

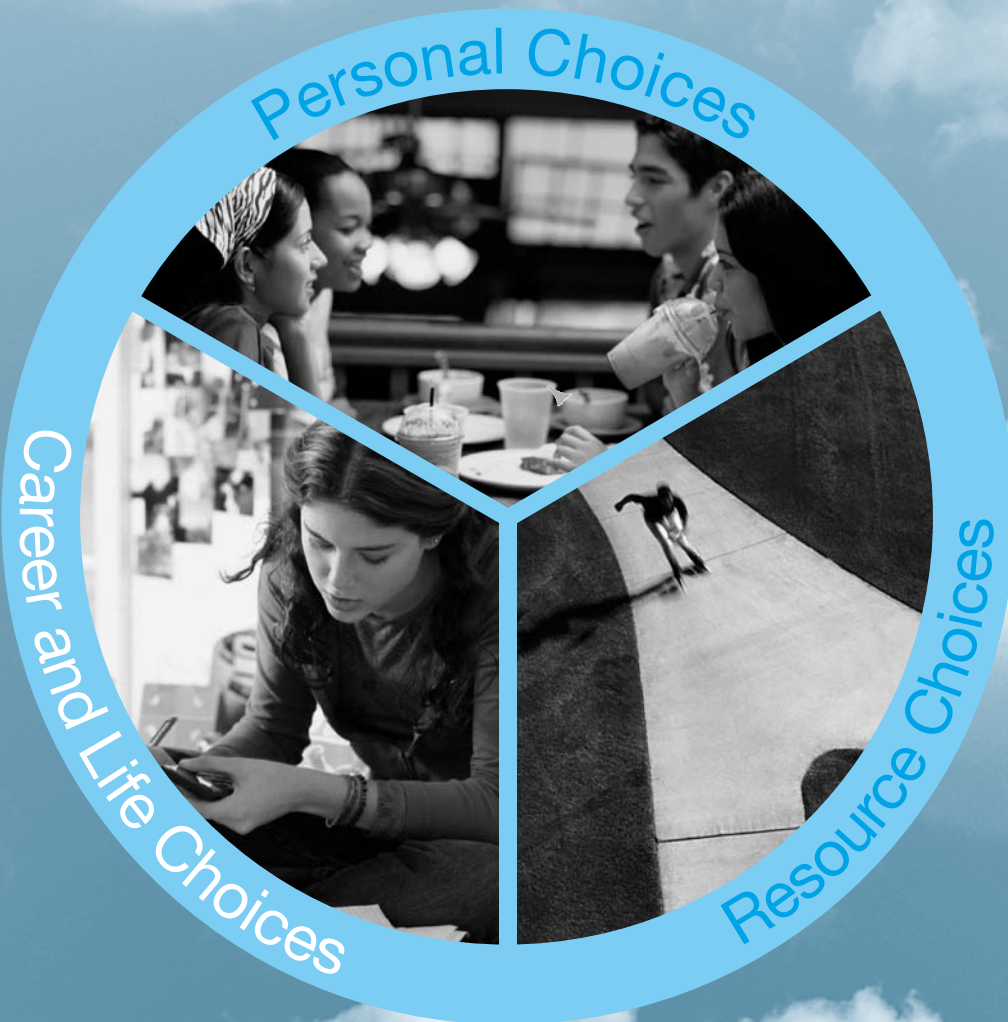
# *Career and Life Management*



## *Module 3* **Career and Life Choices**



# Career and Life Management



## Module 3

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Career and Life Management  
Module 3: Career and Life Choices  
Student Module Booklet  
ISBN 978-0-7741-2967-1

**Alberta Education acknowledges with appreciation the Alberta Distance Learning Centre and Pembina Hills Regional Division No. 7 for their review of this Student Module Booklet.**

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Other	



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- Alberta Education, <http://education.alberta.ca>
- LearnAlberta.ca, <http://www.learnalberta.ca>

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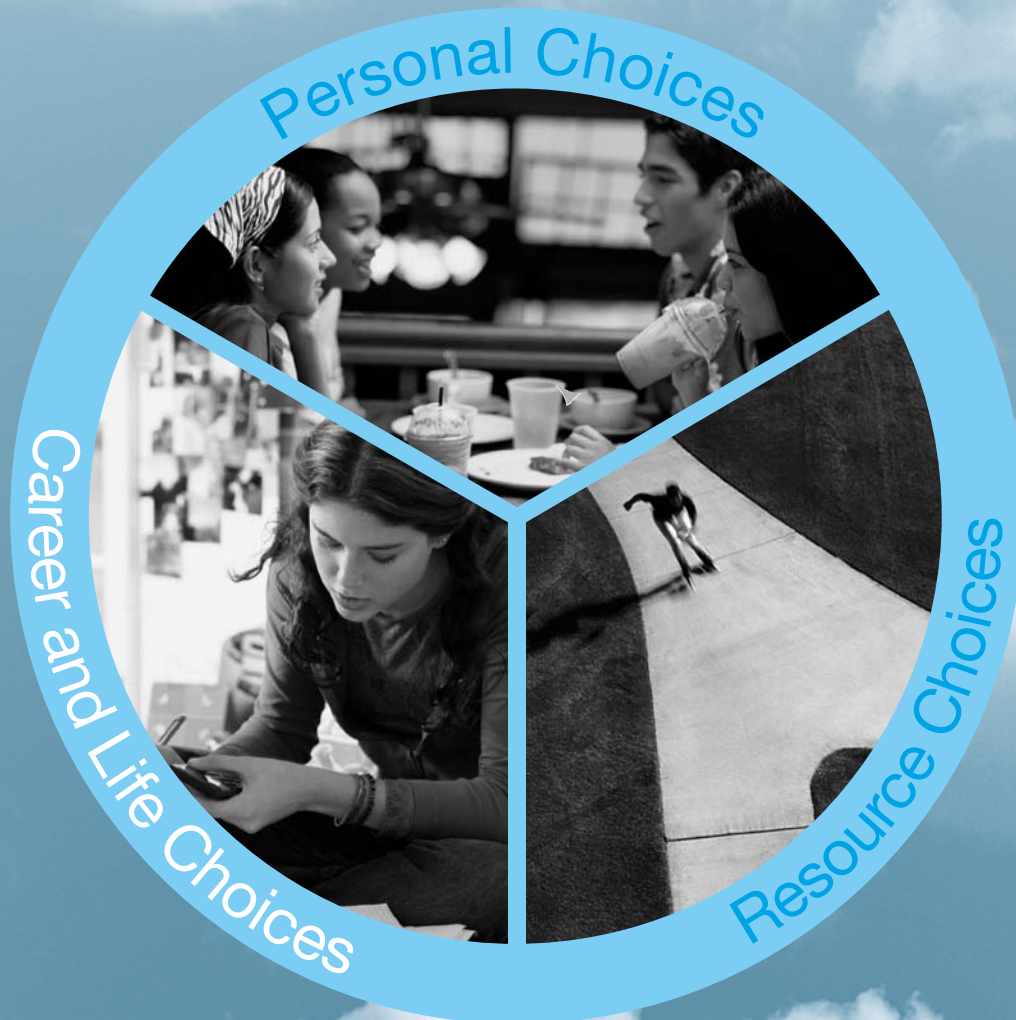
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# Welcome to Module 3 of Career and Life Management

We hope you enjoy your study of Career and Life Management. This course will help you make well-informed, considered choices in all aspects of your life.

There are three modules in this course. It is recommended that you work through these modules in order because the concepts and skills introduced in one module will be reinforced, extended, and applied in later modules.



Module 1 contains general information about the course components, additional resources, icons, assessment, and strategies for completing your work. If you do not have access to Module 1, contact your teacher to obtain this important information.

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# Module Overview

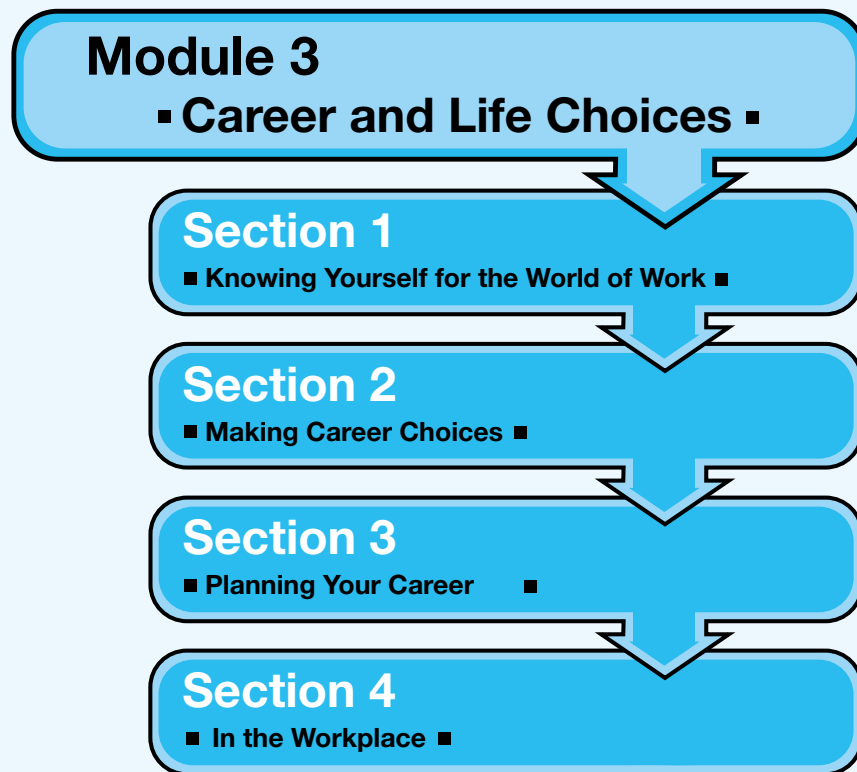


- Jake has known since he was five that he wants to be a teacher.
- Stacy has plans to apprentice as a welder.
- Rashid thinks he will probably go to college and take a general program until he decides what career he might want to pursue.
- Nirmala has tried to figure out what career she might follow, but nothing strikes her as something she would want to do for the rest of her life.

Have you decided on your career path? Or, are you still trying to decide what will be right for you? How will you know if a job or career is right for you? How can you make sure you will be able to move into the career of your choice?

This module will help you explore the strengths you bring to the job market and help you make personal career choices. You will work on setting goals to help bring your career choices into reality. To help you achieve your goals, you will explore strategies for job searching, getting a job, and being successful in the workplace. You will also explore the basics of entrepreneurship, the changing workplace, and work issues. As you carry out your explorations, you will work on developing a career portfolio.





## Assessment

Your mark will be determined by your work in the Assignment Booklets. In this module you are expected to complete four section assignments. The mark distribution is as follows:

### Assignment Booklet 3A

Section 1 Assignment	60 marks
Section 2 Assignment	40 marks

### Assignment Booklet 3B

Section 3 Assignment	35 marks
Section 4 Assignment	<u>65 marks</u>

**Total 200 marks**

Be sure to check with your teacher to determine if this mark allocation applies to you. Your teacher may include other reviews and assignments.

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## Section 1

# Knowing Yourself for the World of Work

What do I want to do for the rest of my life? Where will I be in ten years? How can I decide what career is best for me?

You have already had to make some decisions in high school that affect career choice. Are you taking courses to lead to university entrance or technical school entrance? Are you taking a program full of Career and Technology Studies, or one heavy in math and science, or in humanities like languages and social studies? Despite making decisions like these, many students still haven't made a firm decision on the career they will pursue.



What should you consider when deciding the career that is right for you? What is the dream job that will be fulfilling and support you well? Of course, the answer is as individual as you. Understanding your interests, abilities, and skills are key to finding a career in which you will be successful. Knowing your personality, your strengths and weaknesses, and your values are important factors in choosing a career that will be right for you.

In this section you will continue the self-assessment that you began in earlier modules. You will assess your personality, skills, interests, abilities, and values in terms of careers that fit with them. As you work through the section, you will put together a personal profile that will become the beginning of your personal and career portfolio.

# Lesson 1: Assessing Yourself



Think about people you know who are in their thirties, forties, and fifties. Some are no doubt happy, satisfied with their lives and fulfilled by the career they have chosen. Are there others who do not seem happy, who dislike their work, who feel things are at a dead end? One of the best things you can do to help yourself experience satisfaction in your work is to have a good understanding of who you are now. Knowing yourself well can help you realize what you value in life and the strengths you have to achieve the life you want.

People often do not have a clear picture of who they are or what they want out of life. Sometimes an individual takes on the wishes and expectations of people important to them—their parents or caregivers, their partners, friends, teachers—but this may not be what the individual truly wants to do with his or her life. Being able to accurately assess your personality, strengths and weaknesses, abilities, skills, likes and dislikes, and values helps you understand yourself. This knowledge can help you understand what you would like your life to be, including your career.

Knowing yourself is a complex process. What are the traits you like about yourself? Do you have characteristics that you do not like? Like most everyone, you probably assess yourself continually. You judge your actions, feelings, thoughts, and behaviours in many situations—sometimes you will judge yourself positively, sometimes negatively.

Self-assessment involves reflecting upon who you are now based on your thoughts, feelings, and reactions to your experiences. The purpose of self-assessment is to provide a path to the future, to assess yourself realistically, to compliment yourself on the positives, and to become the person you would like to be. You will be growing as a person throughout your life, so self-assessment is ongoing as well.



**Mr. Romanchuk:** You began some self-assessment in Module 1 as you explored how balanced your life is in relation to the six dimensions of wellness. Now, in terms of careers and your relationship to the world of work, what are the things you need to look at to get a rounded assessment of yourself?

**Jamal:** You need to reflect on things like your values, abilities, and skills.

**Ashley:** Shouldn't you think about your interests? And maybe also assess how you learn—your learning styles?

**Mr. Romanchuk:** Those are all important aspects of self-assessment. There are a couple of others that you should consider—personality and attitudes. You'll explore these topics in the material that follows.

## Personality

Personality includes unique values, beliefs, traits, and behaviours that belong to you. Every individual has distinctive qualities, which make that person different from another. These personal characteristics are recognized as that individual's personality.

Much of who you are is determined by your physical makeup—set by your genetic code. You also have been affected by the environment you have grown up in, including your family and all your life experiences.

It is important to accept and understand the things you learn about yourself. Knowing your personality traits can give you a sense of what characteristics are beneficial as you plan your career. It will also give you a sense of the characteristics that may be a disadvantage in some of your pursuits. Once you recognize them, you can develop strategies to move beyond those disadvantages.



1. There are hundreds of words that can be used to describe the way a person reacts to the world. How would you describe your personality? Go to Segment 17: Personality Traits on your Student Support CD to compile a list of traits that you believe are part of your personality.

Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

## Strengths

*competencies:*  
abilities to do  
certain things  
skillfully and  
with knowledge

*aptitudes:*  
natural  
abilities that  
enable one to  
readily learn a  
particular skill

Strengths are like **competencies** or **aptitudes**. They are the things you do well, and the things you have potential to learn and do well. Self-assessment gives you the opportunity to identify your strengths.

Sometimes looking at others can help you look more clearly at yourself. What qualities do you admire and respect in other people? Some people may lack confidence or always put themselves down, so they may view their whole being through those eyes and have trouble recognizing the strengths that they have. You, however, might see the strengths that they do have. Understanding others can help you look honestly at yourself.

What are the strengths of your personality that would make you successful in particular types of careers? Are you a people person—one who finds it easy to talk to people and likes meeting new people? Do you have a determination to always do your best, no matter what the circumstances? Do you have a positive attitude that leads you to do a good job? Do you have self-confidence to know that you can take on new tasks if you have the training and the opportunity to take on the challenge? Are you good at sports? Maybe your strength lies in designing web pages or repairing bicycles? Or is your strength in academics?



2. Think of times when you have displayed the following personality traits. Select four of these traits and describe situations where you displayed them.

- attentiveness
- creativity
- easy-goingness
- reliability
- loudness
- patience
- quietness
- sense of humour
- unselfishness


Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

## Limitations

You are made up of all the things you are, but you are also defined by everything that you are not. Your limitations probably don't make you feel good. They might sometimes be hard to admit, but they are as much a part of you as your strengths. This is not about being down on yourself, rather it is about being realistic. Recognizing your limitations can be a valuable part of knowing who you are now and who you can be. The plus is that you can overcome many limitations by working on them.

When you assess your limitations, it's good to keep the following points in mind:

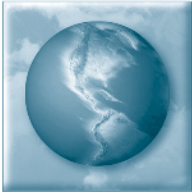
- You can try to change a limitation. If you see that you can't change it, you might decide to develop strengths in other areas of your life.
- You can shift your expectations by focusing on another area and interest of your life and become knowledgeable in that area. Sometimes shifting expectations is practical. It may, however, not always be right. You need to weigh the situation carefully. If you feel that you are being unfairly pushed to shift your expectations, you might want to give it a second thought.
- Some limitations can have a positive effect because they push you to develop strengths and acquire qualities and skills that you might not develop otherwise.



Make the most of your limitations. If you know your limitations, you can use the knowledge to your benefit. Respect yourself for what you have—your strengths.

- a. What are two of your personality traits you would like to develop further? What behaviours or actions could you practise that would help to develop these traits?
  - b. Do you have some personality traits that you think cannot be altered? Do they negatively affect your life? Explain.
4. Review the list of personality traits you compiled for question 1. Choose five that best describe you. What types of occupations would fit well with those traits?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



You might want to try some of the personality inventories that are provided online. Keep in mind that some may be more accurate and useful than others. Here are some sites you can check out:

- <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/pdf/careerinsite/step1/inventory.pdf>
- [www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/midcareer/pg704.pdf](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/midcareer/pg704.pdf)

There is no assignment for this lesson. You will use the information from this lesson to respond to the assignment for Lesson 3.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you examined ways of describing your personality and you assessed your strengths and limitations. Self-assessment is a valuable skill, which enables you to adjust to the changes you face as you move through transitions in your life. In the next lesson, you will take inventory of your skills and attitudes.

## Glossary

**aptitudes:** natural abilities that enable one to readily learn a particular skill

**competencies:** abilities to do certain things skillfully and with knowledge

## Suggested Responses

1. Are there any personality traits that you did not check off that you would like to develop? Are there some traits that might be strengths in some situations but weaknesses in others? In compiling your list, you should have listed the personality traits that you honestly believe you possess. Many of these terms may have personal connotations so you might have emotions tied to them. You may well have thought of other words that describe your personality traits.
2. Traits selected and the descriptions will, of course, vary. Was the situation a positive experience? Was it an appropriate trait to use in that situation? Did it surprise you or someone else? Did it help the situation or make it worse?

Many traits are positive in some situations, but may be negative in others. For example, if you chose *sense of humour* as one of your traits, you know that in many situations, humour is appropriate, but there may be some situations in which humour would be frowned upon.

3.
  - a. People often have skills and abilities they would like to improve and the same is true of personality traits. One example is people saying they would like to be more assertive. A shy person might want to work on being more comfortable socially. You will have chosen traits particular to your identity. Often to improve a trait, you must put yourself in a situation that requires you to practise the trait. Try to make it a safe and comfortable situation to begin with, but one that does provide the opportunity for you to challenge yourself. (While negative situations may be unpleasant and even painful, they can sometimes be turned into positive opportunities.)
  - b. Your answer will be personal. Sometimes personality traits are very deeply ingrained and may seem almost impossible to change. Most people believe, though, that through desire, hard work, and practice, you can modify most personality traits.
4. Each personality trait in the list would be appropriate for certain types of occupations. Being *sociable* would work well for someone in a service industry who deals with many people, such as a salesperson or waiter. A person who is *attentive* may do well in an occupation that requires close attention to detail such as air traffic control or editing. Someone who is *empathetic* might fit well in a profession such as nursing or social work.

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## Lesson 2: Values and Attitudes

Do you have an item that has sentimental value for you? For example, an old baseball glove may have sentimental value for you because you used it when you won your first tournament. When you look at it now, you might recall the pride and excitement you felt when your team won. The glove may bring back memories of your teammates and friends from that time. Perhaps you now consider the glove a lucky charm. To someone else it might have no value at all; it might just look like an old baseball glove. Objects only have value and importance because of what they represent to someone.



What is most important to you? What do you want out of life? Examining what you value in life can help you realize what you need to achieve a successful and happy life. The value of something is the worth you place on it. When you value something, whether it's an object, a quality, or an idea, it is important to you. Your values may be different from those of other people.

Perhaps your values include the following:

- good health
- hard work
- independence
- money
- love
- popularity
- authority
- happiness
- loyalty
- spiritual beliefs
- prestige
- nature
- recognition
- achievement
- honesty
- friendship
- education
- usefulness
- family
- approval
- acceptance



To help you begin an exploration of your aspirations, dreams and goals, read “Wish List” on pages 9 and 10 of *Careers*. The focus of the article is on using wishes to set goals.

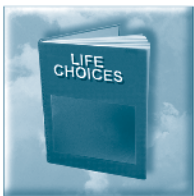
1.
  - a. What kind of wish list do you have? Create your own wish list. The wishes you list will illustrate some of your values—what you believe is important.
  - b. Select those wishes on your list that you consider to be dreams. Are some of your dreams achievable? Are some unachievable? Should you delete any of these from your wish list?
  - c. Review your list and decide which five wishes are most important to you. How do these wishes illustrate your values?
  - d. What type of career would help you best satisfy the five wishes that are the most important to you?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



Your personal values are based on beliefs you consider to be truly important. Your values are based on your principles—beliefs about morality and what is right and wrong.

Personal values guide you as you decide how to live your life. They influence your actions, choices, and decisions. An attitude, an opinion, or way of thinking about something reflects how you put your values into action.



