovery cards (see above). This process allows the client to develop information-gathering skills and to identify past jobs as well as places they might like to work. Counselors can say, “I see you have these skills”—and list them.

Walking tours can also function as “treasure hunts,” during which clients uncover buried information about themselves. Counselors can inspire clients by pointing out these hidden skills, always emphasizing assets rather than deficits.

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<sup>6</sup>Some clients may find the use of discovery cards condescending. Be sure to use the cards only with clients for whom they have a motivating effect.

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 1.3

### **S+S = S+S\***

Lyn Legere, a Boston-based specialist in mental health recovery and peer advocacy, refers to the following “formula” as Psych-Rehab 101. It helps clients set goals in all types of situations.

**Skills** are associated with people’s actions or behaviors. Skills can be taught, learned, practiced, and acquired.

**Supports** help a person perform a skill and can be tangible objects or people, such as a subway or bus pass, an alarm clock, or a friend, family member, or counselor.

A person requires both skills and supports to achieve a goal. The more times a person fails to achieve a goal, however, the more discouraged he or she will become.

#### **Scenario**

I would really like a job. My problem is that I can’t keep a job because I am always late. What skill(s) do I need?

- Time management, including the ability to get up on time
- Awareness of how long it takes me to prepare for work
- General organizational skills

(I will also need to explore other issues particular to my situation.)

What supports do I need?

- Alarm clock
- Call from a friend
- Bus or subway schedule
- To-do checklist before I leave the house for work
- Perhaps a job that begins in the afternoon.

#### **Recap**

Identifying needed skills and supports represents the first step toward acquiring a client’s ultimate employment goals. Yet as counselors work with clients, they must affirm the point that most behaviors are complex. Getting to work on time requires more than one skill and more than one step. Reaching the “Success + Satisfaction” part of the equation involves a journey. In setting any goal or plan, the client must be the leader, or at least an active partner. The counselor, for his or her part, must be sure to celebrate every forward step along the way.

\* Skills + Supports = Success + Satisfaction

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 1.4

### Career Mapping

*Adapted from G. Shaheen and J. Rio, Career Mapping for Disadvantaged Job Seekers (New York: Corporation for Supportive Housing, Chronic Homelessness Employment Technical Assistance Center, November 2006). Used with permission from the Corporation for Supportive Housing.*

Originally developed by the nonprofit One-Stop Career Centers, career mapping is intended especially to engage job seekers who struggle with chronic homelessness. The process is rooted in the strengths and preferences of job seekers, paving the way for self-discovery along with a holistic personal profile and a vision for the future, with supports selected by the job seeker.

For counselors, the challenge centers on engaging and connecting with clients. In listening to the clients' life stories, the counselors must recognize and acknowledge significant events and aspirations and, in turn, help bolster clients' hopes and confidence. The counselors must also be responsive to the clients' subtle emotions and expressions. Finally, counselors must possess knowledge of vocational resources.

The exercise involves the creation of five separate maps. (See *Career Mapping for Disadvantaged Job Seekers*—cited in full, including URL, in the bibliography.) See also “Career Mapping for Chronically Homeless Job Seekers” at <http://documents.csh.org/documents/pubs/chetacareermapping.pdf>.

#### The Five Maps

1. The **life history** map entails a timeline from birth to the present, with a focus on the client's patterns, themes, and interests, along with corresponding strengths and skills.
2. The second map focuses on **strengths, gifts, and abilities**. In presenting strengths, clients use “I am” statements. Strengths may be physical, intellectual, or spiritual. Gifts, which may be defined as talents and aptitudes, are expressed with “I enjoy” statements. And abilities are concrete skills, which clients can discuss using “I can” statements.
3. The third map, “**what works,**” is broader than the first two, focusing on elements in work and other environments that are and are not suited to a client. The map is intended to capture factors important to the client's success and comfort.
4. The **resources** map includes both formal and informal supports for the client. Mainstream resources may include job-search websites and career centers—that is, resources not necessarily intended for people who are homeless, low-income, or who face other difficult circumstances. Informal resources may include friends, neighbors, acquaintances, or family members who have or have had a job in which the client is interested; and public libraries or community centers where employment opportunities are posted.
5. The counselor and client work together to create the final map—a **referral and action plan**. This plan should be generated using information gathered from the previous four maps.

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 1.5

### **Work Success Stories: Learning from Others**

*Clients can gain inspiration for their own professional journey by reading others' success stories. The following titles are attributed in full in the endnotes. Choose one or more to read together as group. Note that this activity can be 45 minutes or longer.*

- John Gordon, *More than a Job: Readings on Work and Society*.
- Helen Lewis et al., eds., *Picking Up the Pieces: Women in and out of Work in the Rural South*.
- Wendy Luttrell, *Claiming What Is Ours: An Economics Experience Workbook*.
- Literacy Volunteers of America, *Speaking Out on Work*.
- Studs Terkel, *Working*.

In reading one of these stories, the counselor can read aloud, facilitate group reading aloud (aka choral reading), or have the clients take turns reading, one passage at a time. At the close of the given story, the counselor can lead the group in a discussion of comprehension questions determined in advance. Next, clients can meet in small groups to discuss these questions:

- Do you know people like this?
- What types of people have these kinds of jobs?
- What does this story suggest to you about the work world?

If time remains, the group could then divide into small groups to read together and discuss other stories.

# Stage 2: Contemplation

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*“Regardless of their tendency to procrastinate, almost all people in the contemplation stage are eager to talk about themselves and their problems, searching for reassurance that their concerns can be understood and overcome ... But while they can actively read, think, and talk, they are not ready to prepare for action until they achieve a greater understanding of their behavior. As a result consciousness-raising is just as important in the contemplation stage as it was during the [precontemplation] stage.”*

— CFG, p. 110

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## Overview

### Characteristics of Vocational Situation

The statement that best characterizes a client during this phase is “To work or not to work.” Correspondingly, a client:

- Now considers employment a possibility.
- Will discuss work with a counselor.
- May ask about various implications of being employed.
- Common expressions by clients at this stage may include “Work is for some folks but not for me right now — maybe later” or “I’ll see what you offer, but I won’t commit.”

### Outcomes

Key outcomes that indicate a client is progressing to the next stage include:

- Attendance at a meeting outside the residence to discuss employment goals.
- Agreement to take some action related to employment. This may include KeyTrain, computer tests, or other assessments.
- Greater comfort with the term or concept of employment.
- Ability to define what employment means for him or her.
- Willingness to ask the question “What do I do next?”

### Competencies

By participating in the activities in this stage, clients can enhance the following soft skills:

- Thinking skills, including creative thinking, problem solving, and the ability to see things in the mind’s eye, such as a “bridge” to a job
- The ability to acquire and evaluate information, as well as to use computers to process information
- Basic skills such as reading and writing

Key goals in this stage include educating clients about employment possibilities and resources; helping clients envision the road ahead, including a clearer path to employment; and introducing tools to make the job search more formal.

## Tips for Counselor Engagement with Clients

Following are scripts for responding to clients during the contemplation stage:

Client says:	Counselor responds:
<i>I'm not ready just yet.</i>	<p>What needs to happen for you to be ready?            What will be different once you are ready?            How will you know you are ready?            What is stopping you from acting?            Can we make a plan or set goals together to address your needs and concerns? (See Counselor Reference 1.3.)</p>
<i>I'm sick of being broke.</i>	<p>Hmm, I wonder if getting a job could help.            Why is this an issue now?            Might work be a remedy? (Explore options and ideas.)            Let's go and get a job!</p>
<i>My life is awful!</i>	<p>You can change your situation.            But first, give me two specific examples of what you mean.            What in your life is okay? What isn't awful? (Explore options, interests, and ideas.)</p>
<i>I'd love to work if everything were not such a mess.</i>	<p>What's the mess? Let's create some order.            But first, if everything weren't a mess, what would that look like?            Anyway, what is a "mess"? (Ask for examples.)            Refer to PICBA (Problem, Impact, Costs/Benefits, Brainstorm, Action) (p. 52).</p>
<i>I don't think I have the skills I need.</i>	<p>Did someone tell you that you don't have the skills you need?            What skills do you have? What skills do you need? (Explore interests and skills as well as options for acquiring those skills.)            If I tell you about a place where you can get skills, would you follow up?</p>

**In general:** Identify barriers and explore concerns. Then seek options for overcoming these concerns and identify resources that may help. Engage in this discussion with the client, not for the client. Set goals and make plans together. Plan for the best, while remaining mindful of intermediate outcomes.

## HANDOUT 2.1

### Websites for Career Exploration

The following resources can help clients explore their work options.

#### **America's Career InfoNet** ([www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org))

This site allows users to search by state using several criteria, including wages, level of education, fastest growing jobs, and jobs most in demand. The site also includes videos and other tools for exploration. Follow these steps when you visit:

1. In the top-left box, select "Occupation Information."
2. In the left sidebar, select "Highest Paying."
3. In the middle of the screen, "Select an Education Level," then click "Continue."
4. Select the appropriate state.
5. Click on an occupation for more details.

#### **CareerZone** ([www.nycareerzone.org](http://www.nycareerzone.org))

This site provides a quick and easy assessment tool to help people identify possible occupations based on their interests and personality types. It provides a full description of occupations, including tasks, skills, knowledge, and education requirements, as well as videos. The site is for job seekers in New York state; other states have similar sites. When you visit:

1. On the right side click on "Career Information."
2. Select "Graphic Site."
3. On the upper right of the screen, select "Assess Yourself."
4. Roll the cursor over each of the six circles and read the description of each. Choose the top three choices and click on them in order.
5. Then click on "View Jobs."

#### **Crittenton Women's Union** ([www.liveworkthrive.org](http://www.liveworkthrive.org))

This site helps clients identify the true costs of living in a particular area (with the focus on Massachusetts), as opposed to costs as outlined by federal guidelines. Correspondingly, site visitors learn about wages that allow for economic independence and the jobs that provide such wages. When you visit:

1. Under "Research & Tools," in the drop-down menu, click "Economic Independence Calculator" or "Hot Jobs."
2. Explore as desired.

#### **Massachusetts Career Information System** ([www.masscis.intocareers.org](http://www.masscis.intocareers.org))

Like America's Career InfoNet, this site has extensive information on occupations, including videos. The "Reality Check" section is geared toward youth but can help all visitors consider the impact of career choices on their finances for the short and long term. When you visit:

1. Click the "Adult" icon, then register by city or town (bottom option) and click "sign-in."
2. In the top-left sidebar (under "Occupations & Employment") click "Occupations"; then click a desired occupation from the alphabetized list.

3. In the left-hand sidebar (under “Related Information”) click “Programs of Study.” Then select and click a desired occupation.
4. In the left-hand sidebar (under “Related Information”) click “Mass Schools.”
5. Click the region of the state in which you reside (“Central Massachusetts” or “Greater Boston”) and review the list of schools offering relevant programs of study. Click on any of the programs that stir your interest and read further.

**National College Transition Network** ([www.collegetransition.org](http://www.collegetransition.org))

This organization provides a wealth of resources and advocates for policy to strengthen the path to college from secondary education.

**Occupational Outlook Handbook** ([www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco))

This classic reference provides information about occupations from A to Z. Compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, it includes descriptions of work, training and education requirements, earnings, and job prospects in each given field.

**TERI College Planning** ([www.tericollegeplanning.org](http://www.tericollegeplanning.org))

This site answers questions related to planning and paying for education, including college and other career-building programs. Resources include financial aid advice and links to documents, information on admissions tests, and links to applications. When you visit:

1. On the top menu bar, click “Publications.”
2. Click “Workbooks,” the lone item in the left sidebar.

**World-of-Work Map** ([www.act.org/wwm](http://www.act.org/wwm))

The World-of-Work Map organizes occupations into six clusters,<sup>7</sup> 12 regions, and 26 career areas (i.e., groups of similar jobs). Using graphics, it shows how occupations relate to one another based on tasks performed. Most important, the site allows visitors to identify the skill levels needed for particular jobs. Specific examples (e.g., writing samples, math problems) help visitors better identify their skill levels. When you visit:

1. On the outer ring, click either “Working with Data,” “Working with Things,” “Working with Ideas,” or “Working with People.”
  - a. In the magnified segment, select a career area and click it.
  - b. If, for example, you have clicked “Working with Things,” then click “Mechanical and Electrical Specialties” and review “Examples of Occupations” and “Majors/Programs of Study.”
  - c. Still working in the “Mechanical” section, click the “skill level” hyperlink. Review the various characteristics and skills levels needed for each occupation, clicking on the hyperlinked numbers for greater detail. Note to counselors: These characteristics are highly useful for guiding discussions with clients and classes about career-related goals.

<sup>7</sup> Parallel to John Holland’s six occupational types. Visit [www.careerkey.org](http://www.careerkey.org), then scroll down to the section on “Career Advice.” Under “Your Personality” (left-hand side), click “Holland’s Theory of Career Choice.”

## EXERCISE 2.1

### Surf for Options Online

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients become familiar with using the internet to learn about jobs and to identify helpful information in comparing employment choices.
- » **Materials Needed:** A computer with internet access for each client
- » **Vocabulary:** certification, licensure, outlook
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: reading; Technology: applies technology to task; Thinking: sees things in the mind's eye
- » **Methodology:** Computer lab activity
- » **Time:** 60–90 minutes

#### Instructions

Ask clients to identify two to four jobs about which they want to learn more. Use that list as the basis for the internet search. In addition to the sites listed in “Websites for Career Exploration” (Handout 2.1), we recommend exploring Next Steps ([www.nextsteps.org](http://www.nextsteps.org), see “Career Profiles”). Counselors are advised to review all the sites to determine which best fit each respective client’s language level and internet familiarity. Two versions of the “Career Exploration on the Internet” handout are available: Version A: Pre-GED/GED level and Version B: ESOL level. Choose the version that best meets clients’ needs.

#### Extension Activities

- Guide clients in comparing education needed and expected wages for different occupations. This will encourage clients to begin to think realistically about whether or not a career path is right for them.
- Have clients bring their completed “Career Exploration on the Internet” handouts to class. Post four large sheets of paper around the room with the headings “High School or GED,” “Certificate Program or Associate’s Degree,” “Bachelor’s Degree,” and “Graduate Degree.” Ask clients to list their future career choice (and expected wage) under the heading that best matches their level of educational attainment.
- Facilitate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - Were the clients surprised by how much or how little education was needed for some jobs? Which ones and why?
  - Were they surprised by how much or how little the wage was for some jobs? Which ones and why?
  - Is there a relationship between how much education or training a job requires and the job’s wage?
  - Why do some jobs require a bachelor’s degree (BA) but pay less than a job requiring an associate’s degree (AA)?

## HANDOUT 2.2

### Career Exploration on the Internet: Version A

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

#### Work Description and Working Conditions

What does a \_\_\_\_\_ do on a daily basis?

In what kind of setting do they work? Inside or outside? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours a day do they work? \_\_\_\_\_

Does a \_\_\_\_\_ work alone or with other people?

What kind of equipment does a \_\_\_\_\_ use? (e.g., computer, X-ray machine, forklift)

Are there any physical or health considerations associated with this work? \_\_\_\_\_

Other questions? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Wage/Salary

What is the typical starting salary in this occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Other questions? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Employment Outlook

What is the employment outlook for this occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there many jobs in this occupation near where I live? \_\_\_\_\_

Is part-time employment usually available in this occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Career Path and Opportunities for Growth

What are the opportunities for advancement in this occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Other questions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Education Requirements and Licensure or Certification**

What education or training is required to become a \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Where do I go to school or get training in my area to become a \_\_\_\_\_ ?

What is the best school for \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Does this occupation require licensure or certification? \_\_\_\_\_

Other questions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HANDOUT 2.3

### Career Exploration on the Internet: Version B

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

First, the facilitator chooses two sample occupations to model the online research process for clients. Afterward, clients research two occupations of interest to them. Consider beginning with the following websites: [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco) and [www.act.org/wwm](http://www.act.org/wwm).

	Sample Occupation #1	Sample Occupation #2	Client Occupation #1	Client Occupation #2
What are the job duties?				
What is the setting of the job?				
How many hours a day or week is the job?				
Do you work alone or with other people?				
What kind of equipment is used?				
What is the salary?				
Are many jobs available?				
What education or training is required?				

## EXERCISE 2.2

### Reality Checking

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients match their core skills with a desired occupation
- » **Materials Needed:** World-of-Work Map website ([www.act.org/wwm/index.html](http://www.act.org/wwm/index.html)), client test scores, and/or samples of clients' math and reading skills
- » **Vocabulary:** applied mathematics, applied technology, basic skills, data, major (study area), "making a match," occupational profile, programs of study, skill level, teamwork
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Information: acquires and evaluates information, interprets and communicates information; Thinking skills: decision making

#### Instructions

Career planning entails a continual "reality check" between the client's desired job and his or her basic math and reading skills. Clients previously had the opportunity to explore career websites (see p. 29); now they will use the World-of-Work Map to look more closely at the match between their skills and an occupation.

