

# Through the Looking Glass

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

Who am I?  
What Can I Do?  
What Do I Know?

A workbook to use with **CanadaWorks**

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# Through the Looking Glass



How many times have you silently asked yourself "Who am I?" What are some words that you would use to describe yourself to a new friend?

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Describe the kind of person you were 10 years ago.

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What is different about you?

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Describe one major event of the last 10 years and decide how it changed your life.

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Brainstorm definitions for the following words.\* Then decide on an example of each of these categories.

skills

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interests

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values

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attributes

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*\* remember that two heads are often better than one. In other words, a diverse group of people comes up with diverse ideas, building more knowledge!*

Look at the things you listed as being different now. Can they be sorted into skills or abilities, interests, values or attributes? These four areas reflect who we are. Some things may stay the same our whole life, like some of our values, but other things change all the time. Use the chart on the next page and begin your list. As you continue to use this workbook, keep coming back to this page and adding things as you think of them.



In order to get where we want to go, we often have to look at where we have been. And that is what we will be doing.

*"The unexamined life is not worth living."*

Socrates

Skill	Value	Interest	Attribute

Your first step in searching for meaningful work is to learn about yourself. How do you do this? Here are some strategies. You can add more. Tick off (✓) those that you have done or are planning to do.

- I identify what you like to do
- Talk to a friend or colleague who is a good listener
- Take tests and personality inventories that help you identify your interests and abilities, your values and your personality
- Talk to a professional counsellor
- Write an autobiography and see if you can see patterns in the choices you have made throughout your life
  
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Which strategy helped you the most?

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Why do you think the strategy was most useful?

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One of the most important things we need to know is how we learn. Why do you think that knowing this is important?

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Reflect on how you learn best. Think about something that you have recently learned to do. It could be learning to program a VCR, using an ATM (Automated Teller Machine) or correctly using prepositions in a class activity. Think about the experiences you had learning the information. Did you have to hear examples or have someone read the instructions to you? Or did you have to read the directions yourself? Some people have to feel their way by putting it together step by step and they ignore the instructions.

What kind of learner are you? What is your best guess?

- visual (you need to see)
- auditory (you need to hear)
- kinesthetic (you need to do)



If you are not sure what kind of learner you are, look at the following:

- Do you listen to the radio or your CD player for news or entertainment?
- Do you remember things if you repeat them out loud?
- Do you learn faster when an instructor explains it to you?

If you answered a strong yes to all of these questions you are probably an auditory learner. You learn best by listening.

- Do you learn faster and better if the information is in chart or graph form?
- Do you remember things better if you see them written out?
- Do you feel more comfortable following written instructions rather than oral ones?

You are probably a visual learner if you answered with a strong yes to these questions.

- ❑ Do you enjoy working with your hands?
- ❑ Do you learn best through role-play or games?
- ❑ Do you doodle, draw or sketch what you are learning?

Answering with a strong yes to these questions suggests that you are a kinesthetic or tactile learner.

These and the following learning style descriptions are adapted from **Creative Student Assessment Literacy Partners of Manitoba**

Another method of describing learning styles uses different language:

*A Physically Centred Learner* learns by watching and doing. They don't need a lot of verbal direction. They need time to practise and complete the activity. The content needs to be useful and practical in life.

*An Emotional Relational Learner* learns by listening to others and talking about the activity with others. They like to relate what they are learning to their personal life. They prefer a relaxed, creative environment.

*A Mentally Centred Learner* pays attention to the idea or theory. They learn what they personally value. They are comfortable with independent learning, but enjoys talking ideas with others. Need to focus on one thing at a time.

These two kinds of descriptions are only guides to identifying your learning style preference. There are many other assessment tools that help identify how you learn best. To get a clearer picture of how you learn you need to practise with several of them.

My best guess about my learning style: \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you know your learning style, how does it help you?

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Do you think this knowledge could help you decide on the kind of work that you would enjoy doing? Why or why not?

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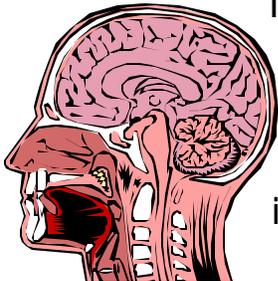
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If you have access to the Internet, there is a program that you can download and complete. It will give you information on how your brain works. Remember that all of these kinds of assessments are for information and insights.

<http://www.algonqinc.on.ca/staff/strachn/braintest.htm>

Go back to the chart on page 3. Under attribute, did you write your learning style or preference?

# Skills, Skills and More Skills!

There are two types of skills that we all have

- Job-related Skills
- Transferable Skills

## Job-related Skills

These are the ones we think of first. They are related to specific jobs.

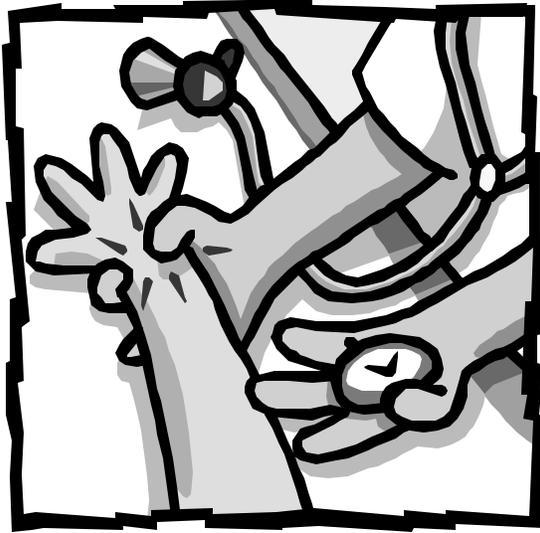
In order to choose a path to employment, we need to get a picture of what skills we already have acquired and the tools or equipment that we know how to use.