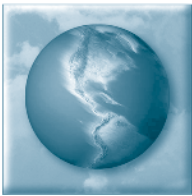
Read “What Matters Most to Me” on page 11 of *Careers*. Then turn to page 12 of *Careers* and complete the “Work Values Inventory.”



Continue your assessment of work values. Go to Segment 18: Work Values Inventory on your Student Support CD. Complete the inventory to gain an awareness of your work values. Consider each item carefully. Use your responses to the inventory to answer the following questions.

2.
  - a. Select three statements from your *Yes* list that are most appealing to you. Write a brief explanation of why each statement is appealing. What do these statements tell you about what is important for you to do at work?
  - b. Select three statements from your *No* list, and briefly describe why each value does not matter to you. What do these statements tell you about what you do not want to do at work?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



There are many personal values assessment tools and inventories available. Your school counselling area or local employment centre might have more value assessment tools for you to work through. Many websites also offer values and attitudes inventories. Complete a search or visit a web site like the following:

**<http://www.usd.edu/trio/tut/time/workinv.html>**

Assessing your personal values can be quite a task because

- you have a unique set of personal values
- you are not always conscious of all the values you have
- some values are more important than others
- you may experience conflict among the values you hold
- you may experience conflict between the values you hold and the values held by other people in your life
- values can shift depending on the situation

Knowing your values gives you an awareness of yourself, which can help you make choices and decisions.

There is no assignment for this lesson. You will use the information from this lesson to respond to the assignment for Lesson 3.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 53. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

By now you have no doubt realized how closely values and attitudes relate to personality traits. You can see also how your interests are related to values, attitudes, and personality traits. All are integrated in you as a unique human being. In the next lesson, you will continue your personal inventory by looking at your interests, abilities, and skills.

### Suggested Responses

- You probably listed wishes in many areas—financial, relationships, career, and so on. You should have listed all those things you think would make an ideal life for you.
  - Are some of these wishes “dreams” that could never come true? This list of impossibilities should be quite short, as most of what you listed could probably become reality with hard work and planning, and sometimes good luck. For example, you might think that “have a million dollars” is just a dream that is unachievable. But many people have achieved bank accounts of a million dollars through hard work and saving. The only wishes you should take off the list are the ones that do not really matter to you.
  - What are the five wishes you chose as most important? What values do they represent? For example, if one of your wishes was to “win a marathon,” you might say it shows that achievement or recognition is one of your values.
  - If you listed money as a focus, you need to pursue a career that pays well, or consider becoming an entrepreneur. If you said a happy family life was a top priority, then a career that demands your being away from home often might not be the best choice.
- a. and b.** Your inventory choices will, of course, be personal. Your responses for questions a. and b. should help you to recognize appropriate occupations that fit with your values.

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## Lesson 3: Interests, Abilities, and Skills



How do you think someone like Jarome Iginla became such a successful hockey player? What abilities and skills did he develop throughout his childhood and adolescence that made him successful? Do you think his abilities were “natural,” or do you think he gained most of his skills through hard work and practice? No doubt it was a bit of both. A key factor here is that he was interested in hockey. His interest in the game kept him attending practices and developing his skills. Or was it that he had a natural ability, so he enjoyed the game, and that made him interested in it? Interest, abilities, and skills are interrelated, each affecting the others.

### Interests

What are your interests now? Are they the same as they were a few years ago? Have you developed new interests or pursued old interests in more depth? Do you have some interests that you have not yet had the chance to pursue?

Interests are all those activities, events, pastimes, and ideas that attract you. An interest captivates your attention and makes you want to spend time exploring it. You feel curiosity and a desire to learn more about it. Your interests may be very unique and personal, or they may be ones that you share with others in clubs or blogs or discussion groups.

1. Gather some information about yourself by doing each of the following activities.
  - a. Make a quick list of ten things that interest you. Don't ponder this task. Just list, as quickly as you can, things that interest you.
  - b. How do you spend your spare time? Do some of these activities reflect your special interests?

c. Which of the following areas relate to your interests? Write your choices in your notebook or electronic file. Select as many areas as you like.

- art
- drama
- music
- literature
- science
- languages
- astronomy
- nature
- animals
- people
- ideas
- puzzles
- physical activities
- sports
- finance
- business
- clubs
- food
- travel
- teaching
- learning
- collecting
- dancing
- machinery
- tools
- new technology
- computers

d. How do your interests relate to the following parts of your life?

- how you spend your leisure time
- your favourite activities with your friends
- what you enjoy most at school or in your neighbourhood
- an enjoyable activity you do with a member of your family

e. Use your imagination to explore your interests. Select any three of the following situations. Identify what you would choose to do if you had

- an hour of free time
- a day to spend as you please
- a week to do as you choose
- one hundred dollars to spend on something that interests you
- all the money in the world
- one book to read
- to give a speech on one topic to a room full of interested people


**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



Interests can play a role in your career choices. For instance, if you love animals you might decide that you want to work with them. Would you study to become a veterinarian or an animal health technician? Would you become a farmer specializing in a certain type of animal? Would you open a salon for dogs? Would you choose to work in a pet store? Talk to parents or other adults you know. Ask how their interests have affected their career and occupational choices. Do you know anyone whose interest has become his or her occupation?

## Abilities and Skills

The words *skill*, *ability*, *talent*, and *aptitude* are often used interchangeably. They all refer to things you are able to do and/or things you are good at. Often the word *aptitude* is used to describe a natural talent you have—a thing you learn easily. Your aptitudes may be seen in the things you do well. For example, maybe you’ve always been good at learning languages. It means you have an aptitude for it. Aptitudes may also refer to your potential skills—natural skills you may have not yet discovered.



Aptitudes are usually included in efforts to identify the following skills.

**transferable:**  
able to be used  
in a different  
situation

- **Personal skills and abilities.** Some abilities are personal in nature; they are sometimes considered to be the skills that make you the person you are. They are the skills you use in day-to-day activities, situations, and interactions with other people. Self-confidence, honesty, energy, co-operation, and a sense of responsibility are all personal skills. In essence, these skills are **transferable** because they are a part of you that you take into all situations and experiences.
- **Transferable skills and abilities.** Transferable abilities are those skills that are learned and used in certain situations, but they can be successfully transferred from one situation to another. Often, transferable skills are those identified as more work-related. In combination with personal skills, they equip you to function in various work-related situations.

Some abilities, such as communicating with others, require a combination of personal and transferable skills. These are sometimes called “self-management” skills, and refer to abilities for managing and organizing yourself, which can help you go about living your life. You require these general abilities and skills to cope with everyday situations and make decisions.

- **Specific knowledge-based skills and abilities.** Some skills are very specific. They meet the needs of one task or activity. For example, a framing carpenter will have learned specific construction skills to frame a house. Knowledge-based skills are usually learned through specific education, training, or through specific work experience.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 39–40. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

Gather information about your skills and abilities by responding to the following questions.

*social skills:  
the abilities  
you use in your  
interactions  
with other  
people*


2. a. What **social skills** do you have? (Social skills are the skills you use in your interactions with other people. Think about how you relate to the people around you.)
- b. What social skills have you developed since your childhood?



3. a. What have you accomplished in your life so far? What makes you feel proud? Make a list of five things you do or have done well in your life. This is your own private list. It should include things of which you are proud, not necessarily things that other people view as great accomplishments or even know about.
- b. Are some of your skills and strengths directly related to your interests? Take a look at your personal interests. What skills or strengths are needed to pursue each of these? What skills have you learned from your interests, both past and present?
- c. Are you an expert at something? What abilities do you have that are respected by others?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**





Sometimes a list of skills can help you recognize your skills. Use the following ideas to stimulate your thinking about the skills you have.

- being with other people
- being on your own
- physical activities
- your own health care
- learning
- thinking
- making decisions
- using words
- working with numbers
- machinery
- being artistic
- nature
- business
- financial planning
- researching
- computers
- influencing/coaching
- setting priorities
- being responsible and reliable
- being determined
- being accountable
- teamwork
- organizing yourself
- sports
- school
- working with your hands
- solving problems
- working at a job
- music
- using equipment
- creating/building/making
- being a leader
- animals
- analysing information
- listening
- setting and reaching goals
- selling
- acting
- respecting other people
- energy and determination
- any other area you can think of

4. Choose five skills or interests you have that you would like to use in a work setting. Explain.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999). Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

## Competencies

In the employment world, the term *competencies* is used to describe combinations of your skills, abilities, aptitudes, and talents. Competencies come in many forms and are demonstrated in everything you do. They can stem from your strengths as a learner or from the kinds of intelligences you possess. Some of them enable you to function in the world in a practical way. Others allow you to explore new experiences or assist you in learning new skills and attitudes. Are you fearless when it comes to physical activity? Perhaps you are detail-oriented. Or maybe you are good with small children. These are just a few examples of competencies you might possess.



Go to page 1 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to questions 1 and 2 of Section 1.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

You have now looked at your interests, skills, and abilities. Recognizing what you are interested in and what you are good at will help you choose a career path that will bring you enjoyment and success. In the next lesson, you will explore how your attitudes about learning play a role in which careers are most suitable for you.

# Glossary

**social skills:** the abilities you use in your interactions with other people

**transferable:** able to be used in a different situation

## Suggested Responses

- 1. a. to e.** All your answers will be personal and will depend upon your interests. These questions are meant to help you to understand who you are as a person. Interests are very personal and indicate things you enjoy in life. The aim is to determine an occupation or career that fits with your interests so that you will enjoy your working life.
- 2. a.** Possible social skills include *good listener, caring, trustworthy, sociable, approachable, interesting, conversationalist, and empathetic*. You may have listed others.

**b.** Answers to this are wide open. You might have listed things like learning to play volleyball, learning a traditional dance, getting along with classmates, learning table manners, respecting other people's property, using language appropriate to the situation, and so on.
- 3. a.** Are you having difficulty thinking of five things? Remember your childhood and the many skills you mastered.

**b.** Often, if a person is interested in something, he or she will enjoy it, spend time doing it, and gain skills related to it.

**c.** Being an expert at something means having the skill to do it well. Over time, being an expert also makes something that is very difficult look easy. You may be an expert at something, but have never demonstrated it to others, so the last question may not apply. But most often experts are recognized by others.
- 4.** You have chosen five skills or interests that you would like to see yourself using in a career. What careers might they match up with? Are these careers that you might consider? You will do more exploration of the skills and interests that fit best in certain careers later in this module.

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## Lesson 4: Attitude and Learning



**Ms. Chan:** Have you ever been in a situation where you had to learn a new skill but for some reason you had very negative feelings about learning that skill?

**Ashley:** When I was five, my mother enrolled me in swimming lessons. I was terrified of the water.

**Ms. Chan:** How did your feelings affect your learning experience?

**Ashley:** I hated the lessons. It took me forever to learn how to swim but once I learned how, I really enjoyed swimming. I even joined the swim club.

**Ms. Chan:** Now recall a situation where you were eager to learn a new skill. How did your feelings affect that learning experience?

**Ashley:** I've always wanted to learn sign language, so last summer I took lessons. In September, the instructor asked me to help teach the course. I really enjoyed the lessons and the language was easy for me to learn.

**Ms. Chan:** Your attitude influences how you view your experiences.

A person's attitude affects how their experiences are defined and interpreted. Both negative and positive attitudes have an impact on learning. A positive attitude will enhance the learning experience. The enhanced learning experience will positively reinforce the experience of learning itself—the learner becomes more willing to continue to learn. For both of these results, students need to know how to create, within themselves, as positive an attitude as possible towards learning.

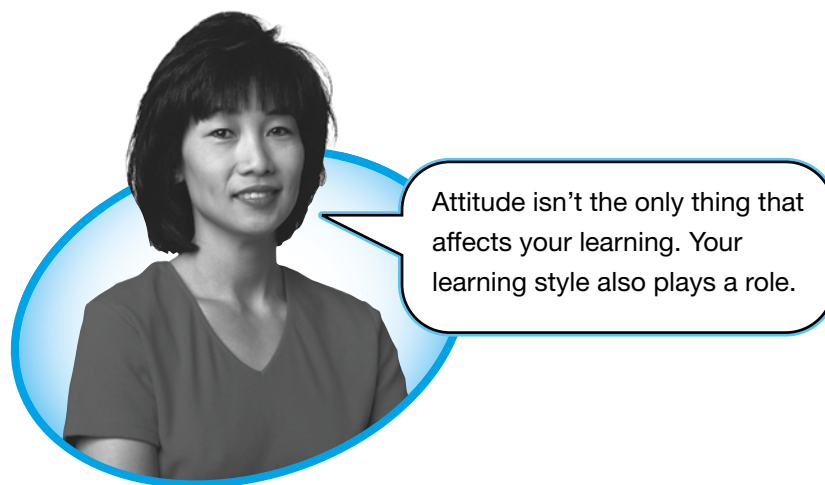
Positive learning attitudes include

- a belief that one is capable of learning
- a belief that the task is possible
- a belief that one can be successful and proud of that success
- a respect for the importance of learning itself, if not the specific material to be learned
- a willingness to make time and find a place suitable for learning and studying
- a dedication to spending time at this place for the purposes of learning and studying
- a sense of success and accomplishment from having learned something
- **perseverance**—the unwillingness (within reason) to be defeated when learning something new

**perseverance:**  
*sticking to a  
purpose or  
task; not giving  
up*

Of course, the same positive attitude that can lead to success in learning can be applied to other areas of life. Positive approaches to new situations, to people, and to challenges lead to success.

Your attitude plays a large role in how you feel about your life. Many psychologists say that you can choose to be positive, or you can choose to be negative. If you choose to look at situations positively, you then see the good in each situation. Things can only become better and better.

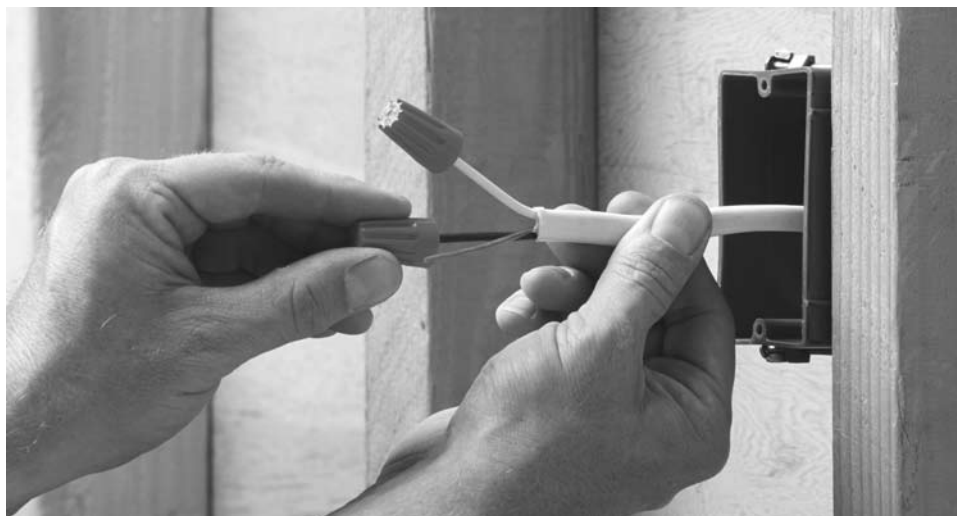


<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 25–26. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

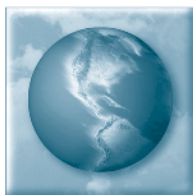
## Learning Styles

In Module 1 you were introduced to learning styles and how they affect you when you learn new skills and information. What does your learning style have to do with your future career?

Different careers require different skills and different methods of acquiring information and using it. A physicist or chemist needs to use learning techniques different from those used by an artist or musician. So, your learning style can affect the types of careers or activities that appeal to you. People who like to analyze problems may want to pursue careers in science or mathematics. An imaginative learner may want to become a graphic designer or a writer. Perhaps a kinesthetic learner would prefer a hands-on job such as that of an electrician. Once you understand how you learn, you can better understand what types of careers may better suit your learning style.



To learn more about learning styles and learning preferences, read “Great Minds Think Differently” on pages 30 and 31 of *Careers*. The article encourages you to look at your strengths when learning. Read also “The Many Ways We Learn” on page 31 of *Careers*, which describes the different ways people learn.



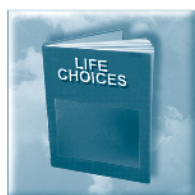
The Internet offers a number of sites that provide learning style self-assessments and inventories. Try some of the learning style inventories that are provided online. Use your favourite search engine and the following terms to search the Internet for websites related to learning styles:

- learning styles
- learning inventories

When you’ve completed your exploration, use what you discovered to answer the following question.

1. Create a chart like the one that follows. Use it to record information from two different websites.

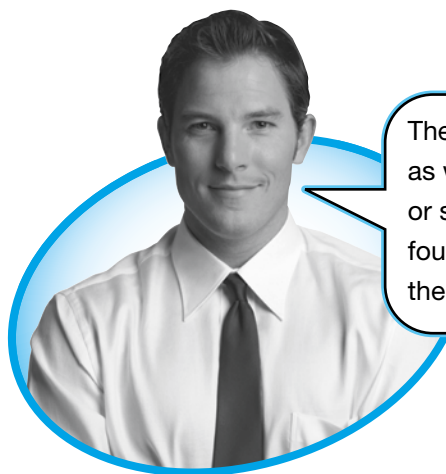
<b>Site Address</b>		
<b>What kind of information does this website provide?</b>		
<b>What self-assessment tools are provided on this site?</b>		
<b>What I Learned</b>		



In Module 1: Section 1, Lesson 4 you completed the “Learning Style Checklist” on page 32 of *Careers* to assess the way you learn. Review your assessment, and then respond to the following question.

2. Create a collage to describe the way you prefer to learn. Your collage can be made up of drawings, photographs, cartoons, or images cut from magazines—or a combination of any of these visuals.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



The article “Great Minds Think Differently” as well as the different learning inventories or self-assessment tools you may have found elsewhere suggest that people use their strengths to learn.

Go to page 5 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 3 of Section 1.

# Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you examined the roles that attitude and learning styles play in learning. Gathering more information about yourself will help you decide the career best suited for you. In the next lesson, you will begin to put all of this information together in a personal profile to include in your career portfolio.

## Suggested Responses

1. Responses will depend on the websites you accessed. Were the sites you investigated easy to navigate? Were they informative? What did you learn about yourself from each self-assessment or inventory? Do you now have a better understanding of the way you learn?
2. Your collage will depend on the learning style that is most relevant to you. Consider the following questions:
  - Have you identified the learning style that is your strength? It is possible for you to identify more than one.
  - Do your visuals include the types of activities as well as the different settings in which you prefer to learn? For example, if your strength is in verbal/linguistic intelligence, you may provide examples that involve writing at a desk or presenting a project in front of the class. If your strength is in interpersonal intelligence, your examples may show you working with other students on a school project, playing on a team, or working with a group on a community cleanup campaign.
  - Have you used the descriptions of each intelligence from “The Many Ways We Learn” on page 31 of *Careers*?

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## Lesson 5: Creating a Career Portfolio



*career portfolio:*  
a collection of  
self-selected  
samples that  
shows one's  
skills, abilities,  
talents, and  
accomplishments

**Ms. Chan:** One of your tasks for this module is to create a **career portfolio** for yourself. This might sound daunting but as you work through the lessons in the module, you'll actually be putting together your career portfolio.

**Jamal:** Is a career portfolio like a portfolio that photographers or designers put together to show to prospective clients?

**Ms. Chan:** Yes, it's the same idea. People in many professions, such as graphic artists, architects, and photographers have portfolios to illustrate their best work and skills. They carry it with them for meetings with clients, employers, funding agencies, schools, or galleries. Your portfolio will have the same purpose.

**Ashley:** It'll be at least two years before we've finished high school. Isn't it kind of soon to be putting together a portfolio to show prospective employers?

**Ms. Chan:** At this stage, a portfolio will help you to set the path for a career. You will find that a portfolio helps you reflect upon your values, interests, and strengths. As well, it can help you in practical matters like completing a job application or applying for scholarships. A portfolio charts your growth; it is always changing.

**Jamal:** What should we put in our portfolios?

**Ms. Chan:** The contents of your portfolios will be as diverse as the people who create them. Following are guidelines to help you develop your career portfolio.

# Building a Personal and Career Portfolio

## What Is a Career Portfolio?

A Career Portfolio is an organized collection of evidence that shows your accomplishments both in and out of school. A portfolio contains samples of your work that exhibit and reveal the quality and variety of your learning, your accomplishments, your skills, and your experiences.

## Is a Portfolio the Same as a Résumé?

A portfolio differs from a résumé in the following key ways:

- A résumé is usually only 1 – 3 pages in length and is meant to *summarize* your accomplishments. A portfolio most often contains many pages and is meant to *show evidence* of a wide variety of your accomplishments.
- A résumé *tells* someone what you have accomplished. A portfolio *shows* someone what you have accomplished.

## What Are the Steps to Developing a Career Portfolio?

### Step 1: Gather Your Evidence

Collect the information and records that show your interests, involvements, and achievements.

### Step 2: Organize Your Portfolio

Arrange your evidence into sections that will help someone else see what you have accomplished.

### Step 3: Assemble Your Portfolio

Format and compile your portfolio so it is easy for someone else to read and understand the information you have gathered.

### Step 4: A Final Check

You have much to be proud of in your portfolio. Check that it has updated information and that it shows your work in the best possible light.