Ask clients to identify two or three jobs that best fit their strengths, interests, and needs, based on based on recently completed activities. Then ask clients to choose a sample of:

- Their best math work
- Their best writing work
- A passage of text that best reflects their most comfortable comprehension level

Thereafter, the lesson can proceed in one of two ways:

1. Clients explore their top two or three jobs on the World-of-Work Map, including required skill levels in math, reading, and writing. Clients then compare their classroom samples to those listed.
2. The counselor prints out examples from the World-of-Work Map reflecting three or four skill levels in math, reading, and writing. Begin with one skill (i.e., math) and distribute examples to the class. Once the counselor has reviewed the various skill levels, he or she can have the clients choose the levels they feel best reflect their present skills. On another day, clients could visit the website and compare the skill levels required for their desired occupation against their own skill levels.

#### Extension Activity

The counselor can develop activities to help clients measure their skill level in other areas (e.g., listening, locating information, observation, teamwork, applied technology) against the levels required for desired jobs in the World-of-Work Map.

## EXERCISE 2.3

### Informational Interviews

This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, *Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide* (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients learn how to engage in an informational interview
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Guide to Informational Interviewing” and “Informational Interview Log”
- » **Vocabulary:** advancement, benefits, entry-level, informational, interview, personnel, qualifications, training, wages
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: participates as a member of a team; Personal qualities: sociability; Basic skills: speaking
- » **Methodology:** Group discussion followed by individual activity
- » **Time:** Up to 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. This activity will give clients an opportunity to practice taking part in an informational interview.
2. Using the chart that follows, the counselor explains to the class that job seekers will likely participate in one or both of these types of interviews.

	Informational Interview	Job Interview
<b>Why</b>	To learn more about jobs in which you might be interested	To see if your skills match an employer’s needs for a specific job opening
<b>When</b>	In the early stages of your exploration of career options	After you have applied for a specific job
<b>Who</b>	Friends, family, neighbors, someone who has worked in a particular industry or occupation for a long time, a community member who has the job	May be a human resources professional from the company or a manager who is hiring directly
<b>Outcome</b>	You have more information about a job; you make a potentially valuable contact to add to your network	The employer decides whether or not to hire you

3. Brainstorm with clients a list of questions to ask a person with experience in a particular job. Record the list on the board.
4. Distribute and review the “Informational Interview Log” (Handout 2.5). For item number 6, clients can add a question based on the list generated in class.

5. There are several ways to have clients practice informational interviews:
  - a. Clients who have significant work experience can interview each other in class.
  - b. In groups of two, have clients interview individuals employed in the building or in the program. Assign one participant to take notes and the other to ask questions.
6. After the groups have returned to the class and shared their findings, ask whether the clients now would like to interview others in the community to learn more about desired jobs? If so, whom?

### Extension Activity

- On the board, record a list of the jobs clients explored during their internet sessions.
- Divide the list into categories (e.g., manufacturing, health care, accounting) or by skill level or in any other way the group devises.
- Ask clients to consider jobs in the category that most interests them. Then have each client decide on a few jobs in that area about which they would like to learn more.
- Form groups of clients based on common job interests. Ask the group members to brainstorm community members with whom they might conduct informational interviews (e.g., a local career center or chamber of commerce representative; a professional with either varied or focused work experience).
- Interviewing can be done by pair or a small group, in class (following an invitation) or in an outside office. Whatever the setting, clients should prepare thoroughly, including what questions to ask, who will do the asking, and who will record the answers.
- After the interviews, the groups report back to the class on what they have learned. For these reports, the counselor creates a wall chart listing the questions and responses for each job.

Discussion questions for comparing findings might include:

- Which job has the highest entry-level wage?
- Which job has the highest educational requirement?
- Do the jobs with the higher educational or training requirements also have higher entry-level wages?
- Which jobs have the most advancement opportunities?
- Which field has the most job openings?

## HANDOUT 2.4

### Tips for Informational Interviewing

*This handout is adapted from Martha and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

Following are the basics on informational interviewing, an important step on your path to fulfilling employment.

#### Why?

1. To get information about places of work
2. To help you make informed choices about where you want to work and what kind of job you want
3. To create a network of contacts

#### Whom to speak with? Where to go?

1. Friends, family members, neighbors, acquaintances
2. People whose careers interest you or about which you are curious
3. People to whom you have been referred by your contacts
4. Places where you would like to do on-the-job training or job shadowing

#### How?

Here's what to say to friends or family members or anyone you want to interview:

1. I'm collecting information about various fields of work.
2. I'm really interested in the work that you do.
3. I'm not looking for a job right now.
4. I only need 10 minutes of your time to ask you some questions.
5. Is it convenient now or later?

#### Interview Guidelines

1. You can write notes during the interview, but do so sparingly. It's preferable to listen very carefully and then jot down notes as soon as you have left.
2. After 10 minutes is up, thank the interviewee for meeting. If the interviewee wants to continue, say thanks and do so if you think more time will be helpful.
3. Before you leave the interview, ask for the interviewee's business card. If he or she does not have one, ask for his or her job title, the complete name of the company or organization, work address, and telephone number.
4. Write a thank-you note, making sure to include your name, address, and phone number.

**The Questions**

1. What do you do in a typical workday?
2. How did you get started in this job?
3. What experience, education, training, and skills did you need?
4. What would you most like to change about your work?
5. Is there anyone else you'd recommend I talk with? (If the interviewee gives you a name, ask if you may use the interviewee's name when trying to set up a meeting with the contact.)

These questions should take no longer than 10 minutes for the interviewee to answer. Remember to be professional; this means staying on topic and refraining from talk about yourself and what you can or cannot do. If you have extra time, you may ask any of the following questions:

6. What types of training and qualifications does this company/organization look for in its employees?
7. Does the company/organization take interns or job shadows?
8. Who does the hiring here? What is the hiring process like?

**More Tips**

1. Be sure to be well groomed and neatly dressed.
2. Make eye contact with the person to whom you are talking and smile when appropriate.
3. Extend your hand when you are being greeted and shake hands firmly.
4. Do not sit down until you have been invited to do so.
5. Take in your surroundings, including what you like and do not like. Be sure to include these observations in your notes.
6. Try to relax and enjoy the experience.

## HANDOUT 2.5

### Informational Interview Log

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

Name of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Questions to Ask:

1. What do you do in a typical workday? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How did you get started in the job? What experience, education, training, and skills did you need?

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3. What do you like most about your work? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What would you most like to change about your work?

5. Is there anyone else you'd recommend I talk with? (If the interviewee gives you a name, ask if you may use the interviewee's name when trying to set up a meeting with the contact.)

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#### Skills and Values for Employment

Counselors: Please incorporate handouts from the previous stage as follows: "Identifying Skills" (Checklist 1.1), "Job Values Inventory" (Handout 1.4), and "Job Values Inventory Summary" (Handout 1.4.1).

## Job Fair or Career Fair?

*This sidebar is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

Here are some differences between a job fair and a career fair:

### **A job fair:**

- Is usually organized around recruiters for a single employer or group of employers
- Has recruiters who may or may not have job openings
- Is a good opportunity to learn about various companies, rather than occupations
- Is a great opportunity to practice asking questions or to do an informational interview

### **A career fair:**

- May be organized by educational programs onsite
- Has speakers representing a variety of occupations who talk about their work
- Is an excellent source of information on various jobs
- Is an opportunity for clients to ask questions and interact informally with employed professionals
- Is a great opportunity to do an informational interview

## EXERCISE 2.4

### Be a Wise Consumer of Education

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

**Counselors:** Please incorporate “My Experiences” (Handout 1.1).

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients learn why being a good consumer of education is essential and what information is needed to make wise educational choices
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Get Smart Before You Enroll: Ask These Questions”
- » **Vocabulary:** affordable, bargain, campus, consumer, “good buy,” income, “return on investment,” transfer, wise decision
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: listening, speaking; Thinking skills: decision making; reasoning
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and pairs work
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Explain that just as we shop for good deals on products (e.g., clothing, food, electronics), we should also shop for the right match in education and training programs.
2. Ask clients what steps they would take if they were buying a new car. Then record these steps on the board.
3. Note that just as a car is expensive, so is attending college or a proprietary school.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, you want to be sure you are investing your time and money wisely. Attending college or another school represents a financial as well as an educational investment, so consider your likely return on investment.
4. In pairs, have clients brainstorm a list of questions related to attending college. Have pairs report the results. Record these results on the board. Discuss how clients might learn about colleges or training programs, noting that the process is similar to that of researching information on a car.
5. Distribute and discuss the handout “Get Smart Before You Enroll: Ask These Questions.”

#### Extension Activities

1. Invite a guest speaker from a local community college to address selected questions from the clients’ list.
2. Have clients modify the questions to fit adult basic education and English as a second language (ABE/ESOL) programs and skills training programs. Have clients visit an education program or proprietary school, ask these questions, and report back to the class with the results.

<sup>8</sup> A proprietary school is a privately owned postsecondary institution that provides training in vocational (i.e., trade) skills.

## HANDOUT 2.5

### Get Smart Before You Enroll: Ask These Questions

*This handout is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

Before visiting a college, prepare a list of questions to ask the college's representatives (as in the previous exercise). When you do visit, take notes on the answers.

#### 1. Financial aid:

- What percentage of students at this school receive financial aid?
- Does applying for financial aid affect a student's chances of being admitted?
- Does your school meet any or all of a student's financial needs?
- What scholarships are available?
- Do you have a work-study program?
- How would that fit my schedule?
- What are important dates for financial aid deadlines?

#### 2. The admissions process:

- What qualifications does a student need to be accepted to this college?
- What placement tests are required?
- What is the retention rate? (i.e., What percentage of students return each year?)

#### 3. The class schedule:

- When do classes start for the first and second semesters of this academic year?
- What is the summer schedule like?
- Ask yourself: are any classes offered at times that would fit my schedule?

#### 4. Student support services:

- Do you provide tutors or individual learning labs or resource centers?
- What is the student-to-advisor ratio?
- Do you have support for nontraditional students who may be older and returning to college?
- How do you help students pick a major?
- How do you help students who are struggling academically?
- Are computers available on campus for students' use?
- How do you help students plan for a career or find a job after college?

*continued »*

**5. Student goals and courses of study:**

- Does the college offer a degree or certificate in my field of interest?
- What are the prerequisites?
- What sorts of skills and courses are necessary to succeed in this field? For example, is it heavy in math, writing, etc.?
- How many students enroll each year in this field of study?
- How many students earn a degree or certificate in this field?
- How does this field of study compare to others at the college in number of faculty, students, and classes offered?
- What are the best programs at this college?
- How long, on average, does it take a part-time student to complete coursework for a major?
- If a state exam is required to work in the field: how many students from the school have passed this exam? How many have had to retake the exam?

**6. Transfer from a two- to a four-year program:**

- What courses would transfer from a community college to the four-year program in which I'm interested?
- Does this school have an agreement with other community or four-year colleges and universities?

**7. The range of students and the campus:**

- How many students attend part time? Full time?
- What percentage of students work while attending this college?
- What percentage of students live on campus? What percentage commute?
- What is the average age of students attending the college?
- What is the campus culture like?
- What kinds of extracurricular activities and client groups operate on campus?

**8. Ask about other important dates and deadlines.****9. Get a catalogue.**

## EXERCISE 2.5

### Options for Further Education

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To educate clients about the various types of postsecondary schools and institutions, including their advantages and disadvantages
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “What Are My Options?”
- » **Vocabulary:** accreditation, earning potential, license, postsecondary, proprietary school, trade
- » **Competencies:** Thinking skills: creative thinking, decision making; Information: acquires and evaluates information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

- As a large group, brainstorm a list of schools people attend for further education or skills training. Encourage clients to think about friends and family members who have attended school. Write the list on the board.
- Break the list into categories: (1) adult education and skills training programs; (2) community colleges; (3) four-year colleges or universities; and (4) proprietary schools.
- Distribute and discuss the handout “What Are My Options?”

#### Extension Activities

- Invite a local adult education provider to speak about ABE/ESOL programs available in the community.
- Invite former clients who have obtained a general equivalency degree (GED), completed a skills training program, or completed coursework at a community college to speak to the class.

## HANDOUT 2.6

### What Are My Options?

*Adapted from TERI College Planning, Get Ready for College (2007). Used with permission.*

#### **Proprietary Schools (Technical Schools, Trade Schools, and Institutes):**

- Offer training programs for specific careers, such as medical assistance, auto mechanics, cosmetology (e.g., hairstyling, skin care), and culinary arts.
- Typically last between three and 18 months.
- Grant a certificate or diploma in the field of mastery—not a college degree.

*You might consider this option if . . . you know the field you want to enter or your life circumstances would make it difficult to invest more time and money in longer-term education.*

#### **Two-Year Community Colleges:**

- Offer career certificates and associate's degrees and prepare students for certain careers or enrollment in a four-year college or university.
- Generally require submission of an application, application fee, and proof of a high school diploma or GED. Nursing programs also require a criminal background check.

*You might consider this option if . . . your chosen career requires an associate's degree or you want more time to prepare to enter a four-year college.*

#### **Four-Year Colleges and Universities:**

- Offer a bachelor's degree and prepare students for a variety of careers.
- Are required by many office jobs—and will continue to be required in the future.
- Provide opportunities to explore numerous subjects and career options, as well as to learn broadly and acquire transferable skills such as critical thinking, communication, research, and writing.

*You might consider this option if . . . your ultimate career goal requires a bachelor's degree and you are ready for such a long-term challenge.*

## HANDOUT 2.7

### Exploring Your Skill Set

Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.

Read the following statements and write “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know” beside each.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
<b>Communication</b>	
I can speak and write clearly so that others can understand.	
I can read and understand information in words, charts, or graphs.	
I can listen and ask questions to better understand instructions and others' ideas.	
I can share information using voice mail, email, and computers.	
<b>Thinking</b>	
I can figure out the basics of a situation, and identify problems and solutions.	
I am not afraid to try new and creative approaches to life and work.	
<b>Learning</b>	
I like to learn new things.	
I like to set goals to improve myself.	
<b>Attitudes and Behaviors</b>	
I am a confident person.	
I am a responsible person.	
I can adapt to changes and new information.	
I can manage my time, money, and other resources.	
I am motivated and have the energy to get the job done.	
I respect others' thoughts and ideas.	

**HANDOUT 2.8****Working with Others**

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

As in the previous exercise, write “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know” in the blank space beside each statement.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	YES / NO / DON'T KNOW
I enjoy being on a team.	
I like to contribute to common goals.	
I try to understand the needs and styles of others.	
I value and respect differences.	
I am responsive to instructions and follow through on tasks.	
I do whatever is needed to get the job done.	

## HANDOUT 2.9

### Self-Evaluation Worksheet

Adapted from Hampden County (Mass.) Regional Employment Board, Work Readiness Certificate Curriculum. Used with permission.

Read each statement, and check the column that best applies to you.

I am ...	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Willing to help others			
Willing to listen to others' opinions			
Apt to blame someone else for my mistakes			
Willing to try new tasks			
Willing to learn from my mistakes			
In control of my temper			
Willing to accept responsibility for my actions			
Apt to see more good than bad in people			
Apt to try to get even with others when I am hurt			
Willing to laugh when the joke is on me			
Willing to accept constructive criticism			
Apt to jump to conclusions			
Apt to think over a situation before reacting			
Willing to take time to get to know someone			
Apt to brag about myself			
Willing to complete a necessary task			
Apt to tell the whole truth			
Apt to show jealousy			
Apt to shame or make fun of others			
Respectful of others			
Apt to spread rumors			
Apt to rely on others to make decisions			
Apt to follow the crowd			
Patient with others			

continued »

Honest with others			
A hard worker			
Conscientious about my time commitments			
Interested in doing a good job			
A loyal friend			
Apt to make positive remarks			

## COUNSELOR REFERENCES 2.1<sup>9</sup>

### **A Second Walk for Coffee**

On this follow-up to the walk in Stage 1, counselors and clients scan the broader city for possible employment matches. Libraries, career fairs, and employment centers may fit the agenda. Counselors and clients will also use a slightly more formal version of the discovery cards discussed on page 23 during this walk. Now, alongside brainstorming, clients will record accomplishments on these cards. If they gather a certain number of cards, or meet a certain number of times with their counselor, then they receive an incentive. Cards are stored in a box.

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<sup>9</sup> Please refer also to Counselor Reference 1.1, "Creating an Employment Portfolio."

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 2.2

### **PICBA — A Problem-Solving Technique**

Clients can benefit from learning how to assess a problem and devise solutions. PICBA, which stands for “Problem, Impact, Costs/Benefits, Brainstorm, Action,” offers clients a means to achieve this end.

**Define the problem:** “A problem well defined is a problem half solved,” according to the Appalachian Consulting Group, which conceived of the PICBA approach. If a person is chronically short on money, for example, the problem could be that she spends too much money, does not earn enough money, or lends money to unreliable people. The core of the problem, then, is not the absence of money but rather the reason behind this absence.

**Impact:** What action is the individual taking to affect the problem—for better or worse? This question allows for further exploration of the problem and the role of the person experiencing it. Let’s say our subject who lacks money decides she is spending too much (a reasonable assumption). What is she up to?