### Example 1

Many of us have worked in a fast food restaurant. One job could be short order cook. Job responsibilities include things like cooking and serving food, putting away supplies, keeping our work area clean (meeting legal, health and organizational standards), inventory control, filling machines, training or supervising others. Tools used include things such as calculator, deep fryer, ovens, ice cream machines, cash register, bar code scanner etc.



## Example 2



Some of us have experience in one of the medical professions. A patient care worker may be responsible for taking food orders and delivering meals, cleaning rooms, making sure that there are enough supplies, talking to patients and their families. Tools used would include a computerized inventory system, thermometer, blood pressure monitor, telephone or call system. Workers may have to have

specialized skills training.

You and your classmates may be able to add more details to these descriptions. Think about these two kinds of jobs. Analyze the skills and tools using the categories on the page 10. There is a blank diagram on page 11 that you can make copies of to use with this activity. You will want to use the diagram on page 11 to help you analyze your own work experience!

Notes

# Job-Related Skills

## Data

- research, find things out
- organize info
- record factual info (coding, time cards, measure, data reports)
- work with financial information (handle money, budgets, payroll)

## People

- communicate
- help others
- manage, supervise
- participate in teams
- follow instructions
- give customer service
- use telephone skills
- deal with the public
- negotiate
- manage conflict

## Ideas

- solve problem
- make adjustments to increase productivity

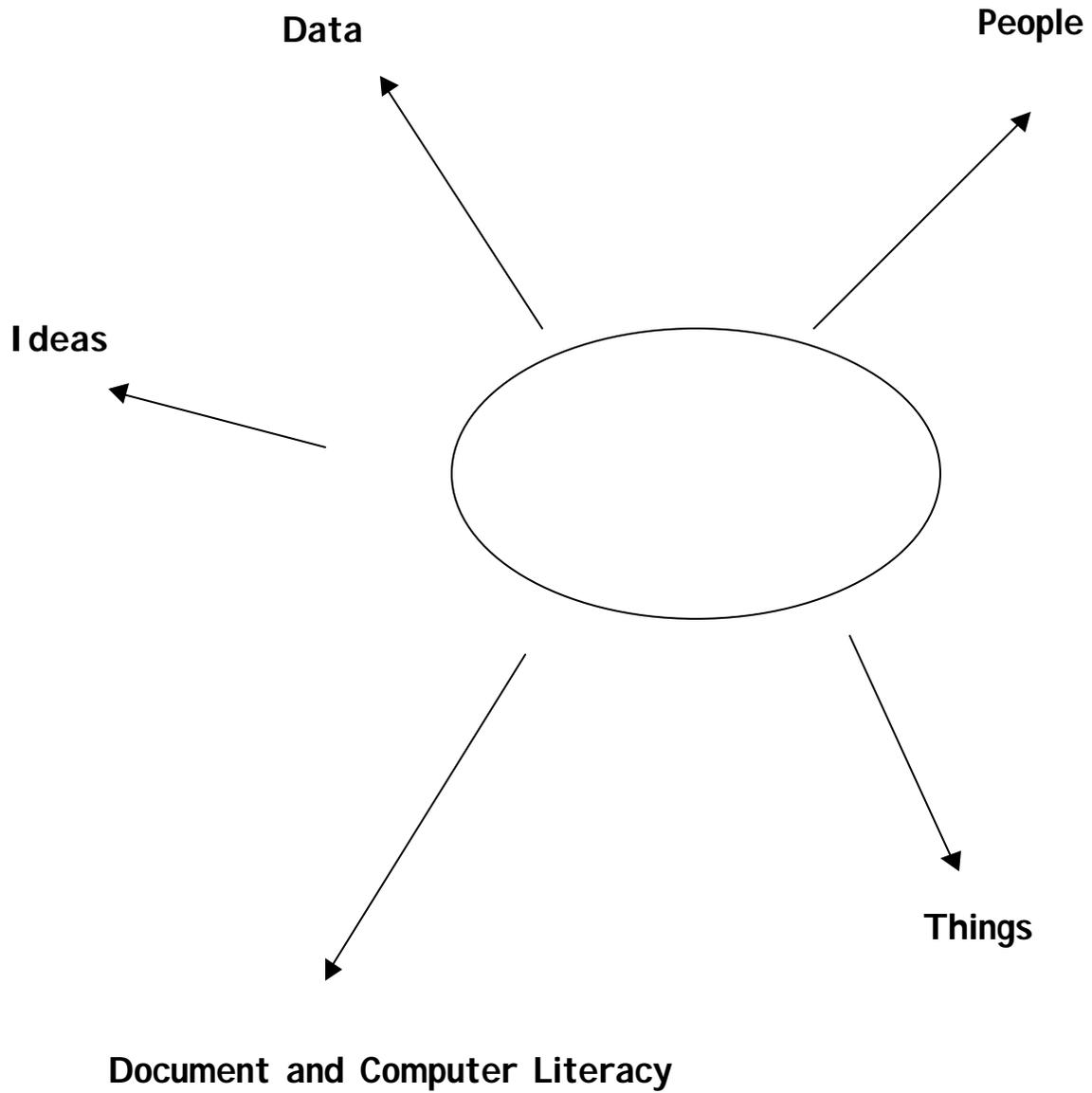
## Things

- work with equipment
- use hand tools
- use information technology

## Document and Computer Literacy

- read production sheets, order forms, packing slips
- write notes, fill in forms

# Job-Related Skills



Now that we have practised analyzing generally, let's take a really close look at our past and current work experience. Use the chart on page 11 and analyze each job that you have had. Make a list of all the jobs you have ever had. Describe in point form the tasks and/or responsibilities you had. Then list all the kinds of equipment you used. Remember that the more you analyze, the more data you will have to work with.

