



Employment Skills

QLWG
Individual Life Skills
Unit 19

QLWG Skills for Life

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QLWG Skills for Life Series

THEMATIC UNITS

Competency-based learning meets the needs of all learners. It is important to keep in mind, however, that all learners are different. In order to address the needs and interests of all learners, units have been divided by *Essential Life Skills* and *Individual Life Skills*.

Essential Life Skills are important for everyone, while *Individual Life Skills* address the needs and interests of different learners. Once learners have completed the “Essential” units, they may choose a unit that is applicable to their interests and lifestyle.

Essential Life Skills Units	Individual Life Skills Units
1. Orientation Unit	18. My Hobbies and Leisure Time
2. Around the Home	19. Employment Skills
3. My Community	20. On the Job
4. Being a Canadian Citizen	21. My Family
5. What’s for Dinner?	22. Entertainment (music and film)
6. Managing My Money	23. Fitness and the Great Outdoors
7. Smart Shopping	24. Getting Around (travel and transportation)
8. My Health	25. Career Exploration
9. All About Me	26. Getting My Driver’s Licence
10. Communication Skills	27. Learning in Quebec
11. Living in Quebec	28. Living Green
12. Strategies for Reading	29. Handling Legal Concerns
13. Strategies for Writing	30. The Retirement Years
14. Strategies for Grammar	
15. Strategies for Numbers 1: Understanding Numbers	
16. Strategies for Numbers 2: Adding & Subtracting	
17. Strategies for Numbers 3: Multiplying, Dividing & Fractions	

QLWG *Skills for Life Series*

Employment Skills Unit # 19

Table of Contents

	page
WELCOME LEARNER!.....	(i)
Introduction.....	1
What I Already Know.....	2
Getting Started: My Interests and Skills.....	3
My Personality.....	10
The Job Search.....	11
How are you doing?.....	17
My Resumé.....	18
My Cover Letter.....	25
Sending Your Resumé and Cover Letter in the Mail.....	31
Preparing for an Interview.....	32
Selling Yourself at an Interview.....	34
Employment Skills and Me.....	37
What I Know Now.....	40
Employment Skills: Learning Checklist	41

WELCOME LEARNER!

This workbook is meant to help you develop important life skills. As you work on different activities, try to see the purpose in what you are doing, stay motivated and enjoy!

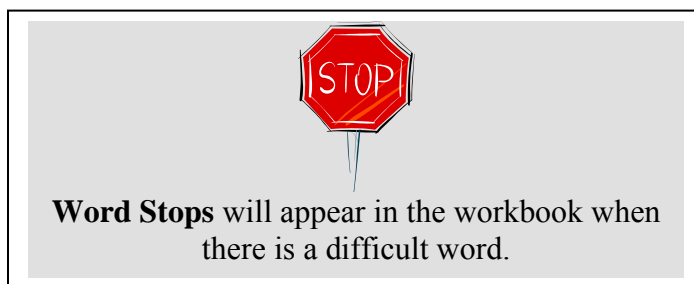
Things to Look for:

Checkpoints

You will finish every unit of study with a Checkpoint (in blue). Once you have completed the Checkpoint questionnaire, you will send this document to your distance education tutor. Make sure you fill in the **date, your name, your phone number** and the **distance education tutor's name** on the cover of this document.

Word Stops

Word Stops will explain more difficult words. Look for words in bold print (example: **bold**). A **Word Stop** will follow to tell you what that word means.



If you do not understand, follow these steps:

1. Look at titles and pictures. Do they tell you anything?
2. Try to find the general meaning.
3. Look for Word Stops.
4. Use a dictionary.
5. If you still do not understand, contact your distance education tutor.

Before you contact your distance education tutor:

1. Prepare your questions. What do you want to ask?
2. Give the page number and section title to your tutor so they know where you are.



“Act the part; walk and talk exactly as if you were already the person you want to be.”