## Step 1: Gather Your Evidence

### What Evidence Can Be Placed in a Portfolio?

Evidence comes in many forms. You can include evidence of your skills, your talents, your achievements, your awards, your experiences, as well as your learning and employability skills. Be sure to include things you do both in school and away from school.

### Items for Your Portfolio

Items can include the following:

- report cards
- certificates of participation (clubs, events, etc.)
- a record of your community involvement activities
- an updated résumé
- things you are proud of (newspaper clippings, certificates, awards, etc.)



## Step 2: Organize Your Portfolio

Your challenge is to organize the information you have in your portfolio into an understandable overview of your accomplishments to date. Similar items and accomplishments should be grouped so that the reader can find the information easily. Consider each of the following four categories to help you organize your evidence:

## Educational Accomplishments

In this section, concentrate on what you have accomplished in your studies at school.

Items to include:

- your latest report card showing your grades and your learning skills
- your up-to-date transcript (your academic record to date)
- any academic awards you have received
- any other evidence unique to you and your education



## School Activities

This section should contain evidence of your involvement in school activities. School activities might include clubs, sports teams, bands, and other activities specific to your school.

Items to include:

- newspaper articles
- sports awards
- a program from a school play
- a letter from your coach
- any other evidence unique to your involvement in school activities

## Work

This section focuses on your work experiences. Be sure to include both paying and non-paying work experiences.

Items to include:

- an updated résumé
- a list of references
- a sample cover letter you have written
- any letters of recommendation you have received highlighting your work skills (include employers, neighbours, friends, teachers, ...)

## Community Participation

The last section should focus on your participation in community activities. Many scholarships and awards require evidence of your community involvement.

Consider your involvement in

- swimming lessons or competitions
- music lessons
- driver's education courses
- First Aid/CPR courses
- cultural clubs/organizations
- religious groups
- fund-raising events
- other activities specific to your community

Items to include:

- a written summary of your experiences, e.g., a personal story
- personal references
- photos
- any other evidence unique to your participation in community activities



## Step 3: Assemble Your Portfolio

After you have selected and organized your evidence, it is time to format and compile your portfolio so it is easy for someone else to read and understand the information you have gathered.

### Tips for Assembling Your Portfolio

- **Does my portfolio show a wide-range of my accomplishments?**  
The strength of a portfolio is in the variety of what you show. Examples you include should show many of your accomplishments rather than many examples of one accomplishment.
- **Are my most important accomplishments clearly evident?**  
Not everything you do will have equal value. The portfolio should show the best examples of your talents and abilities. Make sure that those things that you are most proud of are highlighted in your portfolio.

- **Does my portfolio have a consistent format?**

A portfolio is an organized collection of evidence. Using a consistent format and page layout throughout, connects the diverse documents so it shows a clearer picture of your accomplishments. Any graphics, arrows, or clip art should accentuate your portfolio's contents, rather than decorate it.

- **Do I have a cover page for my portfolio?**

This page should include:

- your name
- a title for your portfolio
- a photo (if you choose)

- **Do I have a table of contents for my portfolio?**

A Table of Contents provides the reader with a guide to the sections and information you have included in your portfolio. It is prepared last and helps you organize your materials in a logical sequence that is easy to read and understand. Numbering your portfolio pages or colour coding the sections will help you to organize your table of contents.

## Step 4: A Final Check

As you learn and develop new skills, your Career Portfolio needs to be kept up-to-date. You will frequently update your portfolio by discarding outdated evidence and inserting new and better evidence as it is accumulated.

### A Final Checklist

- Does your portfolio have the best examples of what you have accomplished?
- Are the examples concise and to-the-point?
- Have you edited your portfolio for clarity and for spelling and grammar?
- Is the sequence and organization of your portfolio logical?
- Does the format of your portfolio make it appealing and easy-to-read?
- Does the organization and presentation of your portfolio demonstrate that you would be an excellent person for an employer to hire?

Your portfolio is a very useful way to introduce the 'whole you' to a potential employer or when applying for admission to a college or university. It is something that you should be proud of.

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<sup>1</sup> Tricia Slipacoff and Caroline White, "Building A Personal and Career Portfolio," <<http://www.curriculum.org/tcf/teachers/projects/portfolio.shtml>> (9 July 2007). Reproduced by permission.

Remember that your portfolio does not include absolutely everything about you or every project you ever completed; it showcases your strengths, your progress and growth, and your best work. Choose information that will create a great first impression with possible schools or employers.



A career portfolio can be your best marketing tool. If you are being interviewed for a job, you can show your portfolio as evidence of a particular skill. A portfolio supplements what you say in an interview. A well-developed portfolio and a clear understanding of your skills indicate to an employer that you have well-developed personal management skills.

Even when you are established in your career, you should keep up your portfolio. Collect your performance appraisals. Keep documentation of training and courses you complete at work. Record your accomplishments. Keep letters and thank-you notes for jobs done well. Your portfolio will evolve as you move through your life.



You've completed a number of self-assessment activities in this section. Now it is time to sort through this material in order to build your career portfolio.

Examine the activities you completed for Section 1. In your notebook or electronic file, create a list of those pieces of information you think will be effective additions to your portfolio. Explain what each shows and the value of including this information in your portfolio.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

Go to page 6 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 4 of Section 1.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you have been given directions for creating a career portfolio. You will add to your portfolio as you work through this module. It will be yours to continue to develop as you complete schooling, develop new skills, and gain experience in the work world.

## Glossary

**career portfolio:** a collection of self-selected samples that shows one's skills, abilities, talents, and accomplishments

## Suggested Responses

You should have chosen those pieces of information that best show your most important personality traits, strengths, skills, attitudes, and learning styles.

Have you clearly explained what each piece of information says about you and why it would be valuable to include that piece in your career portfolio?

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## Section 1 Conclusion



Planning your career involves gathering information about yourself and then making a career choice based on that information. The path your career will take depends on

- who you are
- what you want to do
- what you are able to do
- what you are willing to do

Therefore, before making career choices, you have to take a close look at yourself. That is what you did in this section. You continued with the self-assessment that you began in Module 1, this time gaining understanding to help choose a career. You assessed your strengths and limitations and how these might affect your choices. Then you examined your skills, aptitudes, values, and interests to create a personal profile. Now that you have completed the self-assessment activities in this section, you should be more aware of what your interests and skills are, what motivates you, and what you have already accomplished.

You can use information from your personal profile to begin developing a career portfolio. You will continue to develop your portfolio as you work through the next section, where you will look into the details of careers that interest you.

## Section 2

# Making Career Choices



“What do you want to be when you grow up?” asked Grandma. “I want to be a fairy princess and live in a castle,” replied five-year-old Sara.

What career choices will Sara have to make if she is to achieve her dream lifestyle? The lifestyle you want may be a little more down-to-earth than Sara’s but you will still need to consider how the career choices you make will impact on your lifestyle.

This section is designed to help you explore lifestyle in terms of career choices. You will begin by examining the concept of lifestyle and how lifestyle is affected by occupation. Next you will consider the options that are available to you after high school. Will you go straight into a job, or will you take further education? Will you work for someone else, or will you start your own business? To help you make a decision, you will examine a number of occupations. You will also examine strategies you can use to explore those occupations in detail. As you work through the lessons, you will continue to collect material for your career portfolio.

# Lesson 1: Lifestyle



**Mr. Romanchuk:** What do you think will be the focus in your life? Earlier in this module, you completed self-assessment activities to help define who you are. This self-knowledge will help you define the lifestyle you want. It will also help you find the occupations that will help you achieve the lifestyle you want.

**Ashley:** What exactly is meant by the term *lifestyle*?

**Mr. Romanchuk:** A person's lifestyle is a collection of choices he or she makes about career, relationships, and material assets. Or to put it in simpler language, your lifestyle is determined by how much money you make and choices you make based on your values.

Which of these behaviours do you consider the most important in your life?

- being with your family
- making money
- being independent
- making new friends
- learning new things
- having fun
- being creative
- working hard
- helping others
- travelling

The importance you place on behaviours such as these can influence the lifestyle you want.

1. How is lifestyle affected by occupation in each of the following scenarios?
  - a. Baljit visits his son's classroom two mornings a week as a parent helper. He is able to do this because he works the night shift and doesn't have to be at work until late in the afternoon.
  - b. Anika and her husband both work office jobs during the week. Because of this, their daughter goes to an after-school care centre, and Anika picks her up on the way home from work.
  - c. James is an on-call emergency nurse.
  - d. Gisele is a long-haul truck driver. She drives from Edmonton to the United States twice a week.
  - e. Jordan, an electrician who works in Fort McMurray, lives in camp and is home every second weekend for four days.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



The lifestyle you choose will not happen by chance. On the other hand, some chance occurrences, over which you have no control, may impact your lifestyle. For instance, you don't have any control over where you were born, whether the economy is booming, or whether you have grown up with very little money. However, most of the factors that will create your lifestyle are within your control.

Your life right now is in the process of change. You probably have control over some parts of your life, such as the choices you make about friends, the possessions you purchase, and the values you hold to be most important. You have control over the amount of effort you put into your studies and some choice about the courses you take. You may choose the extracurricular activities you participate in. Of course, much of your lifestyle as a high school student is affected by external factors, such as your family, peers, and your community.



Your control over your own lifestyle will increase as your ability to earn money increases, your independence grows, and your values become clearer to you.

2. In two or three sentences, describe the lifestyle you would like to have.
3. People within a community have diverse lifestyles. Every individual makes different occupational and lifestyle choices. Interview two people within your community. Find out how their occupational choices affect their lifestyles. Ask them to share the rewards of the occupations and lifestyle choices they have made.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

There is no assignment for this lesson. You will use the information from this lesson to respond to the assignment for Lesson 2.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you learned that your occupation will greatly influence your personal lifestyle. It will affect

- where you work and live
- who you work with
- how much money you will earn
- how much enjoyment you get from the work
- how much time you will have for other activities

What you decide to do when you complete high school will affect your choice of lifestyle and career. In the next lesson, you will look at the options available to you.

## Suggested Answers

- Occupations that have hours other than daytime hours allow for more interaction between parents and children during the day and for parental involvement with school activities. The same occupations can also limit the activities that are done as a family in the evenings.
  - For parents who work full time, finding time together with their children can be a challenge, but there may be more opportunities for other activities that require financial resources.
  - Having an occupation that requires an immediate response to work can mean that family or recreational time can be interrupted.
  - Working in an occupation that involves long hours and travel can mean that there are long stretches of time when Gisele is away from her family and friends. It can also mean that when she is at home, there is the opportunity for longer stretches of time off.
  - Jordan is away from home for long periods of time, which means day-to-day, face-to-face interaction with family is missing. On the other hand, having longer stretches of time off can mean more uninterrupted time to spend with family.
- Your answer will be personal. Your description of your ideal lifestyle should reflect the values that are important to you.
- Responses will vary. Did you notice a relationship between the values of the individuals you interviewed and the lifestyle choices they have made?

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## Lesson 2: Consider the Possibilities

*post-secondary:  
having to do  
with education  
beyond high  
school*

Will you pursue a **post-secondary** education immediately after completing high school? Or will you enter the work force or follow some other interest for a while and then return to school? Perhaps you have left high school and have now returned to complete your diploma so you can pursue your chosen career. Maybe you go to school part-time and hold down a job that helps pay for your education.

There are many choices and possibilities. Consider the following:



- **You can finish high school by taking courses for credit/diploma.** For students who leave high school before they graduate, there are many opportunities to get their general or academic diplomas. They can return to high school, enrol in a special adult-level institution, or register in a distance-education program.
- **You can go directly into the work force.** Some students start jobs right away. These jobs may have been part-time before graduation, they may offer on-the-job training, or they might be jobs that require no training. This option may satisfy many people. Counsellors will often suggest, though, that you should try to take further study so you have more options in the future.
- **You can complete an apprenticeship.** Many trade skills—both specific and transferable—can be learned through an apprenticeship. Apprenticeship involves being employed, earning an income, and being trained at the same time. Apprenticeship usually combines classroom instruction and on-the-job experience.

*apprenticeship:  
a paid working  
situation where  
one learns a  
trade from a  
skilled worker*

In Alberta, if you want to learn a trade, you must be an apprentice. You must have an employer who is willing to employ you as an apprentice and who is able to provide you with supervision and training. You can enter an apprenticeship program while you are attending high school.

The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) allows high school students to become apprentices and earn hours toward an apprenticeship program and credits toward a high school diploma. RAP is an agreement between the employer, the apprentice, and the school. Visit the following website to learn more about Alberta apprenticeship programs, including RAP:

[www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca](http://www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca)

- ***You can pursue other interests.*** People are often wary about this option; the concern is that if you don't start post-secondary education right after high school, you might never do it. This is not necessarily true. If you have no idea what you should study or what career to follow, it may be a good choice to take time to sort things out. You may choose to take advantage of volunteer opportunities as a way to gain experience in a variety of career opportunities. Some organizations offer volunteers room and board, and some even offer a small stipend.

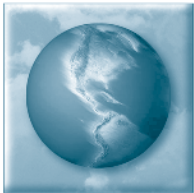


You may choose to travel the country or the world, either independently or through organized exchanges, such as the Rotary exchange program. Many young Canadians go on agricultural exchanges to places like Australia and Japan. Some organizations that combine volunteerism and travel are geared toward youth. Katimavik and Canada World Youth are just two examples. You can explore them at these websites:

- <http://www.katimavik.org>.
- <http://www.cwy-jcm.org>

You might also check out programs offered through religious organizations that provide volunteer opportunities for youth to help Canadians or to help people in other countries.

- ***You can pursue post-secondary education and/or training.*** For most students, post-secondary education is a wise next step. If you have already chosen a career you can enter a specific program. If you are not yet sure what you want to do, you could take more general studies. There are many programs and institutions to consider. Following are some possibilities.
  - Universities have programs that require at least four years of full-time attendance in order to get an undergraduate degree.
  - Community colleges offer a wide range of courses and programs and the opportunity to earn diplomas in many areas of study. Some community college courses can be transferred for university credit after one or two years of study.





**prerequisite:**  
something that is needed before something else can be considered; for example, a certain high school course may be needed for acceptance into a particular college program

– Technical schools offer a wide range of programs and courses with varying **prerequisites** and lengths of study. Education at a technical school may be combined with apprenticeship programs.

– Vocational centres also offer a variety of programs and courses, including upgrading courses and high school completion programs.

– Training programs, workshops, and courses are available through continuing education or distance-learning programs. Usually these programs take

less time than courses that are offered at a school and may provide certification for certain skills. It is important to find out prior to paying for the program whether the certification is of value to employers.

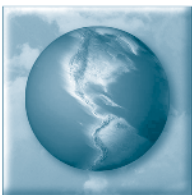
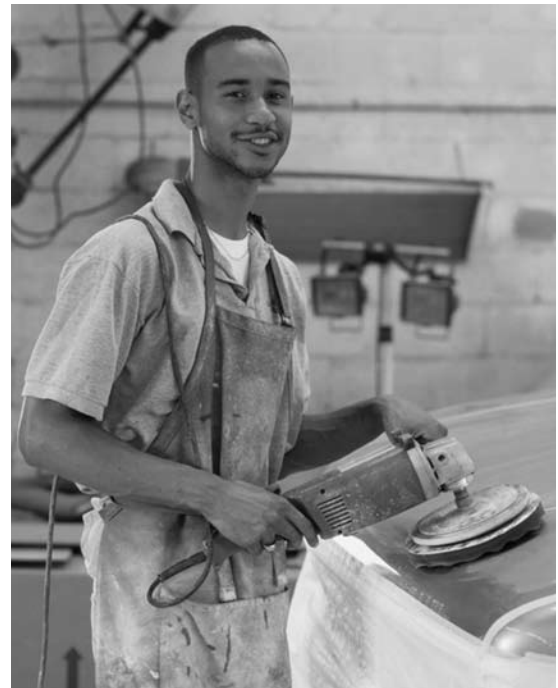
– Private schools, business colleges, and organizations provide opportunities for training in the private sector and civil service. Examples are fire fighters, police officers, computer programmers, and office workers. These programs can vary in usefulness and quality. Therefore it is particularly important before registering and paying for these types of programs to check out the credentials of the institution and the value of the qualifications a student can earn.

– Canadian Armed Forces Recruiting, Education, and Training Systems offer an opportunity for training and education in a range of occupations while in the Canadian Armed Forces. Information is available from the following website:

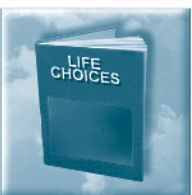
<http://www.forces.ca/v3/Default.aspx?bhcp=1>

- **You can become an entrepreneur.** There are many young people who have created their own businesses at a very young age. For example, you might set up a computer consulting company or a landscaping company. Or, you might be joining a family business or family farm.

If you're not sure what an entrepreneur is, read "What is Entrepreneurship?" on page 48 of *Careers*. This article provides a brief and very positive explanation of some of the skills and attitudes of being an entrepreneur. You'll explore the option of becoming an entrepreneur later in this module.



**entrepreneur:**  
a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture





To learn more about making career decisions, read “Post-Secondary Education” on page 8 in your *Careers* textbook. This article responds to the following questions:

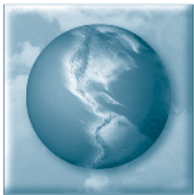
- Who needs post-secondary education?
- Should you choose focused training or general learning?
- How do you make good decisions on where to go and what to take?
- What are the options?
- What are the prerequisites?
- How much does it cost?

Now that you’ve had an opportunity to consider some of the options available to you, respond to the following questions.

1. Which of the possibilities mentioned in this lesson is most appealing to you? Explain why.
2. Which possibility is most practical for you? Explain your choice.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

If you haven’t yet decided on what career path you want to pursue, you may find the following websites helpful



- <http://worksearch.gc.ca/>
- <http://www.careerednetwork.ca/> (Click on *students* and then on *CanLearn Student Planner*, which will take you to an Interest Quiz.

Go to page 8 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 1 of Section 2.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

You may already have decided on your plans for after high school; maybe you are seriously considering two or more of the options presented in this lesson. Which do you think you will follow? In the next lesson, you will find out about sources of information and resources you can use to help you make decisions about what career is right for you.

## Glossary

**apprenticeship:** a paid working situation where one learns a trade from a skilled worker

**entrepreneur:** a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture

**post-secondary:** having to do with education beyond high school

**prerequisite:** something that is needed before something else can be considered; for example, a certain high school course may be needed for acceptance into a particular college program

## Suggested Answers

**1 and 2.** It is best if your most appealing option is also the one that is most practical and the easiest for you to pursue. Sometimes the practicalities of your situation won't let you immediately "follow your dreams." Financial situations may require that you immediately go to work. Relationships with partners, desires of parents, and so on, may also mean you need to satisfy those expectations. If they match up with your wants, great. Otherwise, it may take a while for you to be able to follow what your heart desires.

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## Lesson 3: Information Sources and Resources

By now you have probably narrowed down your career interests to just a few choices. There is a wealth of information available to you to explore those careers in more detail. While it is not possible to search out and use every source or resource, you can become skilled at finding good sources and resources.



### People

You already have your own network of resources—the people you know. They can provide you with a great deal of information about the jobs they do, as well as lead you to information about available jobs or educational opportunities.

Following is a list to remind you of some of the people resources you can access:

- family members such as parents, siblings, grandparents
- your friends and their families
- teachers, coaches, school counsellors, or tutors
- co-workers or managers at your place of work
- government departments
- professional associations or organizations
- entrepreneur networks



## Places

There are also places where you can go to find information about careers and job openings. Following are some examples of such places:

- community agencies or political organizations
- employment centres
- libraries
- local businesses
- local Chamber of Commerce
- post-secondary institutions
- human resource departments of large organizations



## Other Resources

Other sources of information include the following:

- the Internet
- computer programs on career planning
- Yellow Pages and government pages of telephone books
- newspapers and magazines with articles on career trends or want ads
- books on occupations and career trends
- newsletters from professional organizations
- television and radio
- Statistics Canada, which has data on work and occupations

# Factors That Affect Employment Trends

Employment trends—the increase or decrease in demand for specific occupations—might affect your career decisions. Changes in technology, social changes, economic changes, environmental issues, and political actions all have an impact on employment trends.

- **Changes in technology.** New developments in technology may mean fewer workers are needed for certain occupations, the creation of new occupations, or that workers must learn new skills to keep up with technological changes.
- **Social changes.** Examples of social changes that might affect employment trends include the following:
  - Increased communication as a result of technological changes has led to an increased awareness of other places.
  - Increased mobility results in people being more willing to relocate to find a job.
  - Better literacy and numerical skills are required. This means workers need more education.
  - A shift from a resource-based economy to an information-based and service-based economy has meant a change in the type of work to be done and the types of jobs available.
  - Increased chance of being hired for a short period of time where special skills are required means more consulting, contract, and part-time work.
  - Increased number of entrepreneurs generates new jobs.
  - Greater demand for services and products for an aging population means an increase in occupations related to that demographic.



- **Economic changes.** Global competition means that goods will often be made in countries where they can be produced most cheaply. Workers there are paid poorly since there is no minimum wage, benefits are non-existent, and unions are often illegal. As a result, Canadian businesses may not be able to compete, and jobs can be lost because labour costs in Canada are higher.

Some regions of Canada go through boom-and-bust cycles. The economy might be stimulated, for instance, by high demand for a resource or product. Jobs will be plentiful and more secure. When demand lessens or the resource runs out, the economy can slow down. Jobs may be scarce and some people may lose their jobs.