- No longer buys scratch tickets
- Has cut down on cigarettes, in part because the price is up (but she’s not ready to quit yet)
- Still buys her daily cup of coffee from the corner luncheonette
- Has been paying extra when her credit card bill arrives to reduce her debt
- Usually eats out twice a week

**Costs/benefits:** This step may or may not be necessary depending on the situation. What are the costs versus benefits of solving or not solving the problem? Over the short term? The long term?

Costs of not solving, in the case of our friend who lacks cash:

- Rising debt
- Rising anxiety (which makes her smoke more, which costs more money, which means she has even less money)

Costs of solving:

- The need to give up something

Benefits of not solving:

- No need to make a change

Benefits of solving:

- Lower debt
- Fewer worries about money

**Brainstorm:** List as many solutions as possible:

- Get a part-time job.
- Stop eating out.
- Look at supermarket sales and plan meals around them.
- Make coffee at home.
- Find another roommate with whom to share rent.
- Whenever you leave the house, turn off all the lights. Use only needed lights when you are at home.
- Buy a monthly subway or bus pass instead of paying as you go.

**Action:** Does our friend want to take an action to address her problem and, if so, which action? She feels she does, because there's no clear benefit in keeping things as they are. And while she doesn't want another roommate, she's willing to try purchasing a monthly bus pass, checking for sales at the grocery store, and preparing coffee at home. If those steps don't have a great enough impact, then she'll consider getting a part-time job.

In working with clients on PICBA, counselors must serve as guides rather than enablers. They must explain, not push. If the counselor has a different perception of our cash-strapped friend than our friend herself does, that's ok—but the ultimate decisions belong to the client. If she acts in a way that ends up being unhelpful, she knows she has a tool to return to in PICBA.

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 2.3

### **Job Fair Preparation**

*This reference is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

**Part 1:** Ask clients to write up a 60-second introduction for a job fair, including their name, interests, and experience, and the type of work they are seeking. Have clients pair up and practice their introductions. ESOL clients should get extra practice time so that they feel comfortable presenting their introductions in a fluent and confident manner. Have the clients time each other's introductions and suggest changes as needed. If possible, the counselor can videotape the introductions and review the results with the clients.

**Part 2:** Have clients write a thank-you letter to a recruiter they met at a job fair.



**Counselor Notes on the Action Plan**

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Progress on Plan for [*Fill client's name*] \_\_\_\_\_

Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

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Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

# Stage 3: Preparation

.....

*“Preparation takes you from the decisions you make in the contemplation stage to the specific steps you take to solve the problem during the action stage ... Our experience has determined that proper preparation is vital to successful self-change. In the preparation stage, you will continue to reevaluate both yourself and your problem, but feel increasingly confident of your decision to change. Your personal reevaluation will look more toward your future self, and less to the problematic past.”*

— CFG, p. 146

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## Overview

### Characteristics of Vocational Situation

The statement that best characterizes a client during this phase is “I need something (e.g., money, transportation, an interview) to work.” As such the client:

- Assesses his or her own attributes in planning to pursue a job or career.
- Creates a plan for realizing a desired position.
- Gathers information.
- Expresses concerns, as appropriate, as the process unfolds.
- Seeks solutions to potential problems.
- Enters training or educational programs to prepare for employment.
- Considers risks of substance use linked to working and develops response plan.
- Expresses sentiments such as “I am interested in work. What do I need to do to succeed this time?”

### Outcomes

Key outcomes that indicate a client is moving to next stage include:

- Development of an employee assistance plan (EAP) file focused on short-term job goals
- Creation of a portfolio
- Identification of career goals
- Willingness to take greater responsibility for actions
- Participation as a volunteer or intern
- Identification of education or training options, followed by entering an appropriate program

**Competencies**

By participating in the activities in this stage, clients can enhance the following soft skills:

- Handling of information—e.g., acquiring, evaluating, organizing, maintaining, interpreting, and communicating
- Ability to think creatively and make decisions
- Personal qualities such as self-management and responsibility

During this stage, counselors will guide clients toward engaging in structured meetings using the Action Plan worksheet (Counselor Reference 2.4). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Action Plan includes:

- A summary of each meeting, including client and counselor contributions
- Next steps for both client and counselor
- Signature of both client and counselor. When possible, a copy of the document is given to the client at the close of each meeting.

Additional activities during this stage include continued efforts by counselors to educate clients on their various options, first attempts to develop a client portfolio, and the introduction of KeyTrain as a learning tool.

## Tips for Counselor Engagement with Clients

Following are scripts for responding to clients during the preparation stage:

Client says:	Counselor responds:
<i>I feel ready to go back to work, but I'm not sure what I need to get started.</i>	<p>Great. Let's see what you have so far. (Review work history, professional references, resume, cover letters.)</p> <p>Have you identified a job or type of work you would like to pursue?</p> <p>Do you know about the stages of a job search? Here they are ...</p> <p>Conclude: Looking for a job will require your full-time devotion. Sometimes the process will be discouraging. If you agree, let's plan on meeting consistently once or twice a week to discuss the search.</p>
<i>I would like to apply for a certain job, but I don't have the required skills (training, education, or licensure).</i>	<p>Would you consider enrolling in a training program or school to earn needed credentials?</p> <p>Here are some options we can explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral to a GED program or testing center</li> <li>• Referral to another training or certification program</li> <li>• KeyTrain assessment</li> <li>• Assistance getting a driver's license</li> </ul> <p>Let's develop short- and long-term goals for attaining your desired job, as well as a timeline.</p>
<i>I would really like to do [a particular job], but I feel it will never be a reality.</i>	<p>What appeals to you about this job? (Note first steps the client might take.)</p> <p>Do you know anyone else who does this type of work? How did he or she get started?</p> <p>Do you have any relevant experience?</p> <p>Can you identify any obstacles in the way of achieving this goal? What steps might you take to overcome them?</p> <p>If the position requires training or education, how much time would you be willing to commit to the cause?</p>
<i>Every time I've had a job in the past, something has gone wrong.</i>	<p>Can we discuss your specific experiences? Maybe we'll learn something.</p> <p>How might you handle a situation differently now?</p> <p>What other "prejob" steps might you take? Training programs? Volunteering? Job shadowing?</p>

**In general:** At first, assess the client's level of readiness to work, and create a set time or times to meet with the client each week. As the stage commences, research the industry of interest to the client, including needed qualifications, licensing, and work experience. Incorporate strategy sessions into the "action plan."

## EXERCISE 3.1

### Assertive, Not Aggressive

Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the difference between assertive and aggressive behavior
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: "Tips for Being Assertive," "Name the Communication Style"
- » **Vocabulary:** aggressive, assertive, character, passive
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: participates as a team member, negotiates, exercises leadership
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and small group work
- » **Time:** One to two hours

#### Instructions

1. Brainstorm definitions and examples of assertive versus aggressive behavior.
2. Incorporate the following points when summing up the discussion:
  - a. There is a big difference between aggressive and assertive behavior.
  - b. Aggressive behavior includes the intent to harm another person, whereas assertive behavior involves making one's presence felt without intending to cause harm. Fair play, self-control, and ground rules are observed when one is assertive. By contrast, aggressiveness lacks these components and is never a desirable character attribute.
  - c. Aggressive behavior should be displayed only in defense of one's own or another's life, not in the workplace or to resolve conflicts.
3. Distribute and discuss the handout "Tips for Being Assertive."
4. Divide the class into small groups and distribute the handout "Name the Communication Style." Have each group complete the handout.
5. Sum up by reviewing the range of communication styles as a large group and noting answers from each group.

#### Extension Activities

1. Invite an employer or human resources representative to talk with the class about communicating in the workplace. Give the speaker a copy of the two handouts in advance.
2. Ask clients to write about a time when they communicated in an assertive manner. Have them identify which "Tips for Being Assertive" they used on the occasion.
3. Have clients take an assertiveness self-assessment at <http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/bpa/robinson/images/socialstyles.pdf>. Based on the results, ask students to write a paragraph answering the following questions:
  - a. Am I more comfortable in some areas of my life than in others?
  - b. Am I assertive with my family but not with strangers?

## HANDOUT 3.1

### Tips for Being Assertive

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

1. **Make eye contact but not too much.** Avoid harsh stares, and do not look directly at people 100 percent of the time.
2. **Be mindful of posture.** Try to face the person with whom you are talking. Stand or sit up tall, but try to be relaxed rather than stiff.
3. **Keep an appropriate distance and avoid physical contact (except a handshake).** Don't stand too close to your interlocutor. Give the person space to breathe.
4. **Use gestures in moderation.** Use your hands to accentuate a point, but don't overdo it.
5. **Face matches mood.** Your facial expression should match your emotional state as well as your words. Try not to laugh when upset or frown when happy. A relaxed, pleasant expression is best when you are happy. Use a serious face when you are upset.
6. **Speak clearly, don't shout.** When delivering an important point, speak carefully and audibly (i.e., with high enough volume) but remember: you are indoors and your conversational partner is right there. Keep your volume, tone, and inflection steady.
7. **Speak lucidly.** This means avoiding stammering, rambling, or getting off topic, to the extent possible. To keep your words to an efficient, effective minimum, practice with a partner before the meeting.
8. **Time your requests.** If you have a follow-up request or a concern, be sure to think before pressing send (if you're using email) or picking up the phone. Be sure (a) never to express a concern when upset and yet (b) not to wait too long (i.e., more than a week) before posing a follow-up inquiry.
9. **Listen carefully.** Being assertive is about more than just expressing what you want. You also have to listen and absorb your interlocutor's message and tone.
10. **Master your content.** Be an "expert" on whatever you say. Understanding the content you wish to convey is at the heart of being an assertive person.

## HANDOUT 3.2

### Name the Communication Style

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

Write “**P**” for passive, “**AS**” for assertive, or “**AG**” for aggressive in response to the following examples. Answers are listed below.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. “That is the dumbest idea I’ve ever heard. Don’t you ever think before speaking?”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. “Let’s reconsider this response.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. “I will not be able to carpool with you. I sometimes work late.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. “I feel so uncomfortable when you are too hard on yourself. I wish you would be gentler on yourself.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. “Gee, thank you for the invitation, but I really don’t enjoy jazz.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. “A disco! You’ve got to be kidding! We’re both too old for that kind of foolishness.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. “I know that you are busy, but do you mind if I bother you for a minute?”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. “This is probably the wrong answer, but . . .”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. “It seems to me that you have a problem.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. “Look, we can do it my way or not at all.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. “I have seen that particular movie, but I guess I could see it again even though I really don’t want to.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. “I’ll take care of that project. It’s obvious that today is not one of your best days. You always seem so out of it. I think you should seek some professional help.”

**Answers: 1. AG 2. AS 3. AS 4. AS 5. AS 6. AG 7. P 8. P 9. AG 10. AG 11. P 12. AG.**

**HANDOUT 3.3****Community Resource List**

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

<b>Category of Resource/ Person/Organization</b>	<b>Phone and Address</b>	<b>Description of Services and Availability</b>
<b>Child Care</b>		
All day		
Emergency only (e.g., sick child or caregiver)		
Other		
<b>Transportation</b>		
Public transportation		
Taxi		
Friend with vehicle		
Car repair		
Other		
<b>Finances</b>		
Bank		
Credit counseling		
Other		

*continued »*

<b>Social Services/Support</b>		
Financial assistance		
Other		
<b>Health</b>		
Emergency room		
Clinic/family doctor		
Other		
<b>Career</b>		
Job counselor		
Community college		
One-Stop Career Center		
Other		

## EXERCISE 3.2

### Job Shadowing

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients learn about a career by following a professional for a day
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Job Shadow Explanation Sheet,” “Job Shadow Phone Script,” “Preparing for Your Job Shadow,” “Job Shadow Thank-You Letter Format,” “Sample Job Shadow Introduction Letter,” and “Job Shadow Questionnaire”
- » **Vocabulary:** mentor, productivity
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: works well with diverse peers; Information: acquires and evaluates information; Personal qualities: self-management
- » **Methodology:** Setting up job shadows for clients
- » **Time:** 60 minutes in class, two to six hours in a job shadow

#### Instructions

1. Before this lesson, counselors should contact a local career center to ask if its staff can assist clients in setting up job shadow opportunities.
2. Distribute and discuss the handout “Job Shadow Explanation Sheet.” Then ask if clients have taken part in a job shadow before and to share their experiences.
3. Brainstorm a list of the types of jobs or companies where clients might want to do a job shadow. Ask if anyone knows of specific companies to approach.
4. If the career center can help set up job shadows, then let clients know how that will happen.
5. If the career center cannot arrange for job shadows, then distribute and discuss the handout “Job Shadow Phone Script.” Role play client phone calls to companies or organizations.
6. For homework, ask clients to identify two companies or employees they would be interested in approaching for a job shadow.
7. Before the clients do their job shadows, review the handouts “Preparing for Your Job Shadow,” “Job Shadow Thank-You Letter Format,” “Sample Job Shadow Introduction Letter,” and “Job Shadow Questionnaire.”
8. Help clients arrange their job shadows and, afterward, follow up with thank-you letters.

## HANDOUT 3.4

### Job Shadow Phone Script

"May I speak with \_\_\_\_\_?"

"Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_."

"I am a client at \_\_\_\_\_. I am interested in your business/organization and possibly in pursuing a career in \_\_\_\_\_."

"Would you be interested in allowing me to be a job shadow for you or someone else at this office? I'd stay for about six hours."

Be ready to provide the following information:

- Prospective dates and times
- The definition of "job shadow"
- Assurance that you will provide your own transportation
- Your responsibilities and goals (to allay the fear that the employee may lose productivity)

If the employer is amenable to the job shadow, say thank you and say that you will call a few days in advance to confirm the plan.

If the employer declines, ask, "Is there anyone else that you know of in this industry who might be able to help me do a job shadow?"

#### Other contacts:

1. Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder:** Your interest and courtesy are keys to acquiring your desired job shadow assignment.

## HANDOUT 3.5

### Job Shadow Thank-You Letter Format

\_\_\_\_\_ (Today's date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name and title of employee)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Company name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Street address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, state, zip)

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ :

**First paragraph:** Purpose—tell why you are writing this letter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Second paragraph:** Body—mention one insight or skill you learned and one part of the experience that you liked in particular.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Third paragraph:** Closing—thank the person again for his or her time and generosity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (Sign your name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print or type your name)

## CHECKLIST 3.1

### Preparing for Your Job Shadow

#### **Before your job shadow day:**

- \_\_\_ Call to set up your job shadow assignment at least two weeks before the date. Call to confirm a day in advance.
- \_\_\_ Become familiar with the procedures for being a job shadow. If you have questions, ask a staffer at your career center or your counselor.
- \_\_\_ Make travel arrangements to your job shadow site.

#### **Take with you to your job shadow assignment:**

- \_\_\_ An introduction letter (to give to professional you are shadowing)
- \_\_\_ A pen, paper, and questions for your mentor
- \_\_\_ Lunch (unless arrangements have been made otherwise)
- \_\_\_ An upbeat attitude: relax and enjoy this opportunity to learn from a pro.

#### **Follow these tips when at the shadow:**

- \_\_\_ Be on time and dress appropriately (for men, this means dress pants and a button-down shirt—unless, of course, you are shadowing an auto mechanic; for women, appropriate dress means business pants or a long skirt—unless you are shadowing a mechanic. Women should avoid wearing midriffs or tank tops. Other apparel to avoid for both genders: tennis shoes, sandals, hats, shorts.
- \_\_\_ Avoid asking questions if the person you are shadowing happens to be busy.
- \_\_\_ At the end of the day, ask for a business card of the person you are shadowing (if he or she hasn't already offered one).

#### **After your job shadow day:**

- \_\_\_ Send a thank-you letter, including specifics on what you most appreciated learning during your visit.

## HANDOUT 3.6

### **Sample Job Shadow Introduction Letter<sup>10</sup>**

Dear Job Shadow Mentor:

In our job readiness program at \_\_\_\_\_, we aim to give clients many opportunities to explore career opportunities. By learning from a professional like yourself, our clients gain a much richer experience than they ever could from textbooks or activities alone. Thank you so much for agreeing to take part in this highly valuable exercise.

As you are aware, a job shadow allows a client to follow a professional in a field in which the client has expressed an interest. The one-on-one arrangement is particularly conducive to the client's career education, allowing for an intensive experience of a given workplace.

Job shadowing also helps clients:

- Observe the system of the host company or business.
- Gain insight into the academic, technical, and personal skills required by a particular occupation.
- Enhance their understanding of the connection between school and work.
- Assist clients in setting goals and planning for education.

I have attached a survey seeking your feedback on the job shadow. Please add comments and thoughts as needed. We appreciate all you have to say, and will incorporate insights in making future job shadowing endeavors as effective as possible.

Thank you,

Instructor, Job Readiness Program

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<sup>10</sup> Give this letter, composed by your job counselor or program, to your mentor when you arrive at your job shadow.