~Brian Tracy

Employment Skills

"Your biggest opportunity probably lies under your own feet, in your current job, industry, education, experience or interests." ~Brian Tracy



Introduction:

Employment skills are important for everybody. Maybe you want to start a new career or perhaps you're looking for volunteer or part-time work. Whatever you do in life, you should know how to sell your strengths and skills. This unit will help you to promote yourself to an employer.

In this unit, you will:

- identify your interests, skills, and personality traits.
- write a resumé.
- write a cover letter.
- find out how and where to look for work.
- practice looking for work.
- prepare for a job interview.

What I Already Know



Explain what you know about skills to find employment. This list will help you to keep track of what you learn.

Getting Started: My Interests and Skills

Work can be a big part of your life – this is why you want to do something that makes you happy. A happy worker is usually a better worker. Employers want to see not only what you *can* do, but what you *like* to do as well. In this section, you will identify your interests and skills.



My Interests

Your interests are what you like to do. Hobbies and leisure activities are part of your interests.

ACTIVITY:

Make a list of your interests.

STEP 1:

Look over the examples of different interests on the next page. Ask yourself which ones describe you. Add any missing skills to the list.

STEP 2:

Complete a list of your interests.

PURPOSE:

Knowing your interests will not only help you to see what you like to do, it will give you ideas of what to put on your resumé. It may also help you to know what to look for in a job.

Examples of different interests:

- Helping or caring for people
- Supervising others
- Volunteering
- Working outdoors
- Gardening
- Working with children/seniors
- Fixing cars
- Using tools or machinery
- Making things
- Drawing, painting or sculpting
- Working with animals
- Maintenance work
- Cooking
- Meeting new people
- Serving people
- Music
- Art
- Sports
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____



EXAMPLE: *I like to talk with people.*

My Interests (list)



My Skills

Now that you have identified your interests, you are ready to make a list of your skills. A skill is something that you *can do* or something that you have been *trained* to do.



Answer the following questions to help you identify your skills.

1. What can you do well?

2. What training have you had?

3. What skills did you use or develop in past jobs?

ACTIVITY:

Make a list of your skills.

STEP 1:

Look over the examples of different skills on the next page. Ask yourself which ones describe you. Add any other skills to the list.

STEP 2:

Complete a list of your skills.

PURPOSE:

Knowing your skills will help you to see what you do well. This will be an important part of your resumé.



Examples of different skills:

- Trained to be a ...
- Meeting new people
- Able to speak...
- Caring for children/seniors
- Working in construction
- Working in a factory
- Giving customer service
- Answering the telephone
- Greeting people
- Working in a busy place
- Computer training
- Filing and typing
- Working with a cash register
- Doing service repairs
- Handling complaints
- Doing auto mechanics
- Driving a truck, taxi or bus
- Thinking creatively
- Giving advice
- Analyzing data
- Finding information
- Listening to others
- Supporting others
- Training people
- Organizing work
- Creating new ideas
- Questioning others
- Handling long hours
- Serving others
- Motivating others
- Thinking logically
- Selling products
- Inspecting objects
- Making decisions
- Setting priorities
- Handling stress

"Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence."
~Unknown




EXAMPLE: *I can work with my hands.*

My Personality

Your personality is a part of you – it affects how you think and feel. It also affects how you work. Employers usually look for people who have these personality traits:

- **Optimistic**
- Respectful
- Honest
- Confident
- Open to change
- Open to learning
- **Flexible**
- Stable
- Helpful
- Loyal
- Good sense of humour
- Enjoy working with others



WORD STOP

1. **optimistic** (op-tuh-mis-tik): you see the bright side of things.
2. **flexible** (flek-suh-bul): you are easy to get along with.

Describe your personality. List your best traits.



The Job Search



It is not always easy to know how and where to look for work. Luckily, there are many people who can help you if you are looking for work.

Who Can Help?