- **Environmental issues.** In order to protect the environment, the cost of producing goods has increased. While environmental protection is necessary for the long-term existence of the planet, in the short term, it drives up costs and can cause loss of jobs. On the other hand, occupations that deal with environmental protection are increasing.
- **Political Actions.** Political decisions can influence employment trends. For example, governments may choose to subsidize a particular industry, pay people not to fish or not to grow certain crops. These actions can impact the local economy. Laws requiring certain hiring practices, such as employment equity, affect employment.

1. Factors that affect employment trends affect the way people work and the choices they have within their occupations. They also affect people's lifestyles and the way communities grow and develop. Think about the lifestyles that are evident within your community. How are lifestyles shaped and affected by some of the factors you have just read about?

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



Read “Where the Work Is” on pages 56 to 59 of *Careers*, which explores the changing nature of work in Canada and provides a sampling of high technology, entrepreneurial, and home-based employment. Some hot jobs according to Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) are listed.

There are many styles of employment available to Canadian workers. For example, a person can share a full-time job or do part-time contract work. Read “It’s Flex Time” on pages 117 and 118 of *Careers* to find out about the variety of working arrangements available.

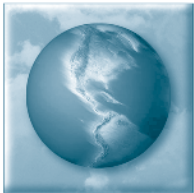


Segment 19: Forms of Work on your Student Support CD also provides information on alternatives to full-time employment.

## Using the Information



Probably the most important piece of advice is not to consider only one bit of information when trying to interpret future trends and occupational opportunities.



One very good source of information regarding employment trends is Job Futures found at the following Internet address:

**<http://emploiavenir.ca/>**

This site provides employment projections for occupations in Canada. The Job Futures website is developed by Human Resources Development Canada and is part of the online National Occupational Classification site.

2. Use the information from the Job Futures website to answer the following questions.
  - a. What kind of information does this website provide?
  - b. Select two occupations that interest you, and describe the information available on each occupation at this site.
  - c. What are the work prospects for these two occupations?
  - d. What basic skills are required for these two occupations?
  - e. What factors are affecting the future trends for each occupation?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

The Alberta Career Education Network is another website that is a good source of information about occupational opportunities:

**<http://www.careerednetwork.ca/>**



Following are some other sources of information about employment trends:

- school counselling departments
- career centres and employment centres
- career fairs
- actual employers and employees in a specific career
- newspapers and other media
- libraries
- the Internet



To learn more about job availability, read “Facts” on pages 126 and 127 of *Careers*. This collection of statistics provides information about the Canadian labour market.

3. After having looked at a variety of information sources, what career areas do you think will be growing when you will be entering the job market?
4. You now have concrete information in your personal profile, and you have understandings of the range of choices available to you after high school. In addition, you have considered some careers or occupations that interest you. Create a short list of the occupations you are interested in.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



**Jamal:** I'm a little confused about some of the terms that are being used. Aren't an occupation and a career the same?

**Ashley:** I'm having the same problem. What's the difference between a job and an occupation?

**Mr. Romanchuk:** I can understand your confusion. People often use these terms interchangeably. For our purposes in CALM, these three terms mean quite different things. Perhaps the explanations that follow will clarify things for you.

**job:** a position of duty and responsibility within an organization

**occupation:** a group of jobs having similar characteristics, interests, tasks, abilities, requirements, and goals

**career:** a collection of an individual's life-time activities, which includes both paid and unpaid labour

- A **job** is a specific assignment of work that includes duties and responsibilities. Usually a job is described by naming the major task and giving the location and name of the business where it takes place. For example, a person can have the job of being a riding instructor at the Riverside Stables.
- An **occupation** is a specific collection of duties, activities, and responsibilities that can be performed in a variety of job settings and locations. The name of the occupation describes this collection. For example, being a cashier at a specific convenience store is a job, but that person and all others who are cashiers have the same occupation.
- A **career** is the sum of a person's life experiences. It can include education, paid work, unpaid work, parenting, volunteer work, hobbies, leisure activities, and retirement. It is the total picture of the roles a person experiences in life.

Consider the following two teachers. One is a Career and Life Management teacher at an outreach school, and the other is a chemistry teacher at a local high school. They have different jobs, but the same occupation. After work, one coaches soccer, and the other one plays in a band. Both find their hobbies satisfy social and self-esteem needs. They also find their hobbies enrich their work life. These hobbies are part of their lifestyle choices that contribute to their unique careers.

There is no assignment for this lesson. You will use the information from this lesson to respond to the assignment for Lesson 4.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

Because the job market is undergoing extensive changes, it's important to be able to respond to its demands. Potential employees must be flexible and prepared. This is one factor to consider as you choose the occupation you will pursue. You have now made some choices as to which careers you will seriously consider. In the next lesson, you will look closely at details of occupations that interest you. You will use your findings to develop an occupational profile.

## Glossary

**career:** a collection of an individual's life-time activities, which includes both paid and unpaid labour

**occupation:** a group of jobs having similar characteristics, interests, tasks, abilities, requirements, and goals

**job:** a position of duty and responsibility within an organization

## Suggested Answers

1. In some cases, these factors can have a negative impact. Businesses can be forced to close or downsize. Do you know of any business in your community that has closed or downsized? What factors do you think played a role in its closing?

What about the people you know? How have they been affected by these factors? Interview two or three adults in your community. How has their work been affected by social, economic, technological, environmental, and political issues? How has their work changed over the years?

2. **a. to e.** Your answers will vary depending on the information found and the occupations examined.
3. The careers that will have growing opportunities as you enter the job market will vary over time. The sources of information you have looked at predict the trends in occupations based on factors such as
  - where they see the economy growing or slowing
  - where they think new technologies will be having an effect
  - projected demographic changes

4. You may have already known the career or occupation that you want to pursue. By looking carefully at your personal profile, with details on your skills, interests, strengths, abilities, and values you should be able to confirm your choice or to consider another career choice. More knowledge about a number of careers and occupations has hopefully made your decisions easier.

Did the information about trends in occupations and employment change your views on occupations you might be interested in? While factors such as technological changes might make some occupations obsolete, these factors can also open new areas of interest to you.

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## Lesson 4: Career Details



You've done self-assessments, considered the options available to you when you leave high school, and thought about the lifestyle you would like to have. It's time to explore occupations that will help you achieve your goals. Where do you start?

### Occupation Categories

One way to investigate careers and occupations is by categorizing occupations. For example, careers can be considered as fitting into one of the following categories:

- service
- commerce
- industry
- sales
- technical/scientific
- artistic

Some people prefer to group occupations into the following categories:

- business education
- home economics
- industrial education
- physical education
- social science and social studies
- fine arts
- language arts
- mathematics
- science
- second languages

The following sources show other ways in which occupations can be grouped; no one way is necessarily better than another. Because each method of organization emphasizes a different facet of work, the categories often overlap.

## Skills-Based Categorization

Occupations can be grouped according to the collection of skills needed to do them. Some examples include the following:

- people—the abilities to work with, serve, help, amuse, or influence people
- data—the abilities to deal with facts, details, figures, records, or files
- things—the abilities to operate, repair, or build machinery or equipment
- ideas—the abilities to solve problems in innovative or artistic ways

## Holland Codes

Holland Codes consider interests, competencies, and occupations in combination to create the categories of

- A. Realistic—activities that involve the precise, ordered use of objects, tools, machines, and animals, and includes agricultural, electrical, manual, physical, and mechanical things and activities
- B. Conventional—activities that involve the precise, ordered use of data, such as keeping records, filing materials, organizing numerical and written data; clerical, computational, and business careers
- C. Enterprising—activities that involve interaction with other people to reach organizational goals or economic gain; includes leadership, interpersonal, and persuasive activities
- D. Social—activities that involve interaction with other people for enjoyment or to inform, train, develop, cure, or educate
- E. Artistic—activities that involve the use of physical, verbal, or human materials to create art forms or products; includes activities and things related to language, art, music, drama, and writing
- F. Investigative—activities that involve the exploration and examination of physical, biological, and cultural things to understand and control them; sometimes includes scientific and mathematical activities

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 78. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

## School Subjects

Careers can also be categorized as they most closely relate to school subjects, including languages, art, religion, biology, music, social studies, and mathematics.

## Academic Fields

Careers can be grouped by area of post-secondary study. Examples include the following:

- architecture
- education
- food science
- personal development
- social services
- community services



## General Occupational Classifications

Careers can be grouped according to general occupational categories. Some examples include the following:

- business sales and operations
- natural, social, and medical sciences
- social, health, and personal services
- technologies and trade
- creative and applied arts

## Apprenticeship Categories

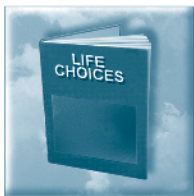
Careers can also be grouped according to potential apprenticeships. Following are some examples:

- electrician
- painter
- autobody mechanic
- welder
- hairstylist
- mechanist
- insulator
- cabinetmaker
- cook
- plumber



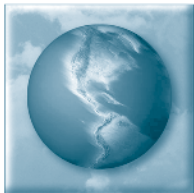


The community can be a good source of information about different occupational choices. Look around you. What kinds of jobs do people in your neighbourhood and community have? What opportunities are available to you in your community?



Learn more about different kinds of occupations; read the following articles in *Careers*.

- “Job Futures and the Canadian NOC” on page 39 gives a detailed description of the contents of the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) resource and the National Occupational Classification (NOC).
- “Health-Related Occupations” on page 67 provides a cluster of occupations.



You may choose to explore the Internet for information about occupational clusters and descriptions. Following are some websites to visit:

- <http://www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/2001/e/generic/welcome.shtml> (the NOC listings)
- <http://www.jobfutures.ca/>
- <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo/>

There are also numerous resources in libraries that provide information on occupational choices and futures.

What occupational groups currently interest you? What are some specific occupations within these groups that appeal to you?

1. Use the information from your readings and the Internet sites to create a list of occupational groups and specific occupations that are most appealing to you.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



To learn more about employment variations and their implications in the career-planning process, view Segment 20: Career Planning on your Student Support CD.



# Creating an Occupational Profile

What is an occupational profile? An occupational profile is a collection of all the important information you gather about a particular occupation or career. Once you assemble this information, you can refer to it whenever you need.

The collection of profiles becomes a resource to help you decide which careers you are interested in, which are compatible with your personal profile, and which are possible for you to pursue.

In creating an occupational profile, you identify such elements as the following:

- major focus of the occupation
- descriptions of tasks required in that occupation, including the amount of physical activity
- kinds of interaction with people required
- tools or equipment required
- personal requirements of the occupation, including attitude, temperament and abilities
- level and type of education or training required
- level of experience required
- working conditions of the occupation: hours/shifts; full time or part time; contract or seasonal; need to work overtime; location; the travel required; physical conditions such as noise, dust, or fumes; indoor/outdoor work; workplace health and safety information
- usual levels of pay, including the starting wage, the rate of pay increase, and benefits such as health and dental coverage
- opportunities for promotions and transfers
- future of the occupation relative to employment trends

Assemble all the information you find. Include any questions you have that may still be unanswered about the occupation.





2. Read the articles “Rick Gagnier—Waste Disposal” on page 59 and “Bob Greschuk—Funeral Director” on page 97 of *Careers*. Using these articles and the Job Futures/NOC information, develop an occupational profile for one of these occupations. Use a chart such as the following for your profile.

Occupational Elements	Occupation:
Type of work done	
Personal requirements	
Level and type of education required	
Level of experience required	
Working conditions	
Expected level of pay	
Opportunities for advancement	
Future of the occupation relative to employment trends	
Other relevant information	

Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

Go to page 11 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 2 of Section 2.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you explored a number of resources that provide details about occupations. Looking at occupations in detail should help you narrow down the career you are thinking of pursuing. In the next lesson, you will add to your career portfolio based on these explorations.

## Suggested Answers

- Responses will, of course, depend on your personal interests. In your exploration of occupational categories and specific occupations, did you discover any occupations that you haven't previously considered but that might be suited to your plans for the future?
- The occupational profiles you develop should include information such as the following. Note that some questions may not be answered with the information you currently have available to you. The Internet may offer additional details on each of these occupations.

Occupational Elements	Occupation: Waste Disposal	Occupation: Funeral Director
Type of work done	<i>delivering, maintaining, cleaning, and pumping out portable toilets</i>	<i>dealing with people at a desk</i>
Personal requirements	<i>positive attitude, sense of humour</i>	<i>positive attitude, even temperament, sensitive to people's feelings</i>
Level and type of education required	<i>NOC skill type 7 skill level C</i>	<i>NOC skill type 1 skill level B; is a high school graduate</i>
Level of experience required	<i>an understanding of how the waste disposal works, some mechanical skills</i>	<i>an apprenticeship</i>
Working conditions	<i>more seasonal (summer) work around the city, attend festivals</i>	<i>normal working hours, some evenings</i>
Expected level of pay	<i>not available</i>	<i>not available</i>
Opportunities for advancement	<i>development of entrepreneurial skills</i>	<i>transition into other jobs that involve working with people in times of need</i>
Future of the occupation relative to employment trends	<i>always a need for portable bathrooms</i>	<i>always a need for funeral directors</i>
Other relevant information		

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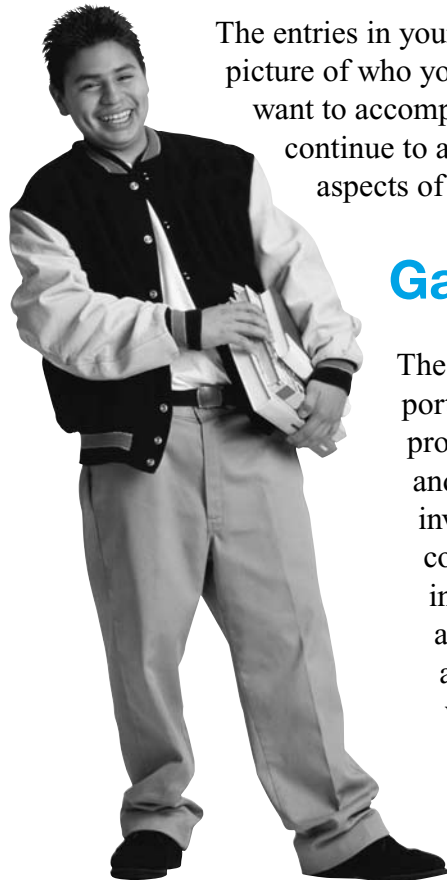
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# Lesson 5: Continuing Your Career Portfolio

*Note: You may find it helpful to return to Section 1: Lesson 5 and review the steps for creating a portfolio.*

By now you should have collected a number of items to include in your career portfolio. Your career portfolio provides solid evidence of your strengths, competencies, and accomplishments.



The entries in your portfolio should create a positive, comprehensive picture of who you are, what you want to do and be, and what you want to accomplish. Your portfolio is a living collection. You continue to add to it as your experiences, education, and other aspects of your life grow.

## Gather Your Evidence

The first thing you need to do to develop your portfolio is to collect information and records that provide evidence of your interests, involvements, and achievements. The various self-assessment inventories you've completed in this and other courses, should make you more aware of what interests and motivates you, what you've already accomplished, and what your values are. These assessments can be placed in your portfolio. As well, you may wish to include job profiles for those occupations you are interested in. These profiles might help you decide on the most relevant personal information to include in your portfolio.

You may want to establish your own collection box or file in which to store items that you think may be important for your career portfolio. You should consider taking time once a week to make a few notes on what you did during the week—your accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities. This process will help you identify items to store and collect for possible inclusion in your career portfolio.

1. Make a list showing all of the items you have collected that might become part of your career portfolio.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Organize Your Portfolio

You might wonder whether everything you've done in your life is actually relevant for a career portfolio. Should you include those Brownie or Cub badges from ten years ago? Is a swimming certificate from when you were thirteen really important? How clear an idea you have about where you want to go determines the relevance of an item. If you have your heart set on being a lifeguard, the swimming certificate is probably beneficial. If you think that those badges will build your image as a good camp counsellor, put them in. It's probably better to put in too much. You can always rearrange items or take them out, if they're not relevant for a particular interview.



As you select items for inclusion in your career portfolio, you need to organize and label the items effectively. Your labels should include the following elements:

- date
- description of the item
- reason for including

You can use the following questions to help you develop your descriptions:

- What did I accomplish? What did I demonstrate?
- How long did it take? Who was involved?
- Did I improve something positive such as a skill, competency, ability, or talent?
- Did I eliminate something negative such as a bad habit or a limitation?
- How effectively did I work?

Re-examine all the items you have collected. Which ones do you want to place in your career portfolio?

2. Describe the items you have selected to include in your portfolio and how each is related to your career choices.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Career Portfolio Format

The format and organization of a career portfolio should be flexible enough to allow you to add, update, and delete materials as your career plans evolve. As well, you need to be able to select items for use in presentations and interviews. Therefore, most career portfolios are presented using a three-ring binder, dividers, and plastic page protectors.

Your portfolio contents can be saved electronically, using a word processor, desktop publishing software, or a scanner. You may even wish to consider developing an electronic portfolio in the case that an employer accepts portfolios via e-mail. You can scan documents and take digital photos of items to include in your electronic portfolio.



Potential formats for a career portfolio include the following:

- print (text, pictures, graphics)
  - folder
  - scrapbook
  - binder with dividers
  - binder with page protectors
- portfolio case or box (a large zippered case or box large enough to hold materials such as art work, blueprints, sculptures)
- multi-media (video and audiotapes, CDs, photographs)
- Internet or web-based (interactive, self-marketing tool)

Your choice of portfolio format will be governed by the kind of work you do. For instance, a graphic artist will require a portfolio case for his or her work while an editor's portfolio could fit into a binder.

3. What format will you use for your career portfolio?

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Using Your Career Portfolio

One of the primary purposes of developing a career portfolio is to use it for job applications. You won't necessarily be mailing the entire portfolio with your application. A résumé and a covering letter will usually suffice. At various times, however, you will be selecting items from your career portfolio to present to various audiences. This could be a one-on-one interview situation; it could also be for a panel of people. Some jobs require applicants to give a presentation to an audience. You will need a smaller binder or folder to use for such situations. You will learn to select from the career portfolio to develop a presentation portfolio that can be targeted for a variety of purposes. For example, employment interviews, post-secondary program applications, and scholarship applications might each require a slightly different version of your portfolio.



Go to page 12 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 3 of Section 2.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson you added to your career portfolio based on the decisions you made about possible careers. You examined the information you collected about yourself and about careers. You then chose the information that best shows your strengths. As well, you decided on a format for your career portfolio.

## Suggested Answers

1. Your list will vary. It should include self-assessments that you have made in this course, in particular this module, as well as other items showing your skills, achievements, and academic history.
2. You need to choose the items that are most relevant to the careers you are considering. Each item will show different things about you.
3. Most people will find a three-ring binder with dividers and plastic page protectors the most practical format. If you are thinking of becoming a graphic artist, designer, or architect, you will need a case of some sort to protect and organize your creations. If you are thinking of web design or programming, you may want a format that can include your digital creations.

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## Section 2 Conclusion



In this section you focused on the following:

- the relationship between occupational choices and lifestyles
- the range of opportunities in education and work settings
- career information sources and resources
- the development of an occupational profile

Much of your focus in this section involved exploration of information about occupations and relating it to yourself. You identified careers and occupations of interest to you, and you looked at occupational profiles. These profiles and your look at job trends and career options provided you with the opportunity to choose the career areas that you are most interested in. Knowing what career and occupational choices are available will help you to continue to develop your career portfolio.

The knowledge you've gained about yourself in this section and in Section 1 should help you make effective career decisions. In the next section you will focus on goal setting and career-planning strategies.

## Section 3

# Planning Your Career



So what is it really that you want to do with your life? What is it that will make you feel successful and give you happiness and satisfaction?

Some students might have clear and definite answers to these questions. Other students, no matter how much they have thought about questions like these, might move through their entire lives and still not be able to answer them. If you know exactly what you want out of life, it is relatively easy to develop a plan to attain your goals. On the other hand, how can you make a plan and set goals if you have no idea where you want to end up?

If that is the case, then it is important to focus on the options available to you. You want to be in a position to take advantage of opportunities that come your way even if you never do know “what you want to be when you grow up.” Don’t be afraid of planning. Know that things are always changing in life and you may need to adjust your plans and goals.

This section will help you set goals to achieve your career aims. You will look into the requirements of your chosen career and skills you need to develop to meet those requirements. You will then develop short-term and long-term goals and action plans to bring your career aims into reality.

# Lesson 1: Setting Goals

This morning you knew the things you had to do, the places you had to go, and the people you wanted to interact with. No doubt you made plans about what you would do, where you would go, and who you would see. Some of these plans were probably controlled by other people or institutions; others were definitely your choices. As well, something unexpected might have come up that led to a change of plans.

Although your life—like plans—will keep changing and happening no matter what, you want to have some control over how it turns out. The best way to control where your life goes is to have a life plan. It does not need to be a complex plan, but it should be realistic and flexible. Your plan might be short-term, such as making social plans for tonight or planning the steps needed to finish that essay assignment by Thursday. Other plans stretch into the near future, such as deciding on your courses for the next semester or sorting out how you will get ready for the music recital in a couple of months. Then there are the plans that stretch into the far future. What do you plan to do after high school? Do you plan to go on to post-secondary education? What plans do you have for your future lifestyle? What is your plan for a career? Planning for the future involves setting goals.



## Goals

Goals are the ends or aims toward which you direct effort. You choose to work toward a personal goal, whether it is something you want to own, something you want to do or experience, or some way in which you want to live.

You make choices about your life based on your goals. Goals reflect your needs and desires; they allow you to act upon your personal values and expectations. In a way, they are pictures of standards you set for yourself.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 54. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

There are things you can do today that can help you achieve your long-term career goals. The first step is to try to come up with clear goals to work toward.