Job-related Skill	Job 1	Job 2	Job3
Data			
People			
I deas			
Things			
Document and Computer Literacy			

When you have finished organizing all of the job data, refer back to your chart on page 3. Are there additions you would like to make now?

Don't worry if you have not had extensive job experience. As an adult you have had lots of other experiences. We will discuss your interests and hobbies a bit later.

*Things I'm not sure about...*

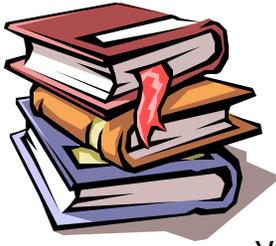
Keep track of any questions you need to ask or vocabulary that is new. Bring your questions up in class.

**Now that I know what I can do, what words can I use to describe what I do?**

The most powerful words are action words or verbs. Most books on writing good résumés will have lists of these verbs. You already know lots of these action words. Brainstorm with a friend or colleague and develop a list of words you could use when describing your skills. Organize the words in the same way that you did when you organized the examples of skills you already have. An example is included for each of these categories. A few of the possible categories are done for you. What others could there be?

<b>Customer Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ listened</li> </ul>	<b>Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ spoke</li> </ul>	<b>Document Literacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ wrote</li> </ul>	<b>Financial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ balanced</li> </ul>	<b>Helping</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ assisted</li> </ul>
<b>Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ clarified</li> </ul>	<b>Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ assigned</li> </ul>	<b>Technical</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ operated</li> </ul>	<b>Details</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ inspected</li> </ul>	<b>Ideas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ created</li> </ul>

***Note: all of these action words are in the past tense. This is the form most commonly used in résumés.***



If you get stuck and can't think of any more words, get a good résumé book from your library. There will be lots of words to choose from. Remember too that you may not be able to fill in some of the skill categories. Concentrate on the skill areas where you have experience.

Now that you have collected the language, it's time to practise. Choose at least ten words and using each one, write a complete sentence that describes your ability. The person reading the sentence (the audience) will be a prospective employer.

#### Examples

As a team leader, I **coordinated** the shift schedule with production demands.

*This is an action word describing a management skill.*

I **recorded** data on patient record cards.

*This is an action word describing a document literacy skill.*

#### Now it is your turn:

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

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pat yourself on the back! That was a lot of work. Are you surprised at the skills that you were able to pull out of your job experience?



Don't forget to go back to page 3 and fill in new information in the first column.

# Transferable Skills

These are the skills that can be used from job to job.

Let's go back to the two examples we used earlier: the short order cook and the patient care worker. If we look at the skills listed in the examples, we can decide which have a transferable part to them.

Short Order Cook	Transferable Skill	Patient Care Worker
	<b>communicate</b>	taking food order
cooking	<b>follow</b> procedures	
serving food	<b>customer service</b>	serving food
putting away supplies	<b>organize</b>	
cleaning		cleaning
meet legal standards	willingness to <b>learn</b>	specialized training
meet organizational standards	willingness to <b>learn</b>	specialized training
controlling inventory	<b>schedule</b> delivery	enough supplies
filling machines	<b>follow</b> procedures	
training	<b>communication</b>	
supervising	<b>communication</b>	
	<b>customer service</b>	talking to patients and families
fryer, oven	<b>operate</b> equipment	
cash register	<b>operate</b> equipment	
bar code scanner	<b>use digital</b> tools	computerized inventory system
	understand <b>systems</b>	telephone/call system
	<b>specialized knowledge</b>	medical equipment

Work with others and brainstorm a list of words that you think would be useful in describing your transferable skills.

Here are a few to get you started:

- analyze
- assemble
- consult
- design
- drive
- file
- find
- interpret
- manage
- plan
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Hint: You might want to go back to page 12 where you categorized your skills.

## What are Employers Looking For?

Summarizing the information currently available, we get this list:

- ✓ willingness to learn
- ✓ basic skills (reading, writing and math)
- ✓ listening and oral communication
- ✓ creative thinking and problem solving
- ✓ self-esteem and goal setting
- ✓ team skills (working with others)

# Making Connections

Research an employer you would like to work for. Find out:

1. what they look for when hiring a new employee
2. the skills they want new employees to already have
3. if training is offered to new employees (it may be called orientation)

This is a research project that will take some time. You will need to decide how to find the information you need. You and your class may choose to do this activity using one or more research tools:

- internet search
- libraries
- newspapers
- government publications
- career books
- telephone calls
- business directories
- face to face interviews
- guest speakers

Can you think of other research methods you might use?

Important questions to ask yourself...

Do you have some of the skills?

If there are some you don't have, how you would get them?

# What do you Enjoy? Or, Life After Work!

Sometimes when we look at the things we enjoy doing in our personal life, we get an idea of what we might enjoy doing for a living. Fill in the following Interest Inventory. Then list the skills that you use when you participate in the activity.

Interest Inventory	Skills
I am a committee member at my church/temple/ mosque ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ organize</li> <li>✓ run meetings</li> <li>✓ present ideas</li> <li>✓ manage conflict</li> <li>✓ negotiate</li> <li>✓ ...</li> </ul>

Notes about my interests...