## HANDOUT 3.7

# Job Shadow Questionnaire

Name of client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Duration of visit: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of job site: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager/contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Area/job shadowed: \_\_\_\_\_

Person shadowed: \_\_\_\_\_

### Client Interview Questions:

"Is your job a full-time position?" \_\_\_\_\_

"What are your hours or days of work?" \_\_\_\_\_

"Is there a dress code?" \_\_\_\_\_

"What type of technical training did you need to apply for this job?" \_\_\_\_\_

"Describe your duties on the job." \_\_\_\_\_

"How is this job satisfying or meaningful for you?" \_\_\_\_\_

"Do you supply any of your own equipment or tools?" \_\_\_\_\_

"What types of employment benefits do you receive through this employer?"

- Health insurance     Vacation time     Sick leave     Retirement benefits
- Dental insurance     Profit sharing     Vision insurance     401K

"Which benefits are most important to you?" \_\_\_\_\_

*continued »*

“Do you have any recommendations for me as I proceed with my career exploration?”

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Other questions or notes:

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**Client’s Reflection Following the Job Shadow:**

Was the job what you expected?

If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a job you would like to do full time? \_\_\_\_\_

Note three things you learned from this shadowing.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What did you like best about the job?

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What did you like least about the job?

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List the job-related terms you overheard or read while at the job site.

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Your final thoughts:

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## EXERCISE 3.3

### Understanding How Attitude Applies

Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the roles of attitude and impact in the workplace
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Positive Attitudes and Behaviors,” “Attitude Awareness Self-Assessment”
- » **Vocabulary:** assessment
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: participates as a member of a team and exercises leadership; Information: interprets and communicates information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion, small group discussion, individual work
- » **Time:** 60–90 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Write one of the quotes that follow on the board and ask clients what it means. How does it relate to attitude?

*“Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.”* — attributed to Frank Outlaw, an obscure and possibly imaginary figure

*“If you think you can and if you think you can’t, either way you’re right.”* — No source

2. Distribute the handout “Positive Attitudes and Behaviors.” As a large group, review and discuss the sections “How We See Ourselves” and “Definition of Attitude.”
3. Then break up clients into groups of three to five, and have them discuss their answers to the three discussion questions in Handout 3.8.
4. Have each group share highlights from their conversation.

## HANDOUT 3.8

### Positive Attitudes and Behaviors

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

**How We See Ourselves:** The view that we have of ourselves affects not only our behavior but also our views of others and the world around us. Our temperament, opinions, and approach to problem solving are also affected by our attitude.

**Definition of Attitude:** A way of acting, feeling, or thinking.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How do you think we end up with the attitudes we have?

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2. Do you know more people who look at life as mostly good or mostly bad? Which do you prefer to spend time with? Why?

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3. It is possible to change our attitudes? If so, how difficult is the task?

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## HANDOUT 3.9

### Attitude Awareness Self-Assessment

Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.

To determine your own level of self-awareness, read the items that follow and place a check mark in the box that best matches your response.

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I am eager to learn.					
I am excited about working.					
I am willing to listen with an open mind.					
I constantly have new ideas.					
I like taking direction from people who know something I do not.					
I try to look at the world through the eyes of other people.					
I believe every person is unique.					
When someone is talking to me, I really listen.					
I am honest with others and myself.					
I have thought about my own strengths and weaknesses.					
I am sensitive to others' needs.					
I care for and am concerned about others.					
I recognize that others may not always agree with my views.					
I adapt easily to new environments and situations.					

## EXERCISE 3.4

### Developing a Resume

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To learn about two types of resumes and to develop a resume
- » **Materials Needed: Handouts:** “Sample Chronological Resume,” “Sample Functional Resume”
- » **Vocabulary:** chronological, functional
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: reasoning; Information: organizes and maintains information; Basic skills: writing
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and individual work
- » **Time:** One hour

#### Instructions

1. Distribute the two sample resumes and discuss the differences between them.
2. Ask clients when one would work better versus the other.
3. Using the sample resumes as a guide, have clients develop their own resumes using the list of skills identified in the career readiness lessons.
4. Have clients draft resumes on the computer, then print and exchange them with another client.
5. Ask clients to critique each other’s resumes, making constructive suggestions when needed.

#### Extension Activity

- Have clients attend a resume writing workshop at a local career center.
- Have clients draft their own versions of each of the types of resumes distributed.
- Have clients choose a job for which they would like to apply and tailor their resume to fit the job.

## EXERCISE 3.5

### Completing a Job Application

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To learn how to complete a paper job application
- » **Materials Needed:** A variety of paper job applications
- » **Vocabulary:** references
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: reading, writing; Personal qualities: responsibility
- » **Methodology:** Large group activity
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Ahead of time, collect a variety of paper job applications, making enough photocopies for each client to have one of each type.
2. Explain that applying for a job frequently means filling out a job application.
3. Distribute copies of one job application to each client. As a class, complete the application.
4. Note the following tips for successfully completing an application:
  - a. Read the whole application before you begin filling it out.
  - b. Fill in every blank space. If an item does not apply to you, write NA for “not applicable.”
  - c. Write neatly.
  - d. Know your Social Security number and provide accurate information (names and addresses) of former employers or references.
  - e. An arrest is not a conviction: you need not mention having been arrested.
  - f. Before submitting the application, double-check your answers for completeness and accuracy.
5. Distribute the handout “Tips for Completing an Application.”

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients collect at least one job application of their own and complete it. After reviewing the samples, share with the class how the applications differ from or resemble one another.
2. Invite an employer to speak about what they look for when reviewing job applications.

## EXERCISE 3.6

### Completing an Online Job Application

Based on resources compiled from the Boston Private Industry Council ([www.bostonpic.org](http://www.bostonpic.org)).

- » **Learning Objective:** To learn how to complete an online job application
- » **Materials Needed:** Materials from the Boston Private Industry Council website, computer, projector, laser pointer (or other pointing device), flip chart or white board, markers
- » **Vocabulary:** personality test
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: knows how to learn and see things in the mind's eye; Basic skills: writing
- » **Methodology:** Large group presentation
- » **Time:** Two hours

#### Instructions

1. In today's market, most people apply for jobs online. Recognizing this reality, the Boston Private Industry Council developed a comprehensive training module to help job seekers complete online job applications, as well as to incorporate online personality tests into the application process.
2. Review the various recommended materials to determine which components are most relevant for your clients.
3. Visit the Boston Private Industry Council at [www.bostonpic.org](http://www.bostonpic.org). Under "For Adults" on the top menu bar, scroll to "Resources for Trainers" and click. The website contains the "Notes for Trainers," including (1) PowerPoint presentations; (2) a practice application; (3) handouts in PDF format; and more.

#### Extension Activities

1. Check with your local career center to see if the staff can provide a workshop on completing online job applications. Then, either set up a time to visit the center or invite the staff to your site to present the workshop.
2. Invite an employer who uses online applications and personality tests to speak to the class.

## HANDOUT 3.10

### Tips for Completing an Application

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

The employer's first contact with you is through your application. You can make a good first impression by:

- **Writing neatly.** This way, the employer will be able to read your application.
- **Making minimal corrections.** To correct a mistake, draw one or two lines through the error; do not scratch through or rip holes in the paper.
- **Keeping the application clean.** Be careful not to smear ink, or food or other stains, on the form.
- **Following instructions.** Do exactly as the directions tell you, including using a check mark, X, or filling in a blank with a Number 2 pencil.
- **Using complete words.** Avoid abbreviations and be sure to write your full name, not a nickname.
- **Filling in all information.** Answer all questions and do not leave any blanks.
- **Being positive.** Keep your responses positive while remaining honest. Do not, for example, complain about your former boss or coworkers if asked why you left a job. Respond instead that you were seeking a more challenging opportunity.
- **Being accurate.** Be sure all information you give is correct. Employment dates, addresses, and reference contacts must be accurate because they will likely be checked.

To ease the process of filling out an application, create a personal fact sheet including information such as references (and contact information), dates of employment, and descriptions of personal strengths. If you have access to a computer, save a copy of this sheet to the computer, a CD, or a thumb drive.

## EXERCISE 3.7

### Getting Ready for Your First Day

- » **Learning Objective:** To learn what information is needed to prepare for the first day of a job
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Getting Ready to Start a New Job”
- » **Vocabulary:** authorization, occupational license, personnel coordinator
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: problem solving and creative thinking; Information: interprets and communicates information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Brainstorm and record items to know for the first day of a job. Discuss where one could locate that information.
2. Distribute the handout “Getting Ready to Start a New Job.” Compare the questions posed in the handout to those generated by the class. Ask clients who are now working or who have worked to discuss how these questions may help new employees on the first day.

#### Extension Activities

1. Invite a human resources guest speaker to discuss how to prepare for the first day of a job.
2. Have clients do an informational interview with an employer to learn what a new employee needs to know.
3. Have clients read the article “How to Get Ready for Your First Day in a New Job.” (Visit eHow.com and type the article title in the search bar.) Then ask the clients to write a paragraph about what they learned.

## CHECKLIST 3.2

### Getting Ready to Start a New Job

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

Use this checklist to help prepare for your first day on the job. Call your new employer's personnel coordinator to get answers, as needed.

**Do I need a uniform?** Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**If yes:**

Do I need it on the first day? \_\_\_\_\_

Where can I get it? \_\_\_\_\_

What pieces does the uniform include? \_\_\_\_\_

How many sets should I get? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the cost? \_\_\_\_\_

**If no:**

What should I wear? \_\_\_\_\_

What time should I arrive? \_\_\_\_\_

Where should I report? \_\_\_\_\_

To whom should I report? \_\_\_\_\_

**Do I need to bring any of the following forms?** (Check off those that you need.)

\_\_\_\_ Document that establishes identity (birth certificate, driver's license, picture ID)

\_\_\_\_ Social Security card

\_\_\_\_ Work permit (if you are younger than 18)

\_\_\_\_ Occupational license (if needed)

\_\_\_\_ Unexpired employment authorization document (EAD) (if you are an immigrant)

\_\_\_\_ Medical records (report from a physical; doctor's authorization to work)

**What special equipment do I need?**

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**Where do people usually eat lunch?** Do they buy? Bring their own?

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## EXERCISE 3.8

### Planning Ahead

*This exercise is adapted from Martha Oesch and Carol Bower, Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum Guide (National College Transition Network [NCTN] and System for Adult Basic Education Support, 2009), and is used with permission. The entire curriculum guide can be found at <http://collegetransition.org/home.html> or <http://sabes.org/>.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients identify potential barriers and corresponding solutions to pursuing a career
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Making a Plan—and a Backup Plan”
- » **Vocabulary:** advice (noun), advise (verb), alternative, barrier, challenge, community resource, contingency plan, obstacle, potential, solution
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: problem solving, knows how to learn, decision making
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and individual work
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Brainstorm potential problems clients might encounter (e.g., child care, transportation, money) as they prepare to enter employment or further education and training. Record items on the board.
2. Emphasize that today’s solutions can fall through. That’s why we need contingency plans.
3. Following the format of the handout “Making a Plan—and a Backup Plan,” walk through several of the problems named by clients. Then identify a solution, a “what if” scenario, and another solution. For example, if a client needs child care and typically relies on her sister to help, but the sister gets sick, then an aunt can be enlisted as a backup for the future.
4. Have clients complete the handout for homework, drawing upon their own potential problems.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have a guest speaker from your local child care resource center discuss child care solutions.
2. Have clients get into pairs and share homework solutions, including ideas for resources and ways to solve problems.

## HANDOUT 3.11

### Making a Plan—and a Backup Plan

*Adapted from Marian Collette, Beverly Woliver, Mary Beth Bingman, and Juliet Merrifield, Getting There: A Curriculum for Moving People into Employment, rev. ed. (Knoxville, TN: Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, 1996). Used with permission.*

Try to complete the transportation examples in the chart below. Then add your own examples in the blank spaces, whether related to transportation or other issues.

Problem	Solution	What If	Another Solution
My two-year-old needs care from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. while I work.	I leave him with my mom.	My mom gets sick.	I could arrange with my sister to be a backup on those days.
I attend a skills training program at a community college located 20 miles from my apartment. Yesterday, my car's transmission went out.			

## CHECKLIST 3.3

### Workplace Dos and Don'ts

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

#### RELIABILITY

##### Do:

- Be on time.
- Keep your promises.
- Honor your word and commitments.
- Return what you borrow.
- Pay your debts.
- Be dependable.

##### Don't:

- Leave work before you should.
- Blame others for your mistakes.
- Ignore deadlines.
- Leave your team members or coworkers hanging on tasks.

#### HONESTY

##### Do:

- Tell the truth.
- Be sincere.
- Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things.
- Come forward with information.

##### Don't:

- Lie.
- Cheat.
- Steal.
- Be sneaky or tricky.
- Work around policies.
- Forge information.

#### INTEGRITY

##### Do:

- Stand up for your beliefs—follow your conscience.
- Be honorable.
- Live by your principles.
- Have the courage to do what is right.
- Build and guard your reputation.

##### Don't:

- Do things that you know are wrong, even if others are doing them.
- Lose your confidence if you fail on a task.
- Promise things that you cannot deliver.
- Let your team members down.

#### LOYALTY

##### Do:

- Be a good employee.
- Keep the confidence of those who trust you.

##### Don't:

- Betray someone's trust.
- Let others down.
- Spread gossip.
- Ask others to break the rules.
- Do or say things just to get ahead.

#### Education Resources

Counselors: Around this point in stage 3, please incorporate materials from the previous stage as follows: "Be a Wise Consumer of Education" (Exercise 2.4); "Get Smart Before You Enroll: Ask These Questions" (Handout 2.5); "Options for Further Education" (Exercise 2.5); and "What Are My Options?" (Handout 2.6).

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 3.1<sup>11</sup>

### Creating a Resource Map

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

**Directions:** Have clients create an actual map of community resources, which may include a community organization, a small or large business, a government agency, a church, or even a neighbor. Ask clients to open their imaginations when brainstorming. They may encounter surprising resources.

1. In seeking resources, have clients scan newspapers, phone books, and any other listings of community organizations, government agencies, or businesses. Write the names of the pooled resource providers on a master map on the board (even as clients keep their private maps).
2. Under each organization or business's name, write the service or benefit it provides. Not all clients, of course, will use all resources, but now they will be more aware of the options.
3. Have the clients repeat steps 1 and 2 for their personal resource maps. In addition to the community organizations and businesses listed on the group map, have them consider the following:
  - Whom (personally) do you know? To which organizations do you belong that may be a resource?
  - What resources do the people in your life provide? A car? A skill? Do they live near your child's school?
4. Ask clients to review the group map and then their personal maps and to incorporate all the items into a main list for use at home. Organize the resources by category: for example, if the church provides both child care and a support group, write the church's contact information in both categories (including name, telephone number, address, and other relevant details). Expand on this worksheet, adding new categories as needed. There's no limit to how many sheets of paper you can use—it's always better to have more resources than fewer.

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<sup>11</sup>Please refer also to Counselor Reference 1.1, "Creating an Employment Portfolio."

## COUNSELOR REFERENCE 3.2

### **Job Shadow Explanation Sheet**

A job shadow is a structured career activity in which a job seeker follows an employee at an existing organization to learn about a particular job or industry. Job shadowing is aimed at helping job seekers explore a range of career options. For the experience to be ultimately meaningful, though, job seekers must shadow someone in their area of interest. The “host” employee is called a mentor, and he or she can introduce the shadow to various elements of the job in a one-on-one setting.

#### **Job shadowing helps clients:**

- Gain information about possible career interests.
- Observe the daily routine of an employee.
- Observe the system of the host’s company or business.
- Gain insight into the academic, technical, and personal skills required by a particular job.
- Gain an understanding of the connection among education, training, and work.
- Gain information to assist clients in setting goals and planning for education.

# Stage 4: Action

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*“Real, effective action begins with commitment. Once the commitment to change is made, it is time to move; in the action stage the focus is on the processes of control, countering [temptations to relapse], and reward, with a continuing emphasis on the importance of helping relationships.”*

— CFG, p. 174  
 .....

## Overview

### Characteristics of Vocational Situation

The statement that best characterizes a client during this phase is “I am looking.” The components of this stage are as follows:

- Searches actively for a job.
- Participates in an education or training program—or has completed a training program.
- A common mindset is reflected in this statement: “This is my plan for getting and keeping a job, and here is where I want you to help me.”

### Outcomes

Key outcomes that indicate client is progressing to the next stage include:

- Getting a job.
- Securing a volunteer position.
- Participating in an internship.

### Competencies

By participating in the activities in this stage, clients can enhance the following soft skills:

- Ability to acquire and evaluate information; organize and maintain information; and interpret and communicate information
- Ability to think creatively and make decisions
- Personal qualities, including self-management and responsibility

## Tips for Counselor Engagement with Clients

Following are scripts for responding to clients during the action stage:

Client says:	Counselor responds:
<i>I filled out 15 applications yesterday.</i>	Great. For what jobs? Did you keep a list? Did you get to talk with any hiring managers? Which of the positions most interest you? How long do you intend to wait before following up?
<i>I have been applying to jobs for three weeks but haven't received a single call.</i>	Let's review the jobs you've been applying for. Do you have any friends with similar jobs? How did they land them? Remember that looking for a job is very difficult. On a personal level, what are you doing to take care of yourself?
<i>Good news. I've got an interview on Monday.</i>	Congratulations. Do you know who'll be interviewing you? Do you have appropriate clothes (list options)? Let's make sure your resume and reference list are up to date. We can also revise your cover letter if needed. Let's also review your response to an employer who queries gaps in your resume.
<i>I thought I did alright at the interview, but the employer seems noncommittal.</i>	Did you ask the employer if he or she has a target date for making a decision? Did you ask how many candidates are being considered? Do you know who makes the hiring decision? Is it the person who interviewed you? Now, given our discussion, what do you think about your prospects?
<i>You won't believe this. I just got two job offers.</i>	Fantastic. Do the hours allow you to accept both? Will the schedule allow you to maintain a "life" outside work? Do you prefer one job over the other? If so, can you use the second offer as leverage to secure more hours at the more desirable job? Does either job have the potential for full-time status with benefits?