You may find it helpful at this point to reread “Go for Your Goals” on pages 6 and 7 of *Careers*. This article provides some examples of school and career plans, personal growth goals, health goals, and financial goals. As well, the article explains how setting goals can help you maintain balance in your life.



As you define your personal goals, it is important to remember the following:

- A goal should feel natural and comfortable.
- A goal can change as you grow and learn more.
- A goal should have a potential action plan; it should not be obviously impossible.
- A short-term goal is usually completed within three months to a year. (It may, of course, be completed within a shorter time frame.)
- Long-term goals are usually those that extend into the future and represent ideas that are personally important and valuable. As situations change, these goals are continually revised and expanded. Action plans may not be quite as clear for long-term goals as for short-term goals. A long-term goal requires careful planning and effort if it is to be reached.

## Goal Setting



**Ashley:** I recognize the importance of setting goals, but I'm not sure how to go about actually doing it.

**Mr. Romanchuk:** The process for setting goals is very similar to the process for decision making, which you worked through in Module 1. Following are strategies you can use to help you with your goal setting.

- Identify the goal and state it as clearly as possible. In fact, write it out in enough detail so that it is understandable and can be reread when it is necessary to refocus.
- Accept responsibility for the goal—make it your own.
- Make a plan of action with definite target dates.
- Review actions along the way.
- Make changes to the goals when needed.

**Mr. Romanchuk:** Now take these general ideas about setting goals and make a concrete set of goals for achieving the career you have chosen. Be sure your goals are realistic, meaning that they are reachable. Be ready to make changes, and be flexible.

Before continuing with this lesson, it might be a good idea to review the Goal-setting skills in Module 1: Section 1, Lesson 4.

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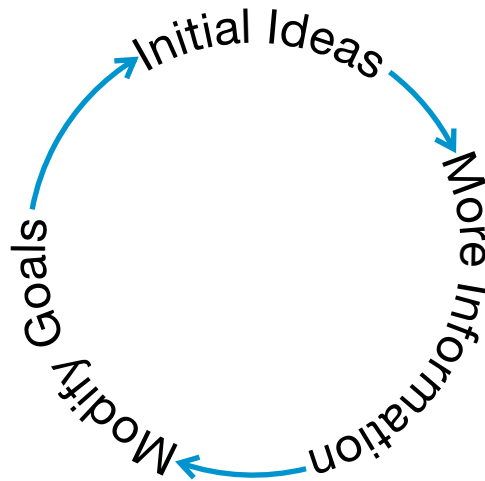
<sup>1</sup>Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 81. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

# Developing a Career Plan

A career plan involves setting out the short-term and long-term goals you need to achieve a chosen career. Developing a career plan includes the following elements:

- choose an educational program, an occupation, and a career path
- decide on the goals necessary to meet those choices
- set target dates and timelines
- decide what and how to make changes, if they are needed

A plan of action is needed to move with purpose toward your goal. Building an action plan requires that you divide the bigger steps into specific tasks with set deadlines. You will find that this is a circular process. You begin with initial ideas. As you find more detailed information, or learn more about yourself, you will modify your goals and action plans. Sometimes you may change goals and plans completely.



Ask yourself the following questions about each goal. Identify a timeline for each one.

- What major actions do I need to take to get to my goal?
- What are the detailed things I need to do to complete each major action?
- What do I need to learn to get to my goal?
- What resources do I need to have to get to my goal? (money? skills? education?)
- Where will I get each of these resources?
- How will I plan my time? (make a schedule)
- What do I need to do next?

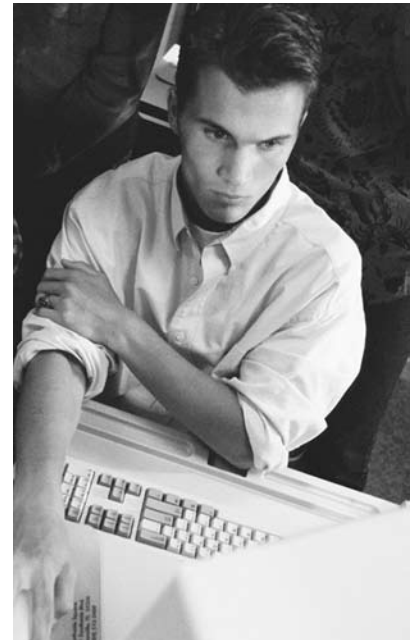
<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 81. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

## What Education or Training Will I Need?

The educational requirements of a career will be one of the main elements to consider in any plan. The academic requirements for admission to post-secondary programs will vary; the lengths and costs of the programs will vary. Do some preliminary exploration of programs that you will need to pursue your career. Finding the requirements will determine the educational goals you need to meet. Start with the following website:

**<http://www.jobfutures.ca>**

You can do searches for colleges and universities in Alberta. A number of sites include up-to-date lists of institutions, both public and private. Here is a list of websites for key public post-secondary educational institutions in Alberta:



Alberta College of Art and Design: **<http://www.acad.ab.ca/>**  
Athabasca University: **<http://www.athabascau.ca/>**  
Bow Valley College: **<http://www.bowvalleycollege.ca/>**  
Concordia University College of Alberta: **<http://www.concordia.ab.ca/>**  
Grande Prairie Regional College: **<http://www.gprc.ab.ca/>**  
Keyano College: **<http://www.keyano.ca/>**  
King's University College: **<http://www.kingsu.net/Default.aspx>**  
Lakeland College: **<http://www.lakelandc.ab.ca/>**  
Lethbridge Community College: **<http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/>**  
MacEwan College: **<http://www.macewan.ca/web/home/index.cfm>**  
Medicine Hat College: **<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/>**  
Mount Royal College: **<http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca/>**  
Norquest College: **<http://www.norquest.ab.ca/>**  
Northern Lakes College: **<http://www.northernlakescollege.ca/>**  
Olds College: **<http://www.oldscollege.ca/>**  
Portage College: **<http://www.portagec.ab.ca/>**  
Red Deer College: **<http://www.rdc.ab.ca/>**  
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology: **<http://www.nait.ca/>**  
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology: **<http://www.sait.ab.ca/>**  
University of Alberta: **<http://www.ualberta.ca/>**  
University of Calgary: **<http://www.ucalgary.ca/>**  
University of Lethbridge: **<http://www.uleth.ca/>**

For details on apprenticeship programs go to **<http://www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca/>**.  
NAIT and SAIT sites also have information about apprenticeships.

1. Research two career options that you are attracted to or research more than two options if you have not yet been able to narrow down your choices. Research the calendars or course offerings of one of the institutions, either online, in your school counselling office, your school library, or a local employment office. Find out about the programs offered at this institution for your chosen careers.

- What are the admission requirements?
- Where is the program offered?
- What is its time commitment?
- What are the costs involved?

Record your findings in a chart similar to the following. Be sure to leave plenty of space for your answers.

Career	Institution	Program	Requirements	Costs

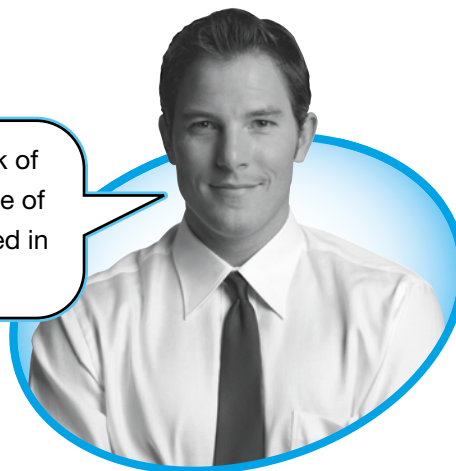
Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

You will return to this information later when you begin creating a plan to meet your career and educational goals.

## What Skills Will I Need?

You have already assessed and documented your skills and strengths. Look closely now at the skills required by your chosen careers. Assess how the skills you possess match the skills required. Are there skills that you need to develop or improve to succeed? If so, you will need to set goals to build those skills.

Look carefully at your bank of transferable skills. Do some of them apply to skills required in your chosen career?





The following chart shows examples of skills learned at home or school that could be applied at work.

<b>Skill Area</b>	<b>Examples of Skills Used at Home and in the Community</b>	<b>How Skills Transfer to the Workplace</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• math tutor</li> <li>• reading buddy</li> <li>• newsletter editor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain concepts to others</li> <li>• read with understanding</li> <li>• write persuasively</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community club volunteer</li> <li>• peer mediator</li> <li>• new student</li> <li>• welcome wagon volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• express feelings appropriately</li> <li>• withstand and resolve conflict</li> <li>• sensitive to cultural differences</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basketball team member</li> <li>• peer mediating co-chair</li> <li>• camp counsellor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appreciate/reward peers' efforts</li> <li>• bring reason to a problem</li> <li>• motivate others</li> </ul>
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alter recycled clothing</li> <li>• resolved a scheduling conflict at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see all sides of a situation</li> <li>• open-minded</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changed schools twice</li> <li>• created new system of team playoffs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accept change as a challenge</li> <li>• tackle problems with optimism</li> </ul>
<b>Self-management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a planner</li> <li>• earn own spending money</li> <li>• prepare meals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate the need to achieve</li> <li>• resourceful</li> <li>• creative</li> </ul>
<b>Initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• found own mentor</li> <li>• started babysitting co-op</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify untried possibilities</li> <li>• carry out ideas</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Judith Misener and Susan Butler, *Exploring Your Horizons* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1998) 156-157. Reproduced with permission of McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.



To become more familiar with the skills that are expected by many employers, read “Employability Skills Profile: The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Workforce” on page 46 of *Careers*. The list focuses on academic, personal management, and teamwork skills. This article will help you answer the next question.

2. Create a chart like the one that follows. Choose one of your career possibilities. In the first column, list four skills needed in that career. Think about the skills, including transferable skills, that you have developed through your home life, your school life, and in recreational activities. In the next three columns, check off whether you possess the career skill, whether you need to improve the skill, or whether it is a completely new skill that you need to develop.

Skills Required by Career	Possess Skill At Necessary Level	Need to Develop Further	Need to Develop New Skill

3. Take the educational requirements, financial needs, and necessary career skills from questions 1 and 2. Use them to write a list of goals that need to be accomplished in order to move into your chosen career.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

Go to page 1 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 1 of Section 3.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you discovered the importance of goal setting in developing a career plan. You researched the requirements of your chosen careers, in particular the educational programs needed, the financial costs of the education, and the skills that you need to develop. You then wrote each of these in terms of goals you need to achieve in order to move into your chosen career. In the next lesson, you will develop short-term plans to achieve those goals.

## Suggested Answers

1. The information you identify will depend on the program and institution you select. Check to ensure that you have included the following:
  - **Focus of the program:** What kinds of courses are mandatory for the program? What optional courses are available? What is the range of choices in course selections? How much flexibility is there in choosing optional courses?
  - **Requirements:** What high school courses are needed? What are the minimum grades required? What other skills would benefit you in this program? What activities and experiences would enhance an application to this program? Are there limitations on registration, i.e., is there a quota on the number of students allowed into the program?
  - **Cost:** How much is tuition? Do you have to buy your books? Will you have to live away from home? What will you use for transportation?
2. Creating this kind of chart is an effective way of summarizing and assessing your skills. The chart helps you to set goals for acquiring new skills.
3. Lists will depend on the career you've chosen and the programs you researched. Suppose, for example, you would like to become a teacher. You searched through the sites of various educational institutions to see their programs. You might be interested in the University of Lethbridge program. Your list might include the following elements:
  - **Educational requirements:** Find the admission requirements and list those. One of your goals will then be to achieve the entrance requirements. You can break that larger goal down to setting smaller goals to pass each high school course required.
  - **Financial needs:** Find the costs of the program. Note also the cost of tuition and books for the four-year program and list those costs. The cost of attending the university for four years requires that you set the goal of acquiring that money. You might state your goal to save a certain amount. Another goal might be to get a job to make needed money. Another goal might be to achieve a certain average to qualify for a scholarship.
  - **Career skills:** What are the skills you need to move into the career you have chosen? Have you listed goals to help you achieve the skill levels required for the career?

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## Lesson 2: Developing Your Plan

How do you plan for a career? Believe it or not, you have already begun to develop your career plan! First you used some self-assessment tools to identify your abilities, interests, values, and skills. You placed this information in your personal profile. Next you became familiar with the career you have chosen. You found out what it requires in terms of education, skills, and personal attributes. Then you compared the career requirements with the skills, abilities, knowledge, and training you have now.



How do you plan a career? Read “Every Decision Is a Career Decision” on pages 51 and 52 of *Careers* to help you answer this question. This article emphasizes the ongoing and interwoven nature of career decision making.

### What Should I Be Doing Now?



Before you begin making career decisions, revisit these questions:

- What personal skills and abilities do I need to improve to be successful in the career I've chosen?
- What further training or education do I need to acquire?

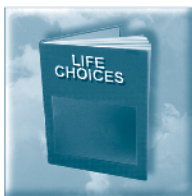
## Short-term Action Plans

Your next step is to set short-term action plans that take advantage of everything that can help you right now with your career planning. Your short-term actions can include any of the following:

- Take advantage of the large number of high school courses and programs that can give you the education you need for your chosen career.
- Talk to your school counsellor. School counsellors can advise you on the courses you need to take to prepare for post-secondary education, for apprenticeships, or to enter the job market. They can also provide information about scholarships and bursaries and other programs to help you financially as you study.
- You can **job shadow**. Job shadowing gives you the opportunity to spend time with someone working at a job that interests you. You can record personal impressions about the job. You might also interview the employer to gather more information about the job. You can see first hand the skills required in the job and what you need to do to develop those skills.
- You can begin **networking**. Networking involves getting to know, and getting known by, people who can help you pursue your career path. Networks can include family and family friends, teachers, coaches, and co-workers. All people you have contact with, such as your doctor, bank personnel, or casual acquaintances, are part of your network.
- Get involved in work experience or co-operative education so you have the chance to explore careers to see if you really would like them. You can also build valuable networks with people in those careers. See “FAQ: Co-op Education” on page 115 of *Careers* for a brief description of co-operative education.
- Try out part-time work. You can develop skills in those career areas. It also allows you to see people at work and to see the role attitude plays in the world of work.
- Volunteer. This helps you develop transferable skills and build valuable networks.
- Find a **mentor**. An experienced, knowledgeable, worker can share wisdom with students or beginning workers.

**job shadow:**  
*learn about an occupation by spending time with someone as he or she works*

**networking:**  
*maintaining a group of people connected to you by friendship, professional contact, or social association*

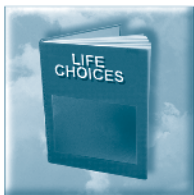


**mentor:**  
*a trusted advisor knowledgeable in a particular field*

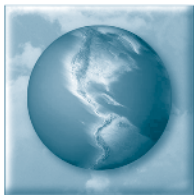


## Volunteerism

Did you know Alberta has one of the highest rates of volunteerism in the country? Part of our worldview says that people should give back to their community. When you volunteer, you have the chance to work and gain experience, as well as to contribute to society. You can learn new skills that may be very specific, such as how to use a power drill, or transferable, such as how to organize an event or work with a team. You don't receive money, but you do get experience, satisfaction, and a connection with other people. Volunteerism is something that you can do right now to develop transferable skills and to add to your career network.



To learn more about volunteerism, read “Volunteering Wave” on pages 124 and 125 of *Careers*, which gives examples of volunteerism and reasons for volunteering. The article describes how to go about finding an appropriate volunteer job.



There are many agencies and organizations in communities that welcome volunteers. Some communities have Volunteer Action Centres that coordinate all available volunteer positions. Search the Internet for websites related to volunteerism. Start with the following sites:

- Volunteer Canada: <http://www.volunteer.ca>
- Charity Village: <http://charityvillage.com>

1. What volunteer opportunities exist in your community? Do some research to find what volunteer organizations and positions are available. (Your community may have its own volunteer website.) List your findings and provide a brief description of the types of volunteer positions available.

2. Which volunteer positions within your community appeal to you and fit with your skills and abilities? Which would provide you with transferable skills for your chosen career? Which might you seriously consider pursuing, allowing for time commitments and other factors?



Are there drawbacks to volunteering? Read the following articles in *Careers* to find the answer.

- “Free for the Hire” on pages 14 to 17 questions the fairness of using volunteers instead of paid employees.
  - “Internship: Big Break or Bad Move?” on pages 18 and 19 explores the advantages and disadvantages of being an intern.
3. The articles present different perspectives on volunteering and internships. What personal guidelines could you set up so that it would be easy to tell whether you are getting what is needed from a volunteer or intern experience?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Planning for Post-secondary Education

Following are some actions you can take that can help you identify options and choices in realizing your goals.

- Talk to a school or employment centre counsellor about scholarships, bursaries, and other funding for post-secondary education.
- Ask former students who have been working or attending a post-secondary institution about their lives now, and how they got to where they are now.
- Talk to a counsellor at a post-secondary institution about registration procedures, admission requirements, and what to expect as a student.



Gathering this type of information helps you to solidify your goals and design a plan to achieve those goals.



To gain some useful ideas for developing your career plan, turn to your *Careers* textbook and read the following articles.

- “The Great Training Riddle” on pages 3 and 4 responds to the question “What do I train for when there are no jobs?” The ideas presented also apply when there are jobs available, but you are having a hard time deciding on a career path.
- “FAQ: Career Fairs” on page 19 presents a description of career fairs and some guidelines for attending one.
- “Web Spinners Can Pounce on New Jobs” on pages 34 and 35 encourages you to learn as many skills as possible in the job market to allow for flexibility.



4.
  - a. Consider what you have been doing up to this point to develop a career path. What are you already doing that will help you reach your career goals?
  - b. What are some short-term actions to take to reach your career goals?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

Go to page 3 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 2 of Section 3.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

Hopefully you are satisfied with your career path thus far and can see the immediate and short-term actions you can put into place. Take some time to re-evaluate your goals and plans and make changes as needed. The next lesson will help you develop long-term career goals.



# Glossary

**job shadow:** learn about an occupation by spending time with someone as he or she works

**networking:** maintaining a group of people connected to you by friendship, professional contact, or social association

**mentor:** a trusted advisor knowledgeable in a particular field

## Suggested Answers

1. The volunteer positions you find in your community will vary. They may range from helping with spring cleanup to coaching a sport to visiting a seniors' lodge to helping at the food bank. What are the types of skills and abilities each position requires? What careers would each volunteer position develop skills for? For example, if you volunteer to coach a little league soccer team, you will not only need to understand the rules of the game, you will need communication, organizational, and time management skills. These skills will readily transfer to most careers.
2. Your list of volunteer positions will vary, depending on your interests and skills. Check that your list of positions is consistent with those interests and skills you have identified. Your list may include positions that involve tasks such as the following:
  - mailing
  - telephoning
  - co-ordinating
  - writing
  - visiting
  - delivering
  - organizing
  - entering data
3. Your personal guidelines will vary, but they may include these ideas:
  - Does the experience provide an opportunity to share your personal resources with others?
  - Does the experience allow you to learn and practise transferable skills?
  - Does the experience allow you to explore a job or occupation that is of interest to you?
  - Does the experience increase your chances of being hired in the area or with the organization?
  - Does the experience enhance your personal network?
4. **a. and b.** The skills and experiences you list will vary, depending on your goal and personal background. Consider transferable skills you have developed or experiences you have had in areas such as the following: academic, technical, communication, and social.

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## Lesson 3: Making a Long-Term Plan

Your long-term career plan will cover the things you need to address from next year and forward. Although the goals relate to things in the future, there may be actions you need to take now to achieve them. For example, you need to take particular courses in high school or save for future needs. You probably already established some of these goals in the previous lesson.

To help organize your planning, set up file folders or electronic folders with information and planning details for your career topics. Topics might include

- post-secondary education
- apprenticeship
- work
- relationships
- finances



### Post-secondary Education

Achieving the education you need depends on both your short-term and long-term goals. To determine your long-term goals, you need to look at what education you need after you leave high school. You have already completed some research into the education required for your chosen careers. Research the details on your choice of apprenticeship, technical institute, college or university. You will need to know admission requirements, application deadlines, length of the program, and costs of tuition, books, and materials.

Once you have gathered all these details, you need to work them into goals and action plans to make them become reality. What are the things you need to do now? For example, you may need to take a particular math course or volunteer in a certain area to build transferable skills. Begin gathering the documentation, recommendations, and other items you need for applying. Set up a schedule showing key dates so you don't miss deadlines for applications, scholarships, and bursaries. Visit the institution's website often to stay current with new information.

## Apprenticeship



If you are thinking of obtaining an apprenticeship, you need to do much of the same research as suggested for post-secondary education. Focus your research on technical institutes such as the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT), as most apprenticeship programs in Alberta are handled by them. Also research the trade you are interested in. What trade organizations can provide you with more information? Find out the requirements of the apprenticeship programs and make a plan on how to meet those requirements. Keep track of application deadlines. Also research financial compensation you might receive during your apprenticeship.

## Finances

As you discovered in Module 2 of this course, you need to set financial goals. If you plan on further education, you will need to calculate your living expenses while you are studying: housing, food, transportation, tuition, books and supplies. Then examine what financial resources you will have, what your family can contribute, and whether you will need to work while studying. Will you be able to live at home or will you need to move away to attend school? You will need to research student loans and opportunities for scholarships and bursaries. These calculations should be made now. If you do not have enough money to cover your costs, what can you do? Perhaps you will need to begin part-time work to save money. Check into scholarships and bursaries to find out which you might be eligible for, the information required on the applications, and the application deadlines.