1. Quebec Employment Centres and Human Resources Canada

There are many public services out there to help you find work. Some services will even help you to get the skills and training that you need for certain jobs. To find out more about these services, you can:

1. call and speak to an advisor.
2. visit your local office and ask about jobs in your area.
3. check the notice boards or the electronic job bank.

2. Volunteer Groups

Volunteering is a great way to make contacts. It may even lead to paid work! Another bonus is that it can help you to find out what you like or dislike doing.

3. People You Know

Many people find work through word of mouth. Let people know if you are looking for work. Speak to:

- family
- friends
- neighbours
- people you have worked or studied with

Where Can I Look?

1. Classified Ads

Many companies put an ad in a section of the newspaper when they need a worker. You can find job offers under these headings:

- Help Wanted
- Domestic Help Wanted
- Employment



2. Business Windows

Some businesses will announce that they are looking for a new worker by putting a “Help Wanted” sign in their window. Keep your eye out for such signs.

3. Bulletin Boards

Many employers will announce their need for a worker on local bulletin boards. Check:

- local community centres
- YMCA/YWCA
- drugstores
- local cafés
- adult education centres

4. Online

Many jobs are posted online. Check out the websites below to find work in your area and beyond.

Canadian Job Bank:

http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/Intro_en.aspx

Emploi-Québec

<http://www.emploiquebec.net/anglais/index.htm>

Job Post Canada

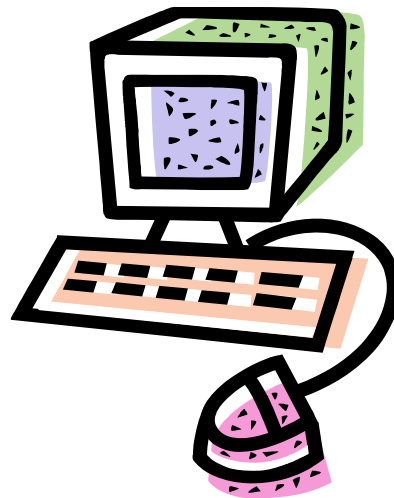
<http://www.jobpostcanada.com>

Wow Jobs

<http://www.wowjobs.ca>

Eluta.ca

<http://www.eluta.ca>



ACTIVITY:

Find out about three different job openings in your area. Look for jobs that you would like to do.

STEP 1:

Now that you know where to look for jobs, you are ready to do an actual job search. To begin, decide how you will do your search. Who can you talk to? Where can you look?

STEP 2:

Make a list of at least three different job openings in your area.

STEP 3:

Explain how and where you found out about these jobs.

**PURPOSE:**

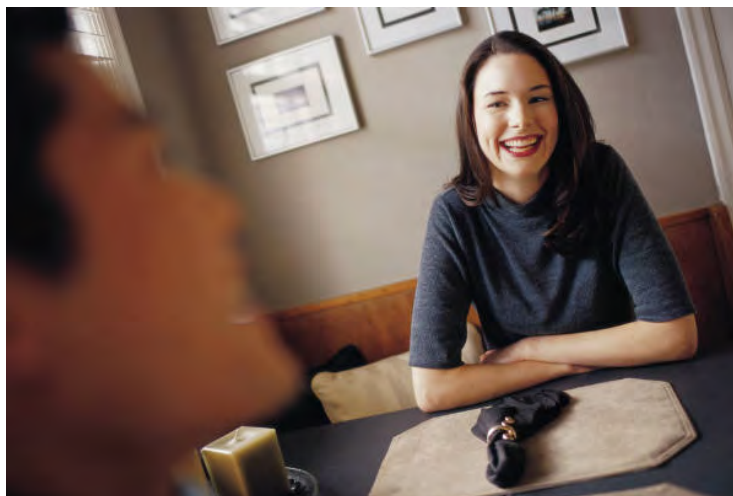
It is *always* a good idea to know how to do a job search. The skills involved in doing a job search will help you prepare for different possibilities of today and tomorrow.