**In general:** If a client is interviewing for jobs without success, assess the match between the positions and the client's skills and experience. To achieve success, might the client explore other avenues? Remember the basics—e.g., is the client sending resumes on clean paper?

## EXERCISE 4.1

### The Hidden Job Market

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand that many jobs are not published and to learn alternative ways to identify openings
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “The Hidden Job Market”
- » **Vocabulary:** headhunter, networking, qualifications, recruitment specialist, traditional
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Information: acquires and evaluates information, interprets and communicates information; Thinking skills: reasoning
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 30 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Have clients brainstorm ways to find jobs, and record the list on the board.
2. Ask clients which job search methods they consider most effective. Appeal to clients now working for their success stories on this matter.
3. Distribute and discuss the handout “Tapping the Hidden Job Market.” Compare clients’ answers and rankings to those on the diagram.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients survey family members and friends on how they have found jobs. With clients’ findings, develop a graph, then ask the clients to chart the components of the graph in an Excel spreadsheet.
2. Have clients visit a local career center to seek recommendations on where to look for jobs. Have them report back to the group with their findings.

## HANDOUT 4.1

### Tapping the Hidden Job Market

*Adapted from Crittenton Women's Union, My Story, My Path to Self-Sufficiency, Woman to Woman Program (Boston, 2009). Used with permission.*

A traditional job search entails writing a resume, searching the newspaper classified ads (and, increasingly, internet listings), printing resumes and cover letters, and sending your materials into the world. This approach has the following benefits:

- Educates clients generally on the job marketplace.
- Imparts information on salaries (in both particular jobs and industries).
- Locates key hiring contacts within an organization, such as recruitment specialists.

But this approach also has limitations, including:

- A low likelihood of success: the job applicant pool with which you are competing can be quite large.
- The possibility your materials will slip through the cracks: your application could easily be overlooked by a busy recruiter.
- Unstated realities: jobs posted in classified ads are sometimes filled by the time they reach publication. The successful candidates are often tapped into the “hidden” market.

Research shows that successful job seekers often tap into the hidden market. But what exactly does this mean? It means they have engaged in informal discussion with potential employers in all sorts of ways. The graphic that follows gives a sense of the specifics.

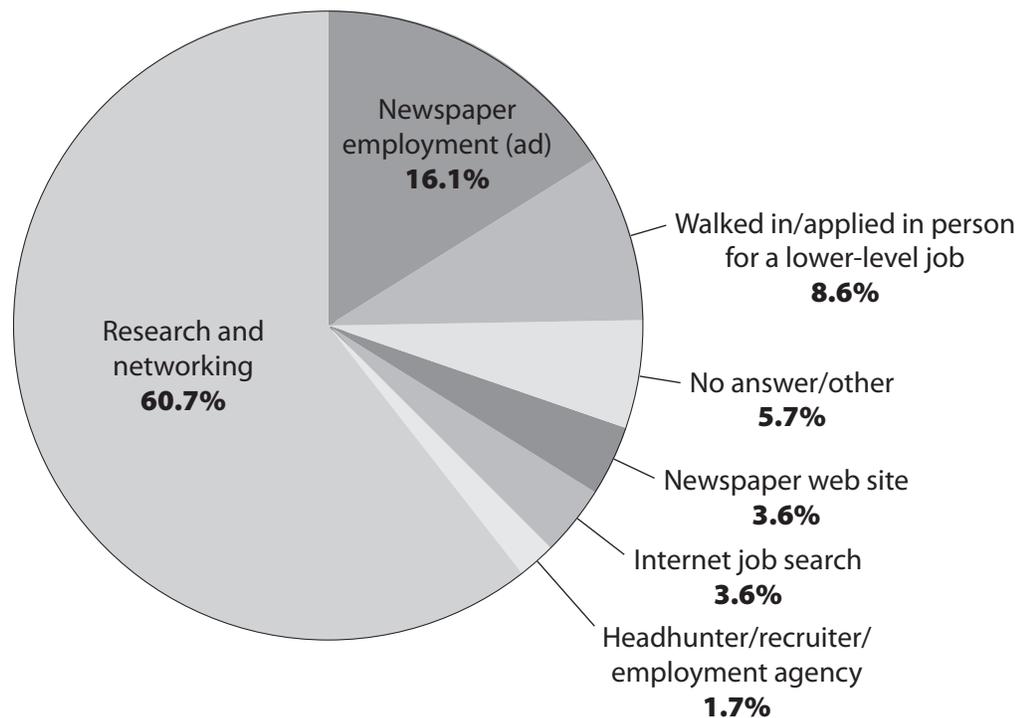


Chart reproduced from data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 1886.

## EXERCISE 4.2

### Networking: Your Path to the Hidden Job Market

*Adapted from Crittenton Women's Union, My Story, My Path to Self-Sufficiency, Woman to Woman Program (Boston, 2009). Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the concept of networking and how to develop a personal network for a job search
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: "On the Path to the Hidden Market," "Identifying Your Network," and "Networking Plan"
- » **Vocabulary:** colleagues, networking
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Systems: understands systems, improves or designs systems; Information: organizes and maintains information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and individual work
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Distribute and discuss the handout "On the Path to the Hidden Market."
2. Tell clients they will have an opportunity to begin identifying their own networks for a job search. Distribute and review the handout "Identifying Your Network," giving examples of members of their own networks.
3. Ask clients to spend 10 minutes filling in the grid.
4. Ask clients to share some of their network contacts, as well as categories or places for finding people with whom to network.
5. Explain the next step: to develop a plan for contacting people in your network.
6. Distribute the handout "Networking Plan." Use an example of someone in your own (i.e., the counselor's) network and demonstrate how to fill in the grid. Ask for other examples from clients.
7. Brainstorm ideas for how clients might reach out to someone they do not know well.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients complete their network grid and develop a more thorough networking plan, using a bullet point for each step. Ask clients to share networking plans with the group, emphasizing each client's personal assets and ways to "break through" to the contact.
2. Have clients develop a timeline for getting in touch with the first person listed in their networking plan. After they have reached this first individual, have them set timelines for getting in touch with the remaining contacts.
3. Invite a speaker from the local career center to discuss how to network and opportunities for networking at career center events.

## HANDOUT 4.2

### **On the Path to the Hidden Market**

Networking is the process of making connections with people who share your values and interests, and who can offer support, additional connections, and information. Your network is larger than you may think it is. It includes family members, friends, past colleagues, and fellow job seekers in whatever programs to which you belong.

#### **How to Build Your Network**

Building your network requires three actions:

- Identifying people already in your “network.”
- Following a plan: (1) knowing people with whom you want to make a connection, (2) what you think those people can offer, and (3) what you can offer in return.
- Expanding your network by “pounding the pavement” and seeking opportunities wherever they appear.

## HANDOUT 4.3

# Identifying Your Network

*Adapted from Crittenton Women's Union, My Story, My Path to Self-Sufficiency, Woman to Woman Program (Boston, 2009). Used with permission.*

In each of the boxes provided, write the names of existing people in your network.

<b>Friends</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Family members</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Neighbors</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Group members</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Coworkers and managers</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Community/political contacts</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Other organizations</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Religious affiliations</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

**HANDOUT 4.4****Networking Plan**

*Adapted from Crittenton Women's Union, My Story, My Path to Self-Sufficiency, Woman to Woman Program (Boston, 2009).  
Used with permission.*

In the space provided, develop a networking strategy for your own job search.

<b>Person's Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b> What does this person have to offer?	<b>Your Contribution</b> What do you have to offer this person?	<b>Steps for Success</b> How can you establish a relationship with this person? What are the first steps?

**Job Application Resources**

Counselors: Please incorporate materials from the previous stage as follows: "Developing a Resume" (Exercise 3.4); "Completing a Job Application" (Exercise 3.5); "Completing an Online Job Application" (Exercise 3.6); and "Tips for Completing an Application" (Handout 3.10).

## HANDOUT 4.5

### Sample Chronological Resume<sup>12</sup>

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

**Name**

Address

City, state, zip

Phone number

Email address

**POSITION DESIRED**

Seeking position requiring clerical skills in an office environment. Position could require a variety of tasks, including word processing and contact with customers.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**Acme Vocational School** (2010), Temple Terrace, Fla. Completed one-year program in secretarial skills and office management. Courses included word processing, time management, and customer rights.

**John Adams Adult High School** (diploma: 2007), Tampa, Fla. Coursework focused on workforce skills along with academic subjects such as statistics and communication.

**EXPERIENCE**

**Claire's Boutique** (2007–2008), Tampa, Fla. As assistant manager, handled sales transactions, assessed inventory, and performed related tasks. Closed store on weekends.

**Part-Time and Summer Jobs** (2004–2007), Tampa, Fla. Employers included Adrienne's Nails Etc., the Shells Shop (accessories), and Sunnyside Farm Stand.

**SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES**

- Type 100 words per minute and adept at operating office equipment (e.g., fax machine, scanner, copier).
- Receptive to supervision and advice, take responsibility for actions, and learn quickly.
- Have strong social skills and excellent attendance record.

*Excellent references available upon request.*

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<sup>12</sup>A chronological resume is best suited for clients with both a solid employment history and hard skills. A functional resume (see handout 4.6) is designed for clients who have hard skills but a shakier employment history.

## HANDOUT 4.6

### Sample Functional Resume

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

#### **Name**

Address

City, state, zip

Phone number

Email address

#### **Career Objective**

Energetic, honest, and responsible individual seeks position as a management trainee.

#### **Office Management**

Two years' experience maintaining inventory, night cash deposits, and supervision of one employee for a retail outlet.

#### **Operation, Business Equipment**

Can do word-processing on a computer, and operate an adding machine and an electronic calculator.

#### **Planning and Organization**

Planned training schedule for new employee. Organized and assisted manager in daily duties.

#### **Interpersonal Skills**

Have had friendly relationship with customers and coworkers. Assisted youth group as volunteer with church mentor organization.

#### **Academic Achievement**

In adult education program, currently completing studies toward high school diploma. Received certificate of recognition and worker's certification card after completing workforce readiness skills course.

#### **Personal Characteristics**

Strong work ethic, career-focused; reliable, hard worker loyal to company.

## EXERCISE 4.3

### Keeping Track of Your Job Search

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand a method for documenting and tracking job search activities
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Sample Job Card Entries” and “Creating an Employment Portfolio” (just for reference); three-by-five index cards
- » **Vocabulary:** documentation, tracking
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: writing; Thinking skills: knows how to learn; Personal qualities: self-management
- » **Methodology:** Discussion and individual work
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Introduce a job card file as a tool for recording job leads, requirements, employer names, interview information, and personal notes.
2. Discuss and note on the board information clients may want to record after contacting an individual in their network or being interviewed for a job.
3. Distribute sample job card entries.
4. Distribute index cards and ask clients to record information from a recent interaction with a network contact, a submitted job application, or an interview.
5. Ask clients to share insights encountered as they completed the card.
6. Encourage clients to use a job card file, updating activity as they apply and interview for jobs.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients ask people from their network for other suggestions on how to record job search activities. Clients can record these items in a running list, which they can update and save on a computer, if available.
2. Have clients visit a local career center to explore other methods of recording job search activities. After the visit, ask clients to share results with the group.

## HANDOUT 4.7

### Sample Job Card Entries

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

Today is Tuesday March 23, 2010. Yesterday, I spoke with the manager of Harvey's Dairy Company. Her name was Shirley DuBose, and she seems really nice. She told me to call her back in a week to check on the status of my application. She described how I would have to arrive at 4:00 a.m. every day to milk and feed the cows. For three hours of work each day, I would get \$42. I am very interested in this job.

Today is Tuesday June 15, 2010. Last Friday, I interviewed with Dr. Robert Palmer for a position as his office receptionist. The pay is \$500 a week for eight hours a day, five days a week. The interview went well. We discussed the office duties, which include answering the telephone, arranging appointments, taking payments, and keeping up with patients' files. Dr. Palmer said that he would call me back later in the week. If I don't hear from him, I will call back the following Tuesday.

Today is Thursday August 12, 2010. I just finished interviewing for a teacher-aide position with the principal of a school. The pay is \$425 per week for seven hours of work per day, 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. That's good money. We talked for more than an hour about my possible duties, including helping the teacher grade papers, helping kids do their work, and creating bulletin boards. It sounds exciting because with children things are always busy. The principal said she will call me next Monday. If I don't hear from her, I'll call her two days later, on Wednesday.

## EXERCISE 4.4

### Practicing Telephone Etiquette

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To become acquainted with the appropriate steps when calling for information regarding a job opening
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Tips for Telephone Etiquette”
- » **Vocabulary:** etiquette
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: speaking; Interpersonal: teaches others new skills; Information: interprets and communicates information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and role plays
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Distribute the handout “Tips for Telephone Etiquette” and discuss with clients.
2. Bring in telephones or have clients use their cell phones to enact a phone conversation, paying attention to correct etiquette.
3. Divide the group in half to perform skits: one side demonstrates proper etiquette, the other does not.
4. Discuss why proper phone etiquette helps a client make a good first impression.

#### Extension Activity

Have each client write out a script for a telephone call inquiring about an education or training program or a job opening. Then have each client make the actual call and record the responses. Have clients share these responses with the group.

## HANDOUT 4.8

### Tips for Telephone Etiquette

How is it that we get a distinct impression of someone over the phone? Even without seeing a face, we can tell whether our conversation partner is friendly, distracted, attentive, impolite, or even strange. Here's how to make a good impression yourself:

1. **Prepare before calling.** Write down what you will ask and say, leaving space beside the questions for answers. Practice your lines until you feel comfortable. When you make the call, have a pen at the ready.
2. **Call from a quiet place.** The person on the other end of the line will be able to hear trucks roaring by, construction workers hammering, or your aunt gossiping noisily in the next room.
3. **Don't chew gum.** Or suck on candies or eat a bowl of cereal or ...
4. **Ask for the right person.** Don't waste time giving information to the receptionist. Instead say, "I am interested in [job name] being advertised by your firm. Can you direct me to the correct person?" Write down the name of the contact person, and confirm the spelling, letter by letter.
5. **Introduce yourself to the contact person.** Be sure to include your reason for calling, and give the name of anyone who may have referred you.
6. **Ask to set up an interview.** If the contact person says yes, or that he or she will get back to you, thank the person using his or her full name. Make sure to leave your phone number.

## EXERCISE 4.5

### Job Searching on the Internet

- » **Learning Objective:** To explore use of the internet to identify job openings
- » **Materials Needed:** Computer lab; handout: "Searching Online"
- » **Vocabulary:** working conditions
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Technology: selects technology; Systems: understands systems; Basic skills: reading
- » **Methodology:** Group activity in a computer lab
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Preview the following websites (an essential step for counselors), then explore their potential for finding job openings with clients.
  - a. Massachusetts Career Information System: [www.masscis.intocareers.org](http://www.masscis.intocareers.org) (or use the comparable site for your state)
  - b. Your local career center's website
  - c. The sites of local employers listing job openings
2. Using the handout "Searching Online," choose one job opening identified in the exercise. Complete the handout as a group.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients visit the local career center, identify two job openings using the center's computers, and complete a copy of Handout 4.9 for each of the jobs.
2. If the career center offers a workshop on job searching online, arrange for your group to attend the workshop or for a staff person from the center to visit your site and deliver it—in a computer lab, if available.

**HANDOUT 4.9****Searching Online**

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Position available: \_\_\_\_\_

Hourly wage or annual salary: \_\_\_\_\_

Full-time or part-time? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_

**Skills needed:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Duties and responsibilities:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Education or training:**


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**List any working conditions noted for this job. For example, does it require working in- or outdoors, or evenings and weekends?**

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**How do you apply?**
 Application (paper)    Application (online)    Send resume
**Where to send application and resume:**

Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

---

 Application deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXERCISE 4.6.

### Interview Preparation Basics

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand that preparing for an interview means more than knowing how to answer questions
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Interview Preparation Tips”
- » **Vocabulary:** well spoken
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: problem solving and decision making; Information: acquires and evaluates information
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Brainstorm and record answers to the following question: What do you need to do to prepare for an interview (e.g., preparing clothes, transportation, directions, documents)? Prompt clients as needed.
2. Distribute the handout “Interview Preparation Tips.” Discuss the overlap between the group’s list and the handout, as well as new items on the handout. Now that clients have seen the handout, would they add anything else?
3. Review the section on demonstrating communication skills. Can clients identify any other such skills?