If you are planning on going straight to work after high school, it is still valuable to calculate now the expected month-to-month expenses you will encounter. Compare those expenses to the wages earned at your planned job. Will you be able to support yourself to the degree you want? Maybe adjustments will be needed in the type of housing, transportation, and so on, that you will be able to afford. It is also wise to take courses in high school that will give you the option of taking post-secondary education in the future.



## Work

Besides considering financial feasibility, you need to become informed about the types of jobs you are interested in. The jobs may not require post-secondary education, but what skills and qualities do they require? You need to begin building those skills and qualities now.

Often jobs require previous experience. Sometimes you can gain experience by volunteering in related areas. You can choose your high school courses to give you background requirements for the job. You have covered much of this topic in other parts of this module. Make your action plan now for success in your future jobs.

## Relationships

You are approaching a time of change in your life. How will relationships with friends, and family be affected by the changes that are about to take place in your life?


What impact will your choices of career and education have on your present relationships? How might this affect your long-term plan?

Sometimes trade-offs will need to be made, especially if you need to move from your home community. You will need to plan for ways to maintain those relationships that matter most to you.

## Some Final Tips

Following are some tips to help you in putting together your long-term career plan.

### Be Familiar with Post-secondary Resources



If you plan to take further education after high school, become familiar with the resources for post-secondary educational institutions.

Review the information you gathered in the previous lesson about educational programs. You may want to do further exploration of the many educational institutions that offer programs on careers that interest you. Your school counselling office will have career information. The counsellors can help explain the information. The office may also have information on colleges or universities outside of Alberta that offer programs that interest you.

An extensive list of Internet sites for key schools was provided in the previous lesson. Many of those sites also have information on available scholarships and bursaries.

It is worth visiting a number of these sites again to see what each offers. The information they give can help you decide on what programs you want and help you to set out plans to reach your goals.

### Be Flexible

As your life changes, you will need to re-evaluate your goals and plans. Maybe you will inherit enough money from a relative to pay for your education. Perhaps your partner's plans change and he or she will be moving to a different city. You might choose to move as well to maintain the relationship. You must really focus on achieving your goals, but at the same time, be flexible. In other words, be prepared to adapt your plans to changes that may occur.

## Recording Your Long-term Plan

You're ready to put together your long-term career plan. The next step is to record your plan. Create a chart or database to record your long-term goals and the actions you plan to take to achieve those goals. Use headings similar to those shown in the chart that follows.

Career Goal:		
Sub-Goals	Plans for Achieving Each Goal	Timeline/Deadline

Write your main goal at the top of the chart. For example, write “Entrance requirements for Legal Secretary.” You then break down the large goal into smaller, step-by-step goals—sub-goals. Enter these in the first column. An example of a sub-goal might be “obtain high school diploma.” In the middle column, record the precise actions you will take to achieve each sub-goal. An example of an action plan for obtaining a high school diploma might be “complete English 30-1.” In the third column, write actual dates for accomplishing each goal; for example, the deadline for completing a scholarship application.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

Go to page 4 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 3 of Section 3.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you continued with your goal-setting and plans of action for achieving those goals. You should now have a very good understanding of all you need to do so you can move successfully into the career of your choice. In the next lesson, you will explore the world of entrepreneurship.

## Suggested Answers

Charts or databases will vary. Following is an example.

Career Goal: Entrance requirements for Dental Technology at NAIT		
Sub-Goals	Plans for Achieving Each Goal	Timeline/Deadline
High school diploma, with minimum 75% average, including English 30-1 or 30-2, Biology 30, Math 30 Pure or Applied. One of Sci 30, Chem 30, Phys 30, Math 31, Social 30, or 30-level language other than English	Complete English 20-2 Complete English 30-2 Complete Biology 30 Complete Pure Math 20 Complete Pure Math 30 Complete Physics 20 Complete Physics 30	Jan this year Jan next year Jan next year Jun this year Jan next year Jan this year Jun next year
Immunizations for Hepatitis B, Mumps, Red measles, and Rubella;	Get Hepatitis B shot Collect proof of immunization for Mumps, Red measles, and Rubella	Feb next year This month
Standard First Aid Level C-CPR certificate	Register in St. John's Ambulance CPR course	March this year
Basic computer literacy, including word processing, spreadsheets, Internet and e-mail	Practise word processing and spreadsheet skills; Know Internet and e-mail	Focus on through high school course work
Apply for Millenium Alberta Rural Incentive Bursary	Complete the Application for Financial Assistance with the Alberta Student Assistance Program	March next year
Career investigation report	Go to NAIT website for details and form	February next year

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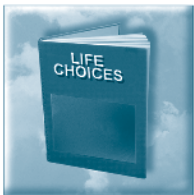
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## Lesson 4: Becoming an Entrepreneur

Being an entrepreneur means being able to recognize needs or problems and, using the resources one has or can get, to meet those needs or solve those problems. An entrepreneur generates an idea and, through planning and work, brings that idea to market in the form of a product or service.



Many people would much rather have their own businesses than be employed by others. There is the opportunity for great success, both financially and personally. Successful entrepreneurs approach their business with passion.

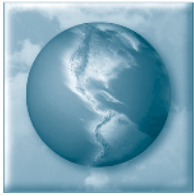


To find out about what it means to start your own business, read the following articles in *Careers*.

- “What Is Entrepreneurship?” on page 48 explains that becoming an entrepreneur is more than starting a business.
- “Be Your Own Boss” on pages 103 to 105 focuses on organizing oneself to be successfully self-employed. The article includes a quiz about being a self-boss, information about developing a market plan and a financial plan, and some general guidelines for becoming an entrepreneur.
- “All Work and Little Play” on page 119 shows the vacation days of entrepreneurs.

<sup>1</sup>Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 156. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.





There is a tremendous amount of information on the Internet about entrepreneurship and starting a small business. Canadian sites that support small business and entrepreneurial ventures include the following:

- Canadian Youth Business Foundation  
<http://www.cybf.ca/>
- Canada Business Service Centres  
<http://www.cbsc.org/>

Financial information on starting a new business is available from many financial institutions. There are also numerous library resources that provide detailed information on starting your own business and developing entrepreneurial skills.

## Maintaining a Balance

Entrepreneurship has the the potential for success but there are also risks. Many of the problems encountered in building your own business are unknown or unpredictable. As well, there is no steady income, particularly in the beginning. It is often difficult for an entrepreneur to maintain a balance in his or her life.

There are some extreme demands on an entrepreneur, particularly a new one. Time is a resource that will seem to be in very short supply. A person may be overwhelmed by the things that need to be accomplished each day, even if a comprehensive business plan has been developed. Time-management and stress-management skills are particularly important if there is to be any semblance of balance in the life of the entrepreneur.

A would-be entrepreneur needs to decide, initially and then on an ongoing basis, whether pursuing the venture is really worth the effort and whether it is personally enjoyable. It is difficult to maintain balance in life when the entrepreneur is keen; if there is not enough enthusiasm or if there are too many problems and obstacles, the demands on resources can be far too much to cope with.

As well, an entrepreneur needs to consider the demands made on the time, energy, and money of family members and others who are dependent. A new business venture can drain personal finances and make time and energy demands on family members that they may not be willing to give. This can sour the entrepreneurial experience and lessen the support for the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur may regret having entered into the venture.

Another important aspect of maintaining balance in life is protecting yourself by “not putting all the eggs in one basket.” Not all ventures are successful. The entrepreneur needs to leave avenues open by actions such as getting enough education to be employable in other situations. It is also very important not to use all of one’s money because there needs to be enough to live on while finding a job if the venture fails.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifecoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 165. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

1. What skills does an entrepreneur need? In your notebook or electronic file, create a chart with the following headings. In the first column, list skills an entrepreneur should have. In the second column, identify the skills that you have that would support an entrepreneurial venture.

Skills That an Entrepreneur Needs	Skills That I Have
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Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

## Planning for Success

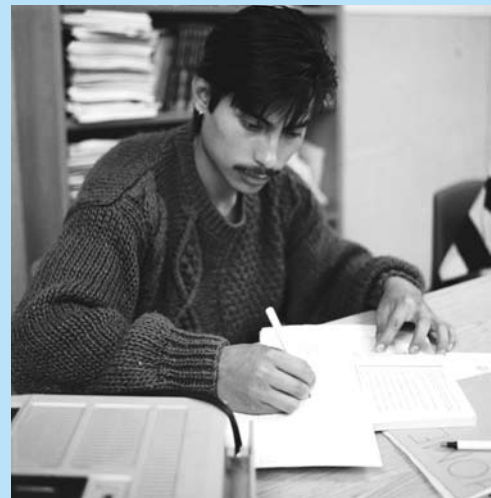
The first step in becoming an entrepreneur is recognizing the dream. There are many steps needed to make that dream a reality. The first is creating a business plan. It helps the entrepreneur to focus on all the practicalities needed to start the business.

Business plans are a necessity. Banks and financial institutions, investors, and almost any entity that might finance the business will require a detailed business plan that indicates that the entrepreneur has done all the research, contemplated and addressed all the obstacles, investigated the potential market, and in general has a substantial and potentially successful plan.

Besides all the requests and demands for a business plan, another real advantage of developing a plan is that the entrepreneur will have gone through the experience of organizing all the thoughts and considering all the details necessary to start up a business. This helps the entrepreneur stay focused on the business and what has to be done.

Business planning is a continuous process. Circumstances change, problems arise, and obstacles appear.

Continuous re-evaluation is a critical activity.



A detailed business plan, such as that which is required for financial institutions and investors, needs substantial research. Such plans usually contain a proposal, market analysis, budget and financing, timelines, and schedules.

<sup>1</sup>Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 161–162. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.



To learn more about starting up your own business, read the following articles in your *Careers* textbook.

- “Cash-Flow Basics” on page 98 provides basic advice on managing cash flow, such as closely monitoring accounts and keeping low inventories.
- “How to Get the Cash You Need to Start Your Own Business” on pages 98 and 99 looks at forming loan circles or peer-lending groups.

## Examples and Experiences

Entrepreneurial ventures vary considerably and can involve different forms of work. Here are descriptions of different types of entrepreneurs:

- Consultants provide a special expertise or skill that is sold to a client. Consultants base their business around this skill.
- Agents or representatives sell a product or service on behalf of several different companies.
- Individuals buy a franchise and run it, meaning that the entrepreneur buys the right to operate a particular business. The name, product, and operating set-up are all provided to the franchise owner.
- An independent small business owner may purchase an existing business or start a business from an idea, creating a product or service, and then sell that product or service.



2. What creative ideas for entrepreneurial ventures do you have? Use one of the following suggestions to help you identify an idea for a small business.
  - Brainstorm ideas for a new business. Include all ideas, no matter how silly they seem.
  - List three leisure activities or interests you have and explain how each could be converted into a small business.
  - Come up with two innovative ideas for any three of the following environments: your school, home, neighbourhood, community (city, town, rural area), a shopping district, a movie theatre, a fast-food restaurant, or the world.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



For more information about striking out on your own, read the following articles in *Careers*.

- “Buying the Boss” on page 71 discusses how a high school dropout purchases a desk-top publishing business.
  - “Venturing Out on Their Own” on pages 90 and 91 and “This Teen’s One for the Record” on pages 92 and 93 present examples of young Canadians starting businesses.
  - “Marnie’s Mobile Mums” on page 119 tells of how a small business that offers services to individuals has expanded to offer contracts to local companies.
3. Use the information from these articles to make a list of the qualities an individual needs to be a successful entrepreneur.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

If you’re interested in becoming an entrepreneur, you may wish to take courses in Enterprise and Innovation in Career and Technology Studies.

Go to page 5 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 4 of Section 3.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

This lesson gave you a glimpse of what it might be like to run your own business. The many resources mentioned in the lesson should be helpful sources of information if you choose entrepreneurship as your career path.

## Suggested Answers

1. Answers will vary, but your list should include some of the following skills:
  - creative thinking skills; thinking in new ways and making ideas happen
  - organization skills (able to balance life)
  - coping skills
  - problem-solving skills
  - financial expertise
  - ability to delegate; use of support when needed
  - time-management skills
2. Ideas for a new business will vary. Did you list as many ideas as you could, and then narrow your choices down to the one that you think could be the most viable and successful?
3. According to the articles, successful entrepreneurs should have these qualities:
  - goal oriented
  - willing to take initiative, self-motivated
  - self-confident
  - persistent and determined
  - perceptive
  - resourceful, self-reliant
  - looking for personal accomplishment
  - innovative
  - hard working
  - committed to goals, ideas, and ventures
  - visionary and creative
  - optimistic

They also need to have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude.

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## Section 3 Conclusion



You began this section by gathering the information you learned about yourself and the careers you are interested in.

You researched details of educational programs and the skills you may need for the career path you wish to pursue. You looked at immediate and short-term goals and action plans for working now to achieve those goals. Then you looked at long-term goals and wrote action plans for achieving those goals. You also explored entrepreneurship.

In the next section you will be introduced to some information you need to know as you prepare to enter the world of work.

## Section 4

# *In the Workplace*



The summer is coming up and Tony is looking for a job. He has some job leads from friends, but he still scans the newspaper every morning. He knows that he'll have to market himself to his potential employer. He hopes that his strong writing skills will be a selling point.

Marketing yourself is an important part of building a career path. It involves using strategies to link yourself to a potential employer. This section is designed to equip you with strategies and tools that will help you make that link.

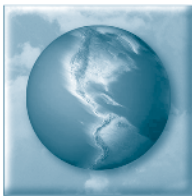
As you work through the lessons in this section, you will acquire ideas and information that will help you market yourself. You will be given strategies and tools to show you how to search for a job, complete application forms, write letters of application, create a résumé, and prepare for an interview. You will examine the importance of work experience, job expectations, and workplace protocols. You will also consider issues connected to leaving or losing a job. As well, you will consider employer expectations, examine the responsibilities and rights of employers and employees, investigate health and safety issues, and explore strategies for dealing with discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

# Lesson 1: Applying for a Job



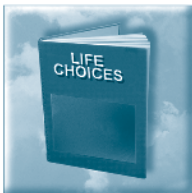
**Jamal:** I want to find a part-time job but I don't know where to start looking, or how even to apply for a job.

**Mr. Romanchuk:** You're in luck. This lesson will provide you with the tools you need for looking for a job and for applying for the job once you've found it.



A good starting point is the Alberta Learning Information Site or ALIS, as it's more commonly called. It gives information on all aspects of searching and applying for jobs, as well as links to career information and job postings. You can find it at the following address:

<http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca>



To learn more about starting a job search, read the following articles in *Careers*:

- “Looking for a Part-Time or Summer Job?” on page 122 presents tips for getting a job.
- “Finding a Place for Me, Inc.” on page 2 provides an overview of job-seeking strategies in a tough job market.

Businesses and organizations within your community can be valuable sources of information for job-search strategies. Plan to interview—either in-person or by telephone—some individuals who work in businesses or for community organizations. Find out what they consider to be effective job-search strategies. Ask them to share experiences they've had in getting the job they currently have. Ask them to share their perspectives on what they would look for if they had to hire someone for their business or organization.





1. By now, you should have a good understanding of places, things, and people that can serve as resources as you begin searching for a job. You may also already have some personal experience in searching for a job. With a partner, brainstorm a list of ways to search for a job.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Developing a Job-Search Tool Kit

What are some steps you can take to pursue any jobs you may be interested in? As you continue to develop your career portfolio, you can build a job-search tool kit as part of it. Your tool kit can help you decide on the job-search strategies that are most appropriate for the type of job you are looking for.



The method you use to search for a job can depend on the kind of job you're looking for. Some job-search strategies are effective if you're looking for seasonal, part-time, or temporary employment. Others are better for looking for a job after you graduate and need to get experience. For example, a part-time, temporary position, such as working in a greenhouse during the summer months, requires a different approach than being hired permanently as a lawyer in a firm.

Strategies—or tools—for your job-search tool kit include the following:

- identifying jobs and contacts
- completing application forms
- writing letters
- creating a résumé and preparing a portfolio
- preparing for an interview

## Identifying Jobs and Contacts

One of the most important tools in your job-search tool kit is the identification of contacts who can help you find out about jobs. This is known as networking. You have already done some networking by interviewing individuals working in community businesses.

Networking means building a support group of people who know you are looking for work, who will keep their ears and eyes open, and who will pass on information concerning job leads.

## Networking

Your own personal contact with people is one way of finding out about jobs and, in some cases, even getting hired. A personal network can include family members, friends, people at school, co-workers, former and present employers, and other personal contacts.



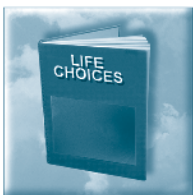
Networking might sound difficult, or even scary. It is not that hard. You can phone people if that is easier for you. Let them know who you are and say you are looking for a job. Tell them the kind of things you can do. Refer to your transferable skills, your interests, and your current involvements. Check to see if they can do any of the following things for you:

- think of any openings they have heard of
- think of anybody who is quitting work, which may create a job opening
- write you a letter of recommendation
- mention to their friends or supervisors that you are looking for work
- think of a few places you could apply for work

Keep in mind that it is important to always be polite and respectful. Don't expect to get hired just because someone knows you. You still have to cultivate a positive impression and present yourself and your work in a courteous manner.

It is important to develop a network. Networking is the only way you can find out about jobs that are never advertised. Networking can get you a job if you have the necessary skills. You should not, however, count on getting a job because of whom you know, but rather hope for a job through networking because a wider group of people see your skills and traits.

To learn more about networking, read “Networking . . . a Contact Sport” on pages 54 and 55 of *Careers*. This article explains the concept of networking and suggests ways to make contacts.



## Finding Job Advertisements

Following are some tips you can use for finding advertised job vacancies:

- Most local, national, and international newspapers advertise available jobs in the classified ads section of the newspaper. In some newspapers, jobs are also advertised in the business section or the careers section, if the paper has these sections. Many of these newspapers can be found online.
- The federal and provincial governments have career centres that post available jobs and provide counsellors to help you find employment.
- Some jobs are posted at career fairs and shows.
- Some businesses advertise job vacancies on their websites.
- Some businesses post job vacancies on bulletin boards at the worksite location.

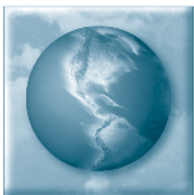


## Using an Employment Agency

There are both government and private employment agencies. These agencies act as go-betweens, both for businesses who are hiring and people who are looking for jobs. Some employment agencies charge fees. Some charge the person looking for a job, others charge the business recruiting a new employee, and others charge both.

## Going Online

You have already explored many online sites that can help you to assess personal interests and skills and to focus on career information and planning. There are also many job-hunting websites that can help job-seekers link up with potential employers. Often these websites include valuable tips on looking for work.



The federal government provides links to a job sites at  
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/individuals/cluster/jobs.shtml>

The Government of Alberta provides links to job sites on its ALIS website at  
<http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/jp/>

There are also a number of website references in your *Careers* textbook. Many sites offering job listings are private, commercial sites and contain advertising. Check to see if there are any costs involved before using a site.

Many companies maintain up-to-date websites about their operations. Current information about a company can be useful when you prepare your application and résumé. Knowing about the company can help you show in the interview that you are motivated and interested in the business.

2. Investigate some of the jobs available in your community that would be suitable for students looking for part-time or summer work. Use at least two of the following strategies:
  - a. Check the want ads in the following sources:
    - newspapers
    - community league newsletters
    - community bulletin boards found in community centres, local businesses, schools, and at post offices
  - b. Make a list of the people in your network whom you could ask about possible job openings. Use the three levels suggested in the article “Networking. . . a Contact Sport.”
    - Level 1: personal friends and relatives
    - Level 2: colleagues and business acquaintances including students and teachers at school
    - Level 3: people you don’t know, but who could help you identify jobs in your community

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

### Did You Know?



Eighty-five percent of all jobs are never advertised. How can you gain access to this hidden job market? View Segment 21: Finding Employment on your Student Support CD for information about exploring various ways to identify potential sources of work.

It is important to keep good records while doing a job search. One of the best ways to do this is to create a file folder (hard copy or electronic) with a page for each business being targeted. On this page, list the following:

- the name of the business
- name of the person spoken to
- company address, telephone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and website URL
- each date of contact, along with a brief note about the results of the contact and name of contact person
- information as to whether an application form or résumé has been submitted
- any other important information, such as any interview dates and times

All written communication (photocopies of those sent and any correspondence received) should be kept in a file folder.

Your page or file card may look like the following one.

<b>Business:</b> <i>Yolanda's Garden Centre</i>	<b>Position:</b> <i>Supervisor, U-pick Strawberries</i>
<i>Box 777</i>	<b>Date of Application:</b> <i>Feb. 18</i>
<i>Low Ridge, AB</i>	<b>Date of Interview:</b> <i>Feb. 28</i>
<i>333-6677</i>	<b>Name of Interviewer:</b> <i>Yolanda Sanchez</i>
<b>Possibility of a job:</b> <i>prospects look good—there are also four positions for working with the perennials in the green house</i>	
<b>Materials sent:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>résumé</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>covering letter</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>application form</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>information card</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>thank-you letter</b>	
<b>Competition ends:</b> <i>March 1. She'll call me by March 3.</i>	
<b>Impressions:</b> <i>looks like a busy place—outdoor work—owner is nice, also professional</i>	

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 94. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

## Applying for the Job



Once you have found an appropriate job, you begin the whole process of applying for it. You have already collected in your profiles and portfolios most of the information that will be required throughout the process. Most often, the first step in applying for a job is to complete an application form. Some employers may ask only for a résumé; others may require you to submit both an application form and a résumé.