"No one can help you in holding a good job except Old Man You."
~Edgar Watson Howe

JOB SEARCH WARM-UP:

1. I will talk to the following people to find out about jobs in my area:

2. I will look in the following places to find out about jobs in my area:



My Job Search:

Job Opening	Name of Business
1.	
2.	
3.	

How I found out about these job openings:



How are you doing?



Complete the questionnaire to keep track of your learning.

1. Have you completed all reading and activities to this point? (*Circle your answer.*)

Yes

No

2. If you answered “No”, explain what you did not complete and why.

3. What was easy and why?

4. What was difficult and why?

5. General comments. (*Do you have any comments on the work that you have done?*)

My Resumé

The purpose of a resumé is to sell your best traits – it your very own personal ad! A good resumé can help you get the job or promotion that you are looking for.

Who should have a resumé?



Anyone who...

- is looking for work.
- wants to change their job.
- would like a promotion.
- wants to apply to a new school.
- wants to do volunteer work.
- wants to keep a record of their training, experience, skills, and interests.

Your resumé should include the following facts (usually in the following order):

1. Objective (position wanted)
2. Your name, address and phone number
3. Training and skills
4. Work experience and volunteer work
5. Interests and hobbies
6. References (optional)

Writing My Resumé

ACTIVITY:

Write your own resumé.

STEP 1:

Look over the sample resumé to get an idea of what you want to put in your resumé.

STEP 2:

Prepare a rough draft of your resumé (pages 21-23).

STEP 3:

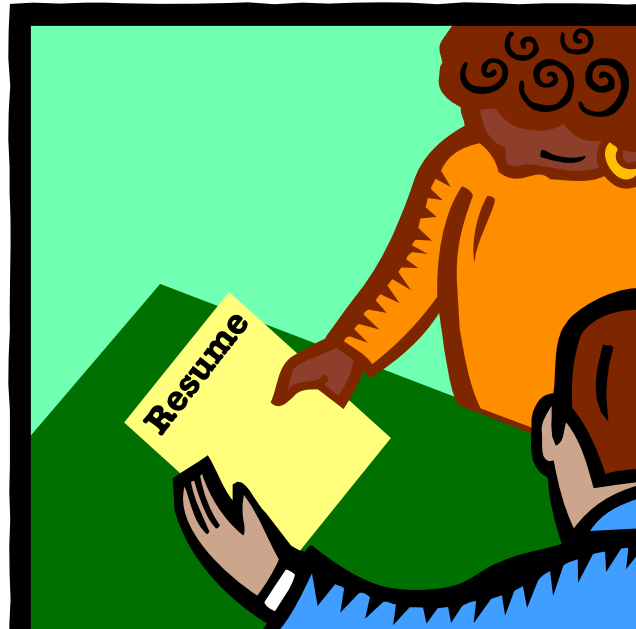
Ask someone to edit the rough draft of your resumé.

STEP 4:

Prepare a good copy of your resumé. This should be typed. Make sure it is neat and well organized.

PURPOSE:

It is always a good idea to have a copy of your resumé on file. You never know when you might need it.



You should change your resumé for different jobs.



Sample Resumé

Henry G. Happiworka

Address: 123 Smith Street, Smallville, Quebec G1G 1A1

Telephone: (418) 555-1234

OBJECTIVE: To obtain work in customer service.

TRAINING

January 2010

Computer Training Course, Eastern Shore Computer College

February 2008

Certificate in Hospitality, Happy Customer Training Group

SKILLS

- Good communication and telephone skills
- Can work well in a busy place
- Typing and filing
- Handling cash

WORK EXPERIENCE

March 2005 – December 2010

Mr. Ed's Discount Barn

Office Assistant

- Filed papers
- Handled customer complaints
- Answered the telephone

April 2003 – February 2005

Delice-o-Mart Grocery

Cashier

- Helped customers
- Worked as a cashier
- Maintained a cash register

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

April 2008 – present

Stay Awhile Animal Shelter

- Walked dogs twice a week
- Answered the telephone

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

- Volunteering
- Singing
- Meeting new people

References available upon request

Fill in your personal details under each heading.

