

Job Search



Workplace Readiness
Occupational Training
Applying for a Job
The Job Interview

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PREVIEW | Workplace Readiness

- How much do you already know about the material in this unit? Circle letters or words to correctly complete the sentences. Answers are upside down at the bottom of the page.

1. There are (hundreds / thousands) of different job possibilities for people in this country.
2. (A history / An aptitude) test can help you set an appropriate job goal.
3. Retail (merchandise / services) includes clothing, television, furniture, and other things sold in stores.
4. If you're interested in a job, find out what kind of education or (preparation / category) it requires.
5. Sometimes, (uniforms / benefits) can make up for a lower salary.
6. A (flight attendant / firefighter) works for the government.
7. You could train to be a police officer at
 - a. a union hall.
 - b. a police academy.
 - c. city hall.
8. A retail salesperson might sell
 - a. ideas.
 - b. shoes.
 - c. buildings.
9. A real estate salesperson sells
 - a. houses and land.
 - b. farm equipment.
 - c. social services.
10. The most education is required for
 - a. factory work.
 - b. professional jobs.
 - c. sales work.

Answers: 1. thousands 2. An aptitude 3. merchandise 4. preparation 5. benefits 6. firefighter 7. b 8. b 9. a 10. b

LESSON

1 Aptitudes/Interests Inventory

In the world of work, there are *many* different job choices. What kind of work would suit you best? Which trade or profession will give you the most satisfaction? Which occupation best matches your skills and interests?

An aptitude test can help you figure that out. *Aptitude* means what you're good at, what your talents are. This test is not like a math or history exam. It's often given on a computer, with special software or on a special Web site. The questions are designed to discover your natural abilities and what kinds of activities most appeal to you.

Here are some questions similar to those you might find on an aptitude test:

- DeShawn is shorter than Dan. Devon is shorter than DeShawn.

Who is tallest? _____

Who is shortest? _____

- What number comes next in this series: 1 1 2 3 5 ?
a. 7 b. 10 c. 8 d. 9
- Lake* is to *puddle* as *wide* is to
a. river b. short
c. narrow d. tiny
- Which word is first alphabetically?
a. bland b. blame c. bran
- Which would you prefer?
a. working with people
b. working with machines
c. working outdoors
- Which would you most enjoy?
a. talking on the phone



- making up riddles
- riding a horse

School guidance counselors give various kinds of aptitude tests too. Your counselor can interpret your answers to help you decide which choices you might make when preparing for employment.

At the library, there are also books of aptitude tests and explanations of how they work. If you want to, you can test yourself. Then you can match your test results with different job types and career categories.

Employment agencies can also help you evaluate your skills and work preferences.

No matter how you go about it, exploring your aptitudes is an important step in a job search.

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. Aptitude tests identify your
 - a. height, weight, and age.
 - b. abilities and talents.
 - c. altitude and attitude.
2. Aptitude tests are sometimes given on a
 - a. computer.
 - b. radio.
 - c. microphone.
3. School guidance counselors can
 - a. take the test for you.
 - b. help you understand your test results.
 - c. tell what your aptitudes are without talking to you or testing you.
4. Activities that *appeal* to you are
 - a. activities you like.
 - b. activities you don't like.
 - c. activities you know nothing about.

■ **Key Vocabulary:** Write a letter to match each **boldface** word with its meaning.

1. ____ **aptitudes**
2. ____ **interpret**
3. ____ **employment agency**
4. ____ **evaluate**
 - a. explain
 - b. natural talents
 - c. determine the worth of something
 - d. business that assists people in finding jobs

■ **Recalling Details:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ Aptitude tests can be found in the library or on special Web sites.
2. ____ You can match results of a test to career categories.
3. ____ A math test is no different from an aptitude test.
4. ____ The number of professions and trades gets smaller every day.

■ **Everyday Math/Critical Thinking**

Students in a career class wanted to find out how many available jobs there are in their city. John read the classified section of the local newspaper and counted 218 different jobs listed. Lynn used the Internet and found 5,683 jobs in their area.

1. How many more did Lynn find than John? _____
2. Do you think Lynn had found all the possible jobs in their area? _____

■ **On Your Own**

Think about the activities that *interest* you most. Now think about things you're especially *good* at doing. How many of them are the same? (For example, you might be interested in being a lifeguard, but you're not a good swimmer. Or you might be interested in studying foreign languages and also be very good at speaking Spanish.) List the ones that you both *like* to do and *can* do well.

LESSON

2 Career Categories and Preparation

What type of career looks good to you? Knowing your aptitudes can be very helpful. What interests you most? What are you good at doing?