### Completing Application Forms

An application form provides an opportunity to make a first impression with a potential employer. In general, a potential employer uses an application form to judge the match of the potential employee to the job. Application forms usually ask for some personal information, previous work experience, and educational background.

You have already organized a great deal of personal information for the career portfolio you began in Section 1. Develop a personal information sheet like the one in the next question to include in your portfolio. It is like a short résumé and includes almost all the information that might be asked for on an application form.

3. Following is a template of a Personal Information Sheet used to collect information that may be needed on an application form. Re-create the chart in your notebook or electronic file. (Be sure to allow enough space for your answers.) Fill in all the information on the chart—or as much as you can, depending upon your prior experiences. Save this information in your portfolio. It will assist you when you fill out an application form or create your résumé later on in this lesson.

<b>Personal Information Sheet</b>	
Full name and complete address	
Home telephone, work telephone, fax, e-mail	
Citizenship	
Driver's licence number and type of licence	
Name, address, and telephone number of emergency contact person	
Names and addresses of last three employers and the name and telephone number of a contact person at each place	
The beginning and ending dates of each job and the reason for leaving	
Three references and their telephone numbers and addresses	
Certificate or accreditation numbers of any documentation needed; date of qualification for any special training	
Degrees, diplomas, certificates; dates of graduation from programs; schools/ institutions	
Any special awards or prizes, with the dates they were given	
Last school attended and a school contact person	
Skills that may be of use in the jobs being applied for	
Language spoken and written	
Types of jobs you are interested in	

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Writing Letters



A letter is a tool for marketing yourself to employers. When employers do not have enough time to meet with all the prospective candidates, a letter can make an impression that may lead to an interview or to being hired. There are different types of letters that can be used in a job-search strategy:

- A letter of inquiry is sent even though there has not been a request for applications. It expresses interest in the business and inquires as to whether there are any jobs available. It is sent in the hope that there is some job that has not been advertised or that a job may be opening soon. Often letters will be placed on file in case this happens.
- A letter of application is itself the application for the actual position. It is in answer to an advertisement for a specific job. Once interest has been expressed in a letter of application, the employer will likely request a résumé and/or an interview.
- A covering letter is sent along with an application form or résumé. It must sell your résumé. If the covering letter is not effective, the person hiring may not bother to read the résumé or application. (Covering letters are also referred to as *cover letters*.)
- A follow-up letter is sent after you've interacted with the potential employer. For example, a thank-you letter should be sent after being given an interview, receiving information, job shadowing someone, or being given a tour.

A letter can also be used for various other purposes such as networking or accepting a position that has been offered.



When writing a letter for a job search or application, use this three-paragraph format:

- **First paragraph:** State the position being applied for and the purpose for writing the letter. Explain where the information on the job came from. Get the attention of the employer. Look professional and get to the point.
- **Second paragraph:** Explain very briefly why you are capable of filling the position. Refer to the résumé if you have included one. Briefly mention your most important education and work experience and how they relate to the job.
- **Third paragraph:** Ask for an interview and give a general indication of when you are available. Indicate your enthusiasm and willingness to work. Be sure to include contact telephone numbers.

Keep copies of letters and advertisements in your job-search files. Make sure your letter looks professional by doing the following:

- Use regular white paper. Do not use coloured paper, recycled-on-one-side paper, or cute stationery.
- Use business style.
- Use a professional tone. It should be self-confident and respectful of the employer. It should not sound boastful. (**Note:** Many of the employment websites provide letter templates and hints for wording job-search letters.)
- Use word processing. Proofread carefully to ensure there are no grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors.
- Use good-quality photocopies. Make letters look professional.



The following articles in *Careers* have helpful advice on writing covering letters:

- “Making the Shortlist with a Concise, Quality Covering Letter” on page 87 discusses the importance of concise, good-quality covering letters.
  - “Use the Phone to Find a Name” on page 17 provides a brief explanation about using the telephone to gather information for an accurate covering letter.
4. From a newspaper or website ad, choose a job that interests you. Outline the information you would include in each of the three paragraphs of a letter of application. **Note:** You do not need to write the actual letter.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Creating a Résumé and Preparing a Portfolio

A résumé is one of the most important tools in a job search. Most job ads ask you to submit a résumé. Not all résumés will be read, so it is extremely important to make the résumé interesting, appealing, and professional.



You want to make your résumé compelling enough that the hiring person will include you on the short list of people who will get interviews.



To learn about how clear communication contributes to employability, view Segment 22: A Résumé and Covering Letter on your Student Support CD.



The following articles in *Careers* also provide tips for writing effective résumés:

- “Writing Effective Résumés” on pages 64 to 66 describes chronological, functional, and combination forms of résumés. It also provides some general guidelines for information to include in a résumé.
- “Your Résumé: Write It Right!” on page 23 provides a sample combination form of résumé for a high school student with some previous part-time and seasonal work experience.
- “Job References: Tough for Everyone” on pages 68 and 69 gives some ideas on how to obtain and use good job references.

Frequently employers ask that applications and résumés be completed and forwarded online. “The Online Job Application: Preparing Your Résumé for the Internet” on pages 120 to 122 of *Careers* provides guidelines for writing a suitable online résumé.

5. Review your personal profile and other information you have gathered about yourself in this module. Using this information about your personal skills, create a list of action words and phrases to describe yourself in your résumé.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Preparing A Presentation Portfolio

One of the primary purposes of developing a career portfolio is to use it for job applications. You won't necessarily be mailing the whole thing out with your application. A résumé and a covering letter will usually suffice. While some employers will request a complete portfolio, most often you will need to select the most appropriate information from your portfolio to include in your résumé.

If a full portfolio is required, you can develop a presentation portfolio from the materials you have in your career portfolio. The materials you select for a presentation portfolio will depend on the audience you are presenting to. It could be a one-on-one interview situation; it could also be for a panel of people. The format you use for your presentation will depend upon the type of materials selected. Usually a small binder or folder will work well.

A presentation portfolio should be developed with a specific purpose and situation in mind. This means that its format will always be changing. For example, preparing a presentation portfolio for an interview for a summer job working with young children will require different pieces and samples than a presentation portfolio used in an interview for an internship at a research laboratory.



You will learn to develop a presentation portfolio for a variety of purposes. For example, interviews for employment, post-secondary program applications, or scholarship applications all require slightly different versions of your portfolio. As you can probably already tell, your portfolio needs to be flexible and versatile.

6. Make a list of the items from your career portfolio that you could use to prepare a presentation portfolio.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



**Mr. Romanchuk:** You've sent off your résumé to a potential employer. It's compelling enough that you've made the short list of people who will get interviews. What's your next step?

**Ashley:** I'll need to find out what to do to get ready for an interview.

## Preparing for an Interview

Getting to the interview stage in the job-search process is a great accomplishment. Often the employer has résumés from more applicants than can be interviewed. Therefore a short list of those who seem strongest based on their résumé and references will be the ones who are interviewed and actually considered for the job.

An interview fulfills several functions. The employer uses it to determine if you have the skills, knowledge, and characteristics necessary for the job being offered. The employer is also trying to communicate some idea about the company and to get a sense of whether you will be a good fit. The interview gives you a chance to create a positive impression, as well as find out whether the institution is a desirable place for you to work.

Preparing for an interview is necessary for the following reasons:

- First, the interview itself will be relatively short. Most interviews don't last for more than an hour. Well-practised answers allow you to use that time as efficiently as possible to let the interviewer know how suitable you are for the position.
- Second, preparation will decrease your nervousness. Rehearsing will also help you make a better, more confident impression.

Following are some sample interview questions. Preparing good answers for them will reduce much of your anxiety prior to the interview.

- Tell me a bit about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this field/line of work?
- Why did you apply for this job?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What interests you in our product/service/business?
- What position are you most interested in?
- Have you any experience in this type of work?
- Are you willing to work your way up to the job you would like to do?
- Why should we choose you as the successful applicant?
- Why do you feel you are qualified for this job?
- What three words describe you the best?
- What are your strengths?
- What would your last boss say is your greatest strength?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What would your last boss say is an area in which you need improvement?
- What subjects did you enjoy at school?
- How does your education relate to this job?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- What jobs in the past have you enjoyed doing the most? Why?
- What jobs in the past have you enjoyed doing the least? Why?
- Tell me about a work accomplishment you are most proud of.
- What is the most difficult task at work you have had to handle? What happened?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?

- Can you tell me about a time that you successfully managed/organized a project?
- What computer programs do you know?
- Why did you leave your last employer?
- Why do you want to leave your present job?
- Were you absent much from your last job?
- Do you work well under pressure?
- Can you tell me some ways that you handle stress on the job?
- Describe some time when you had to motivate other people to get a job done.
- How do you get along with co-workers?
- How would your co-workers describe you?
- Do you prefer to work by yourself or with others?
- What type of boss do you prefer to work with?
- What are your career plans? What are your long-term goals?
- How does this job fit with your career plans?
- Where do you see yourself in three/five/ten years?
- Are you willing to relocate?
- What hours can you work?
- What times of day or evening can you work?
- What days can you work?
- How long are you planning to stay in this job?
- What are your expectations regarding salary?
- Are you applying for other jobs?
- Do you have any questions?

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), BLM #6. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

Before going into an interview, it is important to research the company. You can look at the organization's website or ask people who know about the organization. Use the information you find to jot down a few questions and take them to your interview. Researching can help you ask questions that show you are truly interested and willing to put time into learning about the organization. Doing your homework is part of impressing your interviewer!



To learn more about interviews, read the following articles in *Careers*. They will be useful for answering the next question.

- “How to Interview Effectively” on pages 80 to 82 points out that the skills for being interviewed can be improved with practice. Researching and learning about the company or business before having the interview are also keys to success.
- “How to Ace a Job Interview” on pages 78 and 79 is a very detailed look at interviews. Possible interview questions are categorized into groups. The article also gives some interview tips and guidelines.
- “Preparing for Tomorrow’s Interview” on pages 76 and 77 suggests six ways to prepare for an interview.
- “The Telephone Interview” on pages 83 to 85 provides advice on how to handle a telephone interview.
- “Fashionably Yours” on page 77 discusses dressing for an interview.

7. Consider what you've learned about interviews. Select ten questions from the list of sample interview questions. Choose different kinds of questions for the list; choose some that you find easy to answer and some that you find challenging to answer. Respond in writing to each one.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



There are valuable people resources in your community who can help you practise interview and job-search skills. Actually participating in an interview is a worthwhile experience that will help you develop your skills. Ask a community member such as a business owner, community volunteer, manager, community-league member, agency recruiter, or a human-resources representative about the types of questions he or she would ask a potential employee or volunteer. Ask the person if he or she would be willing to interview you, using some of these questions. Ask for feedback once the interview is completed. Alternatively, practise the skills of telephone interviewing with a friend or an adult.

Go to page 6 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to questions 1 and 2 of Section 4.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson you developed a job-search tool kit. You acquired strategies for identifying jobs and contacts, completing application forms, writing letters and résumés, and preparing for an interview. In the next lesson you will examine employer and employee expectations.



## Suggested Answers

1. Your list of ways to search for a job will vary, depending on your experiences, your resources, and your community. Your list may include strategies such as the following:
  - walking from door-to-door
  - completing application forms on-site
  - searching through job sites on the Internet
  - using the newspaper to identify jobs in the community
  - using a résumé
  - telephoning businesses
  - using an employment agency
  - submitting a résumé online
2. **a. and b.** The potential jobs that you identify in your job search will vary, depending on your interests, the types of businesses and opportunities for student work in your community, and the job-search strategies you select. Which strategies did you use?
  - checking the want ads
  - making a list of people in your network
  - contacting potential employers
  - checking bulletin boards within a business
  - watching for Help Wanted signs in windows of businesses
3. Personal information sheets will vary, depending on your experiences, skills, and interests. Have you included as much information as possible? Ensure that you have included all your work experience, such as part-time jobs, babysitting, volunteer experience, or informal work you have done in your community. Also, ensure that you have permission from three references you can use. Remember that this sheet is for your own use and does not have to be shared with potential employers. It provides a databank of information that you can use and refer to as you fill out application forms.
4. The information you include in your letter outline will vary according to the ad you are responding to and your skills, experience, and training. Your first paragraph should include the job being applied for and where you saw the ad. The second paragraph is where you sell yourself by indicating your relevant strengths, skills, abilities, experience, and education. Refer to your résumé, if included. The third paragraph should indicate your availability for an interview and contact numbers. End with expressions of enthusiasm for the job.
5. Do the words you've chosen accurately describe you? While you want the language you use in your résumé to present a positive image of yourself, you also want it to be honest.
6. The items you select will depend on the specific skills and strengths that you want your presentation portfolio to represent.

You need to be well prepared for any presentation. The following checklist can be a starting point.

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want to accomplish?</li> <li>• What do you expect from your audience? Do you know their names? Their positions?</li> <li>• What do you know about their interests and expectations?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Messages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What two or three key messages do you want the audience to learn?</li> <li>• Which messages will likely have the most impact on the audience?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which items from your portfolio effectively demonstrate your key messages/strengths?</li> <li>• Do they need updating?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will you use any technology/props in your presentation?</li> <li>• If the technology fails, what is your back-up plan?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timing/sequence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much time is available?</li> <li>• Will the audience have questions? Which questions might be asked?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you assess the impact and effectiveness of the presentation—by doing a personal assessment, or by asking for audience feedback?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will you take? What will you wear? How will you get there?</li> <li>• What can you do to relieve stress?</li> </ul>

7. The answers you develop will depend on the questions you select from the list of possible interview questions. Hopefully you selected different kinds of questions from this list—some that were easy to answer and others that were challenging to answer. Practise saying your answers out loud, and plan to share the questions and answers with a friend, parent, or interested adult. Review and revise your answers based on their feedback.

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## Lesson 2: You in the Workplace

How do ensure you are a success at a job once you are hired? One of the major aspects of doing well at a job is your attitude. (Of course, you also need to have the skills required for your duties.) Employers recognize and value enthusiasm and a strong work ethic. They appreciate an employee with good work habits who arrives each day excited and interested in doing a good job.



To learn about the importance of attitude in the workplace, turn to your *Careers* textbook and read “Learning Is Job #1” on page 13. This article discusses the characteristics that are appealing to employers—those qualities that can help a person to both get and keep a job.

In some ways, your first job is the most crucial because it is when your personal work habits and standards are developed.

Once a person has developed work habits, whether they are habits with high standards and goals or ones that aim much lower, these habits will become instilled. They can become very difficult to change. For this reason, it is important to set high standards on the first job.

There are three important goals for a worker:

- Quality: doing high quality work in all that is done
- Accomplishment: being successful in completing all tasks
- Satisfaction: personal satisfaction with the work that is done

These three goals are interrelated. If a worker sets quality work as a personal standard, it is likely that the worker will succeed at many of the tasks required by the job. Succeeding at work is a source of pleasure and satisfaction for the worker who has set high standards.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifecoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 119. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

1.
  - a. What do you expect a job should give to you?
  - b. What do you expect you should give to a job?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

How do you prepare for workplace expectations? In addition to considering your own expectations in a job, you must consider employer expectations. You also need to work within **workplace protocols**.

*workplace protocols: the expectations, customs, and rules of the workplace*

## Workplace Protocols



Following workplace protocols is like fitting in with any social group. There are appropriate topics of conversation and there are topics that make people uncomfortable or angry. There are rules about taking coffee breaks, using the washroom, talking on the phone, using the lunchroom, and talking to other employees. There are as many different protocols as there are workplaces. Part of your job is to be watchful and to take your cues from your managers, supervisors, and other employees in that workplace.

The following articles in *Careers* discuss two aspects of workplace protocols:

- “Fashionably Yours” on page 50 provides advice on dressing for casual Fridays in an office setting.
- “Mind Your Telephone Manners” on page 123 provides instructions on how to handle telephone calls in a business setting.



# Employer Expectations

Employers expect that employees will

- do whatever it takes (be flexible)
- have integrity (ethical principles; honesty)
- find better ways to do the job (be innovative)
- work well with other people
- have a spirit of service (be committed)
- strive to be better

What do these statements mean? Read the following explanation to find out.

## Employer Expectations

### 1) Do whatever it takes.

Valued employees

- have commitment to the job and to doing whatever it takes to get the job done—An employer relies on the commitment of a worker to complete tasks; that is how an employee adds some value to the business.
- are flexible (the ability to change what one is doing, sometimes in mid-stream) so that when a new task or unexpected demand arises, an employee can do it by applying abilities already learned as well as the willingness to learn new things
- are adaptable (the ability to accept changes) to a new situation—Not only must an employee be capable of dealing with changed expectations and demands, the employee must also be willing and able to accept the change. The phrase “it’s not my job so I don’t have to do it” shows rigidity that employees cannot afford to have.

This does not mean that one employee is expected to do everyone else’s work; however, it is expected that employees will pitch in when needed.

- work hard
- have sound judgment
- can set priorities so that the appropriate work gets done—Timelines for projects and work are set so there are deadlines.
- are self-motivated—No one has to make the employee work; the employee can get on the job and keep on the job until it is done.

- have stability, the ability to “hang in there” and get the job done when times get tough—That means the employee is willing to work, within reason, some more hours to get through unexpected demands on the business, or times when the workload for everyone is heavy. It also means that the employee is wise enough to know that these times will end and the demand and stress will lessen. A stable employee has staying power.
- are enthusiastic and interested in the work to be done, even if it is not the most appealing part of the work—The employee recognizes that everyone has some tasks that are more appealing than others but that a job is a combination of tasks.

## 2) Have integrity.

“Doing whatever it takes” does not mean overstepping the boundary of good judgment, being dishonest, or harming another person. A valued employee’s actions are tempered with integrity.

Having integrity means having the appropriate honesty, trust, and follow-through at work and in working relationships. Integrity is crucial because it inspires confidence and respect from other people—co-workers, supervisors, employers, and customers.



### Valued employees

- are responsible; the employer can trust that the work is done to high standard and that it is done when it is supposed to be done
- are reliable; the work gets done all of the time, not just some of the time, and other people can trust that the work will be done—There is regular, consistent follow-through. A reliable employee is not absent from work unless there is a valid reason.
- are honest—It is expected that the worker knows right from wrong and will make work decisions based on those personal values and the values of the business.
- respect confidentiality and privacy of other people and information about them
- observe company regulations

### 3) Find better ways to do the job.

This statement refers to finding ways to increase productivity on the job.

Valued employees

- have critical thinking skills that help to “solve your own problems if possible” by thinking things through—A company policy manual or a list of guidelines can never cover all the things that will happen at work. Critical thinking includes being able to analyze a situation, whether a small problem or major crisis, to determine how to best handle it.
- use these thoughts in combination with good decision-making and problem-solving skills
- ask questions to do the job better
- follow directions to do the job better
- are well-organized, including the work space and desk, and work schedule
- use time-management techniques to make the most of all the work time, getting the work done and staying focused—The employee is aware of how much time can be wasted on the telephone and the Internet and chatting with co-workers, and makes a conscious decision to avoid wasting time.
- take initiative by being ready and able to find better and quicker ways to do the work or begin new projects
- ask for assistance or advice when needed, such as when there is a work overload

### 4) Work well with other people.

Valued employees

- have a positive attitude that is visible to other people
- use good communication skills to understand and be understood
- have an appropriate sense of humour, suitable for the workplace
- get along with other people by
  - being respectful
  - being polite
  - avoiding office gossip

- avoiding or dealing with conflict with others—quarrelling between workers is not acceptable in the workplace. Employers do not have time to be referees. Upset employees are not productive and so do not add value to the company.
  - not taking credit for other’s work
  - not undermining others or their work
  - showing appreciation of others and their work
- can compromise
  - have teamwork skills—This means collaborating with other employees to reach a common goal—the company’s success, just as a sports team works toward scoring a goal.

### 5) **Have a spirit of service.**

The purpose of every business is to provide a product or service to others. Whether the title is “customer,” “client,” “patient,” “fellow employee,” or something else, the focus is always on serving other people so that the company has the opportunity to serve them again. That is what keeps the company in business. In order to do that, all the employees in a business must have a desire to provide service.

Valued employees

- have a “customer first” orientation—this does not mean that the “customer is always right.” Rather, it is an acknowledgement and understanding that every business must have a customer for its product or service. The business wants customers to feel satisfied and that problems have been resolved.
- use customer relation skills such as showing interest and enthusiasm when dealing with a customer, making the customer feel valued, and making the customer feel that their business is important
- take initiative in serving others by working to understand the needs of a customer, working to solve customer problems, offering other services or products that might appeal to the customer, and trying to see things from the customer’s perspective in order to resolve problems.

### 6) **Strive to be better.**

This refers to seeking personal and professional development in order to become a better employee. Striving to be better is slightly different than the previous statement “looking for better ways to do a job”; it focuses more on the personal development of the employee.



## Valued employees

- learn from constructive criticism by focusing on how it can improve personal performance, instead of being hurt by it, and they make an effort to improve—constructive criticism is meant to be helpful.
- set and work toward personal and professional goals—work achievements should be noted and added to one’s personal portfolio.
- continue to learn, both on the job and off



An employee can learn on the job by

- taking advantage of on-the-job training, courses offered at work, and any other professional development opportunities
- reading professional and work-related journals, magazines, and newsletters
- accepting more duties and responsibilities while at work. This is a way of increasing skills and knowledge while still doing the expected job.

An employee can also learn while not on the job by

- taking advantage of weekend or evening courses and programs that will help on the job. However, to do this, the employee must be willing to give up some personal time in order to learn more.
- having other interests in life in which new transferable skills may be learned

In the work world, if the employee is not willing to learn and strive to be better, there will always be other people who are willing and want to be hired. The goal is to learn as much as possible. In some settings, this is referred to as life-long learning.