Your name, address and telephone number:

Objective (job or position wanted):

You may omit this part if you are not looking for a specific job.

Training and skills:

This does not have to be in-school training. Put down any skills that an employer would be interested in. If you put any formal training, include the name of the school, course, and date that it was taken.

Work experience and volunteer work:

Begin with your most recent job and work back. You should include the name of the place where you worked and the dates when you worked there.

Interests and hobbies:

Include interests and hobbies that show that you are a positive and active person.

References (optional):

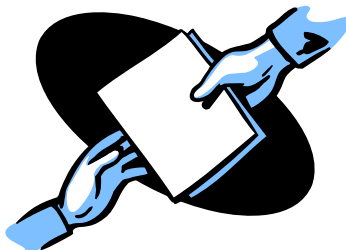
You do not have to put your references on your resumé. If you do not, you can put “References available upon request”. Make sure that you have a list of references prepared for a job interview.

Sample Reference:

Mrs. Alma Ferguson
Assistant Manager
Mr. Ed's Discount Barn
1234 Spruce Street
Smallville, Quebec
G1G 1A2

Telephone: (123) 456-7890

While you do not have to put your references on your resumé, an employer may ask for them. You should have the names of three references neatly typed on a separate sheet for an interview.



The Good Copy

Now you are ready to do the good copy of your resumé.

TIPS

1. Put your name in large print at the top of the page.
2. Use simple words and short sentences.
3. Use bullets for each detail (see sample).
4. Type your resumé.
5. Check for spelling or grammar errors.
6. Have someone edit your spelling and grammar.
7. Make sure your resumé is neat and clear.
8. Make several copies.



My Cover Letter

A cover letter is a letter that explains your best traits and skills. Many employers will read a cover letter before they look at a resumé. When you apply for a job, you should include a cover letter with your resumé.

A cover letter...

1. follows a set format.
2. says which job you are applying for.
3. introduces you to the employer.
4. stresses your best traits and skills.



Tips for Writing a Cover Letter:

1. Address the letter to the person who does the hiring (you can call and get the name).
2. Keep the letter short and simple.
3. Check your spelling and grammar.
4. Sum up what you have to offer.
5. Stress your best traits and skills.
6. Be professional and friendly.
7. Keep your cover letter up-to-date. Add new experiences and training.
8. Make sure the date and addresses are correct.

Sample Cover Letter

123 Smith Street
Smallville, Quebec
G1G 1A1

June 21, 2010

Mrs. Hariette Grocheez
Personnel Manager
Super Champion Department Store
827 Main Street
Bigville, Quebec
G4W 2Y2

Dear Mrs. Grocheez,

I am applying for the position of Customer Service Agent at Super Champion Department Store. I am a skilled and experienced worker. I have both computer and customer service training.

I am a respectful and honest person who likes to work with other people. At Mr. Ed's Discount Barn, I gained experience in handling customer complaints. I was also in charge of filing papers and answering the telephone. I have good communication skills and can work well in a busy place.

I have enclosed my resumé. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,

Henry G. Happiworka

ACTIVITY:

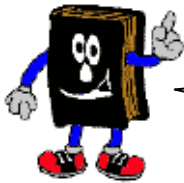
Write a cover letter for one of the job openings that you discovered in your area.

STEP 1:

Identify your top interests, training and skills, and personality traits on the next page. This will give you a good idea of what to put in your cover letter.

STEP 2:

Decide which job you want to apply for. Find the name and title of the person who does the hiring. You will need to get their mailing address as well. You can do this by calling or looking in the Yellow Pages™.