Family

Religion

Hobbies

Volunteering

School

Sports

Other memberships

Interest Inventory	Skills
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

Don't forget to go back to page 3 and fill in the Interest column.

Remember that Interests are the things we like to do. It could be a sport, a hobby, a craft, reading, writing, carpentry, cleaning the house or going to the movies!

You can use words like the following to identify interests:

- I like...
- I really enjoy...
- I am really interested in learning about...
- I wish I could...
- On weekends, I ...



Complete the following sentences:

If I had a million dollars I would \_\_\_\_\_

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I wish that I could \_\_\_\_\_

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*Do your answers give you a clue to your interests?*

If you have access to the Internet, you will find excellent information about careers at <http://worksearch.gc.ca> . This is a site of Human Resource Development Canada.

# Values

What are values? Work with a group and brainstorm a definition or a list of values.

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Hint: Think about things that you strongly believe in.

Can we organize these beliefs or values in any way? The following chart may help.

Spiritual	Work	Family	Political	Cultural	Ethical

A famous poet expressed his values in the following poem:

## Success

Ralph Waldo Emerson

How do you measure success?  
To laugh often and much,  
To win the respect of intelligent people  
and the affection of children,  
To earn the appreciation of honest critics and  
endure the betrayal of false friends,  
To appreciate beauty, To find the best in others,  
To leave the world a bit better, whether by  
A healthy child, a redeemed social condition,  
Or a job well done,  
To know even one other life has breathed  
Because you lived,  
This is to have succeeded.

What do you think this poet values? What are the things he believes in most?

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Are the ideas the same or different from your list?

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Do you see any that you wish to add to your list?

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# Work Ethic

This is an expression that is heard quite often in Canada. We are considered to have a strong work ethic. In other words we place a high value on work, working hard and earning our keep.

The language we use to communicate expresses this. Look at the following list of expressions. Decide on what value or belief the words are expressing. What do the expressions mean? Two are done for you. You may want to ask your instructor for help with the vocabulary.

Expression	Meaning
Whistle while you work	work goes faster if you enjoy yourself
Many hands make light work	
First come, first served	
Another day, another dollar	
If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem	teamwork is good
Let's sleep on it and talk about it in the morning	
Success is a journey, not a destination	
I say jump, you say, how high	
We need a level playing field	
There is no I in team	



## Work Values ... Asking the right questions

Often, a workplace has a set of values. This can be described in an organization's mission statement or observed in the way that it does business. When we look for work, we look for a "fit" between our values and the workplace's values. Ask yourself these questions to help you find the fit you are looking for.

1. Do you need a lot of money or just enough?
2. Do you like to work alone?
3. Can you travel?
4. Are you a self-starter?
5. Do you like a city or rural environment?
6. Do you like supervision?
7. Can you work overtime?
8. Do you like to set your own hours or work the standard eight hours?
9. Do you prefer to do a variety of things?
10. Do you want to work for a company or yourself?

Something to think about...



Are you a clock watcher? Do you place a high value on spending time with your family? Would it be a wise choice to accept a position with a company that demands a lot of over-time?

# Attributes

The last area to consider when we are analyzing ourselves is attributes. Attributes are qualities or characteristics related to our personalities.

What words do you generally use to describe yourself? Are you shy, hard-working, wise, reliable? These are words that describe our personality. We need to be honest about these, because our personality can affect our success in employment.

If you have access to the Internet, go to <http://www.emode.com/> and click on personality tests. Just remember that these are for information and fun. If you don't have Internet access, your local library will help you find books and articles that will help you describe your attributes. Many libraries now have Internet available to members.



## Job Ad

Black Cat Café is looking for a highly motivated, ambitious, self-starter to train as night manager. The person must keep accurate records, be organized, outgoing and flexible. We expect the person to work hard, solve problems and be confident enough to supervise a staff of 7. The individual must have strong oral and written skills. They must be familiar with computerized inventory systems. Experience in a food service industry preferred.

Analyze this ad and fill in the following chart. What are the skills, knowledge or attributes described in the ad?

Skills	Knowledge	Attributes

It is important that you are able to describe your positive attributes. It is equally important that you are able to give an example.