- seek balance in life—having more than one thing to do in life helps a person to have perspective, a sense of the “bigger picture” of life. It also provides opportunities to learn new transferable skills. Balance in life refers to having a mix of pursuits and interests.

Being a good employee requires commitment and responsibility. You need to recognize that some days work is a grind. It is rare that every day will be fun and enjoyable. Commitment to stick with it can help you through those tough days and lead to those days that are rewarding and fulfilling.

<sup>1</sup>Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), BLM #7–10. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

2. a. Getting ready to go to work the first day on a new job can be very much like getting ready to go to an interview. As a new employee, you will be making first impressions almost everywhere on the jobsite. Being prepared for the first day can lower your stress level. Create a list of all the things you could do to get ready to go to work on the first day of a new job.
  
- b. Understanding employer expectations is an important part of starting and maintaining a job. Locate an individual in your network of contacts who has supervisory experience. You could use someone in your family, one of your friends' parents or if you have a part-time job, you could even ask your manager the following questions. Record your findings in a chart like the one that follows:

Questions	What I Learned About Employer Expectations
What are the most important things you expect from an employee?	
What are some of the personal qualities that are important for an employee to have?	
How do you help an employee to do his or her best work?	
What do you do when an employee is not working to full potential?	
How do you help an employee who is just starting out on the job?	
What advice would you give a new employee joining your business?	

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



To reinforce your understanding of appropriate employee behaviours, view Segment 23: Employer Expectations on your Student Support CD.

Go to page 17 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 3 of Section 4.

# Looking Back; Looking Ahead

This lesson outlined the expectations an employer has of an employee. Did the expectations match what you want out of a job? In the next lesson, you will study the legal rights and responsibilities of employers and employees.

## Glossary

**workplace protocols:** the expectations, customs, and rules of the workplace

## Suggested Answers

1. Following are one student's expectations. You may have others.
  - a. I expect a job should give me a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, fair treatment and fair pay, and experience and skills I can use in future jobs.
  - b. I expect to perform the job to the best of my ability, be punctual, and follow workplace protocols.
2.
  - a. You might consider these questions when getting ready to go to work on the first day of a new job.
    - How do I get to the jobsite?
    - What should I wear?
    - Where and when do I eat?
    - Is parking available? Is there public transportation?
    - What is the exact the location (department/floor/office) of the job?
    - Who is the contact person on the jobsite?
    - Do I need to bring any information requested by the employer?
  - b. The information you collect from an employer in your community will vary depending on the nature of the business. How does the information compare to the list of employer expectations given in this lesson?

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## Lesson 3: Rights and Responsibilities



Both employers and employees have rights and responsibilities. Some are set by law and others are common workplace protocols and expectations. The basic premise of all rights and responsibilities on the jobsite is that employers and employees to be treated fairly and treat others fairly. Some basic rights and responsibilities are listed in the following chart. You will explore some of these rights and responsibilities in more detail as you work through this lesson.

Employee Rights	Employee Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to be paid fairly</li><li>• to get fair treatment from the employer</li><li>• to have a safe place to work</li><li>• to receive adequate training for the job</li><li>• to get feedback on job performance</li><li>• to refuse to work in an unsafe situation or do unsafe work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to do the work for which one is paid</li><li>• to treat the employer fairly and honestly</li><li>• to work and act responsibly around any hazardous equipment and materials</li><li>• to wear and use all safety clothing and equipment</li><li>• to report dangerous working situations and environments to the employer</li></ul>

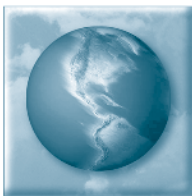
Employer Rights	Employer Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to receive work for the pay given</li> <li>• to be treated fairly by employees</li> <li>• to have employees work safely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to provide an equitable wage</li> <li>• to be fair and honest with employees</li> <li>• to provide training if the job involves being exposed to any hazardous materials</li> <li>• to provide a safe working environment and safety equipment as needed</li> <li>• to provide adequate guidance and feedback</li> </ul>

## Labour Legislation

The federal and provincial governments in Canada have legislated rights and responsibilities for employers and employees. The Canada Labour Code is the main legislation for Canadian businesses and workers. It is comprised of three sections:

- Part I: Industrial Relations, which deals with industrial relationships and collective bargaining.
- Part II: Occupational Health and Safety, which deals with workplace health and safety, promoting healthy and safe workplaces, and related issues.
- Part III: Labour Standards, which deals with minimum wages, hours of work, overtime, maximum hours, annual vacation, sick leave, maternity and parental leave, sexual harassment, and termination of employment.

There are comparable forms of Labour Codes and Employment Standards at the provincial levels.



Use the following keywords to locate information from the Internet on federal and provincial employment standards and human rights codes. There are also resources in libraries that provide this information. Your librarian will be happy to help you find the resources you need.

- Canada Labour Code
- Canada Labour Standards
- Federal Labour Legislation
- Employment Equity Act (1995)
- Workplace Equity
- Alberta Employment Standards

There are also numerous websites listed throughout your *Careers* textbook that relate to

- rights and responsibilities
- protection against harassment
- diversity programs
- employment equity programs
- protection against discrimination



1. Create a chart, such as the following one, to record information from two different websites that you select from the preceding list. Use the questions in the chart as a research guide.

Site Address	Questions About the Site	What I Learned
	What kind of information does this website provide?	
	Identify two employee rights that are protected.	
	Identify two employer rights that are protected.	
	What information is relevant to the occupations you are interested in?	

2. Review newspapers (hard copy or online). Find a news story in which either an employer or an employee broke labour regulations. Describe the rule that was broken. What was the outcome of the situation?

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

## Human Rights Codes

Canadian human rights laws stem from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These laws protect job applicants and employees from discrimination. Some laws are federal and cover all provinces and territories. You can check out the Canadian Human Rights Act at the following URL:

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/H-6>

Some human rights laws are provincial. Because these laws vary from province to province, it is important to find out about the laws in your province, or in the province in which you plan to work. To find out about Alberta human rights laws, visit the Alberta Human Rights Commission at the following URL:

<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>

In Canada, protection against employment discrimination usually includes protection against discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, marital status, and physical capability. An example of an exception is the right of an employer to ask about the ability to lift heavy objects if lifting is a requirement for the job.

Forms of discrimination that are punishable under the law include actions such as insults, taunts, telling or showing inappropriate jokes, posting inappropriate written materials, persistent harassment, or offering or preventing promotions or salary increase is based on a person's gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, marital status, or physical capability. Unfortunately harassment and discrimination based on these factors do occur. Human rights legislation provides a means of recourse for individuals who have been harassed or have experienced discrimination.



Learn more about gender inequality in the workplace by reading the following articles in *Careers*.

- “FAQ: Pay Equity” on page 69 provides a brief description of pay equity as equal pay for work of equal value.
- “Women Break into the Trades” on pages 44 and 45 gives examples of women in non-traditional technical occupations. A comparison of similar abilities in traditionally male and female jobs is given.





## Health and Safety on the Job

Safety on the job is the joint responsibility of employers and employees. The employer must provide a safe worksite, the necessary safety equipment, and safety training. Sometimes, workers are asked to provide their own safety clothing and small equipment, but the employer must ensure a safe, well-ventilated, adequately lit workspace.

The employer must establish safety procedures for doing the job and must review them with the employees. These obligations are particularly relevant for occupations that involve the use of dangerous substances, equipment, and vehicles. All workplaces must have emergency response procedures in place in case of fire or some other disaster.



The employee must also take responsibility for safety. He or she must use the required safety clothing and equipment and take any safety training made available. An employee's safety responsibilities also include arriving at work well rested. On the job, or prior to the job, employees must not consume alcohol or illegal or prescription drugs that can affect judgment, vision, or motor skills. The employee must report unsafe situations or working conditions and is entitled to refuse to work in a hazardous situation.

Each province is responsible for the health and safety of its workers. Alberta has two key pieces of health and safety legislation. The Occupational Health and Safety Act sets health and safety standards and safety practices in the workplace. The Worker's Compensation Act compensates and rehabilitates injured workers and works with employers to ensure safety standards. The Canada Labour Code provides legislation for health and safety at the federal level.



To learn more about the importance of a healthy workplace, read the following articles in *Careers*.

- “10 Questions to Ask Your Employer” on page 45 addresses safety questions on the workplace.
- “Dangerous Substances in the Workplace” on pages 26 and 27 explains the WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) and N.F.P.A. 704 Code, which can be used on a Materials Safety Data Sheet that identifies controlled substances.
- “Ergo-Naughty Habits” on pages 94 to 97 provides instructions for setting up a computer work station.

4. Make a list of resources that provide information about workplace safety rules and regulations in Alberta and safety issues. Explain the type of information each resource provides.

Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.

## Job Stress

Job stress, another health and safety issue, can have a great impact on an employee, both personally and professionally. Productivity can fall drastically and the employer may take measures to remedy the situation, which can create even more stress for the employee. The skills to handle job stress are as important as other skills needed by a worker. They are the same skills needed to handle other stresses in a person's life.



For some suggestions on how to handle job stress before it becomes burn-out, read "FAQ: Job Stress and Job Burn-Out" on page 72 of *Careers*.

Go to page 18 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 4 of Section 4.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you examined the legal rights and responsibilities of employers and employees, including rules about discrimination and sexual harassment. The lesson also provided information about workplace health and safety. In the next lesson, you will examine the issues of leaving a job and being unemployed.

## Suggested Answers

1. Information recorded will vary depending on the websites you selected. Were you aware of the rights that are protected?
2. Responses will vary depending on the news story. Did you clearly describe the story—the legislation that was broken and how it was broken? What was the outcome of the situation?
3. The steps should follow an outline similar to the following. Your steps might be adjusted to reflect the individual job situation.

### **Step 1: Clearly define the problem.**

A supervisor is harassing you and a co-worker.

### **Step 2: Establish your criteria.**

Identify what is important to you. It could be stopping the behaviour, as well as finding support for you and your co-worker.

### **Step 3: List your alternatives.**

There are a few possible steps you could take. Some might be better than others. You could talk to the harasser; talk to your co-worker; consider the resources you can access; or talk to another supervisor or human resources manager.

### **Step 4: Evaluate the alternatives based on your criteria.**

There are a few questions you could ask yourself. What advantages are there in talking to another supervisor or human resources manager? In talking to the person doing the harassing? In talking to the other person being harassed? Can the problem be resolved at this level or must it go higher in the organization?

### **Step 5: Make a decision.**

Specify the action needed.

### **Step 6: Review the decision.**

What further steps may be needed? How will the success of the action be assessed? If the harassment stops, you'll probably have achieved a large part of your goal. Have you and your co-worker who experienced the harassment received the support needed? Has the harasser understood the nature of his or her behaviour? Is the harassment likely to start up again?

4. Provide a list of print materials and websites. Websites are probably the easiest places to find current information. Using keywords such as “workplace safety Alberta” can provide sites like these:

- Workplace Health and Safety – Alberta Government

<http://employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/53.html>

- WorkSafe Alberta

<http://employment.alberta.ca/whs/worksafely/index.asp>

- links to Alberta Occupational Health and Safety

<http://bsa.cbasc.org/gol/bsa/site.nsf/en/su06859.html>

- SafeCanada.ca

[http://www.safecanada.ca/link\\_e.asp?category=12&topic=114](http://www.safecanada.ca/link_e.asp?category=12&topic=114)

- Workers’ Compensation Board

[http://www.wcb.ab.ca/workingsafely/heads\\_up.asp](http://www.wcb.ab.ca/workingsafely/heads_up.asp)

Did you describe the types of information each resource provides? Information might include regulations, general safety tips for the workplace, specific safety requirements for different types of jobs, and your rights when it comes to safety.

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## Lesson 4: Leaving a Job

### Fort Saskatchewan losing 170 jobs (9:40 a.m.) edmontonjournal.com

Published: Thursday, August 31, 2006

EDMONTON — Dow Chemical Canada will shut down two of seven plants at its Fort Saskatchewan complex east of Edmonton by the end of October at a cost of about 170 jobs, including 100 company employees and 70 contractors.

The five surviving Alberta plants—and nearly 900 jobs including more than 500 employees and 350 contractors—will keep going for years to come, the company predicted Thursday in announcing the cuts.

But in Ontario all Dow production at Sarnia will shut down by the end of 2008, ending the jobs of 340 employees and 40 contract workers.

Age and international competition led to the Fort Saskatchewan plant closures. The two dying plants were 27 years old, exported all their output to Asia and needed overhauls that were too costly to make in the teeth of stiff competition from newer plants overseas,

Dow said.

The Ontario site is shutting down because all its supplies of a critical raw material from Alberta, ethylene, will be cut off in mid-September, Dow Canada president Jeff Johnston said in an interview.

Ethylene deliveries will halt on the Cochin Pipeline from Edmonton to Sarnia, he said. The 30-year-old Cochin system's owner, BP Energy Canada, said a safety issue prompted the action, Johnston added.

Dow will try to find new roles and locations for employees affected by the closures, company public affairs officer Shannon Gregg said. Retirement and severance packages will also be available, she added.

Staff of the Fort Saskatchewan plants are highly skilled and may turn out to be in high demand in Alberta's surging energy industry, Gregg said.



How would you react if you were one of the Fort Saskatchewan workers losing his or her job?

<sup>1</sup> Material reprinted with the express permission of: "EDMONTON JOURNAL GROUP INC." a CanWest partnership. <http://www.canada.com/edmontonjournal/story.html?id=f269fbdf-09dd-4096-98f0-dc44c812e18c&k=0>

## Leaving a Job

Losing or leaving jobs and moving on to others is the norm in today's work world. It used to be common that a person began a job right out of school and remained with that company until retirement. While that still happens, most workers today change jobs at one time or another, and frequently, many even change occupations. As well, many jobs themselves change over time, requiring new skills and making new demands on their workers. When jobs change, workers may leave them or they may learn new skills to deal with the changes.

Employees leave jobs for the following reasons:

- to accept a promotion to another level within the same company
- to transfer from one job to another within the same company
- to go to a new job with another business
- to move to a new place
- to do other things such as parent children or return to school for more training or education

A person may become unemployed because a company is downsizing or changing its focus. Sometimes a job is just not the right fit. Perhaps the employee took the job because that was all that was available at the time; it might not have been a job that the person was really interested in, or it might have been one that did not make use of the skills or training of the employee. Sometimes, for whatever reason, the employee is stressed and unhappy in the job. Leaving the job may be the best, healthiest solution.

Every change requires adjustment. Changes can be

- anticipated
- threatening
- unexpected and uncontrollable
- a source of shock and dismay
- dreaded
- welcomed
- expected and planned
- easy to accept
- surprising

Giving notice means notifying an employer of your decision to leave a job. Usually, the length of time required for notice is two weeks. This gives your employer time to find someone to fill the position. Because regulations vary, it is important to check current federal or provincial labour regulations.

## Losing a Job



An employee may be laid off, which means leaving a job because the company's needs have changed and the job is no longer required. Usually, employees with the least amount of time with the company are laid off first.

When an employee is laid off, the company is required to issue a Record of Employment to that employee. This document indicates the last date of work and the reason for leaving. This

information is needed if the employee applies for Employment Insurance. (There is a requirement for a certain number of weeks of unemployment before Employment Insurance premiums will be paid).

Losing a job includes being fired. Firing an employee with just cause requires the employee to have been at fault in some way. Reasons for just cause include not following company regulations or being dishonest. A person can also be fired without just cause; in this case **severance pay** may be given. If no severance is paid, then it may be a case of wrongful dismissal. An employee may wish to seek legal advice in this situation.

*severance pay: additional money given as a form of compensation to employees who are laid off from a job*

An employee who is being fired should be told the reasons. Sometimes, the reasons are very clear. If the reasons are not explained, the employee should ask for an explanation.

Being fired is unpleasant, to say the least. Probably the only good thing that can come out of it is that the fired worker can learn from it and not repeat the same mistakes. If the firing has been made without just cause, then the worker should seek recourse.



A person often goes through many different career or occupational experiences in a lifetime. Do you know someone in your community who has switched jobs or changed careers?

1. Identify someone from your family or community who has experienced changes such as the following:

- changing a job, but remaining in the same occupation
- changing from one occupation to another

Ask this person to share his or her experiences and any decision-making strategies used in deciding to make the change.

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



View Segment 24: Workplace Changes on your Student Support CD for more information about changes in the workplace that can happen because of economic conditions, family situations, health problems, or seasonal work.

## Dealing with Unemployment

Many people end up unemployed at some point in their lives. When someone wants a job and does not have one, that person has to cope with unemployment which is, of course, an incredibly stressful situation.

The first step in dealing with being unemployed is to cope with all the emotions and behaviours of grieving about having lost a job. Not only is there a loss of income, there is also the loss of contacts with co-workers who are friends and who remain on the job. There is also the loss of a daily routine and sense of pride and accomplishment when succeeding on the job. While dealing with feelings of loss, it is important to set out to find new employment. Sometimes it is necessary to take some of the following steps toward that goal.

- Establish a routine. It may be tempting to lie around and do nothing but feel sorry for oneself, but it is important to fill the day and re-establish a routine that has most likely been lost with the loss of the regular job. It is important to continue to think of oneself as a person with a purpose. This means setting an alarm, getting up, getting dressed, and having things planned so that there are things to do. Something related to searching for a new job must be done every day.
- Make contacts. If losing the daily contacts with co-workers means losing the opportunity to spend time with people, then the unemployed person needs to create a wider circle of contacts. This is important for two reasons. First, a network of contacts is an important part of the process of searching for a job. Secondly, friends are an important source of emotional support when needed. There are also other sources of support—a group of other unemployed individuals who are job searching, or other groups and resources in the community.



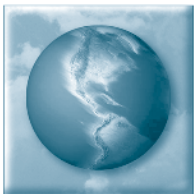
- Start the job search immediately. Putting off a job search does not make it any easier and, in fact, can lead to some loss of personal confidence, which makes the search even more difficult. The job search process is basically the same as the process that took a person to the job that was just lost. The advantage is that the person has more experience and more on the résumé.

- Volunteer. For many reasons, volunteering is good for someone who is unemployed. There are likely to be new people met and new contacts made. Skills can be learned or kept up-to-date.

- Learn new skills. It may well be necessary to learn new skills, perhaps by volunteering or taking a course. Complete retraining in a new field may be necessary. A recently unemployed person must look carefully and as objectively as possible at the reasons for the unemployment.

- Build some personal, low-cost activities into each day. Being unemployed can be a depressing time. It is important to have balance in life, even when unemployed. Enjoyable leisure time, including physical activities, can help even out emotionally difficult times.

- If necessary, claim employment insurance benefits while searching for a job.



You can learn about Employment Insurance at the Government of Canada website:

**<http://www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/ei/menu/eihome.shtml>**

The following website also answers many questions about unemployment and Employment Insurance

**<http://worksearch.gc.ca>**

2. Dealing with the loss of a job or a change in jobs requires the same skills and attitudes that you have learned to apply to the process of getting a job and keeping a job. What are some of the skills that you have that would be most useful in dealing with a situation in which you might lose or change a job?

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

<sup>1</sup> Judith Campbell, *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 151–152. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

Go to page 20 of Assignment Booklet 3B and respond to question 5 of Section 4.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

This lesson dealt with the issues of job loss and unemployment. Hopefully the strategies you were given for coping with such issues will prove useful should you find yourself in these situations.

## Glossary

**severance pay:** additional money given as a form of compensation to employees who are laid off from a job

**stereotyping:** placing an inaccurate label on someone because of his or her membership in a particular group

## Suggested Answers

1. Responses will depend upon the individual identified and his or her reasons for changing jobs or occupations. Was the person's experience positive or negative?
2. Your list of skills and attitudes that can be applied in situations in which jobs are lost or changed will vary. Following are possibilities:
  - applying time-management skills to establish productive routines
  - applying goal-setting and problem-solving strategies
  - maintaining contacts through using your personal network
  - asking for support
  - staying motivated and being persistent
  - staying positive
  - maintaining a belief in your abilities

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## Section 4 Conclusion

You began this section by exploring ways to market yourself to a potential employer. You discovered how to search for a job, complete application forms, write letters of application, create a résumé, and prepare for an interview. The strategies and tools you acquired are now part of your job-search tool kit.

Next you investigated what is involved in keeping a job. In doing so, you examined

- your job and workplace expectations and workplace protocols
- the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers
- labour legislation
- human rights codes
- harassment
- health and safety on the job
- job stress
- leaving a job
- dealing with unemployment



Review the activities you completed for this section. Collect any information that helps you identify and describe the skills and abilities that will help you meet workplace protocols and employer expectations.

By now your career portfolio should be nearing completion. Remember that this is just the beginning. You will update and add to your career portfolio as your education increases, you develop experience in work and volunteer positions, you become active in more organizations, your goals and plans change.

# Module Summary



In this module, you have done a lot of work on career choices. You continued with the self-assessment you began in Module 1, this time looking at your dreams, strengths, skills, abilities, and interests in terms of the most suitable careers for you. Then you examined a variety of careers in detail, matching up career requirements to what you have to offer. You narrowed down your choices to careers you are interested in. In Section 3, you developed goals for building your chosen career and action plans that will make those goals a reality. You also explored entrepreneurship as a career alternative.

In the last section, you looked at how to apply for a job, examined how to be a successful employee, considered the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers, and imagined what you should do if you ever find yourself unemployed.

You may have started this module with a good idea of the career you want. Maybe the module helped clarify careers that would work for you. No matter what, the ideas about setting goals and writing action plans can help you achieve the career you desire. You do have the ability to bring your dreams into reality.

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