If you do not want to apply for a job right now, you should still follow all these steps and write a cover letter. If you are already employed, you can write a practice letter to your boss to ask for a promotion.

STEP 3:

Write a rough draft of your cover letter on page 29.

STEP 4:

Check for spelling and grammar mistakes. Change anything that you do not like. Then, ask someone to read over your letter.

STEP 5:

Write a second draft of your letter on page 30.

PURPOSE:

Knowing how to write a cover letter is an important skill. Once you have completed your second draft, you will have a letter that can be typed and sent to an employer.

GETTING STARTED

Your cover letter may be your first introduction to an employer. You want it to tell your best interests, training and skills, and aptitudes. Fill in the following chart to target what you want to put in your cover letter.



Think like an employer. What kinds of things would you look for in an employee?

My top interests are:

1	
2	
3	
4	

My top training and skills are:

1	
2	
3	
4	

Personality traits that will help me at work:

1	
2	
3	
4	

My Cover Letter: Draft 1

1. Put your address in the right hand corner.

2. Today's date and then the name and address of the employer.

Dear _____,

3. Introduce yourself. Say which job you are applying for.

4. Sell yourself! Describe your top interests, skills and personality traits.

5. Close the letter by thanking them and saying how much you would like to hear from them.

Sincerely,

My Cover Letter: Draft 2

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

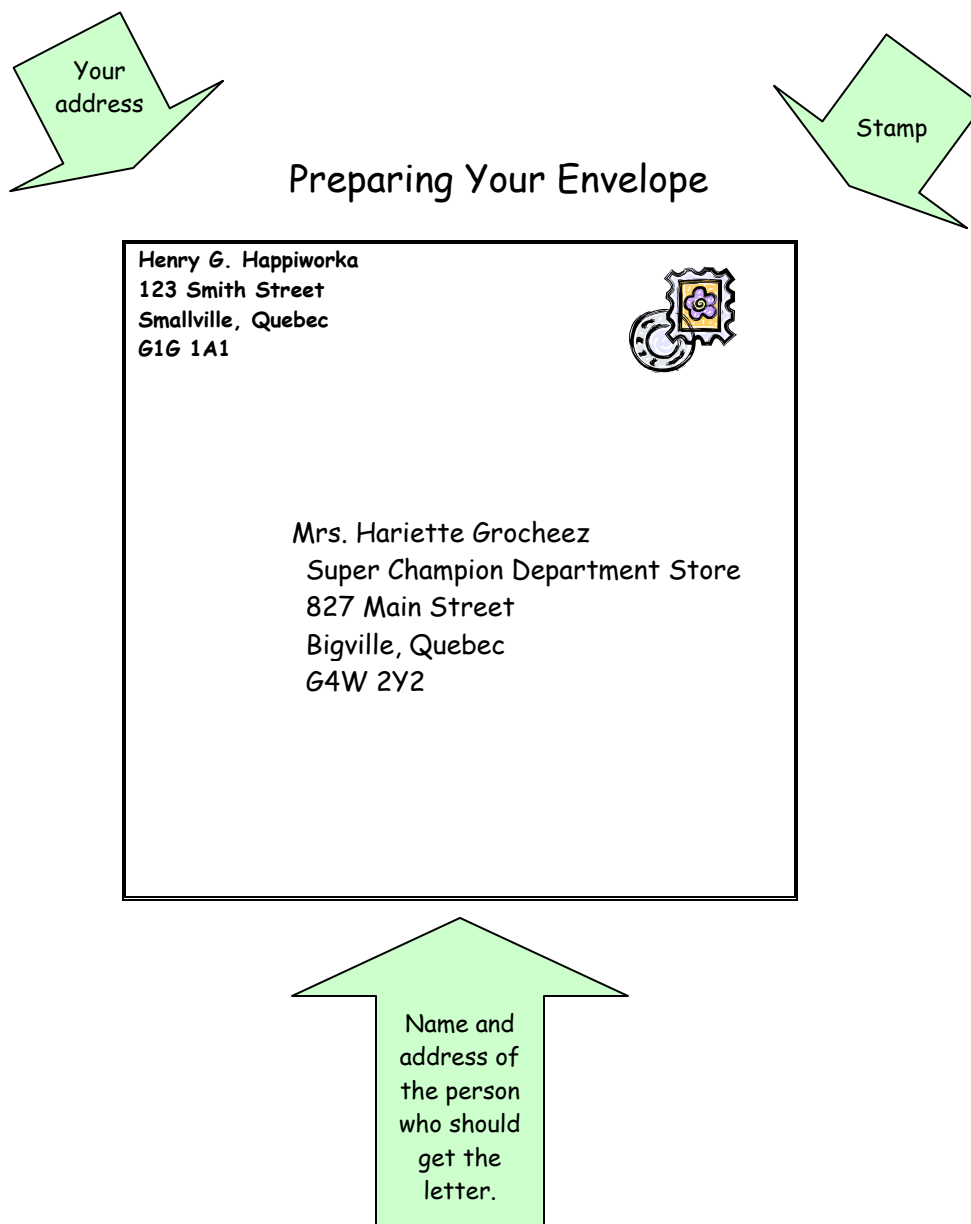
Dear _____,	

Sincerely,	

Sending Your Resumé and Cover Letter in the Mail

You should prepare a final typed copy of your letter. Put it in an envelope and with your resumé send it to the employer.

Note: You should not fold your cover letter or resumé. Put them in a long envelope.



Preparing for an Interview

An interview is when you meet an employer face to face. In this section, you will practice selling yourself to an employer.



Some Interview Tips

- Arrive on time.
- Dress nicely (no matter what the job is for).
- Be neat and clean.
- Listen carefully to all questions.
- Show interest in the job.
- Answer honestly.
- Show that you are willing to get more training.