Listed below are some popular career categories.

Sales (computer industry salespeople sell hardware or software; real estate agents sell buildings or land; store clerks sell retail merchandise such as clothing or auto parts)

Professional service (teacher, nurse, social worker, lawyer)

Construction work (carpenter, sheet metal worker, electrician, mason, plumber)

Factory work (auto assembly, clothing manufacturing)

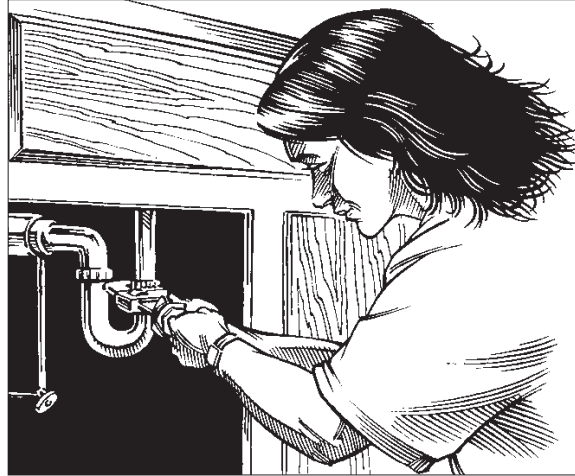
Clerical work (office or administrative assistant, court reporter, customer service representative)

Government jobs (firefighter, police officer, postal worker, urban planner)

“Green” jobs (sustainable farmer, solar power installer)

Of course, there are *many* more job categories and jobs than are listed here. Check out Web sites, like this one from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, that can help you match your interests with job ideas.

Suppose you’ve picked a job that matches your talents and interests. Now you need to find out what kind of education or preparation you need for



the job. For example, for certain sales jobs, you may not need anything more than a high school diploma.

But what if you want to be an electrician? You need to attend trade school or train as a union apprentice. (An *apprentice* is someone who learns from a person who is skilled and experienced in a certain job.)

Postal workers must earn a GED or high school diploma and pass an exam. Police officers must graduate from high school, take criminal justice classes at a community college, and then go to the police academy.

If you want to be a biologist or an air-traffic controller, you’ll need to go to college and earn a degree.

Sometimes the first career idea you have is not the right one for you. So you’ll want to explore several possibilities. But you’re off to a very good start if you stay in school and build your skills. Soon you’ll be looking forward to your first day on the job!

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. How many career choices are there?
 - a. ten
 - b. one hundred
 - c. thousands
2. *Retail merchandise* is
 - a. products sold in stores.
 - b. items sold to dealers.
 - c. schools and vacant lots for sale.
3. Real estate agents sell
 - a. clothing.
 - b. buildings and land.
 - c. computer services.
4. To be a police officer, you'd need to
 - a. enroll in a police academy.
 - b. get a master's degree.
 - c. attend a trade school.
5. A professional service career might be
 - a. painting houses.
 - b. selling lumber and building materials.
 - c. teaching or nursing.

■ **Recalling Main Ideas:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ If you prepare for something, you get ready for it.
2. ____ Many jobs require special education or training.
3. ____ Once you choose a career, you cannot change your mind.
4. ____ It's best if you have an aptitude for the career you select.

■ **Key Vocabulary**

1. An *apprentice* is someone who works with and learns from _____
_____.
2. *Merchandise* means _____
_____.
3. *Clerical work* is usually done in _____
_____.

■ **Categories**

1. Name three career categories:

2. List four kinds of workers needed to build a home.
_____ _____
_____ _____

■ **Everyday Math**

Alejandro needs a car to drive to the police training academy. The used car he wants sells for \$6,700. Alejandro's Uncle Theo will loan him the money. He said that Alejandro could pay him back after he starts working as a police officer. Suppose Alejandro pays Uncle Theo an equal amount every month for two years. How much will each monthly payment be? \$_____

■ **On Your Own**

Name two jobs you like that are *not* mentioned in this lesson.

LESSON

3 Salaries and Job Benefits

What should you think about when you're considering a job? Two things are extremely important: the salary and the job benefits. Your *salary* is the money your employer pays you for your work. *Job benefits* are another form of payment. They include things such as paid vacations, sick leave, and health insurance. Others might be the use of a company car, company stock, or discounts on the company's products. After working many years, you may receive a pension from your employer. This is an income to live on after you retire.

Health insurance is very expensive to purchase on your own. Many people can't afford it at all. What happens if they have an accident or illness? They must pay for all of their doctor's visits, lab tests, hospital stays, and medications. That's why health insurance is such an important job benefit. You might accept a lower salary rather than take a job where health care insurance is *not* provided. This benefit could well save you thousands of dollars.