Example:	<p>Organized      I am responsible for gathering the information that goes in the newsletter at my daughter's school. I work full time, I have three children and I run a house. I have to be well-organized in all parts of my life: personal, work and volunteer.</p>
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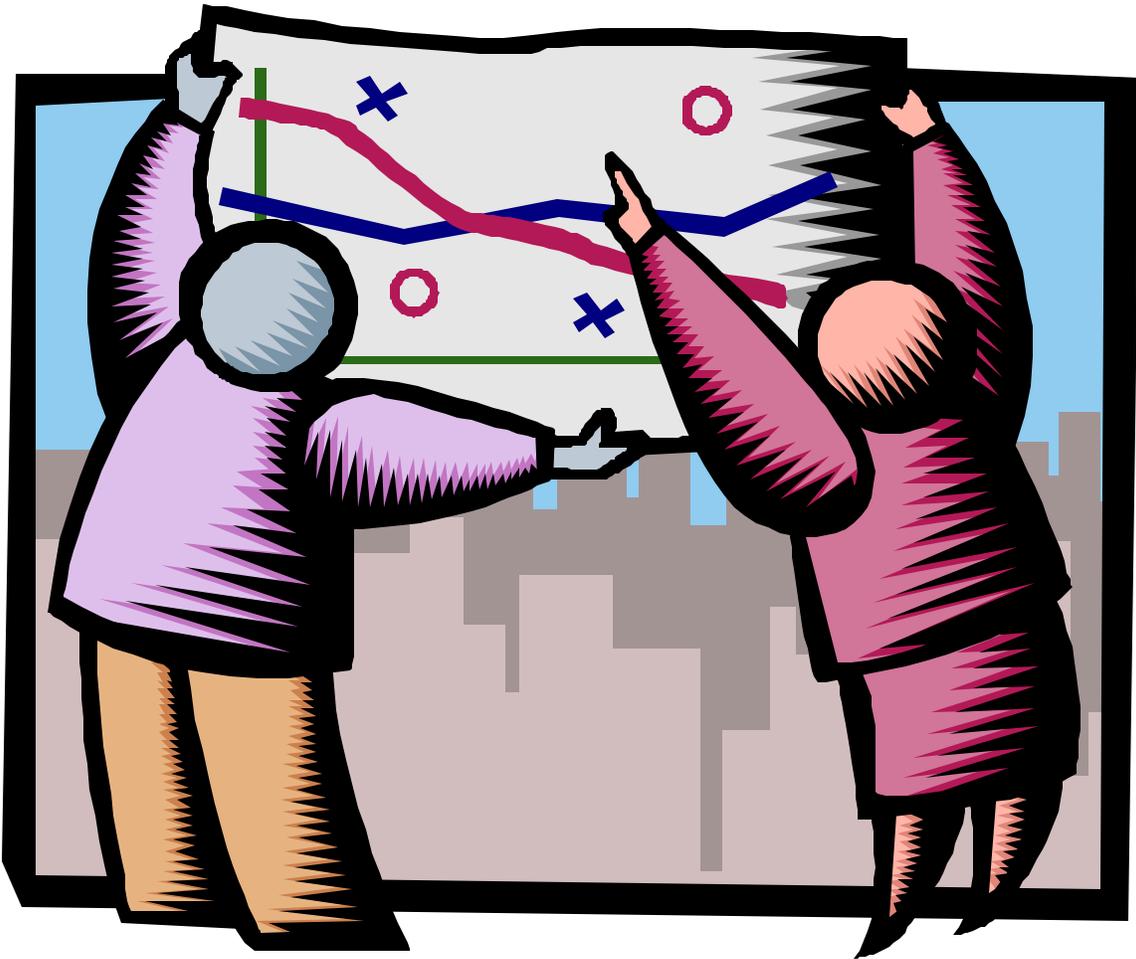
Think of 10 of your most positive attributes. Think of an example that you could share with an interviewer looking for those attributes in an individual.



Attribute	Example
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Don't forget to go back to page 3 and make sure you have listed these attributes.

Now that you have a clearer picture of your past and present, we are going to suggest you use that information to get to where you want to be.



*In order to arrive at a goal, we need to identify the steps or pathway to get there!*

# Setting Goals

What is a goal? Take a look at the statements below. Which ones are goals? Circle the ones that you think state a goal.



A. My goal is to travel.

B. My goal is to enroll in a Web design course this September.

C. My goal is to get fit by consistently exercising 3 times a week.

D. My goal is to get a job.

E. My goal is to become Prime Minister of Canada.

F. My goal is to get a job in the hospitality industry by the time I am 32 years old.

G. My goal is to volunteer at my local hospital once a week to gain experience.

H. My goal is to improve my health.

I. My goal is to read one work-related book or magazine every month.

J. My goal is to learn about computers.

K. My goal is to stop smoking.

L. My goal is to meet more people.

M. My goal is to take driving lessons and get my license in 15 months.

N. My goal is to be more organized.

O. My goal is to save \$20/month to put towards a computer course.

Check the next page for the answers!

Why aren't the others considered to be goals? A goal can be measured. It is something that is achievable. A goal is realistic. Let's think about each statement.

A. My goal is to travel.

**Where do you want to travel? When do you want to travel?**

D. My goal is to get a job.

**What kind of job? When could you start? What skills do you need?**

When we set goals, we want to make sure we don't make these kinds of mistakes!

- Goals A, D, H, J, K, and N are far **too general**. There aren't enough clear details
- Goals A, D, H, J, K, and N are also **not measurable**.
- Goal N **lacks action**
- Goals E and L are **not realistic** if we think about ability and time
- Goals A, D, H, J, K, and N **lack a time frame**

Now it's your turn. Try to write clarification questions below for each statement from the previous page that is not a clear goal. Can you help someone focus on a goal by asking questions? Share your ideas with another learner or your instructor.

D. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

H. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

J. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

N. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

L. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Let's take a look at how we can apply what we know about goal setting to a learning situation. Here's a goal as it relates to learning.

Sample Learning Goal



**In order to get more Canadian work experience, I will volunteer 6 hours per week at my local hospital for a 3-month period. To make sure it is a valuable experience, I will record my time spent, new terms and meanings, as well as my experiences in a journal. I will also request a performance evaluation at the end of the 3-month period.**

This learning goal has all the aspects it needs to be an effective goal.

Does it have clearly stated details?

**get more Canadian work experience**

Is it measurable?

**volunteer at my local hospital, keep a journal, ask for a performance evaluation**

Does it have action words?

**volunteer, record, request**

Is it realistic?

**I will be able to find 6 hours in a week to volunteer**

Is there a time frame?

**3 months**

Now, it's your turn! Write a goal as it relates to your learning situation. Make sure you include all of the aspects above needed to make it an effective goal. Share your goal with another learner or your instructor.

What is my Learning Goal?

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Now that you have written down your learning goal, your next step is to identify what you need to reach your goal. This is where you need to use your imagination. It's important to identify **everything** that you will need to make your goal a reality.

Let's go back and take another look at the **Sample Learning Goal**. Check all the elements that you think this learner will need in order to make the goal a reality.