- Ask questions.
- Say thank you and shake hands at the end of the interview.

Do Not...

- Do not chew gum or smoke.
- Do not bring anyone else to the interview with you.
- Do not say anything bad about another person or employer.
- Do not give up.

Interview Questions

There are a number of questions that an employer usually asks. The following list will give you an idea of what to expect at an interview.

Questions an Employer Might Ask:

1. Tell me a bit about yourself.
2. Why do you want this job?
3. What kind of training or experience do you have?
4. Are you willing to take training classes?
5. Are you willing to work nights?
6. Can you work out of town?
7. Why did you leave your last job?
8. Tell me about a time when you handled a problem.
9. What do you expect from your employer?
10. What do you expect from your co-workers?
11. What skills do you have that will help you with this job?
12. How do you work under pressure?
13. Describe the ideal job?
14. What are some of your long-term goals?
15. What are your strengths?
16. What are your weaknesses?
17. Why should I hire you?
18. When can you start?



Selling Yourself at an Interview

You probably know how a first impression is important. Many employers will decide if you're the right person for the job within the first few minutes of meeting you. Right away, you want to sell your best skills, training, experience, and traits. You want to state why this person should hire *you!*



EXAMPLE:

I am a very hard-working and honest person who loves to work with people. I have training and experience in customer service. My last employer was often impressed by the way I handled customer complaints.

With one statement, this person was able to show an employer that they...

- ✓ are hard-working.
- ✓ are honest.
- ✓ love to work with people.
- ✓ have training in customer service.
- ✓ have experience in customer service.
- ✓ have impressed their last employer.
- ✓ know how to handle customer complaints.



ACTIVITY:

Prepare a short self-selling phrase that you can say to an employer.

STEP 1:

Review your top skills, training, experience and traits. What would impress an employer the most?

STEP 2:

Look at the example of a selling phrase to get an idea of what to say.

STEP 3:

Write your self-selling phrase.