Remember to take a look at the *whole* job package. First, figure out how much money you will need each month for your housing, food, transportation, insurance, and other basic expenses. This amount is your *cost of living*. Then, look at how much income you'll have from your job *and* what benefits are included.



When Jessica graduated from high school, she was offered a job in the office of a large automobile repair shop. She knew she would learn a lot there. There would be a variety of job duties, and she liked the people she met at her interview.

But Jessica had also taken the required test to get a job at the post office. She was surprised when she compared the two salaries and job benefits. The salaries would be nearly the same, but the post office offered much better benefits.

Jessica's older brother is a car salesman. He earns a commission, or percentage of each sale he makes. Since Jessica's brother is a good salesman, his commissions are usually high. But he doesn't have paid vacations, sick leave, or company-paid health insurance.

Security is important to Jessica. She'd rather have good benefits and a fixed income she can count on to cover her cost of living. After thinking it over, she decides that the post office job would be the best choice for her.

■ **Thinking It Over:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ A job benefit is something a company offers its employees besides a salary.
2. ____ A sales commission is always the same, month after month.
3. ____ Some companies pay for employees' health insurance.
4. ____ It's always better to take the job with the highest salary.

■ **Key Vocabulary**

1. A *salary* is money an employer pays you for your
 - a. benefits.
 - b. work.
 - c. insurance.
2. A *pension* is
 - a. income to use when you retire.
 - b. a place for criminals.
 - c. a small commission.
3. An *hourly wage* is
 - a. always 8 dollars.
 - b. a certain rate of pay for each hour worked.
 - c. equal to health insurance.
4. A *commission* is
 - a. a percentage paid for sales or services.
 - b. an old church.
 - c. the same thing as a pension.

■ **Cause and Effect**

1. Suppose you take a job with no health insurance. If you get in an accident or become ill, you will have to _____.
2. Suppose you are working on a sales commission and you don't sell anything. Your commission will be _____.
3. If your company has a pension plan, you will have _____.

■ **Everyday Math**

1. Janelle works for Gary's Gutters. She earns \$12 an hour for an 8-hour shift. There are no job benefits. Janelle's friend works at Ace Roofing. He earns \$10.50 an hour for an 8-hour shift, and the company pays for benefits worth about \$300 a month. What is Janelle's salary for working a 5-day week? \$_____
2. What is her friend's salary for working a 5-day week? \$_____
3. Which employer offers the best job package?

■ **On Your Own**

List three expenses that make up your cost of living (example: gas for car).

LESSON

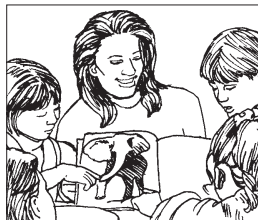
4 Short-Term and Long-Term Goals

Some jobs don't really lead anywhere. They pay your bills, but they aren't the first step on a *career path*. Other jobs are much more challenging. They offer lots of opportunity to learn so you can move up in the world.



Shane has a job that he enjoys most of the time. He's a cab driver. He knows his job will never change much—no matter how many years he does it. In ten years, he'll still be driving people home from the bus station and taking tourists to restaurants. He'll still be driving senior citizens to the market. But he doesn't mind. He likes driving and meeting people.

Shane's goal is simply to make a living. He isn't eager to learn new things or develop new skills. He earns a salary and tips, but he won't be able to advance. He isn't moving toward a higher paid position that has more interesting responsibilities.



Erin just loves working with young children. She gets a job working as an assistant at a big preschool. For four hours a day, she helps the teacher. In the afternoons, she goes to college. One night a week, she also takes a night class. Her long-term goal is to be a kindergarten teacher. Erin knows that it will take a lot of time and patience to achieve her goal. But she is steadily gaining both education and

experience. For now, she enjoys planning for the future. One day, she may even teach other people how to work with children. So Erin's current job is an important step toward her long-term goal. She looks forward to working her way up in the world.



Even as a child, P.J. was fascinated by the restaurant business. Whenever he got a chance, he liked to taste different dishes and see what was going on in the kitchen. When he graduated from high school, his short-term goal was to earn enough money to move out on his own. So he got a job as a waiter in a small, medium-priced restaurant. After six months, he became a waiter in a nicer restaurant. He also started to attend cooking school at the nearby community college. Now his long-term goal is to become a master chef. (A master chef creates the restaurant's menu and supervises everything that has to do with cooking and presenting the food. He or she has strong skills and can create wonderful dishes of many kinds.) P.J. is enjoying the whole restaurant scene. For now, he watches, listens, and learns while he earns.