- find a local hospital that needs volunteers
- be flexible in volunteering where and when the hospital requests
- be able to travel to and from the hospital
- be able to pay for transportation, if necessary
- have good aural comprehension skills (you are a good listener)
- find out who to contact at the hospital with regards to volunteering
- be able to write point form notes
- have good oral communication skills (you are a good communicator)
- be able to set aside 6 hours per week for 3 months
- have basic knowledge about how a hospital functions

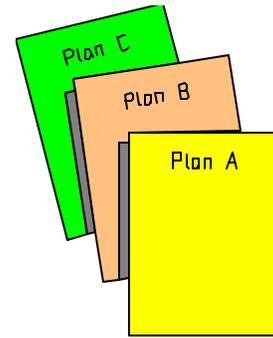
How many boxes did you check off? The answers are on the next page!

Answer: You should have checked all the boxes! In order to achieve his or her goal, this learner will need all of these elements.

Now, let's think about **your** learning goal. Make a list of all the elements that you will need to reach your goal. You may want to work with another learner who has a similar goal to help get your ideas flowing! You could also show your work to your instructor or a volunteer to get feedback.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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- \_\_\_\_\_

# Action Plans



Now that you have stated your goal and know what elements are needed to reach it, you need to do a little more work.

You need to **organize** the steps to achieve your goal into an action plan. An action plan includes the following:

- the **resources** that are needed to achieve your goal
- the **timing** that is needed to achieve your goal
- the **people** who are needed to help you achieve your goal
- the **tasks or jobs** you have to do to achieve your goal

Let's think about our **Sample Learning Goal**.

What resources are needed?

**a local hospital that requires volunteers, notebook, pen, money**

What timing is needed?

**set aside 6 hours per week for 3 months**

Are any people needed to help?

**family members and friends need to be able to cope without my help for 6 hours every week**

What are the tasks?

**Find a local hospital, contact the right person in charge of volunteers, determine travel arrangements, set up volunteering schedule with the hospital**

The most important part of an action plan is to make sure that you do things in a **logical order**. That is, things must make sense. If the learner in the example can't find a local hospital that needs volunteers, then he or she doesn't need to ask family and friends for their help. The learner's first job should be to find a local hospital that wants and needs volunteers.

Let's go back once again and look at the elements needed to achieve our **Sample Learning Goal**. This time, we will **prioritize** or put in order of importance each element. You should ask yourself, "What does the person need to have or do in order to move on?" Number each statement from **1 to 10**. 1 is the first thing that the learner needs to do or have. 10 is the last thing needed.

\_\_\_ find a local hospital that needs volunteers

\_\_\_ be flexible in volunteering where and when the hospital requests

\_\_\_ be able to travel to and from the hospital

\_\_\_ be able to pay for transportation, if necessary

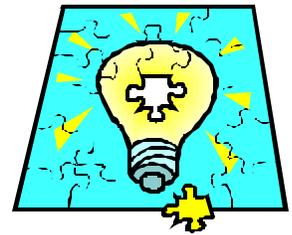
\_\_\_ have good aural comprehension skills

\_\_\_ find out who to contact at the hospital about volunteering

\_\_\_ be able to write point form notes

\_\_\_ have good oral communication skills

\_\_\_ be able to set aside 6 hours per week for 3 months



\_\_\_ have basic knowledge about how a hospital functions  
Compare your answers to those of your fellow learners. There may be more than one way to organize these items. The following probably makes the most sense:

2 - 6 - 4 - 5 - 8 - 3 - 10 - 7 - 1 - 9

Now it's your chance to practise! Go back and take another look at the list of elements that you will need to achieve **your own learning goal**. Prioritize your list into an action plan! Ask yourself, **"What do I need to do first (second, third, and so on)?"**

As you do this job, you may want to eliminate one or more of the elements on your list. Don't worry! It's natural that after you have thought about your goal, you may want to make some small changes to your list.

Write your prioritized action plan below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have everything organized, ask yourself the following important question:

**Is there anything stopping me from doing the first (or second, third, etc.) step?**

For each of the steps in your action plan, list anything that is “in your way”. These are the things you **deal with and remove**. Only after you have done so, will you be able to successfully reach your goal!

So, for each step in your action plan, list anything that will stop you from completing the action. Think carefully! Share your thoughts with another learner, a volunteer, a family member, or your instructor. It’s always a good idea to get feedback from others!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, work at dealing with and getting rid of the things on your list that are stopping you from taking action and reaching your goal. After you have done that, you will be able to follow your prioritized list. Soon, you will have met your goal and will be enjoying a great feeling of accomplishment and success!

Here's another interesting question for you...

### **How often should you go through the process of goal-setting and action planning?**

Read the situations described below. Check the ones to which you could apply the process of goal-setting and action planning.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I will run 5 km this afternoon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am looking for a new job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am attending a team meeting next Monday.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am reading a newspaper article.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am trying to lose weight.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am saving money for a down payment on a car.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am graduating from school next month.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am going grocery shopping tonight.

Check the next page for the answers!

You could apply the goal setting and action planning process to **all** of the situations! Let's look at each one a little more closely.

I will run 5 km this afternoon.

In this situation, your goal could be to run the 5 km in 25 minutes instead of your usual 26 minutes. Then, you would decide what actions to take to make this goal a reality.

I am looking for a new job.

I am sure that you checked off this statement! It is clear that this is a situation that requires goal setting and action planning.

I am attending a team meeting next Monday.

In this case, your goal could be to make one suggestion during the team meeting (since you have never made a suggestion before!). Of course, you would think about what you need to do in order to make this happen.