#### Extension Activity

- Have clients make a pre-interview to-do list, including documents needed, wakeup time (plus alarm clock and perhaps a backup “alarm bell”— e.g., a call from a friend), child care, and transportation, including familiarity with public transportation routes and schedules.

## HANDOUT 4.10

### Interview Preparation Tips

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

An interview is an exciting opportunity to demonstrate your skills and personality, but it can also be stressful. You may only have a half hour to show an interviewer what you have to offer. Meanwhile, the interviewer will not only be evaluating what you say but how you say it. She will be asking: is this candidate well spoken? Are his an answers clear and to the point?

Here are some tips for preparing for an interview:

1. **In the days before your interview, do a mock interview with a partner.** Practice multiple times.
2. **The day before the interview, make sure your outfit is clean and neatly pressed.** Polish shoes, paint nails, and do other such things a day in advance.
3. **Lay out your clothing the night before the interview.** On the day of the interview itself, you'll be too preoccupied with other things to choose clothing.
4. **The night before the interview, gather important materials, and place them in a folder or portfolio.** Be sure to put the portfolio in a location where you will remember it. Items to include are a resume, letter(s) of reference, directions, and identification card(s).
5. **Review travel plans.** Whether you are planning to drive or use public transportation, make sure you know exactly how to reach your interview site. When planning your departure time, add in at least fifteen minutes for parking or transportation delays.
6. **Know where you need to go.** That includes the address, floor number, and room number (if applicable). Get explicit directions from the public transportation drop-off spot or parking lot. Write down these directions and the name or your contact person, along with his or her phone number.
7. **Eat breakfast or lunch before the interview.** Make healthy choices, if possible.
8. **Be courteous and professional with everyone you meet.** Starting with the the security guard and the receptionist ...
9. **Turn off your cell phone and pager once you arrive.**

To bolster your communication skills before an interview, consider the following steps:

1. **In front of a mirror, practice describing your skills and talents in less than two minutes.**
2. **Have a friend ask you questions you expect to encounter in your interview.** Remember to answer clearly and slowly.
3. **Start the interview with a firm handshake.** There's no better way to communicate self-assuredness. Once the interview begins, be sure to look directly at the interviewer when speaking. Good eye contact is good communication.
4. **If you don't understand a question, ask the interviewer for more details.** There's never any need to panic. If you feel tense, take a deep breath and relax your shoulders.
5. **Avoid slang.** Try as best you can to use proper English. Speak slowly and, if possible, in full sentences.
6. **Finally, remember the breath mints.** For your own sake and your interviewer's ...

## EXERCISE 4.7

### Planning for a Successful Job Interview

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand and prepare for the most common interview questions
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Anticipate Common Interview Questions (and Boost Your Confidence),” flip chart, markers
- » **Vocabulary:** criteria, competency, probe, savvy
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: reading and writing; Thinking skills: reasoning
- » **Methodology:** Small group activity and individual work
- » **Time:** 90 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Break clients into small groups, and ask them to brainstorm a list of questions they have been asked or expect during an interview.
2. Each group presents one of its questions, with the counselor recording each question on the board or a flip chart until a full list is compiled.
3. Distribute, review, and discuss the handout “Anticipate Interview Questions (and Boost Your Confidence).”

#### Extension Activity

- Have clients fill out “Anticipate Common Questions (and Boost Your Confidence).” Then discuss as a group, including a brainstorming session on the most difficult questions.

## HANDOUT 4.11

# Anticipate Common Questions (and Boost Your Confidence)

*From internet sources.*

Interview questions fall roughly into the four categories explored in this worksheet. Please fill in your responses for the questions in each category:

**1. General questions.** These questions are not job specific but rather cover your career overall as well as your personal qualities.

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you leave your previous employer?
- Why are you interested in this job or field?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses? (Tip: Don't overdo it on this one. A classic safe answer: "I often get very involved in my work and lose track of time and stay late.")
- Describe your career goals. Where do you see yourself five years from now?

**2. Competency-based questions.** These questions are designed to probe your qualifications by revisiting past work experiences. They often have an exploratory feel, beginning with "Tell me about a time when ..." and ending with:

- ... you completed a task or project under a tight deadline.
- ... you had to show attention to detail.
- ... you were asked to shift to one task while in the middle of another.
- ... you had to deal with a challenging colleague or situation.
- ... you were asked to complete a task but not given much direction or information.

Review the "Tell me about ..." questions just given, and match each to the appropriate attribute in the following list:

- Ability to work well with others
- Ability to handle pressure and stress effectively
- Attention to detail
- Flexibility
- Ability to self-start and direct one's own work

*continued »*

**3. Difficult questions.** Everyone has struggled at some point in his or her career or in a particular job. Savvy recruiters will want to identify and discuss these difficult situations. To prepare for challenges from an interviewer, answer the following questions:

**a.** Which questions would be most difficult for you to answer?

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**b.** How could you respond to these questions in a professional way?

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**4. Inappropriate questions.** Poorly trained interviewers may ask questions that have nothing to do with the job or work for which you are applying. These questions may involve your age, birthplace, nationality, race, arrest record, religion, or marital status, just to name a handful of possibilities.

If an interviewer asks an inappropriate question, politely redirect the conversation by asking, “Is there a job-related reason for this type of question?” Then move on. If you have concerns about whether a question was legal, follow up later with the recruiter’s manager. Don’t try to resolve the issue during the interview.

## EXERCISE 4.8

### The Mock Interview

- » **Learning Objective:** To practice interviewing skills by doing a series of mock interviews
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Mock Interview Evaluation Form,” video camera
- » **Vocabulary:** mock
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: listening and speaking; Interpersonal: participates as a member of a team
- » **Methodology:** Small group and individual activities
- » **Time:** One to two hours

#### Instructions

1. Divide clients into small groups. Ask half the groups to develop and practice an interview demonstrating appropriate behaviors while the other half develops and simulates an interview demonstrating inappropriate behaviors.
2. Videotape groups as they perform, then play the recording, noting specific behaviors and the importance of a good first impression.

#### Independent Activities

1. Have clients rate the groups using the “Mock Interview Evaluation Form.”
2. Invite other staff members to do mock interviews with clients. Have interviewers complete a “Mock Interview Evaluation Form” for each client, while clients use the evaluation form to do a self-assessment. Once the two evaluations are completed, ask clients to compare the responses and assess areas in which they they might improve.
3. Invite employers or human resource representatives to visit the group and do mock interviews.

## HANDOUT 4.12

# Mock Interview Evaluation Form

*Adapted from Portland (Oregon) YouthBuilders.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Key:** 4 = Excellent  
3 = Very Good  
2 = Good  
1 = Needs Improvement

Greeted interviewer with smile and handshake	4	3	2	1
Was able to explain purpose of interview	4	3	2	1
Was able to discuss personal strengths and areas for improvement	4	3	2	1
Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm throughout interview	4	3	2	1
Avoided using slang/street expressions and other inappropriate speech mannerisms	4	3	2	1
Maintained eye contact throughout interview	4	3	2	1
Closed interview in appropriate manner	4	3	2	1

## EXERCISE 4.9

### Interviews: Following Up

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the importance of following up after an interview and how to write a thank-you letter
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: "Saying Thanks"
- » **Vocabulary:** impression, salutation
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Information: interprets and communicates information;  
Basic skills: reading and writing
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion, individual and pairs work
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Lead a large-group discussion on the value of following up after an interview and how to write a thank-you letter. Discussion points include the importance of (1) informing the interviewer that you appreciated his or her time; (2) noting that you remain interested in the position and believe you would be an asset to the organization. Also, be sure to tell clients that thank-you letters:
  - a. **Should be sent the day of or day after an interview.** They can be handwritten (neatly) or typed.
  - b. **Should have correct spelling and grammar.**
2. Have clients write a thank-you letter and share it with a partner, seeking feedback. Display sample thank-yous around the room as a reference for clients who may struggle to write them on their own.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients visit a local career center and attend a workshop on following up after an interview. Then have them write a summary of the advice they collected and share it with the group.
2. Have clients search the internet for thank-you letters for interviews. Discuss the findings as a group.

## HANDOUT 4.13

### **Saying Thanks**

A thank-you letter following your interview should include the following pieces of information:

- Date
- Formal salutation (followed by a colon or comma)
- Statement of thanks
- Upbeat impressions of the organization
- Your belief that your personal experience would benefit the organization—and your desire to be part of the team
- Your contact information
- A nod to the future (“I’ll look forward to hearing from you.” Or some variation.)
- “Sincerely” followed by your signature

## EXERCISE 4.10

### Timekeeping Practices

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the importance of keeping track of work hours and the ways in which companies do so
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Keeping Time: Tips to Remember” and “Timekeeping Exercise”
- » **Vocabulary:** pay period, pay schedule, time card, time sheet
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: arithmetic/mathematics; Interpersonal: exercises leadership and works with diversity
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and small group activity
- » **Time:** One hour

#### Instructions

1. Distribute and discuss the handout “Keeping Time: Tips to Remember.”
2. Divide clients into small groups and have them complete the exercise.
3. Have each group report its results.

#### Extension Activities

1. Collect examples of time cards and time sheets from the community and review them with the group. Alternatively, have clients bring in examples of time cards or time sheets from their current or former workplaces.
2. Invite an employer to discuss the importance of reporting to work on time, taking breaks and lunch in a timely manner, and the firm’s method of tracking employees’ hours.
3. Prepare mock time sheets and distribute them to the clients. Then have the clients plot the information on an Excel chart, as would an employer.

## HANDOUT 4.14

### Keeping Time: Tips to Remember

When companies employ individuals on an hourly basis, they must provide a way for employees to record their hours. This not only makes running the organization easier, it's also the law. The typical means of keeping track are time cards and time sheets:

- **Time cards.** Through this system, employees typically receive a time card at the start of a pay period. Each day, employees “clock in” by inserting their time card into a machine, which stamps it. When employees take lunch or a break or leave for the day, they “clock out” by reinserting their card into the machine. Employees are paid only for the hours during which they are “clocked in.”
- **Time sheets.** These forms may be located in a central spot at a workplace. Each employee has his or her own. Similar to the time card system (but without the machine), employees mark down the times of day when they enter and leave the work premises for breaks, lunch, or end of shift. Increasingly, digital time sheets are being used by employers to save paper and avoid clutter: see, for example, [www.GetMyTime.com](http://www.GetMyTime.com) or [www.minute7.com](http://www.minute7.com).

Employers must pay workers' compensation and other insurance and taxes based on the number of hours employees have worked. As for workers, fudging hours—or repeatedly “forgetting” to clock out—is against the law and can result in getting fired. In a word: timekeeping isn't just a formality, it really matters.

## HANDOUT 4.15

### Timekeeping Exercise

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

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

In the examples that follow, calculate the number of hours Mathilda has worked. (Employees are paid for each complete quarter hour they work starting at 8 a.m.)

**On Monday**, Mathilda got to work at 7:58 a.m. and went to lunch at 12:02 p.m.; she returned from lunch at 1:10 p.m. and left for the day at 4:15 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**On Tuesday**, Mathilda got to work at 7:57 a.m. and went to lunch at noon sharp (12 p.m.); she returned from lunch at 12:55 p.m. and left for the day at 4 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**On Wednesday**, Mathilda got to work at 8:02 a.m. and went to lunch at 12:05 p.m.; she returned from lunch at 1:05 p.m. and left for the day at 4:18 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**On Thursday**, Mathilda got to work at 7:50 a.m. and went to lunch at 12:10 p.m.; she returned from lunch at 12:59 p.m. and left for the day at 4:01 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**On Friday**, Mathilda got to work at 7:58 a.m. and went to lunch at 12:01 p.m.; she returned from lunch at 12:56 p.m. and left for the day at 4 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**On Saturday**, Mathilda got to work at 7:56 p.m. and left for the day at 12:03 p.m.

How many hours did she work? \_\_\_\_\_

**How many hours did Mathilda work this week?** \_\_\_\_\_

## EXERCISE 4.11

# Understanding Your Paycheck and Benefits

- » **Learning Objective:** To read and understand a paycheck
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Wages, Deductions, Benefits, and Taxes” and “Reading a Pay Stub”
- » **Vocabulary:** benefits, credit, deduction, regular employee, tax credit, withholding
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Information: acquires and evaluates information; Basic skills: reading; Thinking: reasoning
- » **Methodology:** Pairs activity followed by group discussion
- » **Time:** One hour

### Instructions

1. Distribute the handout “Wages, Deductions, Benefits, and Taxes” and ask clients to select a partner with whom to work.
2. Have clients discuss and complete the worksheet.
3. Review clients’ answers and respond to any questions.
4. Distribute and review the handout “Reading a Pay Stub.”

### Extension Activities

1. Invite a member of your agency’s payroll or human resources department to speak to the clients about wages, deductions, benefits, and taxes.
2. Collect examples of pay stubs (with confidential information crossed-out) and review and discuss their contents as a group.

## HANDOUT 4.16

### Wages, Deductions, Benefits, and Taxes

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

Match the definitions below with their corresponding terms, marking the correct letters in the left column.

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

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ Paid a specific amount of money for each hour they work          | <b>A.</b> Commission employees     |
| 2. _____ Paid a set amount each pay period                                | <b>B.</b> Federal withholding      |
| 3. _____ Paid according to how much money they make for a company         | <b>C.</b> Hourly employees         |
| 4. _____ People hired for a special project who are not regular employees | <b>D.</b> I-9                      |
| 5. _____ Employee's withholding allowance certificate                     | <b>E.</b> Independent contractors  |
| 6. _____ Advanced Earned Income Tax Credit                                | <b>F.</b> Insurance                |
| 7. _____ Employment eligibility verification                              | <b>G.</b> Local taxes              |
| 8. _____ Federal income tax   | <b>H.</b> Medicare                 |
| 9. _____ Government-regulated retirement plan                             | <b>I.</b> Retirement plan          |
| 10. _____ Health insurance program regulated by a federal agency          | <b>J.</b> Salary employees         |
| 11. _____ State income taxes  | <b>K.</b> Social Security          |
| 12. _____ Workers' compensation insurance                                 | <b>L.</b> State disability         |
| 13. _____ City or county taxes  | <b>M.</b> State withholding        |
| 14. _____ Optional deduction for medical, dental, and/or life insurance   | <b>N.</b> W-4                      |
| 15. _____ Optional deduction for 401(K)                                   | <b>O.</b> W-5 commission employees |

**HANDOUT 4.17****Reading a Pay Stub**

*Adapted from the School District of Palm Beach County website.*

This sample pay stub contains details about what employees get paid and what gets withheld. Review its contents and answer the questions that follow.

<b>Garcia, Juan P.</b>				<b>Period Ending 02/04/2011</b>
<b>Rate</b>	<b>Overtime Rate</b>	<b>Regular Hours</b>	<b>Overtime Hours</b>	<b>GROSS PAY</b>
9.00		80		720.00
Wellness Center 295 20th Ave. Healthville, USA		<b>Deductions</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>YTD</b>
		Fed. with. Tax	74.16	222.48
		F.I.C.A.	54.72	164.16
		Medicare	8.12	24.36
		<b>NET PAY</b>	<b>583.00</b>	<b>1,749.00</b>

Juan Garcia worked 40 hours a week for two weeks, or 80 regular hours.

1. His rate of pay is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour.
2. His gross pay is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. His federal withholding tax is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. His Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) deduction is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. His Medicare tax is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
6. His net pay \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
7. His year-to-date earnings total is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .

## HANDOUT 4.18

# Miscellaneous Items to Consider When Starting a Job

### First-Day-on-the-Job Resources

Counselors: Please incorporate materials from stage 3 as follows: “Getting Ready for Your First Day” (Exercise 3.7) and “Getting Ready to Start a New Job” (Checklist 3.2).

### For the worker who is homeless or staying in a shelter:

- Will breakfast be available earlier than usual so that you can eat before work?
- Will your hours conflict with a curfew?
- Can you store your possessions in a locker at the shelter so that they will be safe while you are at work?

### Accounting for the basics:

- What are hygiene and dress standards at your new place of work?
- Do you have the necessary toiletries (e.g., razor, comb, shampoo, antiperspirant)?

### To travel to work:

- What bus or train line will you take? Will you also need to ride a shuttle?
- When will you need to leave the house to make it to work on time?
- How much will it cost to ride back and forth? Will you have enough money? (Some employers offer compensation or discounts for riding public transportation. Does yours?)

### When you get paid:

- How will you get paid? Will you need to open a bank account?
- When is the first payday?
- How often do you get paid (e.g., weekly, every two weeks)?

## EXERCISE 4.12

### Problem Solving On the Job

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand appropriate ways to handle common problems encountered when starting a job
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Job Situations”
- » **Vocabulary:** ethics, staff meeting
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Systems: understands systems, monitors and corrects performance; Interpersonal: negotiates
- » **Methodology:** Pairs work and then large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

- Distribute the handout “Job Situations.” Divide into groups of two.
- Ask clients to choose one of the scenarios and discuss how they would deal with feelings of fear, uncertainty, excitement, and a desire to excel at work.
- Address positive and negative ways to express the feelings discussed.
- Have each pair report their findings to the group, asking others to volunteer ideas as appropriate.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients write responses to each of the scenarios and share them with the group.
2. Have clients role play best and worst ways to handle each scenario.