PURPOSE:

This phrase will help you to prepare for an interview. An employer wants to know what you do well – it is your job to tell them what this is.

My Self-Selling Phrase:

What are you able to show an employer with this one statement?

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____



The activities in this unit will help you prepare for employment needs of today and tomorrow. Remember to always keep your resumé and cover letter up-to-date.

Good Luck!

Employment Skills and Me

You are now ready to consider how employment skills affect your everyday life.

ACTIVITY:

Pay close attention to the world around you to find examples of how employment skills affect your life.

STEP 1:

Reflect on what you know about employment skills.

STEP 2:

Observe the world around you for several days and take note of how employment skills affect your life (or others' lives).

STEP 3:

Answer the questions on the following page. Provide solid examples of what you observe.

PURPOSE:

Learning is most valuable when you can apply it to your own life.

Where to find real-life examples:

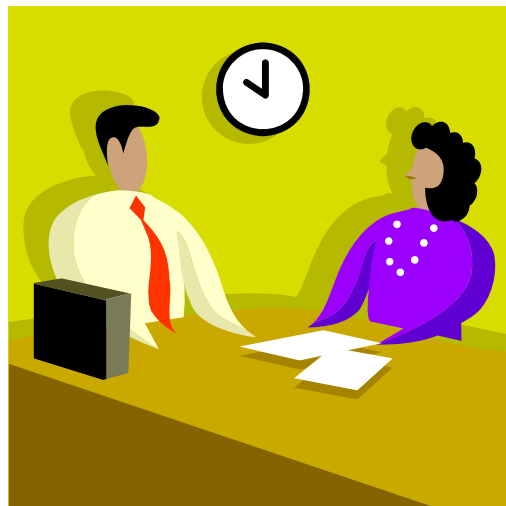
1. Look at the people around you. How do employment skills affect them?
2. Check the classified ads to see what kind of skills are in demand.
3. Consider your skills and how you use them.
4. Observe how others work (at work, on TV, in stores, etc.). What skills are important?

Employment Skills and Me

REFLECTION

Provide solid examples of what you have observed in the past few days.
How do employment skills affect your everyday life?

How do you feel about what you observed? Why do you feel this way?



What I Know Now



Go back to the beginning of this unit and look at the list of things you knew before you started. Describe what you know now. What have you learned?

Employment Skills

Learning Checklist

Check off each item on this list that you can do as “ACHIEVED”. If you feel that you have to improve on something, check “IN PROGRESS”. Review your Learning Checklist with your tutor.

COMPETENCIES What I can do.	IN PROGRESS	ACHIEVED
1. I can explain what an interest is.		
2. I can explain what a skill is.		
3. I can identify my interests.		
4. I can identify my skills.		
5. I can describe my best personality traits.		
6. I can call an employment advisor.		
7. I can check different places for job openings.		
8. I can talk to people I know to find out about job openings.		
9. I can do a job search.		
10. I can explain what a resumé is.		
11. I can explain why a resumé is important.		
12. I can explain what a cover letter is.		
13. I can explain why a cover letter is important.		

COMPETENCIES What I can do.	IN PROGRESS	ACHIEVED
14. I can write my own resumé.		
15. I can have my resumé edited.		
16. I can type a good copy of my resumé.		
17. I can prepare a list of references.		
18. I can identify my top skills, interests and personality traits.		
19. I can write a cover letter for a specific job.		
20. I can write a rough draft and fix it up.		
21. I can write a second draft.		
22. I can prepare an envelope for my resumé and cover letter.		
23. I can prepare for an interview.		
24. I can say what <i>to do</i> at a job interview.		
25. I can say what <i>not to do</i> at a job interview.		
26. I can write a self-selling phrase.		
27. I can connect what I learned to my life.		
28. I can observe how employment skills affect my life.		
29. I can write about what I observe.		
30. I can keep track of my learning in a journal.		

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