I am reading a newspaper article.

You may decide to set a goal of finding and recording 5 new words and/or phrases from the article. Again, you would set out an action plan to meet that goal.

I am trying to lose weight.

Many people make a goal to lose weight. Here, you might set your goal at 5 kg.

I am saving money for a down payment on a car.

Here's another situation that is well suited to goal setting and action planning. You could set your goal at \$2,000 to be saved in 12 months.

I am graduating from school next month.

In this case, your goal might be to get a job in a related field. Again, you would develop an action plan to meet that goal.

I am going grocery shopping tonight.

Even this is a goal setting situation. You could decide to buy only foods that are low in salt. Your action plan may include taking time to read the labels.

Our last activity showed us that it's important to remember that you can set goals and come up with action plans all the time! Setting goals should not only take place when a change is upon you. Many people think that they need to set goals only when they are about to graduate from school or when they want to find a job. The more that you use the goal setting and action planning process, the easier it will become. In addition, you will improve the quality of your life because you will be **constantly** setting new goals. As the saying goes, "The sky is the limit!"



# Learning a Living

A company in Toronto uses the expression "Learning a Living" as part of its mission statement. It is printed on t-shirts and baseball hats. What do you think it means?

If you guessed that the company believes in a "learning culture" and that it spends time and money training all of its employees, you would be right.

Remember the list (page 18) of things that employers are looking for? One of these is "willingness to learn". If we look at the language used in today's workplace, we see "continuous learning". What does this tell us?

**We are all expected to be lifelong learners!**

What does this mean? Are you a lifelong learner? What is the last thing that you learned? Why did you learn it? Did you learn it informally or formally? The thing to remember is that learning is ongoing. It takes place where you are and it continues from birth until death.

Our world is continuously changing. It has been estimated that more information has been produced in the last 30 years than in the previous 5,000 years. We can expect any area of knowledge to double every 5 years.



Take a moment to think. How will this impact on you personally?

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There may opportunities in your life for both formal and informal learning. Brainstorm with a partner or group and see if you can identify some examples from your own experience. Some examples have been done to get you started.

	Formal	Informal
Personal life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>finished ___years of school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>learned to cook</li></ul>
Work life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>took a forklift driver course</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>watched how the others behaved in the lunchroom</li></ul>

# Lifelong Learners

It is interesting to note that in this "information world", the fastest growing group of Internet users are the senior citizens in our society. Why do you think that seniors are getting on line in record numbers?

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A common expression in North America says "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Do you agree with this? Do you think a lifelong learner would agree with this?



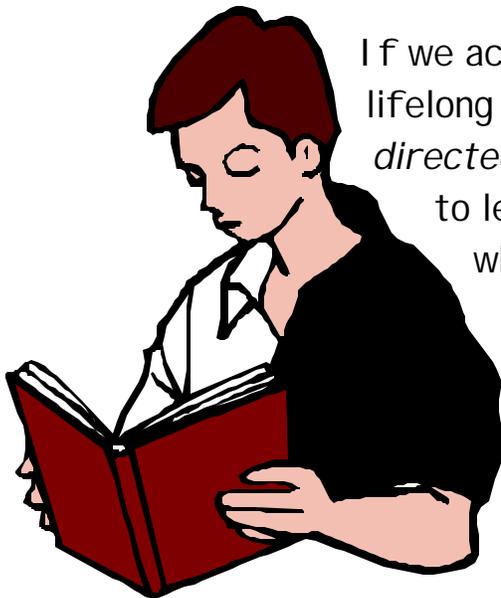
The formal learning we do is usually more structured and often includes a cost of time or money or both. Informal learning is a part of our day-to-day lives. Look at the following lists. Are there things that you can add to these lists? Or are there items that you now want to add to the chart on page 46?

Formal activities could include:

- taking a certificate course
- taking a general interest course
- completing a distance education course or an on-line course
- attending a workshop
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

Informal activities could include:

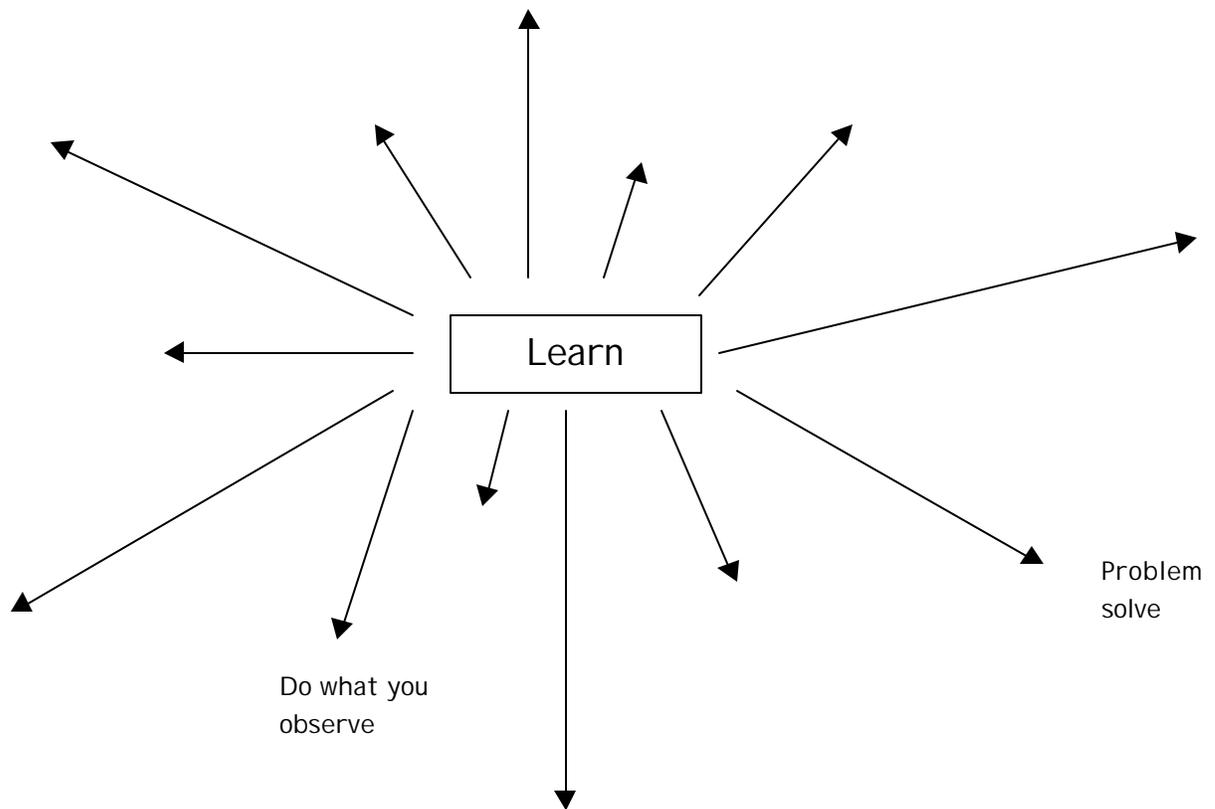
- doing self-study: articles, books
- presenting at or attending conferences, conventions, tradeshow, meetings or workshops
- talking to, observing, working with colleagues
- attending meetings (professional)
- having a mentor
- training others
- preparing reports
- publishing
- suggesting an idea for change
- 
- 
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- 



If we acknowledge that we are or need to be, lifelong learners, we need to improve our *self-directed learning* skills. These are the skills we use to learn. There are lots of skills that we use when we learn. Use the chart on the next page as you identify some of those skills.

# How We Learn

Brainstorm the skills we use when we are learning. Use this chart to record your ideas. Two ideas are already recorded.



Were you able to come up with lots of ideas? Share your ideas with others. Are these things that you want to add to your notes?

Think back to the work you did on transferable skills. Do you think transferable skills are the same skills we use in the learning process? Some of them certainly are. Sometimes, transferable skills are called self-management or self-direction skills. Look at the following chart. Decide which of the skill areas you use in your personal life, which ones you would use in a job and which ones you'd use when learning. Write an example in the blank space. You might want to work with a partner to complete this task.

	Personal Life	Work Life	Learning
<b>Goals</b> Do you set them formally or informally?			
<b>Time</b> Do you use it efficiently? Do you keep track of it?			
<b>Problem Solving</b> Do you collect, analyze and evaluate information?			
<b>Self-awareness</b> Are you aware of how your attitudes and behaviour affect others?			
<b>Multi-tasking</b> Do you use strategies to manage tasks and responsibilities?			
<b>Change Management</b> Do you deal effectively with change, conflict and stress?			
<b>Relationships</b> Do you interact well with others?			
<b>Learning &amp; Thinking</b> Do you ask questions when you need to know something? Do you understand concepts like cause and effect?			

If you were able to fill in every space, congratulations! These are all skills that we use in all parts of our lives.

When we direct our own learning we need to define:

- ✓ what we need or want to learn (these are not always the same thing: I **need** to learn to use a computer. I **want** to learn how to skydive.)
- ✓ how we want to do our learning (do we take a course, ask a friend, use trial and error?...what resources or materials will we need?)
- ✓ when we will do it (in the evening, week-end, at work, on-line at home, or in a full-time program)

Does this sound familiar? It is just another way of talking about setting goals or writing action plans? And you just finished looking at that process.

Notes to Myself...

# Just Do It!

The manufacturer of a well-known brand of running shoes uses the phrase *Just Do It* in all of their advertising. This is an excellent motivational phrase for athletes. Does it work for you? Why or why not?

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Sometimes, we have excuses for not taking responsibility for our own learning, at least the more formal ways of learning. The following list of *I can't because* statements may contain some familiar reasons for not *just doing it*. Think of a positive response you could give in response to each negative statement. You might want to work with a partner or a small group. Remember two heads are better than one when it comes to creative thinking!

## **I can't because**

1. it costs too much money. 

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2. I don't have time. 

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3. I can't afford a babysitter. 

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4. I don't know what course to take. 

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5. why should I? 

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6. I'm not interested. 

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Are there other excuses you've used or heard other people use? Add them to the list and come up with a strategy for dealing with the barrier.

If learning is a lifelong journey, how do we get started? The good news is ...we already have! We just need a way of recognising the learning that we do both formally and informally.



We can track our learning. **Learning Portfolios** are an excellent way of doing this. We can keep in one place any certificate, letter of completion, letters of commendation, etc. By managing our time, (remember this is a transferable or learning skill!) and writing daily in a learning log we can keep track of what we know, what we can do and how we learned to do it.

## Why do it?

It reminds us of things before we go into a job interview or prepare to fill in an application form. It increases our self-confidence as our list of skills grows. It gives us information to work with when we need to figure out what transferable skills we have. It helps us identify our preferred learning styles. Start your journey now. The knowledge and skills you have practised while working through the activities in this workbook will give you lots to think about along the way.



# Learning Log

Date	Review of the day's activities	I learned... I now Know...

# Learning Log

Date	Review of the day's activities	I learned... I now Know...