## HANDOUT 4.19

### Job Situations

*Adapted from Leon County Schools [Florida] Adult & Community Education, ABE Florida 2001: Workforce Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide (2001). Used with permission.*

Read the following scenarios, and draft an ethical, appropriate response to each.

1. You have only been in your new job for a week. When performing a task you know how to do, you make a big mistake that will cost your employer money to fix. Your employer does not know you are responsible, and you are not sure whether your coworkers know your role.
2. You work in customer service, and you enjoy it. But one day, a customer enters the store and begins yelling about how inept your company is and ranting that he will never do business with you again. Your supervisor is out to lunch, and everyone else is busy with other customers.
3. It's your second week on the job, and your alarm doesn't go off. Fearing you'll be late, you see you don't have a clean uniform and wear a mediocre replacement from your closet. On your car ride in, you get stuck in traffic because of an accident. You arrive an hour late. The first person you encounter is your boss.
4. You've been in your job for a month. At a staff meeting, your boss calls you to the front of the room. She says several customers have reported to her how helpful and friendly you have been, and commends you as an example for all company employees.
5. For your new job, you have been trained by a friendly but not-very-helpful coworker. He seems to assume knowledge on your part that you don't always have. In particular, you need to know how a particular piece of equipment works. You want to get the answer without sounding ignorant.
6. You began working at your company two months ago. Just last week, you alone saw a seven-year veteran of the firm engaging in an unsafe act.

#### Counselor References

Please refer to Counselor Reference 1.1, "Creating an Employment Portfolio."

# Stage 5: Maintenance and Relapse Prevention

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*“No one who has ever changed successfully, in or out of therapy, will deny that maintenance is difficult. As with the other stages, there are negative responses that lead to an erosion of commitment and failure. There are also basic strategies for long-term maintenance. Yes, staying there is tough; but it is possible and well worth the effort.”*

— CFG, pp. 204–205

.....

## Overview

### Characteristics of Vocational Situation

The client’s aim at this phase of the employment process may best be described as “staying engaged and imagining the future.” In turn, a client:

Remains attached to the workplace, feels a growing sense of belonging at work, and uses available support services to stay employed.

- Goes to work every day.
- Understands benefits and wages.
- Uses income wisely and is mindful of money management.
- Considers a next job or a career move, including necessary training to acquire more satisfying work. A long-term career picture emerges.
- Identifies limitations along with areas for growth, as well as personal skills needed to promote professional well-being.
- Resolves on-the-job problems. This includes developing techniques to respond to “triggers,” which the client views as opportunities to learn. Likewise, plans responses to a possible anti-work relapse, including identifying signs and stressors on and off the job.
- Identifies and plans for other risk factors associated with work (e.g., finances, interpersonal relations, after-work activities).
- Seeks a new job if he or she loses the current one; succeeds in securing this new job within two or three months.
- Client may express sentiments along these lines: “I have my job. Such-and-such is going well. Such-and-such is not going well.” On the latter count: “I want to be part of the group, and going out for a drink after work is just too hard to resist.”

**For counselors:** If clients relapse, work to renew their determination and minimize lost time and progress.

**Outcomes**

Key outcomes that indicate a client is progressing to the next stage include:

- Continued employment, successful landing of a second job, or attendance at school or job training.
- Successful adjustment to work.
- Advancement in a work position (e.g., from a volunteer or intern position to a paid job or from a part-time to a full-time position).

**Competencies**

By participating in the activities in this stage, clients can enhance the following soft skills:

- Personal qualities, including responsibility, self-management, sociability, integrity, and honesty
- Ability to make decisions, solve problems, and learn
- Skill at identifying, organizing, planning, and allocating resources
- Understanding of work systems

**Resources**

Useful websites for benefits information include:

- Social Security Administration: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)
- MassResources.org
- Work World: [www.workworld.org](http://www.workworld.org)

For workers with a disability:

- Americans with Disabilities Act home page: [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

For local activities that help clients fill free time, alleviate boredom, etc.:

- WhoFish: [www.whofish.org](http://www.whofish.org)

## Tips for Counselor Engagement with Clients

Following are scripts for responding to clients during the maintenance stage:

Client says:	Counselor responds:
<i>Well, I'm past the three-month probation period. I'm safe!</i>	Congratulations. Has your employer indicated any possibility of additional training, so that you can advance within the organization? Do you still like the job enough that you want to stick with it? How do you feel about your supervisor and coworkers (or team)? Since three months have passed, will you receive health benefits?
<i>The job's going great. My only issue is that I have to wait close to an hour for a bus when my shift ends at midnight.</i>	Have you asked your supervisor if a minor shift in your schedule might be possible? Can you wait in a staff room, rather than outside in the cold? Let's visit the mass transit website to explore alternative routes. Do you know of any coworkers who might be able to provide a ride home, even from time to time?
<i>The kitchen manager's my supervisor and she's no problem, but the sous chef orders me around when the kitchen manager is not there.</i>	Does the sous chef have authority when the kitchen manager is out? If not, have you approached the kitchen manager to discuss the issue? Does the sous chef target you, or is she bossy with everyone? Do the sous chef's instructions contradict those of the kitchen manager?
<i>My boss smelled booze on my breath this morning and sent me home for the rest of the day.</i>	Has this ever happened before? Can you tell me approximately how much time passed between when you drank and the start of your shift? Did your supervisor indicate that you might face further consequences when you return tomorrow? What do you think will happen if you start a shift with alcohol on your breath again?
<i>I don't get along with my [coworker, boss].</i>	What impact is this having on your experience at work? Please describe the situation in as much detail as you can. What skills might you use to address the situation? For example: assertiveness, clear communication, conflict-resolution techniques. Also, do you get along with any other people at work? What's the difference between them and this individual with whom you do not get along? Have you struggled to get along with colleagues at previous jobs? How have you handled such past situations?
<i>I don't fit in. All the other employees seem like old friends.</i>	Have you felt similarly when starting previous jobs? Do you have anything in common with these coworkers, even if they seem cliquish?
<i>The whole group goes out for drinks on Fridays. I can't put my sobriety at risk.</i>	Can you socialize in alternative ways? Do you feel comfortable saying you don't drink? Would you feel safe going out with your colleagues and ordering soda? Or: what do you lose by not participating in the Friday evening outing?
<i>I hate my job.</i>	Has something happened since the last time we met? Are there steps you can take to improve the situation? Let's consider how you might comfortably stay in the job or, alternatively, explore the possibility of moving on to a better fit.
<i>I just got fired!</i>	What happened? How can you learn from this experience?

**In general:** Validate the client's success, while suggesting opportunities to advance in a position. If a client has a conflict—either with other personnel or the job role itself—explore the issue without casting judgment. Use conflict as a chance to learn.

## EXERCISE 5.1

### Understanding Your Personal Style

- » **Learning Objective:** To identify your personal style and how it contributes to success in the workplace
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Exploring Your Style”
- » **Vocabulary:** uniqueness, style
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: listening, speaking; Personal qualities: self-esteem
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and small group activity
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

- In a large group ask, “What do we mean by personal style?” Encourage discussion by asking clients to characterize and compare the styles of their favorite comedians or sports celebrities.
- Divide clients into groups of two to four. Then distribute the handout “Exploring Your Style” and have clients complete it.
- Debrief by asking clients to share characteristics of their personal work style.

#### Extension Activities

- Have clients expand their responses in “Exploring Your Style” to a one-page essay on their personal work style.
- Have clients download a PDF of a personal work-style assessment (e.g., at [http://www.lebowco.com/downloads/Personal\\_WorkStyle\\_Assessment.pdf](http://www.lebowco.com/downloads/Personal_WorkStyle_Assessment.pdf)) and share their results. This assessment is best suited for higher literacy clients who have some work experience.

## HANDOUT 5.1

### Exploring Your Style

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

Answer the following questions to start filling out a picture of your personal work style.

**1.** What unique qualities do you bring to the workplace?

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**2.** List several words or phrases that describe how you do your work.

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**3.** If you were to observe yourself working from a distance, what is the most interesting quality you would notice?

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**4.** Imagine yourself working with others. How would your coworkers describe you and your way of working with them?

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**5.** Again, imagine yourself on the job. How would your supervisor describe you and the way you complete your work?

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## EXERCISE 5.2

### Working with Diversity

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand types of diversity and how we form our attitudes
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Valuing and Respecting Differences,” “How We Think about Differences,” “Dimensions of Diversity,” and “Tips for Improving Relationships in a Diverse Workplace”
- » **Vocabulary:** belief system
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: creative thinking, reasoning; Personal qualities: integrity and honesty
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Brainstorm and record answers to the following questions:
  - a. What does diversity mean in the workplace?
  - b. What strengths are associated with a diverse workplace?
  - c. What challenges emerge in a diverse workplace?
2. Distribute and discuss the handout “Valuing and Respecting Differences.”
3. Lead a discussion about belief systems and their formation, asking clients to refer to their own experiences. For example, how have clients’ families and others influenced their attitudes about other cultures? Discuss the role of one’s background and experiences in values formation.
4. Distribute and discuss the handout “How We Think about Differences.”

#### Extension Activities

1. Lead a discussion based on the three-page handout “Dimensions of Diversity,” asking clients to write answers to the two questions. Have clients review their answers in pairs.
2. Distribute the handout “Tips for Improving Relationships in a Diverse Workplace.” Ask clients to write about a time either in school, at work, or in the community when they used each of the three tips.
3. Invite a guest speaker to discuss diversity.

## HANDOUT 5.2

### Valuing and Respecting Differences

*Adapted From Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

An organization gains great advantages from tapping the skills of a diverse workforce. In short, more ideas and backgrounds can mean enhanced know-how and flexibility for an organization. Valuing and respecting differences therefore makes for healthier working relationships that lead to better productivity.

In the workplace, “diversity” refers to the differences we recognize in others and ourselves, such as:

- Gender identification
- Culture
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Having a family or being single
- Physical and mental abilities or challenges

Diversity can also be used to describe differences relating to workplace relationships, such as:

- Management vs. nonmanagement
- Main office/headquarters vs. field/satellite offices
- Technical vs. nontechnical

## HANDOUT 5.3

### **How We Think about Differences**

Think about how your family or others have influenced your attitudes about other cultures. Indeed, some of your beliefs may be based on your upbringing or experiences. Following are examples of factors that play a part in shaping our attitudes about differences:

#### **Experiences**

- Personal experiences
- Personal observations
- Statements or opinions overheard from others (or heard from someone who heard them from someone else; i.e., third-hand)

#### **Family Members and Other Influences**

- Parents or grandparents
- Siblings
- Friends
- School or work associates
- Clubs or churches

#### **Environmental Influences**

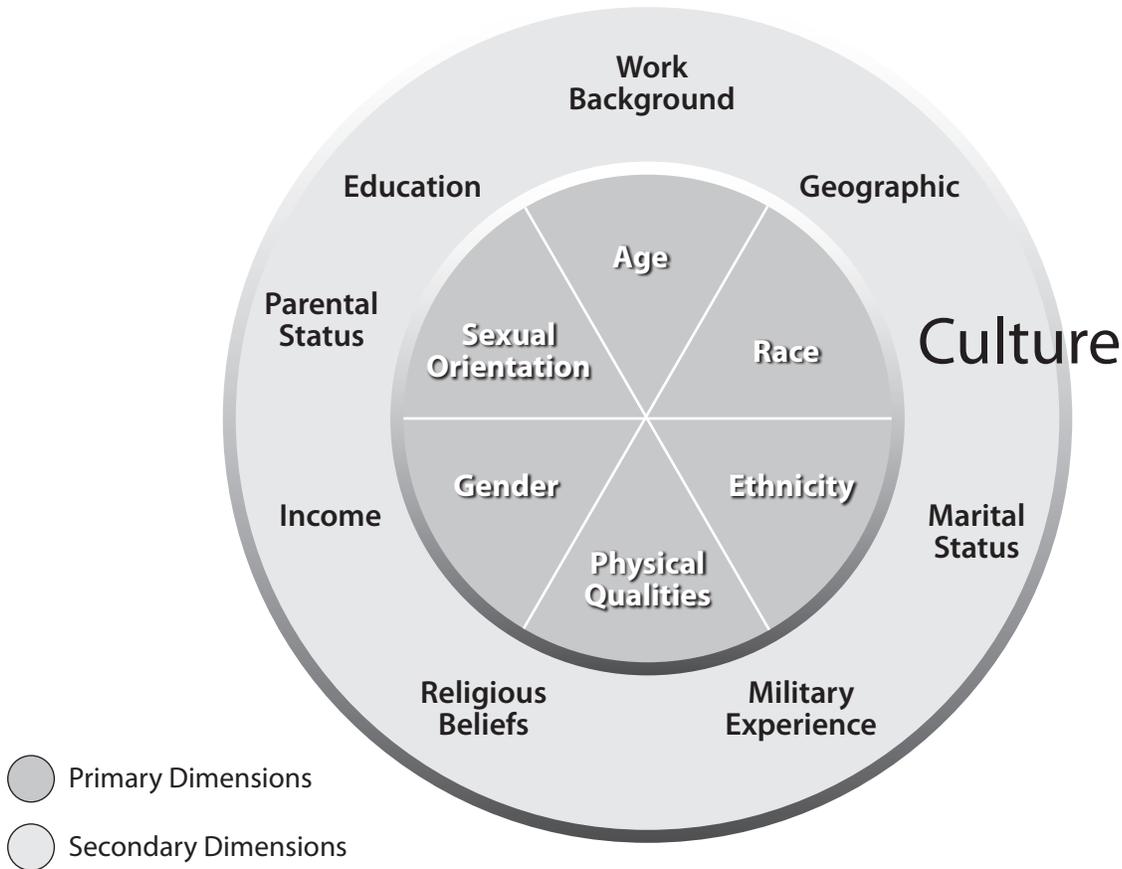
- Movies, television, or video games
- Newspapers or magazines
- Books or studies
- Political campaigns

## HANDOUT 5.4.

### Dimensions of Diversity

Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.

Valuing and respecting differences in the workplace begins with individual self-awareness. It is up to each of us to take a deep look into our feelings and beliefs so that we can open our minds and change our behaviors to more effectively value the diversity around us. The graphic below gets us started on the basics:



Source: Primary and Secondary Dimensions of Diversity (graph), by Marilyn Loden and J.B. Rosener, <http://diversityeducation.cas.psu.edu/PDFs/PrimaryandSecondaryDimen.pdf>. From Robert Kreitner and Angelo Kinicki, *Organizational Behavior*, 9th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2009).

## Primary and Secondary Dimensions

### Primary dimensions of diversity (the “inner circle”) include:

- Age
- Ethnic heritage
- Gender
- Mental or physical abilities and characteristics
- Race
- Sexual orientation

### Secondary dimensions of diversity (the “outer circle”) include\*:

- Communication and work style
- Education
- Work experience
- Family status
- First language
- Geographic location
- Income
- Military experience
- Organizational role and level

### Directions:

The “Dimensions of Diversity” activity gives clients an opportunity to think about their belief systems and the ways in which they were formed. Ask clients to explore the roots of their attitudes by answering the following questions. Model the activity by offering speculative answers based on your own experience.

1. Which of the dimensions of diversity (listed on the previous page) are part of your core identity. Which three would be part of your inner circle?

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2. Now think about yourself at work. What two or three special contributions do you make that owe to your unique background? In what ways do these qualities improve your workplace?

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\*The terms that follow do not correspond identically to the terms in the graph.

## HANDOUT 5.5

### Tips for Improving Relationships in a Diverse Workplace

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

1. **Communicate effectively, using all the tools you know.** These tools include words, body language, and eye contact. Practice conscious self-talk (in effect, acting as your own therapist) to break down assumptions about differences. Skills essential to this practice are openness, active listening, and use of respectful language.
2. **Think before you speak. Be sensitive to others.** If you offend someone accidentally, apologize at once. Avoid making generalizations about cultures or “types” of people. Key skills in this endeavor include selective use of language (i.e., avoiding language that offends or hurts), imagery, and participation in activities (i.e., avoiding groups that encourage generalization and discrimination against others).
3. **Listen more.** When people feel they are being heard, their self-esteem and confidence rise. Listening also encourages people to talk through concerns or problems and to be less defensive, as well as to cooperate.

## EXERCISE 5.3

### Accepting Direction and Criticism

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To use communication skills to improve both giving and receiving feedback
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Dos and Don’ts on Giving and Receiving Feedback,” “Defusing Conflict,” and “Discussion Questions on Receiving Criticism”
- » **Vocabulary:** clarity, consequences, vague
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: problem solving, reasoning; Basic skills: speaking
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion, small group work, role playing
- » **Time:** One to two hours

#### Instructions

Give clients a few minutes to think of a recent experience in which someone gave them feedback, direction, or criticism—whether at school, work, home, or with friends. Then discuss the following questions as a group:

- How was the feedback delivered?
  - How was the “advisor’s” tone of voice?
  - How was his or her body language?
  - When was the feedback given? Immediately in response to an issue or problem? Or days or weeks later?
  - How did you respond?
  - What makes feedback easier to receive?
  - What makes feedback harder to receive?
- Distribute and review the handout “Dos and Don’ts on Giving and Receiving Feedback.”

#### Extension Activity

- Consider one of two options for an activity using the handout “Defusing Conflict”:
  - Option 1—Divide participants into groups of two to three and distribute the handout. Ask each group to write answers to the questions and then report on their findings to the main group.
  - Option 2—Use the handout as the basis for a role-playing exercise. Ask for two volunteers (one to play “team leader,” the second to play “employee”), and set the scene as follows:
 

“The team leader enters the room with a stern look a booklet in her hand. The employee is waiting in a chair and looks up at the team leader with a startled expression.”

After the scenario plays out, ask the volunteers to redo the scene with these changes: This time, the team leader speaks calmly and uses a gentler approach. The leader informs the employee of the rules and the ways in the which employee broke them.
- Lead a discussion using the handout “Discussion Questions on Receiving Criticism.”

## HANDOUT 5.6

# Dos and Don'ts on Giving and Receiving Feedback

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

When offering feedback—whether to a coworker, a relative, or a friend—you'll have a better chance of getting through if you follow these tips:

### DO:

1. **Describe the behavior that concerns you**—"It bothers me when you finish my sentences for me."
2. **Address issues as soon as they come up**—Don't wait until the other person has likely forgotten the situation.
3. **Use "I" messages. These allow you to own your feelings**—"I feel bad when you finish my sentences for me."
4. **Make sure your point is clear**—"Do you understand what I mean when I say that?"
5. **Describe consequences of inaction**—"If you keep interrupting me, I most likely won't want to talk with you in the future."
6. **Be ready to listen to the other person's point of view**—It takes (at least) two to resolve a conflict.

### DON'T:

1. **Make accusations**—"You always interrupt me."
2. **Introduce the opinions of third parties**—"John always says you interrupt a lot."
3. **Give vague consequences**—"That kind of behavior will get you in trouble."
4. **Raise behaviors that the other person cannot help**—"The way you breathe really bothers me."
5. **Deny the other person's feelings**—This conversation isn't about you alone. The person with whom you are talking also has a side to the story.

When receiving feedback, follow these principles to ensure an optimal outcome:

1. **Listen and try not to get defensive**—A two-way conversation always beats stubborn resistance.
2. **Do not blindly accept what you are told as the ultimate truth**—Respect and explore your own point of view.
3. **Paraphrase the feedback to make sure you understand what is being said**—"So, you're telling me I talk too much during staff meetings?"
4. **Remember that all feedback is helpful**—Among other benefits, it gives you a chance to see how others view your work.
5. **Follow up and follow through**—When, two weeks later, you ask the other person whether you've been more attentive and less talkative during staff meetings, he will appreciate your ability to listen and your willingness to change.

## HANDOUT 5.7

### Defusing Conflict

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

A confrontation need not be ugly. But it may be if the confronter doesn't mind his or her tone and body language. Read the following scenario and answer the questions that follow. Refer to Handout 3.1 for tips on using assertive language.

**Team Leader:** "Is this the report that you gave me to review?"

**Employee:** "Yes, I put it on your chair before I left yesterday. Have you had a chance to read it?"

**Team Leader:** "I can't believe you gave me this report! First of all, I couldn't read it because of all the typos and, second, you didn't follow any of my directions. This is the worst report I have ever received in my ten years working for this hospital. I need for you to redo this thing before you leave today."

1. Write an assertive response for the employee to use with the team leader.

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2. Rewrite the team leader's passage using assertive, rather than accusatory, language.

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## HANDOUT 5.8

### Discussion Questions on Receiving Criticism

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

1. How would you react to the criticism provided in the scenario? What, in your opinion, is the right way to handle the situation?

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2. How might the criticism both individuals received affect the way they felt about themselves?

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3. How might the team leader’s tone and body language—even given the same essential message—affect your response?

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4. How is asking someone to do something different from telling someone to do something? When you’re on the receiving end, which do you prefer?

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5. What factors affect your ability to accept directions from others (e.g., age, race, seniority in the organization, personality)?

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6. Notice that in this scenario the team leader did not tell the employee what components of the report to change. The absence of this information makes it difficult for the employee to correct the situation.

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7. In general, when is it appropriate to try to figure something out for yourself and when is it appropriate to ask questions? Whom do you ask? Are you afraid of asking a “stupid” question? Do you think asking too many questions might make you look bad?

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## EXERCISE 5.4

### Defining Conflict and Its Causes

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand what conflict is and the type of conflicts that arise in the workplace
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “How Do You Feel about Conflict?” and “Common Causes of Conflict in the Workplace”
- » **Vocabulary:** conflict, resolution
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: negotiates, participates as a member of a team; Basic skills: speaking
- » **Methodology:** Individual and group work
- » **Time:** 60–90 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Explain that the group will explore what conflict is, our feelings about it, and how to respond to conflict in the workplace.
2. Distribute the handout “How Do You Feel about Conflict?” Ask the clients to answer the questions, noting that the handout will not be collected.
3. After clients have completed the handout, ask whether anyone saw patterns in their responses and, in turn, what they learned about themselves.
4. Divide the class into two groups. Each group does as follows:
  - a. Identifies a recorder and a reporter.
  - b. Has 20 minutes to create a working definition or either “conflict” or “the workplace.”
  - c. Brainstorms ideas before trying to write down its working definition.
  - d. Comes up with as many ideas as possible about these terms.
  - e. Has a chance to report its results to the group, writing each definition on a flip chart.
5. After the two groups have reported on their definitions, the counselor can refer to the following definition as needed:

**Conflict**—a clash, competition, or mutual interference of opposing or incompatible forces or qualities (such as ideas, interests, or wills) (*Webster’s*)

**Talking points for instructor:** Basically, conflict exists when a disagreement occurs between two or more parties. A conflict may be legitimate or seem petty, misguided, or irrational. The parties in a conflict may be able to achieve resolution on their own or they may need outside counsel to step in. The end result of conflict can be improved relations or continued dissatisfaction. The way a conflict is handled has a big impact on its outcome.

*continued »*

A simple definition of **the workplace** is the setting in which work is performed, or the physical location where an organization's activity occurs. But today's workplace is increasingly complex, with many employees performing their roles outside the central site. Therefore, the workforce may more accurately be defined as the various arrangements, dynamics, and mechanisms (including the physical site) through which work flows.

**Workplace conflict**, as noted, refers to disagreements between two or more parties in the workplace.

With these definitions in mind, lead a discussion on the various causes of conflict in the workplace. Write down causes as they arise, and note that conflicts may fall into three categories: interests, rights, and power. Distribute the handout "Common Causes of Conflict in the Workplace."

### **Extension Activities**

1. Have clients write about a conflict they have experienced in school, at work, or with their family, identifying both the source of the conflict and their role in resolving it.
2. Invite human resources speakers to discuss employee rights in the workplace.

## HANDOUT 5.9

### How Do You Feel about Conflict?

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

Both past experiences with conflict and attempts to learn about resolving conflict will inform a person's ideas and attitudes in the workplace. Complete the following sentences to further explore your views on conflict:

1. The way we deal with conflict in our home is ...

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2. When I was growing up, what I learned about conflict is ...

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3. The way my friends and family deal with conflict is to ...

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4. When I'm involved in a conflict, I usually ...

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5. When I see someone else involved in a conflict, I usually ...

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6. When people make me angry, I ...

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7. Conflicts are usually ...

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8. I think most people deal with conflict by ...

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9. The best way to handle a conflict is ...

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10. I wish I could learn ...

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## HANDOUT 5.10

### Common Causes of Conflict in the Workplace

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

**Most conflicts at work fall into one of three overlapping categories: interests, rights, or power.**

Conflicts over **interests** involve employees' desires or needs in the workplace. Issues may range from general treatment to more specific items such as assignments, evaluation, scheduling, promotion, and pay. Conflicts over interests occur among and between employees at all levels.

Today workers enjoy a host of legal **rights** established by statues, regulations, court decisions, and other means. In addition, organizations establish their own systems of internal rights, through policies, procedures, or contractual agreements. Items decided by internal policy include rules over dismissal, disciplinary measures, and the rights of employees being disciplined.

Oftentimes in the workplace, conflicts involve a test of **power**. When assessing such a situation, we might ask:

- Who has power?
- When should power be used?
- How should power be used?

## EXERCISE 5.5

### Resolving Conflict in the Workplace

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand ways to resolve conflicts with others
- » **Materials Needed:** Handouts: “Tips for Resolving Conflicts with Others” and “Role Playing Resolution”
- » **Vocabulary:** nonaccusatory, resolution, strategy
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Thinking skills: creative thinking and knowing how to learn; Interpersonal: teaches others new skills
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion and role plays
- » **Time:** 60–90 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Distribute and discuss the handout “Tips for Resolving Conflicts with Others.”
2. Have clients role play two situations, giving each participant a copy of his or her part only.
3. After the role plays, distribute the handout “Role Playing Resolution” for clients to complete.

#### Extension Activities

1. Invite a guest speaker to address resolving conflicts in the workplace.
2. Have clients develop their own role plays in which they explore several options for dealing with a conflict.

## HANDOUT 5.11

### Tips for Resolving Conflicts with Others

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

When you are experiencing a conflict with another person, consider following these steps:

1. **Identify the person with whom you are having the problem and the problem itself.** Be sure to determine the specific behavior or attitude that is bothering you and how frequently it occurs.
2. **Examine personal dynamics.** Observe the other person's interactions with others. Do they resemble his or her interactions with you? Why does the person act in such a way? Asking questions about causes helps point the way to potential solutions.
3. **Determine the costs of behavior.** How does the other person's behavior affect others? Does it cause people to lose morale? Does it affect productivity? Does it create discomfort for the whole staff? If, in the end, no one is affected by the person's behavior, the behavior should be ignored.
4. **Plan an approach.** Once you identify that the person's behavior does affect you and others, you need to have a discussion with the person. Plan an approach that fits the nature of the problem, the personality involved, and your relationship with the person.
5. **Describe the behavior.** When you meet with the person, describe the behavior in a nonaccusatory manner and explain why it bothers you. Use "I" statements. For example: "Today, I felt really cut down during the meeting when I was talking about the budget and you interrupted me before I had finished my sentence."
6. **State what you want.** Be clear. Say, for instance, "I hope the next time I talk, I won't get interrupted."
7. **Seek agreement.** Be sure the person understands your message and seek a commitment to change. Ask, "Do you see things the same way that I do?"

## HANDOUT 5.12

### Role Playing Resolution

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

For each of the following situations, engage in the role play using skills you have learned about resolving conflicts.

#### **Situation 1: Dealing with the “Back Stabber”**

Trey “the back stabber” is, as his nickname suggests, determined to get ahead at the expense of others. He spreads gossip and outright lies about coworkers, including their work habits and personal life. Out in the open, of course, Trey is friendly. That’s because he hopes you’ll reveal some useful material about yourself.

Recommendations for the respondent to Trey: Remember, don’t stoop to this guy’s level by spreading rumors about him. If you do, your coworkers will think you’re no better than he is—petty and untrustworthy. Plus, they won’t think much of your ability to deal with conflict. Take the high road. Then, the people around you will never believe the dirt Trey has dished about you.

#### **Situation 2: Dealing with the Boundaryless Supervisor**

Your supervisor, Liz Anne, shares too much information about her private life, and she expects you to do the same. She’ll tell you about the drag-out fight with her boyfriend, her doctor’s advice on protein supplements, and so on. For your part, you’ll be spending lots of time in Liz Anne’s office, uncomfortably staring out the window.

Recommendations for the respondent to Liz Anne: First of all, this is not about you. Liz Anne’s the out-of-bounds player here. Don’t feel compelled to respond by sharing inappropriate details about your life. Furthermore, don’t encourage her by offering advice or showing interest in any way. Sometimes, a laugh or a joke can get the point across that you’ve heard enough—and that you have actual work to do.

## EXERCISE 5.6

### Working with Others on a Team

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand that all employees must work on teams and to learn ways to be an effective team member
- » **Materials Needed:** Handout: “Developing and Maintaining Good Working Relationships”
- » **Vocabulary:** confidential, loyal, personal space, prioritize
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Basic skills: speaking, listening; Thinking skills: problem solving
- » **Methodology:** Large and small group discussion
- » **Time:** 60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Note that most workplaces require employees to work on teams at one point or another.
2. Lead a discussion using the following questions:
  - a. What kinds of teams might you work on in a workplace?
  - b. How many members might a team have?
  - c. Who might be on a team?
  - d. What might a team be responsible for?
  - e. Why are teams important in a workplace? (Emphasize answers to this last question.)
3. Break up the clients into groups of three or four, and distribute the handout “Developing and Maintaining Good Working Relationships.” Ask each group to read the tips listed, add their own examples, and prioritize them based on their utility at school, work, and with family members.
4. Have a member from each group share any additions to the list. Record these on the board.

#### Extension Activities

1. Ask clients to list their triggers (i.e., things that cause them to lose their temper). Then, have them create a strategy for maintaining self-control when these triggers appear.
2. Ask clients to contemplate the values and principles about which they feel most strongly and write them down. Then have them reflect on whether their behavior is in line with each of their values and place a check mark next to those values for which this is true. Finally, ask: What would you need to do differently in order for all your values and behaviors to line up?
3. Consider the issues you are willing to stick to, “no matter what.” Clarify for yourself what is and is not worth fighting for.

## HANDOUT 5.13

# Developing and Maintaining Good Working Relationships

*Adapted from Karen L. Harvey (Professional Training Systems, Inc.), with Sarah Griffen, East Baltimore Pipeline Job Readiness Training Curriculum, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Used with permission.*

Follow these tips when forming new relationships or improving existing ones in the workplace.

### **To form new relationships:**

- Introduce yourself. The other person will respond with his or her name. Say the name to yourself two or three times so that you remember it.
- When you encounter the person over the course of the workday, say hello and be friendly.
- Get to know the person before you ask personal questions or reveal personal details about yourself.
- Always respect personal space, even if you have a fond relationship with the person.

### **To improve relationships with coworkers or team members:**

- Make every effort to get to know your coworkers as individuals. Don't take hearsay for granted—give every person a chance.
- Spend time talking with coworkers during breaks and after work, yet recognize the value of having friends outside the workplace.
- Don't hang around coworkers when they're busy (and you've clocked out).
- Take the initiative in communicating praise and concerns alike.
- If you make a promise, follow through.
- Do everything you can to resolve conflicts quickly and completely.
- When people share information in confidence, keep it confidential.
- Be loyal to your team or work group.

## EXERCISE 5.7

### Coping with Change

- » **Learning Objective:** To understand the necessity of adapting to changes and flexibility for success in the workplace
- » **Materials Needed:** flip-chart paper, markers
- » **Vocabulary:** adaptability
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Interpersonal: participates as member of a team; Thinking: reasoning; Basic skills: speaking
- » **Methodology:** Small group activity followed by large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Divide clients into small groups and distribute large sheets of paper and markers. Ask each group to list changes its members have made (or will have to make) once starting a job.
2. Have each group report its results and post its list on the wall. Circle new items as each sheet of paper goes up.
3. Lead a group discussion:
  - a. How would you feel if you had to change your routine in some way?
  - b. How might you use a change in your routine to your advantage? (Point out that every employee needs to make a change like this at some point.)
  - c. What role should a supervisor play in helping an employee adapt to a change at work?

#### Extension Activities

1. Returning to the lists, ask clients to identify the top five changes that they will have to make for a new job. Then have them identify supports that could help them make those changes.
2. Ask clients to develop a plan in which they outline changes to their routine that will allow them to get to work on time.
3. Ask clients who are already working to write a page-long essay about changes they have had to make since starting their job.

## EXERCISE 5.8

### Stepping onto the Career Ladder

- » **Learning Objective:** To help clients develop a long-term perspective in considering job opportunities
- » **Materials Needed:** Access to the CareerOneStop website ([www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)); career-ladder diagrams pulled from the site
- » **Vocabulary:** advancement, human resources department, lateral (or horizontal) movement, mapping, personnel, promotion, tuition reimbursement, wage
- » **SCANS Competencies:** Systems: understands systems; Information: interprets and communicates information; Thinking skills: sees things in the mind's eye
- » **Methodology:** Large group discussion
- » **Time:** 45–60 minutes

#### Instructions

1. Before the lesson, visit [www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel](http://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel) and identify one or two career ladders to share with clients.
2. Explain to clients that, when exploring occupations, it is useful to understand the possibilities for promotion or movement within a particular field or company.
3. Furthermore explain that ascending a career ladder is a step-by-step process through which a client builds skills and wages in a job category or within a company.
4. Finally, note to clients that they can move across occupations within an industry or sector. For example, within a health care setting, a worker can move from a position in custodial services to patient care.

#### Extension Activities

1. Have clients learn more about career paths within an occupation by doing an informational interview with a human resources representative.
2. Ask clients who have past work experience to draw their career path to the present day. Then have them name the career for which they are aiming and write about the steps they might take to move toward that career.

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